

SUNBEAM

TORQUE



Official Newsletter

of the

SUNBEAM CAR CLUB OF VICTORIA INC.

Established 1973

July

2026



Sunbeam Car Club of Victoria Inc.

Reg No A0003752G
ABN 32 446 103 408

CLUB CONTACT INFORMATION

CLUB WEBSITE	www.sunbeamcarclubvictoria.com.au
CLUB BANK ACCOUNT No.	BSB 083-125 Account No. 51-517-0199
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CLUB POSTAL ADDRESS	P O Box 38, Ferntree Gully VIC 3156
CLUB REGISTERED ADDRESS	C/- Secretary: Ross Nye Unit 193, 15 Fulham Road, Rowville 3178

COMMITTEE 2025 - 2026

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*Club Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 8 PM (except December)
At Box Hill RSL Club, 26-28 Nelson Road, Box Hill
Members meet for dinner from 6.00 pm*

Affiliated with The Association of Motoring Clubs Inc.



OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE SUNBEAM CAR CLUB OF VICTORIA INC.

President's Message

Warm greetings to members and friends of SCCV and welcome to the July edition of Sunbeam Torque. I know you will enjoy the read this month because Sunbeam colleague, Darryl Penley, from WA has penned a wonderful article on another epic journey he made last September to the Sunbeam National in his Series V Alpine, along with former SCCV member, Tony Robinson, in his very smart Series II Alpine. Thanks Darryl, a great article, full of laughs and great experiences. You and Tony are an inspiration to us all.

Our July General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 29 July**. This is a break from convention as meetings are always held on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Renovations at Box hill RSL however, have forced us to change the date. Please amend or mark your diaries so you don't arrive to an empty room. As usual, if you would like to join other members for dinner in the Bistro prior to the meeting, please let us know so we can book tables. A Whatsapp poll will be published as usual during the week prior.

It's not long now until our annual Technical Day at Theo Miritis' factory in Bayswater. There is much excitement about this event which combines technical advice and plenty of social activity. Whether or not you plan to put your car on the hoist for free, yes free, technical and maintenance advice, please join us for lunch (on the Club), fun, fellowship, and a great day out for classic car enthusiasts experiencing mid-winter motoring doldrums. It may be cold, but this time of year doesn't last long, so why not focus on getting your Sunbeam ready for Spring.

We welcome some new members this month. Chris McCarthy from Perth WA has joined having recently picked up a very attractive Series IV Alpine in Arctic White with blue interior, a very nice combination. Tony Zuiderwyk (Series IV Alpine), Colin Gow (Series II Alpine) and Darrel and Marie Misso (Series III Alpine and Tiger MK 1) also join us from the Sunbeam and Talbot Car Club. It's wonderful to have you all on board.

The 48th Sunbeam National in Forster NSW from 11 to 13 September is rapidly approaching. Registrations were required by 30 June, but if you're procrastinating, please reach out as soon as you can. I'm sure our hosts from the Sunbeam Owners Club of NSW will make room. Please let us know if you register so we can support each other on the trip north. More information is available further on in Torque.

Finally, a late addition. I'm just in from the combined Rootes Group Car Clubs' Christmas in July. A wonderful day in Panton Hill bathed in sunshine. A great turn out and congratulations to the Singer Car Club for making arrangements, and to the 13 SCCV members who turned out. It was a treat to see a Tiger, Alpine II, Alpine IV and a Harrington le Mans among their Rootes relatives in the car park.

Please come along, if you can, to our next General Meeting on Wednesday, 29 July. It will be great to see you there.

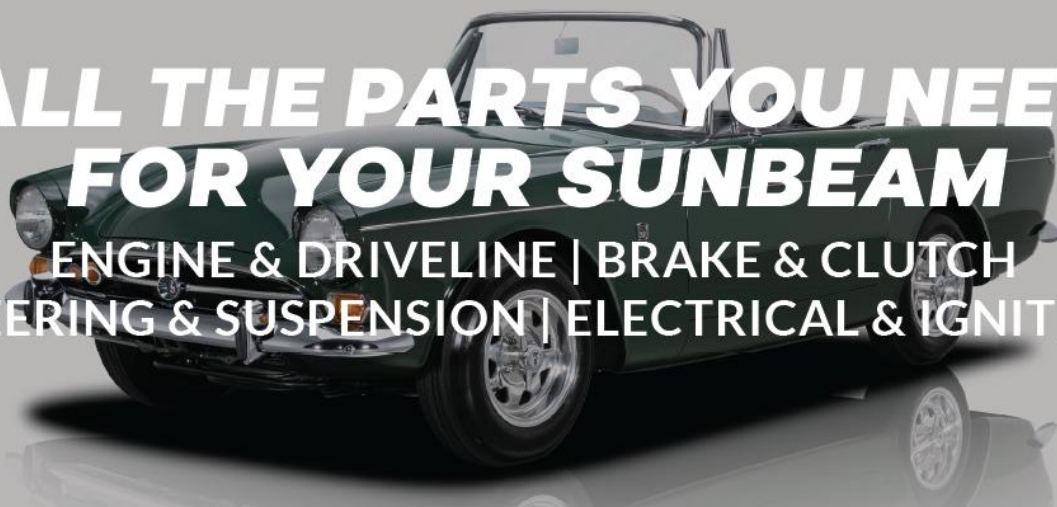
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AUTO SURPLUS

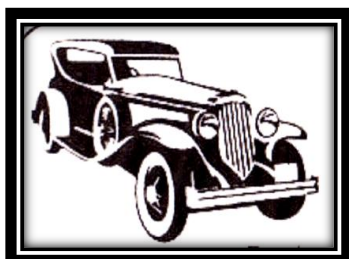
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2026 Calendar of Events

MONTH	DATE	DAY	EVENT
July	*** *29*	*** Wednesday	General Club Meeting at Box Hill RSL *** CHANGE of DATE *** Box Hill RSL Requested change of SCCV Meeting date 6:00 pm Dinner in the RSL Bistro 8.00 pm <i>Club Meeting will be held in the RSL Sports Bar downstairs</i>
August	02	Sunday	*** Club Event *** Technical Assistance Day BUY <> SWAP <> SELL ➤ Hoist Available ➤ Free Sausage Sizzle Learn about the maintenance of your Sunbeam TIME 10.00 am - 2.30 pm VENUE Factory 3 - 6 / 7 Nicole Close Bayswater North RSVP Prior to 29 July (required for catering) sunbeamclubvictoria.secretary@gmail.com
	DIARY COLOUR CODE	BLUE GREEN RED	CLUB EVENTS NON - CLUB EVENTS CLUB MEETINGS



2026 Calendar of Events

MONTH	DATE	DAY	EVENT
August	22	Saturday	*** Club Event *** Saturday MORNING RUN To the Mornington Peninsula TIME: 9.30 am MEET: Hobey Landreth 9 Chetwyn Court Frankston South
August	26	Wednesday	Club Annual General Meeting at Box Hill RSL 6:00 pm Dinner in the RSL Bistro 8.00 pm <i>Club Meeting will be held in the RSL Sports Bar downstairs</i>
September	11 12 13 14	Friday Saturday Sunday Monday	 *** Club Event *** 48th Sunbeam National Meeting Forster NSW HOST CLUB Sunbeam Owners' Club of NSW Inc.
	DIARY COLOUR CODE	BLUE GREEN RED	CLUB EVENTS NON - CLUB EVENTS CLUB MEETINGS



