

Riley Torque Queensland

January 2024



December 19th at the club

Next Meeting:

February 11th, 2024

Queensland Riley Club Shed

**38 Showgrounds Drive, Highvale 4520, Samford Show
Grounds.**

Remember our financial year runs from January to December and we don't send out individual invoices. This as your reminder to pay your 2024 subs. It's \$50 per year and the easiest way to pay is by bank transfer to:-

Riley Motor Club Qld - Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000

A/c 156 635 229

Or contact the Treasurer – Rod Longden 0438 980 378.

If you own a vehicle which is on SIVS concessional registration, remember that club membership is compulsory now.

Next events

January

Tuesday 9th Riley enthusiasts at the Clubhouse, Samford. Restoration activities, friendship and technical advice. BYO lunch and drinks. Tea and coffee provided.

Tuesday 16th Riley enthusiasts at the Clubhouse, Samford. Restoration activities, friendship and technical advice. BYO lunch and drinks. Tea and coffee provided.

Thursday 25th Riley enthusiasts and visitors including the Chev club at the Clubhouse, Samford. Restoration activities, friendship and technical advice. BBQ lunch, tea and coffee provided.

Tuesday 30th Riley enthusiasts at the Clubhouse, Samford. Restoration activities, friendship and technical advice. BYO lunch and drinks. Tea and coffee provided.

February

Sunday 11th AGM and OGM at the Clubhouse, Samford.



1938 Bardon Hillclimb



The very first of at least three Riley Car Clubs in Queensland was first formed in October 1933 and held its first event on 18 November 1933, a combination of a hill climb followed by a picnic. Mt Cotton was the location of the hill climb with details of 'at the foot of the hill fairly steep hill about 500 yards long with a bend about 20 yards from the start and another half way loose gravel surface near a small creek' which appears may be on West Mt Cotton road near the mount itself.

The Steering Wheel, Vol 12 No 1, December 1933, P16-17.

The Brisbane City Council enabled the Whites Hill Reserve to be available as a new climb site from 16 November 1935 and was in use until 15 November 1953. Entry into the reserve was from Boundary Road Camp Hill opposite the Cruces and Capella Street corner. The course was originally 4/10 mile long which ascended to the kiosk at the summit. This site and course could still found up to the 1986 UBD, before the site being redeveloped into a sports field complex. First Whites Hill event was held under the International Classes as per AIACR (Alliance Internationale des Automobile Clubs Reconnus) with the Australian Automobile Association being the Australian representative that covered the local motoring clubs, and thus the RACQ being the Queensland representative club on the national body.



Whites Hill December 1950 (now owned by Keith Morrison)

The closest event to the first road race in Queensland occurred on 1 August 1936 at Woody Point. With the approval of the Redcliffe Council a high speed reliability contest was held on the Peninsula. The course (again on unsealed roads) commenced in Lilla Street into Oxley Ave, then Duffield Road, Ernest St, Albert St, Gayundah Esplanade and back to the start. As Alderman A.H. Langdon, the Mayor of Redcliffe, dropped the starting flag, each competitor was required to change a spark plug before commencing the first of 27 loops, as well as a pit stop during the event to change a wheel without assistance from other people. Drivers were required to maintain an average speed for their class. Class A (up to 1000 ccs engine capacity) were to maintain a 35 mph average, Class B (1000 to 2000 ccs) 39 mph and Class C (over 2000 ccs) 42 mph. Of the 26 who started the event 15 finished, with J.P. love (Alvis) being the victor ahead of S Butters (Willys 77) and Chas Whatmore (Riley) third. N. McIlwain finished in 9th position in his MG Midget. (42). There is no evidence of a second event being held.

Until now all reliability trials and events had been conducted during the daylight hours. On Saturday evening and Sunday morning 14 & 15 November 1936 a night reliability trial with the start in Brisbane before venturing to Caboolture, then via Woodford, Kilcoy, Esk to Ipswich and return to Brisbane. Crews were to maintain an average different average speed during each of the 3 legs, the first to Caboolture, next to Ipswich and to Brisbane. Considering the headlight of the day and the state of development of the major roads this would have been an adventure. Of the 12 who commenced the route, all completed the event with Claude Barron (Oldsmobile) winning from Chas Whatmore (Riley 9) and H. Kyne (Morris 12/4).



