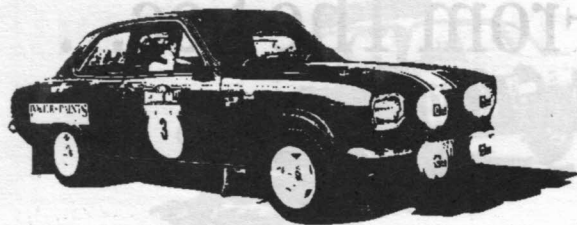


Vice President's Report

from Kim Harper



SO you competed or helped out on the BP. Consider yourself now a part of rally history (if you weren't already).

I have childhood memories of watching dad finishing BPs in the 60's. The finishes were big affairs held initially in Fitzroy St., St. Kilda and later at the Chadstone Shopping Centre. Lots of people would attend and watch each car do its final test, usually a course through the witches hats. Wonderful, dirty rally cars occupied by tired, dirty but elated competitors. Results were always provisional as rumor of "protests" abound. No doubt about it the BP was the sharp-end of rallying back then.

So now please take a moment to consider that your club, the HRA, has successfully re-run and claimed this great event. It was not "just another rally" it was much harder and much longer, for God's sake it was a BP! Along with the event came new memberships from

notable rally champs of the 60's and 70's who will further enrich the club. The HRA has proven to CAMS and others that it can successfully and faithfully run a big event. This is all good stuff.

So the next time you see Messrs Watson, Daniel and Knight, go up and congratulate them for doing it. Buy them a drink and try to include the words "I think you're a bloody hero for directing the BP" and then beg them, grovel if you must, to have at least one more go. And if it does happen again get a car or a map and pencil or a card table and thermos and get involved because by doing it and being there you too become a part of rally history.

Kim

P.S. Bob Ray and Rob I think you're bloody heros.



Past BP Rally winners gathered at the Swan Hill Gala Dinner during this year's event.

Left to right: Bill Hartigan (winner 1961), Peter Haas (1966), Ian McDonald (1958), Mike Osborne (1970), Ross Runnalls (Olde BP winner 1978, 1984 and now 1998), Frank Kilfoyle (1960, 1962, 1963), Mal McPherson (1967), Bob Watson (1972), Geoff Thomas (1963, 1965, 1972), Reg Lunn (1965), Graham Hoinville (member of original BP organising team with Don (DK) Thompson and John Pryce), Phil Nicholas (Olde BP 1989), Graham Wallis (Olde BP 1989), Martin Hartigan (1961).

One Crew's "Olde BP" Experience

Car 4: Thorpe & Oake – Volvo

5.06 time out from BP Oasis Campbellfield. 37 cars, people everywhere, 15 minutes plotting time for the first division to Hamilton. Our first UMR was at Greendale; it took us a half hour to find and it was Ted Perkin's dust from his HK Holden which gave it away.

We found our way to Bradshaw where we fell off the map and were running out of late time. We picked up the main road and headed south for Meredith. In this section we missed a control and I'm sure a lot of other things. At Meredith there was time for a quick re-fuel of car and body and it was here that Gerry Bashford discovered that his children had borrowed the batteries from his magnifying glass.

Woodbourne, the start of the next division took us to Cargerie, Greenvale, Mt Mercer, Dereel, Barringa. It was in this section that we were flashed by a group of young ladies obviously concerned that we may be falling asleep. At Wilgul the engine is running hot so with one eye on the temperature gauge it's on to Berrybank. Now it's boiling and we WD a passage control east of Lismore. We stopped here for fear of seizing the engine. I had two litres of water and two litres of tonic water, which is what I drink, and the engine needed it all. On towards Lismore where we back flushed the radiator. Up till now the roads have been quite good and the times set reasonable.

The roads are now faster and the country opening up we haven't seen many cars. Vite Vite a passage control with an official hiding in the drain. It wasn't until you pointed your car down the correct road that he would appear from his hiding place! UMRs, gates with rally entry signs – in fact three gates to open and close. Across Emu Creek and on to Woorndoo, Hexham, Carumut. I think it was here that we entered a forest, all route charted on tight and twisty roads, which took us to the Hamilton Highway and a transport into Hamilton. The car is running hot again so at Hamilton we fit a mechanical fan on the engine hoping this will cure the overheating. We re-fuel and have a feed. It's now 1.00am on Saturday morning.