2026 Calendar of Events

MONTH	DATE	DAY	EVENT
September	23	Wednesday	General Club Meeting at Box Hill RSL 6:00 pm Dinner in the RSL Bistro 8.00 pm <i>Club Meeting will be held in the RSL Sports Bar downstairs</i>
October	18	Sunday	*** Club Event ***  Rootes  Group  "GT"  Day HOST CLUB Sunbeam Car Club of VIC Inc. <i>Event details TBA</i>
September	23	Wednesday	General Club Meeting at Box Hill RSL 6:00 pm Dinner in the RSL Bistro 8.00 pm <i>Club Meeting will be held in the RSL Sports Bar downstairs</i>
	DIARY COLOUR CODE	BLUE GREEN RED	CLUB EVENTS NON - CLUB EVENTS CLUB MEETINGS

September 2025 National Rally Victor Harbor

By Darryl Penley WA

Vehicle preparation - 2 Sunbeam Alpines

Anthony Robinson's Series 2 Alpine:

2.1 ltr stroker motor. The usual oils and filters, front wheel brgs clean / repack, brakes, tune, tappets etc. The car was running 1 x single 45 DCOE weber carburetor which we replaced with an Alpine innovation manifold and weber 32/36 DGAV carburetor in the quest for improved fuel economy, surprisingly the power loss was not worth talking about, a win win situation. The tyres came under scrutiny being 10/12 years old, Anthony rattled the piggy bank, 4 new white wall tyres were fitted to the chrome wire wheels purchased 2 years previously. A very smart well-presented Alpine ready to go.



My Alpine Series 5:

the usual oil/ filter, check wheel brgs having had major service work 2 years ago before the Melbourne trip. 12 months ago, a new alternator was required and being driven regularly on local runs I was confident all was ok. After the Melbourne trip I started having brake problems where the car would dive either left or right when applying the brakes, switching brake pads, caliper o/hauls, nothing was working. Only thing to do was to try new disc pads. Off I go to the brake shop (nameless) with brake pads in hand, guess what?? “We have had trouble with that brand” THANKS. Back home I go with my new PBR pads – Problem solved - Don’t buy Ben---- pads.

With both Alpines in pristine condition & in top notch mechanical condition, it was time to hit the road. Monday the 9th of September, we departed Perth for Norseman approx. 700 km away. The way we travel WA is via York, Tammin, Southern X for lunch, Coolgardie then Norseman.



A Nature Break just before Tammin!

At Southern X I tried to coach my 25-year-old CD player to make a noise, after 10/15 mins, success. I made the fatal mistake of turning it off, as it refused to make any noise from there on in. I know all you tech guys & girls are shaking your heads in disbelief, but I am old school. All my music goes back to the 70/80s, and I bet you are still listening to that music today. So put that in your pipe and smoke it!

The weather was on our side, sunny no wind, ideal driving conditions !! until about 50 or so kms from Norseman, the man above said it time he washed our cars, and he gave us a wash for the next 2 days.

Interesting, on checking our fuel consumption between the two cars over the 3 fills, Anthony's 2.1 liter with the 32/36 weber had the better economy, but not by a huge margin compared to my 1850 cc twin Webered car.

During the night we had the added bonus of strong southeasterly winds that arrived with the weather front, and little did we know the next 2 days were going to be the same. Leaving Norseman life was interesting when a road train approached with the spray from road train blowing over our side of the road as you passed the r/train the depression would suck you towards the truck with the added bonus of not being able to see a bloody thing for 2/3 seconds, very interesting! The idea was to lock your elbows, anticipate the suction and come out on the other side in one piece. Multiply that by 30/40 times in the day, we earned our beer that night!! Nothing like living on the edge.



Refueling at Balladonia, Caiguna (lunch) thru to Border Village, another 700ks down. When travelling from west /east there is a time difference of 1x1/2hrs, Border/Village is a good time to advance your watch to SA time. During our drive between Norseman, Border/V Anthony's O/drive in heavy rain would drop out intermittently, not a big problem as within a few kms of less rain it would operate again. Stopping and checking the solenoid wires was not going to happen in these conditions.



Madura Pass



Crossing the Nullarbor!

Border Village is a busy hub, with road trains on both sides of the road, fuel, food, showers for the truckies, and motel accommodation. The motel rooms are clean and bathrooms tiled from floor to ceiling; meals are good.

7.30am Wednesday we made our way to the restaurant for b/ fast, what a pleasant surprise! There to greet us with a lovely smile was TIFFANY. French and fantastic what an asset she was to the R/house, another backpacker working her way around Australia. When Tiffany served our breakfast, Mr. Smooth, Anthony had to ask where in France was her hometown, as per well-travelled Mr. Smooth knew exactly where it was and had past thru there a few years previously. Me being not so well travelled, just decided to eat my baked beans and leave them to it.



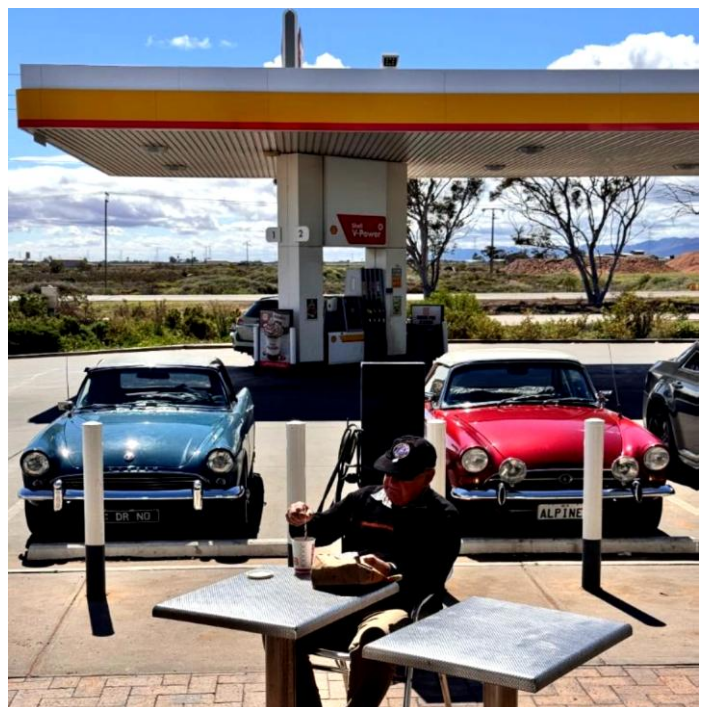
Accommodation Border Village

Leaving B/ Village the next stop is Wudinna, 700 km away, the rain showers were still with us, but the wind had decreased! (hooray), refuelled at Nullarbor R/H, then made it to the town of the windmills (Penong). Ceduna is where the quarantine station is, this relieves you of any fruit & veg - not negotiable!

Thru Ceduna for the 200km to Wudinna arriving at 4.30pm, to find my booking that I had made 2 months previously could not be found. They redeemed themselves by allocating us one of the family units, not too shabby at all. Below is the Family Unit at Wudinna



From Wudinna to Adelaide is the shortest leg just over 500 kms, but progress is slowed upon arrival at the northern suburbs, and from Grand Junction Rd the 4.00pm traffic is just what you don't need. That South Rd is something else. The John Williamson song Parramatta Rd is the Varicose Vein of Sydney – well the South Rd is Adelaide's version of that song BUT, how can I be diplomatic – 10 x worse!