Lowood 1950 (car is now with Keith Morrison)



In 1938 the Queensland Motor Sport Club (QMSC) was first formed as the RACQ focused more on assisting the stranded motorist. It was ultimately decided to form a separate club and a smaller body to run sporting events whose members all took an active interest in the sport and could do it much more effectively. The club received official AAA recognition and would organise events under AAA competition rules. QMSC continued to provide events for members such as gymkhanas (now motorkhanas) at Rocklea showgrounds (tests of the day included such events as Flag Relay race, Potato race, Figure Eight, High Speed Reversing Lap Dash Test, Cigarette Lighting, or Balloon race), trials, social events, with hill climbs at Whites

Hill. On 5 August 1939, QMSC joined with the Auto Cycle Union under the High Speed Alliance, to organize motor cycle and motor car races on the old racecourse at Rosewood. A report states 'for some time Messes H.C.Collett and D. Boughen, Ipswich, have been engaged in converting the old Rosewood Racecourse into a high speed racing circuit'. The track (dirt surface) was about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the lap and 60 foot wide. Instructions to the site were 'turn corner at Rosewood Police station'. Further events were held on 30 September 1939, and 26 November 1939.



Peter Downing Riley Nine Special Strathpine





Lakeside International Raceway. A RMB lapping an Alfa and a Torana....

In the Pine Rivers region 3 airfields were in use during 1939 – 1945. A1 and A3 fields used a grassed landing strip as the runway whilst the A2 airfield at Strathpine had a sealed landing strip. This was the airfield base of the 548 Squadron of Spitfires and today is the site of the Pine Rivers State High School. Until late 1959 this Strathpine airfield site was under the control of both the Commonwealth Government of Defence and the Department of Interior as it was then, eventually sold to developers with the final race meeting on 11 October 1959. The circuit was described as basically down one side of the airfield around some hay bales and 44 gallon drums then back along the opposite side to form a lap of about 1.4 miles. The width of the airfield was some 150 feet with straights just about 0.6 of a mile long.

NEW LAYOUT FOR RACES ON STRIP

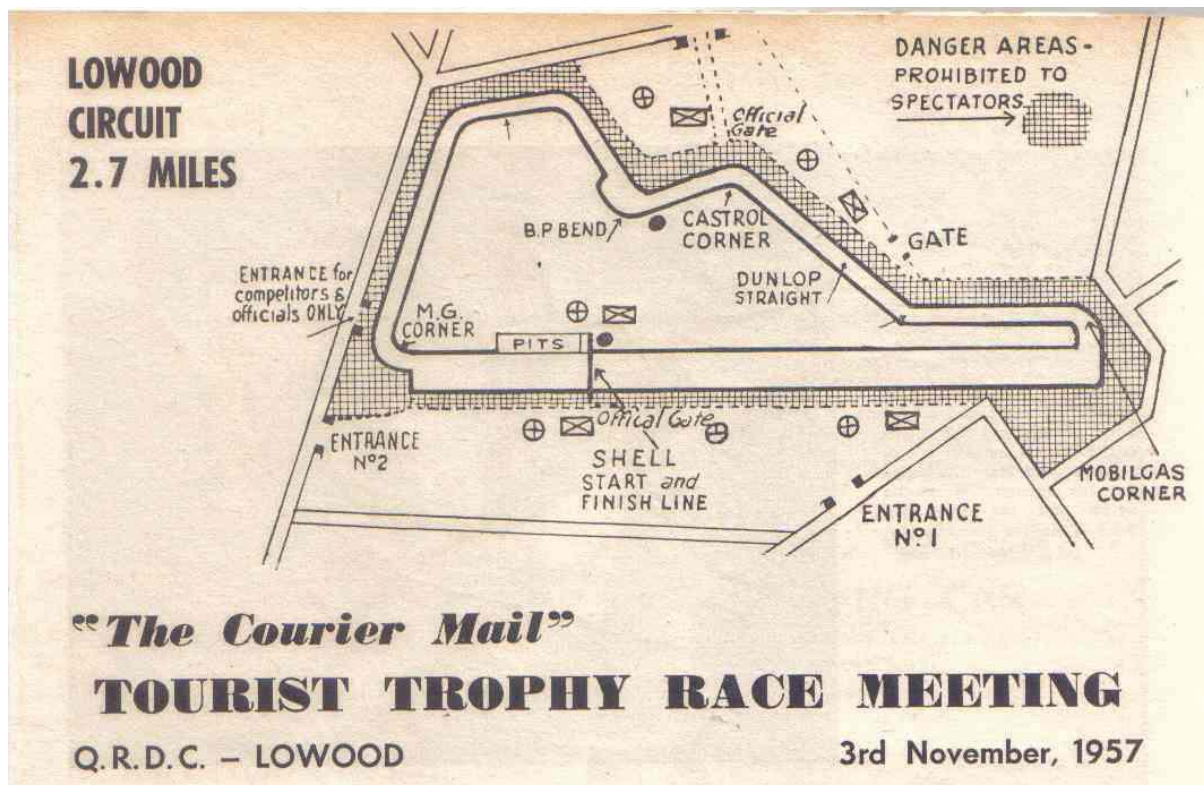
NEW layout on Strathpine airstrip, which will be used for the first time next Sunday, when the Queensland Motor Sporting Club will hold an all-day speed meeting.