Hamilton to Cavendish a terrific blast, then off to the Grampians where navigation gets tough and lots of roads not on the map. The road changes from sandy to rocky with a lot of little bridges to watch out for and big kangaroos on the road. From the Grampians we headed west across Black Range Park and then north around a salt lake and on towards Toolindo Reservoir. The roads are very fast now on our way to Horsham and it's now 4.00 am and the car is running well.

At Horsham, as other competitors arrive, there are tales of broken engines, Kim Harper's axle in the Escort, flat tyres, failed alternators, and kangaroo damage. Next stop Hopetoun, we head for Wail more UMRs to Dimboola then grid country and south at Lake

Hindmarsh. We arrive at Jeparit via some very good roads; now it's route chart to a control on the north-east end of Lake Hindmarsh. This is a fantastic road very sandy quite wide with good visibility the car is running well and we arrive at the control. The sun is coming up and we have time for a dingo's breakfast.

More bloody UMRs this time 23km towards Pella from the south. This road was difficult as you needed to go south to find the road that went north!!! We have now arrived on the banks of Lake Albacutya next to the boat club building. Steve tells me to turn right onto the boat ramp and drive onto the lake! Fortunately there is no water to be seen just a dust trail where Rob Devenish's 240 Z has disappeared. The surface is quite soft but we were able to sit on 50 MPH in top gear OK. It was 4 to 5 k's across and we were greeted by a smiling Rob Knight and Yogi Bear (Park Ranger).

Still more UMRs, NYPO from the south, Hopetoun West and into Hopetoun, it's 9.00 am and breakfast is waiting. Steve and I are feeling very tired and wanted to sleep but Angelo was busy making loud noises under the Perkins/Bashford Holden. It wasn't long and we were again heading north to Speed as 'Silo Town' then east with more UMRs to Sea Lake. These were fantastic roads and we are happy with our progress. We are starting to bunch up on the roads and we miss a few instructions and others catch us up. We had a great dice in the sand dunes with a couple of Datsuns and I made a new track on some parts. We book into control 'Swan Hill' and off to empty the bar fridge. It's 4.00 pm.

Saturday and the great Gala night out, but I couldn't keep my eyes open, so it was off to bed at 10.00 pm.

The alarm goes off at 6.30 am time to do it all again! Sunday was to be our downfall. We started OK but as the day wore on we make more and more mistakes unable to even get the easy ones. The previous day and night had caught up and rationale and logic had left us. It's 40 degrees C and a floor plug has disappeared and the car is full of dust and we are having trouble breathing. Elmore for lunch then we head to Heathcote and struggle to find the right roads. We continue south to the finish disappointed but relieved that it's over. At the Digger Rest Hotel most competitors looked how I felt tired and thirsty.

In the beginning I was asked 'was I doing the BP'? Now I realise that the BP had done me! Five or six cars make it look easy and you can guess where they finished. For the rest of us it was a great learning curve and just to survive the event was an achievement. Bloody Dave Condon in that Mini, every time I looked around he was there. I didn't think those things were any good in the sand! It didn't break down and he drove it as fast as it would go!