Port Augusta for lunch



On the Road Eyre Peninsula



Our accommodation that night was in the hills on the other side of Blackwood, due to traffic we were separated, I arrived approx 1hr after Anthony after taking a few wrong turns.

Friday morning was a 5/6 km trip down Shepards Hill Rd to detail cars and pick up Kath, who had flown over 2 days earlier.

Thank you, Sue, one of our friends from the Alice Springs days back in the 70s. Sue had all the gear, pressure washers' detergents and vac cleaners. Cleaning 2500km of road grime, we were ready for the Nationals.



Anthony Robinson & his Series 2 Alpine

Arrived at Victor Harbor around 2.00pm in time for registration. After Saturday morning judging you have a few free hours, Kath & I caught up with my cousins from the Barossa Valley in Victor Harbor.

Anthony decided to do a tour of the Southern section of the Fleurieu Peninsula, and why not, the weather was excellent, ideal convertible driving conditions.



Saturday morning judging at Victor Harbor.

Due to the time this report has taken to produce, the Nationals have long-gone, well-done Adelaide

My travelling companion Anthony was time restricted and had to fly home on Tuesday dropping his car at the carrier company early Tuesday morning and flew back to Perth that afternoon. This was prearranged and I don't mind the solo drive back to Perth as I have had two previous trips in the Sunbeam. Hence the need for a new stereo, I can only talk to myself for so long.

Checking out of the Resort at Victor Harbor on Monday morning, Kath and I headed to Jervis Bay to catch the ferry to Kangaroo Island for a few days. We stayed at American river, visiting a few of the attractions on offer, another few hundred kms added to the odometer. We had lovely weather and driving around the island in the Sunbeam was a pleasant experience.

Now this is the head spinning part! Up around 5.30 am drive the 30/40 kms to Kingscote, aboard the ferry, breakfast on board, dock at Jervis Bay, drive to Aldinga, spend 2 hrs with my elder sister, my brother couldn't be bothered driving from North Haven although he had been well informed months before. Left Aldinga at 12.00 noon drop Kath at the Airport for her 2.30pm flight back to Perth. Navigated to Islington Park to have a new stereo fitted which I had arranged while on K.I. Pre-arranged catch up with old workmate Eric & Barbara Austin, from the early 60s, guess what type of dealership it was? After talking to the guys when they had finished the install realized my father's old Service Station was only approx 1km west and the old family home approx 2km east of where I was. I had spent my first 21 years in Adelaide, naturally I had to do the drive by the family home. Funny how things can change in 60 years, although the old house is still there. Then I drove to the motel on Main North Rd, and called it a day, Phew!

Friday, hit the road Jack by 7.30am to try and miss the mad rush, not too bad as the motel is right on the start of the freeway North, breakfast at Pt Wakefield, uneventful run to Pt Augusta, then the run West to Iron Knob- Kimba onto Wudinna arriving at approx 4.00 pm. No trouble with the booking this time. I was able to check the accommodation book while the guy was serving drinks at the bar, checking the date when we were on our way over, sure enough there was the entry, but with 6 different people writing in no set order, there was the problem! If any person wants to travel across the country by car using motels or hotels, make sure you book months in advance as the accommodation fills quickly, at 4.00 - 4.30 people arrive en masse.

On the frog & toad by 8.00am weather excellent, no wind, sun out, what more could you wish for, a lovely day for a drive in the country. Top up at Cedula, rearing to go, CD working, Adele giving her lungs a good work out. Penong – Yalata onto Nullarbor Roadhouse for fuel and a break to stretch the legs. Parked close by was an early Land rover Defender, huge mud tyres definitely not a standard exhaust, loaded to the hilt with camping gear. Few minutes later a guy and his son walk back, they used the showers at the R/House, ah, they are camping at night! Off I go 200km to Border Village arriving at the usual time 4/4.30, book in and decided to chamois the Alpine fend off the usual questions, i.e. what it is, never

heard of that, etc. When you tell them about the London/ Sydney 1968 and the winning car, (Hillman Hunter, Rootes Group) a light-bulb-moment hits them. Gee some people are dumb! Off to the restaurant, a well-earned beer and food, then hit the sack.

Next morning, 7.30am over to the chuck house. Guess what, the French Fantastic was on duty again what's her name.....Come on help me out, looking gorgeous as per normal. Tiffany should have been promoted to a managerial position. I'm sure the revenue would double, sad to say, but Tiffany has probably moved on to another posting in Aussie somewhere. Back to the story, thru Quarantine, and hit the road jack, approx 40kms from Madura. Looming in the rear-view vision at a great rate of knots a LR defender same from N/bour R/House, it certainly goes like a rocket, past me like I was standing still, I guess camping saves money, but he would be paying at the fuel pump. I was right for fuel, as I approached Madura turn off my mate in his LR was pulling out, my sixth sense told me to go carefully. Madura is where you go from the lower plains up to the plateau, roughly 300 feet. The Service Station is halfway up the hill. At the top of the hill is a viewing area on the RH side of the road which gives you a good view. I'm catching up to my MATE at the top near the viewing area, so I slow down, he indicates and pulls to the left-hand side of the road. I was probably doing 40/ 50 kms an hour, the next minute he obviously did not look in his RV mirrors and turns right in front of me to go to the viewing area on the RHS. Well, that was a near miss, I could see the whites in his eyes, it must have scared the poo out of him. Never saw him again on the road. Accidents can happen, my sixth sense saved the day. Onwards thru Cocklebidy to Caiguna for refuel and a bite to eat.

I fancied taking a happy snap at the longest straight sign, which is right out in front of Caiguna, sadly it's been vandalized with so many stickers I gave it a miss. BUT I did notice an early model Nissan X trail 4 happy little Asians, 2 huge swags on top packed to the hilt, I hit the frog & toad again, on the longest straight, roughly 100 kms down the road I look in the r/vision mirror lo behold the X trail gaining at a very rapid pace, whoosh its gone, poor little thing it's having its neck wrung, thinking bloody good car that one. 20 kms down the road they are pouring petrol from a 20 ltr container. Whether they made it to Balladonia or not, who knows?

Top up at Balladonia and realized it was early a/noon, due to the time difference you gain 1/1/2hrs. 200kms to Norseman, too early to stop, rang the motel at Norseman, cancelled the motel booking and headed to Coolgardie. No problems, I have the one remaining CD left that I have not played - Tina Turner! Open the disc container - what goes on here - NO TINA, someone has stolen TINA! I threw a wobbly, turned the CD off and drove onto Coolgardie arriving at 6.00pm. Not a bad little drive 860kms in the one day, the car never missed a beat. I have no idea how many R/Trains I passed, must be dozens, they now only sit on 100kms hr probably due to the fuel cost, in past years they would pass me!

The Motel I have stayed at in the past in Coolgardie is now booked out to a mining Co, they have an overflow block down the road, but this can be best described as rough and ready. Any more overnight stays in Coolgardie will require a rethink on accommodation.

Hit the frog & toad at around 8.30am, top up at Southern/X, thru Merredin, Tammin then turn left to York then Sayers Valley then home! Total trip distance this time approx 7300kms, nil oil or coolant used.

This report is more about the journey than the Nationals to give you an idea and description of the trip across the 'paddock' as the Truckies call it. Every drive I have taken, either East to West or vice versa, there is always a story to be told. Of all the 5 trips across the paddock in the Sunbeam have been blessed with good weather, 2025 was the exception. As they say, you can't win them all.