John Crouch pictured here in his Riley at Foleys Hill N.S.W. : March 1946 (John 3 years later would go on to win the 1949 Australian Grand Prix @ the Leyburn airfield circuit Queensland in his Blue Delahaye)

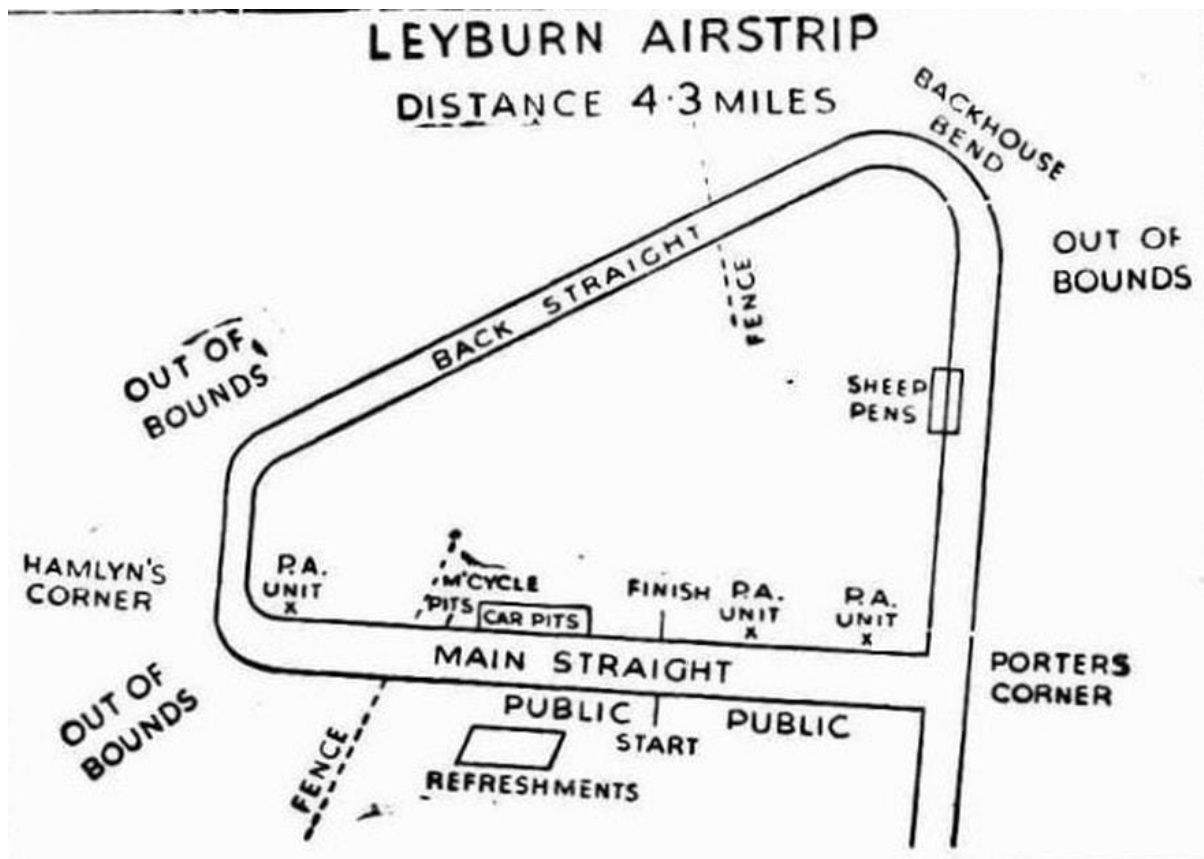
The first hillclimb after the war was at Whites Hill on 6 December 1947 where a thunderstorm stopped proceedings as the surface became slippery and very muddy but not before Chas Whatmore (Studebaker speedcar) set the fastest time. It was common for speedcars to compete at the sealed surface Strathpine as well as on the dirt surfaces. Drivers such as Chas Whatmore and John Maxwell in his Riley Special appear in results.