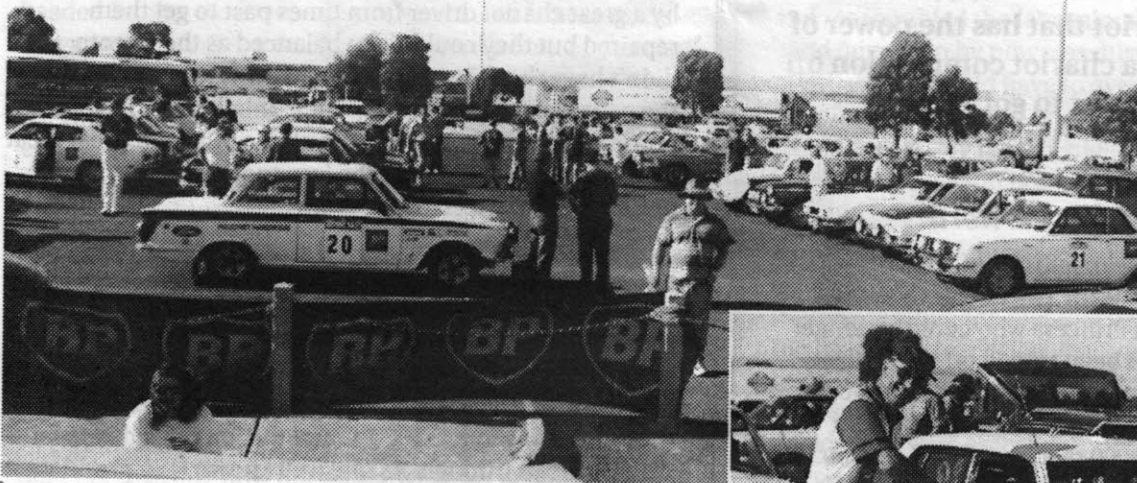
Peter Riseborough couldn't get Dave Smith to wear the official Team Bali uniform which cost them the best presented crew award. The most famous quote for the weekend came from Ross Runnalls at "Werrap" beside Lake Hindmarsh. At 6.30 am Saturday morning, holding Broadbents finest, he said "This thing's a piece of shit!"

All events are as I recall and not necessarily as they happened. Can't wait for the next one!

Russell Thorpe

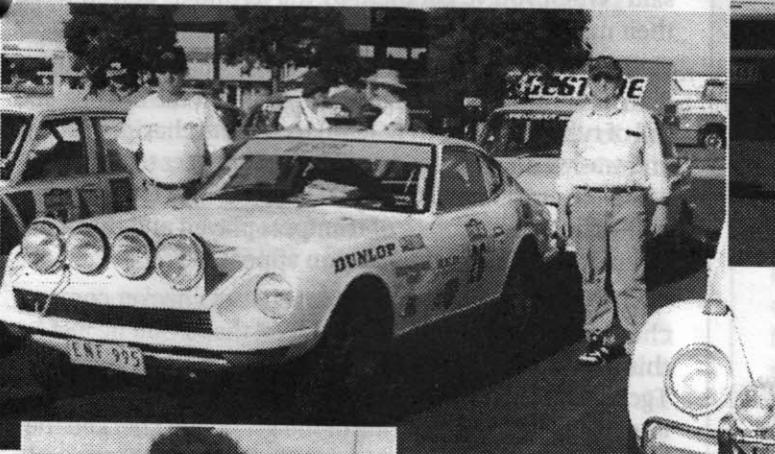
The 1998 Olde BP Rally

Photos by Ken Cusack



Left: General view of the start at BP Oasis, Somerton.

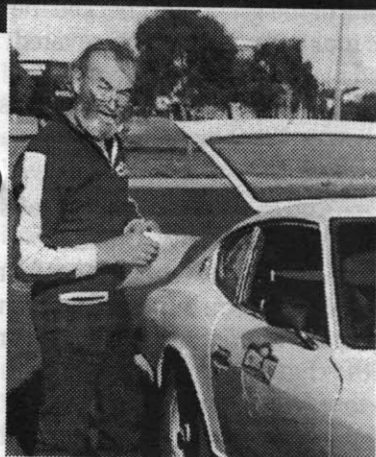
Below: Car No 1. Rick Hartmann and Rob Pickthall leave the start, waved off by Event Director Bob Watson.



Above: Second place getters Rob Devenish and Phil Wylie in the 240Z. It had a cooking motor installed for this event. Phil has been in retirement since the demise of the LCCA in 1992. He directed two VRC Blue Ribbons but both were washed out by record rains in the Eildon, Bonnie Doon area! I recently drove over the Bonnie Doon bridge and it was empty!! A desert!



Overnight leader and eventual winners, Terry Naish and Ross Runnalls.



Left: Frank Kilfoyle nearly ready to go – he's attaching a "Rallyquip" sticker I gave him.



Left: 38° and not a tree in sight near Ultima.

My Saturday sunrise control near Cherrypool west of the Grampians. I was dozing on my banana lounge waiting for the sweep car when I was rudely awakened by two hostile women "greenies" accusing me of being a forward spotting post for the duck shooting opening that morning. I sent them on their way with a "new" attitude about rallying and minding their own bloody business!



Peter and Jeff Whitten reading Issue 1 of ARN that I found in my map case.