*A general overview of the country side between Kimba SA (Kimba is the halfway point across Australia) and Norseman WA. Leaving Kimba thru to the east of Ceduna in September is open farming land with green fields of new wheat / barley etc, broken up with fields of yellow Canola. It is a picture to behold. The road is excellent to drive on, undulating hills and a few stretches where you can see the road ten to fifteen Km in front of you. A driver's dream!

West of Ceduna to Nundroo R/H is also farmland.

****On my trip home from the Geelong Nationals, I stayed at Ceduna overnight leaving at 7.30am. I had one of the most memorable drives to Nundroo with the thickest of Sea Fog I have ever encountered. Maximum speed was 60 – 70 km hour, with visibility down to 15 – 20 mtrs. Quite the experience when a Road Train appeared out of nowhere – white line fever****

Leaving Nundroo thru to 20 km east of Nullarbor is undulating with scrub trees, road still good. Approaching Nullarbor R/H the landscape changes to flat salt bush, this is treeless salt bush flat scenery (Nullarbor Plains). Approximately 90 km from Boarder Village you are overlooking the Great Australian Bight with several viewing areas 100 mtrs above the sea level, with shrub bushes on the northern side of the road.

From Eucla the road descends to the lower plains again. The plateau at Madura to Eucla is all station country. Travelling to Caiguna, Balladonia to Norseman is all scrub / timber country. From Fraser Range, this area goes thru The Great Western Woodlands, where the trees have red bark trunks, which are very spectacular when wet. Road conditions are excellent from Eucla to Norseman. *



Hope you enjoyed the story and thanks for reading.

Darryl

0407081714



Sunbeam Car Club of Victoria Inc

Registration No. A0003752G
ABN 32 446 103 408

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Dear Member,

Notice is hereby given that the **53rd Annual General Meeting (AGM)** of the Sunbeam Car Club of Victoria Inc. will be held:

Date: 26 August 2026

Time: 8.00PM

Venue: Box Hill RSL, Sports Bar, 26/28 Nelson Rd, BOX Hill, VIC 3128

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Confirmation of Minutes from the 2025 AGM
3. To receive and consider:
 - President's Report
 - Secretary's Report
 - Treasurer's Report
- Election of Committee Members
- Confirm or vary the amount of the Annual Subscription and Joining Fee
- General Business of which Notice has been given*
- To update the Account Signatories with the National Australia Bank
- Meeting close

***Notes:**

- Members wishing to raise items under *General Business* should submit them in writing to the Secretary by 19 August 2026
- Only Financial Members are entitled to vote
- Proxies by Post or Email must be lodged with the Secretary by 6pm 24 August 2026
- Proxies by Hand, must be lodged with the Chairperson before the commencement of the Meeting

Ross Nye

SECRETARY

M: 0412 869 075

E: rossnye49@gmail.com

16 July 2026



Sunbeam Car Club of Victoria Inc

2026-2027 COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM

I hereby nominate

for the position of

Proposed by

Seconded by

Nominee's Consent: Date consent given:

Date sent to Secretary:

This form should be e-mailed to the Secoder, Signed, Printed, Scanned and emailed to the Club Secretary, Ross Nye: rossnye49@gmail.com by Monday 24 August 2026

Note: At the Annual General Meeting, prior to the Election of Officers and Ordinary Members of the Committee, the Chairperson will declare all positions vacant. Prior to the Election the Chairperson will call for nominations and all persons nominated, either prior to or at the Meeting, will be eligible for Election.



APPOINTMENT BY PROXY

I _____ of _____
(Name) (Address)

Being a member of the Sunbeam Car Club of Victoria Inc., appoint,

_____ of _____
(Name) (Address)

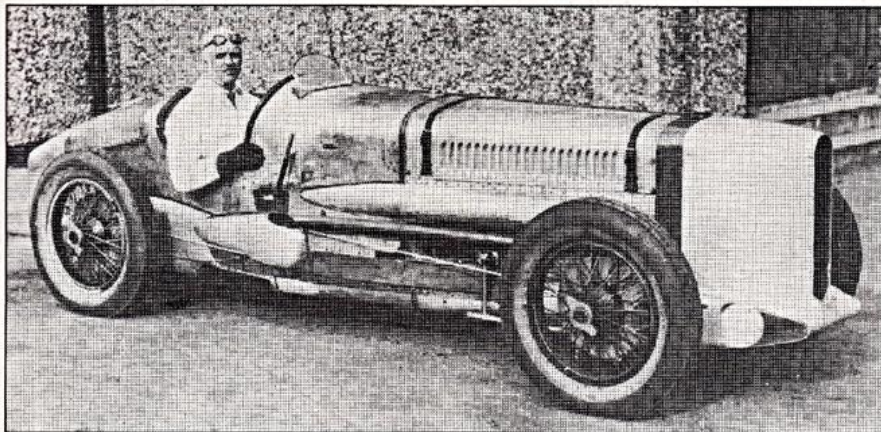
being a member of the Club, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting to be held on Wednesday 26 August 2026 or any adjournment of that meeting.

Proxies by Post or Electronically must be lodged prior to 6.00 pm on Tuesday 25 August 2026 with the Club Secretary, Ross Nye
P O Box 38, Ferntree Gully VIC 3156 or Email: rossnye49@gmail.com

Proxies by hand must be presented to the Chairperson prior to the commencement of the Meeting.

Sunbeam's Classic Pair

Bill Boddy looks at those versatile racing cars, Tiger and Tigress



Above, Sir Henry Segrave in the 4.0-litre V12 Land Speed Record car at the Sunbeam works, Wolverhampton in 1926. A fore-runner of Tiger and Tigress, and somewhat unreliable, Segrave nevertheless achieved some notable results with this car.

LOUIS COATALEN, the celebrated Chief Engineer of the STD — Sunbeam, Talbot, Darracq — amalgamation, loved motor racing but sometimes had to take short cuts to appease those shareholders who disliked expensive competition cars. Coatalen became a master at the art of evolving inexpensive, but usually effective, high-speed vehicles which carried Sunbeam or Talbot-Darracq badges and radiators as was expedient.

Even before the First World War he had effectively put a new side-valve, V12 nine-litre aero-engine into a more-or-less production Sunbeam chassis, endowed it with a slender single-seater body, and got good results. After the Armistice he followed the same formula by building a special chassis to take a 350hp V12 Sunbeam aviation engine, thereby thriftily making claim to Brooklands' fastest car and one with which, after a minimum of titivation, Malcolm Campbell became the first driver to exceed the magic 150mph.

Looking a few years beyond the advent of the cars featured here, the wily Coatalen did it again — the Land Speed Record was very much in the public eye, and excellent publicity, and to raise it above 200mph for the first time was therefore very much on the agenda. But Sunbeam's finances were at a low ebb. Who but Coatalen would have refused to pass over the idea, and have achieved for the indomitable de Hane Segrave this great honour, simply by putting two aged, ex-speed boat 22-litre war-time aero-engines of Sunbeam origin in a crude chassis, driving the back wheels by side chains, enveloping the whole wild machine in a simple body, thereby taking the coveted fastest-ever record with no fuss at all?

The cars we're concerned with here follow a similar pattern. We are back in 1925, and Louis Coatalen has seen his old monster, the 350hp Sunbeam, gain much fame as well as that 150mph record after he had sold it to Campbell — in not altogether good mechanical order, it could be added! To go one better would be sweet. At the time LSR cars were becoming ever bigger and more powerful. They needed long stretches

of beach on which to build up their speed and then reduce it safely. They were almost useless for any other purpose.

