



vintage -1-
racing
club

March, 1984

Minutes of March meeting.....

- At our March meeting, President Jack Hawkes and Race Co-ordinator Leigh Anderson were absent. Dave Birchall, Vice-Pres. chaired the meeting.
- After a slow start, eighteen people were present. Ron Titensor made it up from Seattle and Jaguar Club members B. Eavers and H Richards were also there.
- Derek Bell has offered to provide a video of the last Historic Weekend. This will be shown at the April 10th meeting.
- Pamela Wood read a report from Leigh Anderson on the 25th. Anniversary weekend at Westwood, which is summarized elsewhere in this newsletter.
- Rob Follows gave an up-date on the Historic Weekend. He is looking for advertisers in the programme which will be produced. Rates are as follows:
full page - \$250.00, half page - \$150.00, quarter page - \$75.00, business cards - \$25.00.
Remember, this programme has a circulation of 3000 - 5000 people. If anyone out there knows of any business that could use this kind of advertising please contact Rob Follows.
- John and Betty Hunholz have invited the club for Sunday, April 15th, for the annual get-together. Details elsewhere in this newsletter.

*****NEXT MEETING....APRIL 10th, 7.30p.m.

VANCOUVER ROWING CLUB.....

THE HISTORY OF THE V.R.C.

I thought it was time that someone set down the history of the Vintage Racing Club of B.C. before we all grow senile or just stop caring.

It all started one wet November night. November 28th, 1976 to be exact. Hard core enthusiasts from all the one make car clubs gathered in the home of Colin Fitzgerald, now co-owner of Octagen Motors.

We eyed each other suspiciously, M.G. owners, Jaguar owners, Austin-Healey owners (including myself) and others. All gathered with the intent of creating a vintage racing group, class whatever. Anything, so that we could do more than just read months old reports of Vintage racing in England in "Motor Sport" or make our way, once a year, to Laguna Seca to see the recently started races there.

The club was formed that night, named the Vintage Racing Club at the insistence of Miles Fenton, and elected its first executive: Phil Esworthy, President; Miles Fenton, Vice President; Marsha Esworthy, Secretary; Steve Diggins, Treasurer and Peter Price, Scrutineer. At the first executive meeting, Brian Johnston "stood up to get a beer" and was elected Editor. Brian did a fantastic job for several years, his enthusiasm radiating from the pages and it's great that he has returned to the area and the club after an absence of several years.

As Brian said in his first newsletter in February 1977, already named 'Vantage'.....From the depths of some great abyss, from under the grimeiest sump, from behind the filthiest tailpipe, emerges none other than....Super Enthusiast!!!!

We were all burning with enthusiasm. When it was announced at the formative meeting that we would have to guarantee a minimum of fifteen cars on the grid we all guffawed. Surely we would be fighting off potential racers? Fifteen cars? Thirty would be more like it. We fielded twenty three cars for the first race on June 4 and 5, 1977, an auspicious start.



vintage
racing
club

THE HISTORY OF THE V.R.C. (cont.)

The packed bleachers (it was a Formula Atlantic do) saw a terrific scrap between Ray Cooke in the Cobra and John Schuberg, the Canadian champion, in a highly modified Bug-Eye Sprite. Other entrants came from as far afield as Portland. Vintage racing had arrived in B.C., in fact this was the first vintage race in Canada and the VRC was the first club of its type in Canada.

All of this had been preceded by a driver training session, for vintage racers only, in mid April. Eighteen people graduated. Familiar names in that group included Ian Bain, brother Don, Fritz Duernberger, Miles Fenton, Laurie Hunt and Adrian Ratcliffe. The writer was entered but a last minute change of date left me out in the cold.... That month the cover of 'Vantage' contained a wonderful Miles Fenton cartoon depicting all the VRC members and their cars, easily recognisable, in a terrific shunt at the hairpin at Westwood - so far it has proven unprophetic.

The next race was July 16, 17 1977. (Don't worry, I don't intend reporting every race) Practice day was one of those we all like to forget. The track awash and it felt and looked more like power-boating than motor racing. Sunday dawned beautifully clear and started a tradition, that lasted for three years, that it never rained on a Vintage race, practice yes, race no. The Cobra/Sprite duel led this race also but the others were learning; Peter Price in his hairy Allard J2 and John Swann in his equally hairy Healy 3000 started to show that they too were 'racers'. Bill Spohn, ex-conference racer was there in his fast MGA and Brian Johnston had dug up the old Arnold Special, a TR3 engined, space framed sports racer that looked right and went well.

Miles Fenton had restored his MGND Magnette and he and Doug Lupton, MG TC, enjoyed a good scrap. Phil Esworthy howled around in his XK150 coupe, one of the rare appearances of a Jaguar in VRC races.

In the August '77 issue of 'Vantage' Brian Johnston announced there would be a Vintage Weekend the following July. He was premature; it would take another four years and Rob Follows to make the Vintage Weekend a reality.

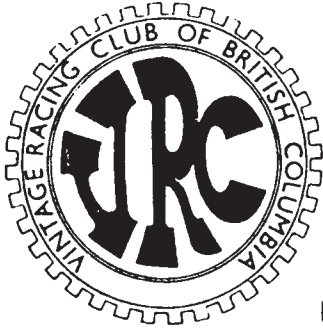
To be continued.....