First race meeting on the Lowood airfield was held on Sunday 20 June 1948. Lowood was the home of Number 71 Squadron RAAF Avron from which conducted coastal patrols against Japanese submarines. The lap distance was 2.825 miles and the main event at the first meeting, the Queensland Road Racing Championships, was won by O A (Snow) Sefton in his Ford V8 (V8 engine on a Jeep chassis using a 4 wheel drive transmission) from Keith Thallon (Jaguar SS 100) and Chas Whatmore (Studebaker). Some 5000 spectators attended and the map of the circuit shows the Start/Finish line on the back straight between Castrol Corner and BP Bend not on the main straight as most associate with the circuit.



Strathpine on 8 August 1948 gave a mixed programme of both motor car and motor cycle events as with all race meetings in this period. In the up to 1500 cc handicap C Anderson (Wolseley Hornet) won from D Forster (Wolseley Hornet) then Col Robinson (MGTC), Miss Connie Jordan (MGTA). Short handicap saw drivers Walter Mathison (Jaguar), Doug McDougal (Riley Spec), J Howlett (Ford V8 Spec), K Bailey (Ford A Spec). The Open handicap had Jack Wright (Ford Spec), Chas Whatmore (Studebaker), Keith Thallon (Jaguar SS 100), and Rex Law (Austin).

The major event of 1949 was the Australian Grand Prix. On 21 January Lowood was selected to be the venue with the AGP on Sunday 19 June subject to approval by the appropriate authorities. Strathpine was seen as too limited in length to hold a Grand Prix. It is reported the RAAF apparently refused to give permission and the newspapers suggested the local residents would not allow such an event to be held on a Sunday. However previous events at Lowood had occurred on Sundays. Then a search for a suitable site was undertaken where four sites being considered with Leyburn being selected as the only useable site although it had never before been used for racing.



Above: Layout of the Leyburn Racing Circuit, which was formerly an R.A.A.F. aerodrome.
Below: The Maybach racing car, reputedly the fastest car in Australia, driven by Stan Jones, of Melbourne, the Maybach has been clocked at 150 m.p.h.



Previously a base for B24 Liberator bombers (Squadron 99) during WW2, now divided among 3 farming families, Hamblin, Porter and Backhouse. A basic triangular layout this circuit had a length of 4.3 miles and was approximately 6 miles north of the town about where Liberator Avenue is today. The National Competition Committee of the Australian Automobile Association (AAA) which until 1953 was the controlling authority for Australian Motor Sport had set out new guidelines to raise the public status of this event. This included rotating the event to all states so it was truly a National Grand Prix, incorporating a massed or scratch race start as occurred with Grands Prix of other nations, over a substantial

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distance and only allow the term grand prix title. This was the first AGP held as a scratch race as previous AGPs were held under a handicap starting order, of either one at a time on their handicap time or in engine capacity groups but not all together. The AGP was held on 18 September 1949 where a crowd of between 25,000 to 30,000 spectators watch the Grand Prix won by John Crough in a 3.5 litre Delahaye from Ray Gordon (MGTC), Arthur Rizzo (Riley Special), Peter Critchley (MGTB Special), Allan Larsen (Cadillac Special), Curley Brydon (MGTC), Irwin Luke (Bugatti Type 37), Theo Trevethan (Ford V8 Special), H McGuire (MGTC) and Col Robinson (MGTC).



Rizzo Riley furthestest from camera.

Once again, if anyone has any contributions to make, please send to the secretary at mgwfrench@bigpond.com



Ralph Morris about to leave the line in his 1937 Riley Sprite, Bacchus Marsh, Victoria 19 September 1937. He won the half-mile sprint with a time of 22 ⁴/₅ seconds.



Norman Horton in his Kestrel was second with a time of 26 ³/₅ seconds.



Looks like a Ford Anglia. Does anyone know more?



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Bess and Barney Dentry alongside their ever-evolving Riley special.