Coatalen had a different approach. He figured out that if he spent some of his shareholders' finance on a much lighter LSR contender he would be able to go for the record, then standing at 150.76mph by Campbell in the older Sunbeam. His new car was constructed at Wolverhampton, using in effect two of the successful 2.0-litre GP cylinder blocks set at 75deg on a new crankcase. A modified Roots supercharger fed both banks of cylinders and this V12 4.0-litre engine developed a useful 296bhp at 5000rpm and poked out over 300bhp if taken to 5300rpm, which was 300rpm above the peak-speed for the 2.0-litre GP car, and represented an increase of 160bhp. This engine was put into what was virtually a Grand Prix chassis, complete with servo four-wheel-brakes, and was fitted with a two-seater racing body, again very like that of the GP Sunbeams, with some streamlining additions, such as a cowl radiator. Because of its light weight, Coatalen was able to spare the cost of taking the new Sunbeam to the South Wales beach at Pendine, where the other LSR contenders unleashed their powerful, back-braked monsters. He figured that the shorter run at nearby Southport Sands would suffice.

That is where the celebrated driver Segrave went in March 1926, to try to raise Campbell's record. It may have seemed little extra prestige for the Sunbeam Company, but perhaps Coatalen felt sorry he had ever sold the 1919 350hp Sunbeam and wanted retribution. He didn't get it all that easily. The supercharger kept cracking its casing and half-a-dozen blowers were used up. Captain Irving, in charge, thought that twin superchargers would be the solution, but time was against him. Eventually, after a fortnight's delay, Segrave tried again, after one nasty experience when the throttle stuck open and it took him two miles to switch off. To conserve the delicate blower, the car was then towed to the start of the measured distance with the radiator warm. Using only three-quarters throttle for the first run, Segrave opened right up on the return run but

once again the supercharger split its casing. The World's mile-record was missed, but the World's flying-kilometre record was taken, at 152.308mph, a small improvement on Campbell's record.

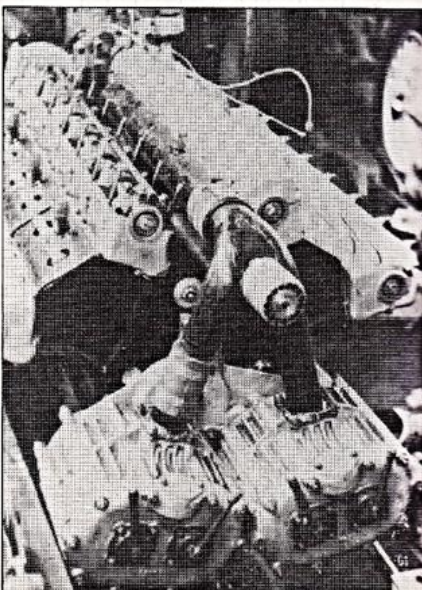
With the LSR, if only temporarily, under his belt (Parry Thomas took it to over 171mph at Pendine a month later) Coatalen could now improve the reliability of his 4-litre engine and use this Sunbeam for road racing. It was entered for the 1926 Spanish Grand Prix five months after the Southport appearance, again entrusted to Segrave. This time it wasn't the blower which gave out but the tubular front axle which broke after six laps, due, it was rumoured, to machining errors like those that had caused the same trouble on the 1.5-litre GP Talbot. This could have been more serious at Southport!

Repaired, the 4.0-litre Sunbeam was sent to Boulogne for the Speed Week. Here Segrave frightened himself in a car for the first time in his life, he said, by holding full speed along the narrow undulating course where the six-kilometre speed trials were held. He clocked a sensational 140.6mph, exceeding 148mph for the third kilometre, the fastest road-speed ever, apart from Ernest Eldridge's LSR at Arpaion in 1924 with the 300hp Fiat, at 146.01mph for his two-way run over the kilometre. The fatal accident to Howey in the Ballot caused the Boulogne hill-climb to be abandoned, just as the courageous Segrave was preparing to start in the V12 Sunbeam.

Coatalen was determined to prove the versatility of this, his last pure racing car, and to get his money's worth. So the compact Sunbeam was



Above, Kaye Don, the genial Speed King, with his riding mechanic aboard the Tiger at Brooklands. Below, this twin-blower layout made the V12 Sunbeams more reliable.



loaded into a railway truck and despatched to Milan in readiness for the Italian Grand Prix at Monza in September. After the truck, which got lost, had been located by Segrave, he was able to lead the race to almost half-distance, before all the oil cascaded from the gearbox. Bugattis took over, but before its withdrawal the Sunbeam had broken the lap record.

One of the cars then went to the Gaillon hillclimb, in October 1926, entered as a Talbot to please the French. Driven by Albert Divo it set a new course record of 28.6 seconds, equal to 78mph over the standing kilometre, vanquishing René Thomas' former record with the giant Delage by a clear second. The cars may have used low axle ratios for such tasks; as run at Southport the top speed was a theoretical 160mph with a 3.5:1 back axle.

By 1927 the finances of the old Sunbeam Company of Wolverhampton were in a sorry state and motor racing, to Coatalen's intense regret, was abandoned. He did manage, however, to construct the expensive and sadly-unsuccessful twin-engined Silver Bullet for Kaye Don's attack on the LSR in 1929/30 at Daytona, and in 1927 had the firm satisfaction of seeing Segrave, first British contender to use the American beach at Florida, achieve a speed of more than 200mph for the first time ever, with very little preliminary bother, with the twin-engined 1000hp Sunbeam.

After that arrangements were made for Kaye Don, the immaculately-dressed Speed King so popular at Brooklands (where he had graduated from light cars to the 11-litre 'aero-engined Wolseley Viper and lapped in it faster than its creator, Alastair Miller) to drive the 4.0-litre Sun-

beams. Don had also proved masterly with the famous 2.0-litre supercharged Grand Prix Sunbeam, The Cub, so the 4.0-litre V12 Sunbeam and a sister car which Louise Coatalen had wisely laid down, were now made available to Don.

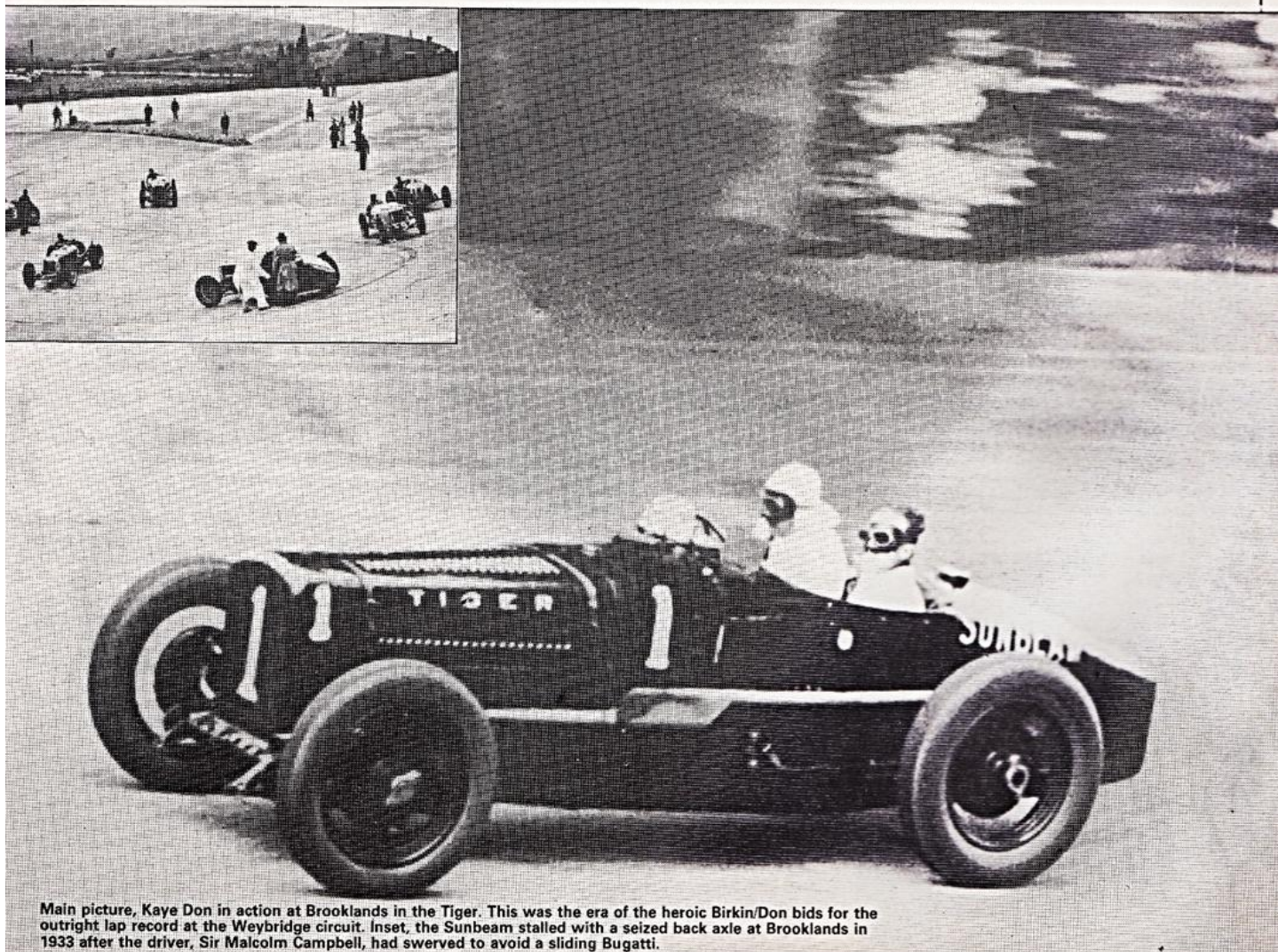
Painted red, these two two-seater racing Sunbeams looked exactly alike, so forgive me if I lump their Brooklands performances together. What Kaye Don found himself in charge of, aided by Bill Perkins up at Wolverhampton, who would drive the cars from there to Brooklands, was an exciting pair of cars, the 67 x 94mm (3976cc) engine with its welded-on water jackets and twin overhead-camshafts, roller main and big-ends, dry-sump lubrication, a Solex carburettor and a compression ratio of 5.9:1, installed in a chassis with a wheelbase of 8ft 10in, a front track of 4ft 3in, a rear track of 5ft 11in, and a four-speed gearbox in unit with the engine. The drive went through a multi-plate clutch and torque tube, to the bevel-drive back axle, and the springing was half-elliptic throughout. The gearbox, with central lever, was in unit with Coatalen's ingenious engine and the four-wheel braking, with Perrot linkage and a gearbox-disc-type mechanical brake servo were retained. The cars, in fact, were virtually unchanged from Louis Coatalen's clever concept of three or four years earlier, but the radiator cowl was removed. The troubles experienced at Southport with the single Roots blower trying to feed both sides of the engine had been solved by using two smaller-size superchargers, of the same type, designed by Captain J L Irving and Mr George Ward. They produced a boost of about 8lb/sq in and were located side by side at the front of the engine, driven from the

gear train. Although the problem was not quite the same, it is interesting that it was the use of a single supercharger for the two power units of the 'Silver Bullet' Sunbeam that probably thwarted Kaye Don of the LSR in 1930.

The 4.0-litre V12 Sunbeam was docile enough to be driven on the road on pump petrol, apparently in spite of a far lower octane-rating than pump-fuel today, but for racing petrol benzole in a 60/40 mix, or 'E2' fuel, was used. At Southport in 1926 the Sunbeam had been referred to as 'Ladybird' but the first of the pair, registered UK 2063, was named 'Tiger'. The sister car, which was built early in 1927, was naturally called 'Tigress'. The first appearance of both cars seems to have been at Montlhéry in July 1927, when the 'still youthful veteran' driver Wagner, and the mysterious British driver Williams, ran them in the Formula Libre race that preceded the French Grand Prix. It was left to Albert Divo to win for the STD organisation, taking the lead from Williams on lap two of a wet race. Wagner with low 'sprint' gearing never featured in the race, the gearbox failing almost immediately. Williams' 'box broke second gear on the third lap and that was his race run, both drivers of the big Sunbeams probably being somewhat relieved as the monster cars were more than a handful in these treacherous conditions, which claimed the life of de Courcelles when his Indianapolis Guyot Special crashed into the trees at over 100mph and exploded like a shell.

For the 1927 Brooklands season Kaye Don drove an old 4.9-litre Sunbeam and the 2.0-litre

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Main picture, Kaye Don in action at Brooklands in the Tiger. This was the era of the heroic Birkin/Don bids for the outright lap record at the Weybridge circuit. Inset, the Sunbeam stalled with a seized back axle at Brooklands in 1933 after the driver, Sir Malcolm Campbell, had swerved to avoid a sliding Bugatti.

Sunbeam's Classic Pair

'Cub' and it wasn't until the following season that he commenced racing the 4.0-litre 'Tiger'. At Shelsley Walsh hill-climb in September 1927 Bill Perkins, Sunbeam's ever-faithful mechanic drove both a 2.0-litre GP Sunbeam and one of the 4.0-litre cars. As a foretaste of better to come, he clocked 55 seconds with the bigger car, which was third fastest time of the day, the 2.0-litre being 2.2 seconds slower. Don opened his 1928 innings as before, but by May of that year he had put the 'Tiger' Sunbeam to good use, using it to break nine Class C International records at Brooklands, of from one km from a standing-start, to 50km, speeds ranging from 136.39mph for the flying km to 78.32mph for the standing km. On the third day of this record-smashing spree, Don added the 50-mile and 100km class records to the 'Tiger's' bag, both at over 120mph. Considering that the car was no longer fully-streamlined and that the gear ratios suited fast acceleration rather more than top speed, the demonstration of this Sunbeam, which dated back to the French Grand Prix-winning Sunbeams laid down in 1923 (doubled up to twice the number of cylinders and supercharged, of course) as 140mph car in Brooklands trim, was indeed impressive.

After he had made some very successful appearances in the 2.0-litre 'Cub' and within a few days of the 'Tiger's' record-breaking onslaught, the Brooklands public had the pleasure of seeing Don race this bigger Sunbeam at the Whit Monday races. Entered for the 41st Lightning Short Handicap (what a splendid title for a contest between the fastest cars!), the red Sunbeam had little difficulty in disposing of the other three runners, lapping at 115.82mph on its flying circuit, to win from scratch. The Track handicapper, Mr Ebbelwhite, duly took note, and the victorious car and driver were docked an extra nine seconds in the subsequent 25-mile 'Gold Star' Handicap. With no less than a full minute to make up on E L Bouts' aged 4.9-litre Sunbeam in the hands of Jack Dunfee, Don pulled out the stops and won again, averaging 128.36mph. This was the quickest win to date, and Don set a new lap-record of 131.76mph.

August Bank Holiday usually produced some good racing down at Weybridge, but in 1928 Kaye Don produced only the 'Cub', substituting this for the bigger Sunbeam in a Match Race against Jack Dunfee's 3.0-litre straight-eight Ballot, which the

2.0-litre Sunbeam won; for comparison with what the 'Tiger' had already achieved, its best lap was done at 121.47mph. The 1928 absence of the 4.0-litre V12 was compensated for early in 1929, when Don brought out the 'Tigress' and established five International Class-C records at the Track, of from 5km up to 50km, all at over 130mph, apart from the last-named. Rather as before, a few days later he was competing at the Brooklands Easter Meeting, at which he also drove the 2.0-litre Wolverhampton car. Unplaced in the Founder's Gold Cup event, after a poor take-off, although later lapping at better than 127mph, and failing by 2.40mph to better his own lap record on a solo run, he wound things up more effectively in the 44th Lightning Long Handicap, with a lap at 130.04mph, which, from his customary scratch starting point, availed him nothing. Incidentally, that year Don's Sunbeams were painted blue, with cream wheels, instead of being in their red and black livery.

This era of Brooklands' history belongs to the epic period of the Birkin/Don bids for the absolute lap record. I can well recall the excitement of seeing Birkin's slim blower-4½ Bentley, described in *T&CC* for March, and the smaller V12 Sunbeam, flying round the steep, battle-scarred bankings in the sunshine, blowers howling, on these very fast runs, both cars jumping from the concrete as they plunged off the Home banking into the Railway straight. Don described it as: "The finishing line seems to be getting very close and then you swoop down the banking to the straight, to discover yourself on the tail of your rival. The 'Tiger' has roared its way to the front again and you have won. But sometimes you have had to beat the record for the Track in order to win..." Stirring times! What Don didn't say was that, for these very fast cars, overtaking was becoming both very difficult and distinctly dangerous. Which is why the lone attacks on the lap-record were more credible.

At the 1929 Whitsun races Don drove both sizes of Sunbeam and with the 4.0-litre won the Lightning Short race at 113.62mph, from Froy's 6.0-litre Delage, took the Gold Vase race with the 'Cub', and, rehandicapped to 'owes 10 secs', did a quite remarkable standing-lap at 115.29mph with V12 breaking the old record held by Thomas' big Leyland Thomas by over five mph. The handicap and the baulking made it impossible for the flying blue Sunbeam to get to grips with Cobb's 10.5-litre Delage which had started 14sec earlier but some reports say Don equalled his own absolute lap-record. At the August races Don

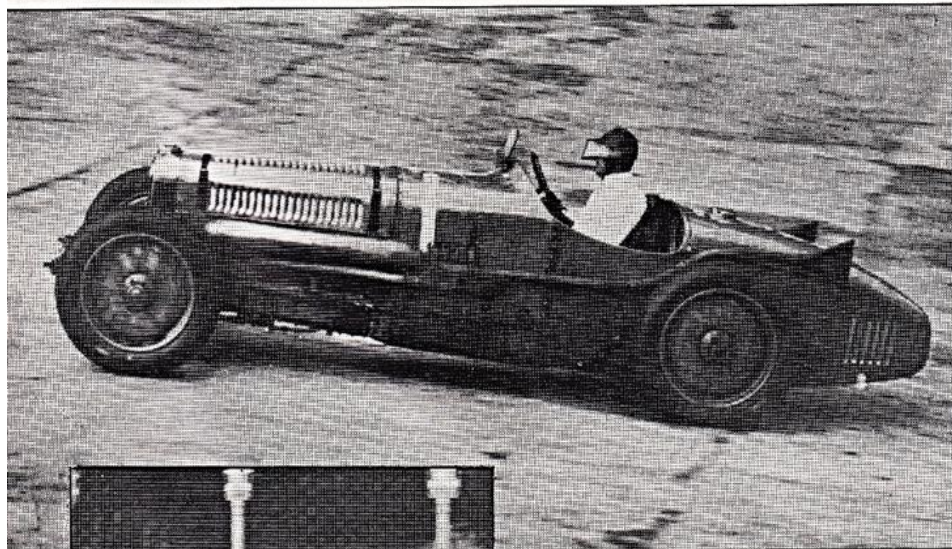
caught all but the 'limit' OM in the Gold Star race, ignoring a broken oil-pipe to set a new lap-record of 134.24mph and he was second in a preceding handicap. Meanwhile, the big Sunbeam had netted the coveted World's Standing Start mile record, putting it to over the ton (100.77mph) for the first time. It also put the ss km to 85.71mph and the Class-C flying mile record to 140.95mph, Brooklands' fastest speed to that date.

At the end of 1929 the 'Tigress' participated in a successful bid for eight records, running for 200 miles, and putting the World's 200km record to 120.91mph and averaging slightly less for an hour in spite of petrol fumes from a leaking tank sickening one riding mechanic. More versatility was displayed by these old 4.0-litre cars, when they tackled the 1929 BRDC 500 Mile Race. Cobb and Cyril Paul drove 'Tiger', Don pairing with Froy in 'Tigress'. Both cars fell out with broken springs — age and the rough Track surface taking their toll. In 1930 Birkin wrested Kaye Don's lap-record from him. Don replied at Whitsun, using 'Tigress', with a new high of 135.33mph. He then finished 2nd to a venerable 21.5-litre Benz, in a later 'Lightning' contest, putting the lap-record up again, to a rousing 137.58mph. This beat the Birkin Bentley record by 2.24mph and it took two years of development to get the more streamlined Bentley to go 0.38mph quicker...

Although several old cars continued to compete at Brooklands in 1931, including the 'Cub', the 4.0-litre pair of Sunbeams were absent, being refurbished by T&Ts for Sir Malcolm Campbell, with Lockheed hydraulic brakes, Wilson pre-selector gearboxes, revised chassis frames, etc. This increased their weight by two cwt, over the 18.3cwt of the LSR 1926 car, but Campbell saw them as still highly competitive. Certainly he had some successes with these revamped vintage Sunbeams, which now looked quite different in appearance. In 1932 Sir Malcolm won the Brooklands Mountain-circuit Championship race, on which he had set his sights, at 68.6mph, from such opposition as Mays' lightweight Invicta, Brian Lewis' Talbot 105, Shuttleworth's Bugatti, etc.

The race was from scratch, over 15 laps of the course with two corners a lap, and Campbell put the Class C circuit lap-record to 71.39mph. A week later he made ftd over the 0.5-mile Brighton Speed Trial course, clocking 76.27mph from a standing start to beat the accelerative 10.5-litre V12 Delage by 0.4sec. The following year success in the Mountain Championship eluded Sir Malcolm who, swerving to avoid Rose-Richards' skidding Bugatti at the banking turn, suffered a 'coming together'; the Sunbeam stopped with a seized back-axle. If you want proof of further versatility, Campbell ran the Sunbeam in the ingenious 1933 JCC International Trophy Race with its handicap chicanes, but it retired when a blower-gear tooth broke up after it had equalled the record for this unusual course, driven very fast by both Campbell and co-driver Chris Staniland. It all came to an end in 1934, with Campbell taking second place from a scratch start in the Second Merrow Mountain Handicap, to Harker's little Harker Special. The Sunbeam just held off Raymond May's famous White Riley, lifting the Class C lap-record for this circuit, which it had lost to Eyston's Bugatti, to 76.31mph, which will now stand to eternity... It was used as the pace-car for a 1937 rolling start, driven by John Cobb, and that year Brackenbury and Powys-Lybbe took it to 4th place at 120.2mph (after a lap at 132.8mph — it hadn't lost much of its old pace) in the BRDC 500km grind.

After the war one of these 4.0-litre Sunbeams lay dismantled but the other was purchased by Sir Ralph Millais, resuscitated, and raced in vintage events for him by J M James. It then changed hands again and for some years has been one of the prized exhibits in the Midland Motor Museum at Bridgnorth.



Above, Sir Malcolm Campbell enjoyed better luck at Brooklands in 1932. He is shown here winning the Mountain Championship race in that year with the V12 Sunbeam. Left, J M James in the Millais Sunbeam after the war, at Brighton Speed Trials.



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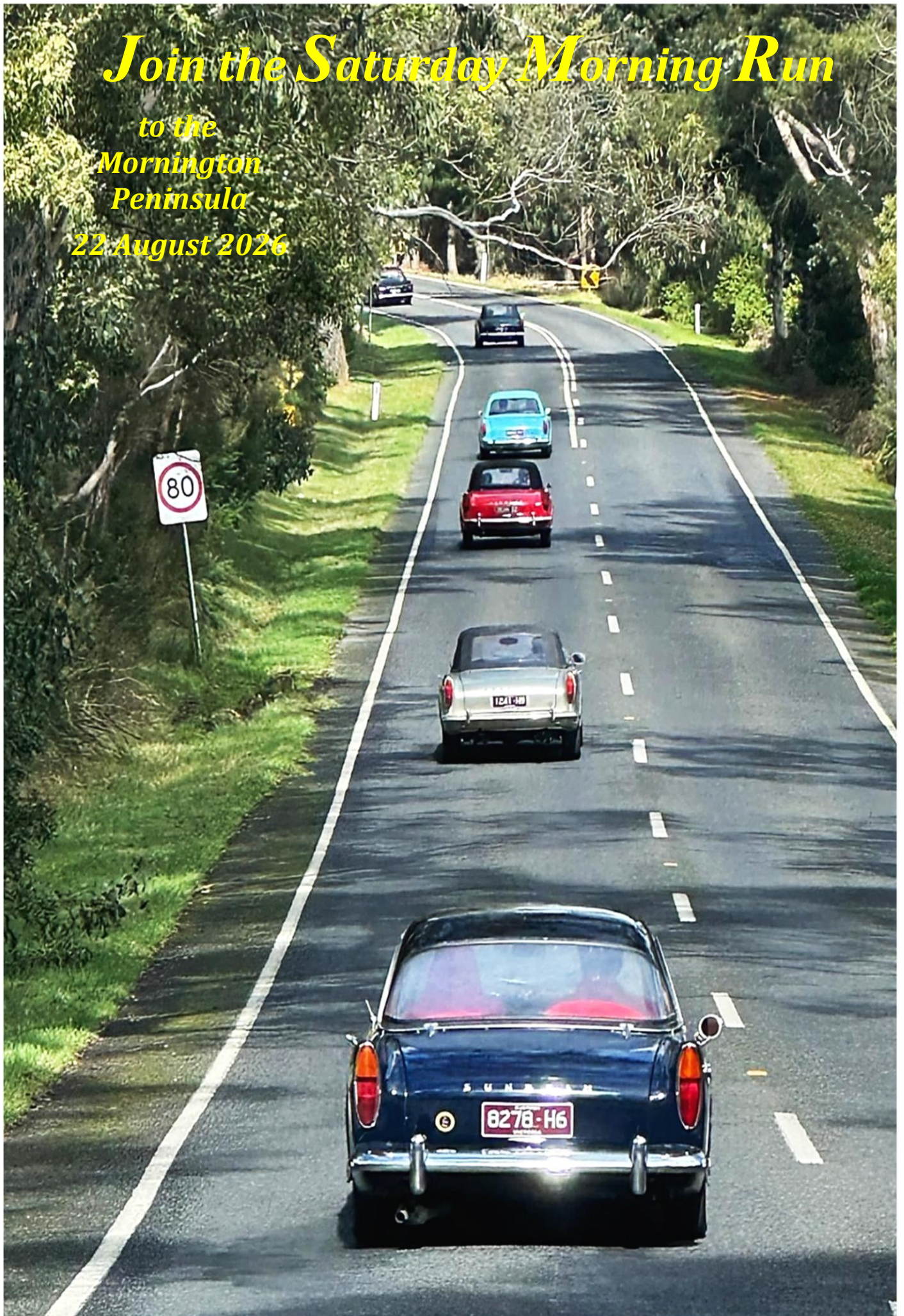
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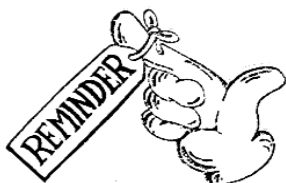


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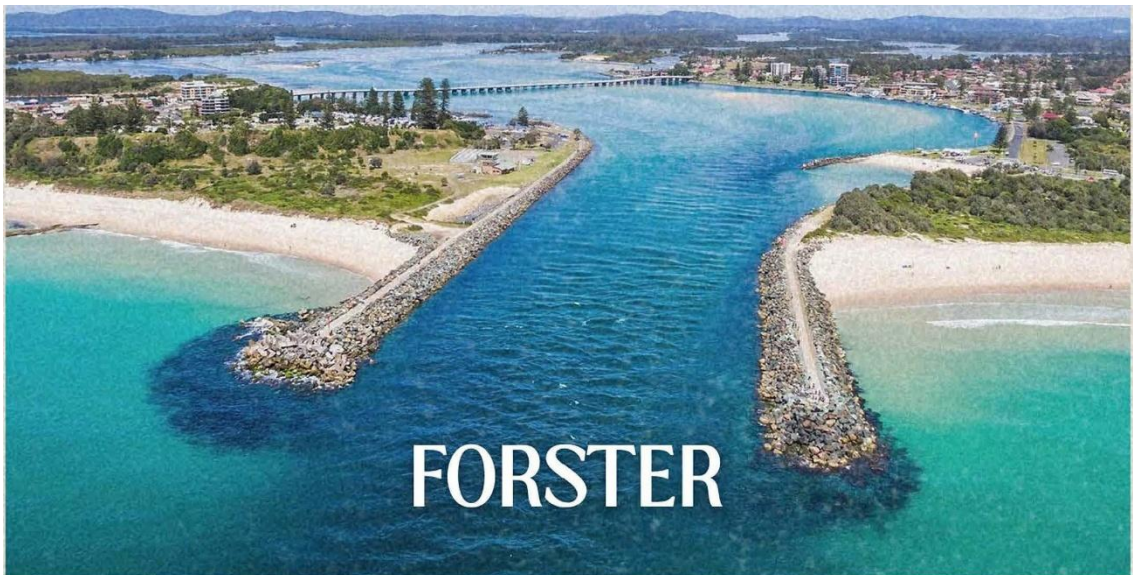


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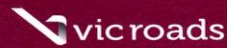
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