Dave Birchall. Vice-President

Presidents Message.

I was not able to attend the last monthly meeting due to a commitment to the flu! This flu being different to the last strain of last year hit me like an express train and I didnt even have time to question which strain it was ? Up to the time pre-flu, I had been busy getting people to commit themselves to entering their cars in the first World of Wheels show at the B.C.Place stadium , however it turned out that the worthy.s putting on the show, decided that cars themselves were not enough of a draw and that a rock band would really ensure that enough people would turn up. However we didnt see the wisdom of this kind of thinking, so we gracefully bowed out. However we have been invited to take part in the Fall show at the P.N.E. and I am assured that there will be no Rock Band ! The Alfa Club took part in one of these shows and it was a great success. However the Alfa Club was not allotted too much space, which rather took the impact out of the show as far as the Alfas were concerned. So we shall have to wait and see, once again just how valuable this kind of exposure is, we do really need a lot more keen and hard working enthusiasts. We do not want to be faced with the kind of thing we had last year and preceeding years where people promised they would turn up then have no more than five or six cars turn up on the grid! The event organisers will put up with this for only a limited time, then we could be out in the cold. So when we make a commitment then we should fulfill that obligation. The twenty-fifth anniversary of Westwood is this year and Leigh Anderson is our liason with the S.C.C.B.C. and he has been very busy attending meetings , and there seems to be a great deal of interest from the many clubs that will be taking part. It will be a non-sanctioned event, and we wont be hampered with too many restrictions. It will be much cheaper to run in this event. The dates for this important event are July 21st and 22nd, so please put this on your list, as we must support S.C.C.B.C. as they have been very good to us in the past. We must also bear in mind that any help that we can provide at the track, with things like painting, cutting weeds and doing anything that will help out will be very much appreciated, as there is always something that needs to be done.

J.H.



vintage
racing
club

REPORT ON 25th ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND
AT WESTWOOD RACETRACK.....

Leigh Anderson attended a meeting of seven interested parties regarding a 25th Anniversary Weekend at Westwood. The meeting was called by Sports Car Club of B.C. The groups represented were the Formula Vee, Sedan(GT), Formula Atlantic, Motorcycles, Vintage Motorcycles, Carts and Vintage Racing.

S.C.C.B.C. plan a non-profit weekend, with the aim being to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the track. As this may possibly be the last year of operation, a show of strength by as many people as possible, would be a great way of showing support for the track.

The date planned is July 21,22. Stirling Moss has been invited to attend. Each group would organize its own events, with its own announcer. As it will be a non-sanctioned event, licences will be under the control of the individual clubs. Spectator admission will be by donation or \$1.50. Entry fee for racing will be \$20.00 approx.

The aim is to have each group field a grid of at least 20 cars per race. Each race will be 30-35 minutes, with trophies for the winners. S.C.C.B.C. is looking to the Vintage group as a major drawing card. This weekend is two weeks after the Historic Weekend, so interest should be high. V.R.C. will have the most race time, with an hour scheduled for Sunday and scratch race or practice time on Saturday.

Each group will advertise among its own interest group, and the weekend as a whole will receive overall publicity. Pit space will be limited to one car per entry (i.e. tow cars not allowed in pits).

The week before the weekend, there will be a display of cars at Coquitlam Centre, and a Ball is planned for the Saturday evening.

Continued on page 9.....

The Lancia Aprilia

One of the members of the Brighton and Hove Club, and also an ex- motor trader had one of the above, a car I coveted very much. He came to me one day and asked me if I knew anything about the car, I replied only what I had read, he said he had the hand book which came with the car. A book that I might add no manufacturer would ever put out to-day... for one thing it was so comprehensive, and so detailed that it would cost a fortune. Well from then on I worked on this little beauty. He was entering all the competitions he could and winning too ! He entered the famous R.A.C. Rally but got clobbered by another car ,putting him out early on. However it wasnt long before I got an Aprilia, a 1939 1500 c.c. which I stripped down, repainted and tarted up. The Aprilia is recognised by most of the experts as one of the most brilliant of Lancias designs. Vincenzo Lancia explained to his designers what he wanted and after about two years of mock ups and experimentation it was finally ready for Vincenzo to test, so for the first part of the test he sat in the back, and after a while he said this car is much to fast for the general public. However when he got in the drivers seat, he expressed so much delight with its handling, speed and brakes he gave Jano the go-ahead. As on all cars produced by Lancia after the world famous Lambda which was the first so-called uni-body car mass produced, the Aprilia was uni-body. Remember that this was in 1935/6 This little car was a four door, and weighed in at 1775lbs. The doors were pillarless , independent front suspension, rear as well. The engine was a V4, single overhead cam with ingeniously designed valve gear to operate the eight valves in the hemi.chambers. The camshaft sat in a trough in the centre of the head, and was operated by a chain drive taken from the crankshaft pulley, with no idler , which meant the driven sprocket was large, it had a tensioner driven by oil pressure from the main gallery. The block and oil sump were aluminum, the finish of which was like glass. The head was cast iron.. the cylinder sleeves were cast into the aluminum block, they were spun cast iron, the small very efficient gearbox had no synchros 2nd, 3rd and 4th were constant mesh driving a 4.1-1 rear axle ratio. It seemed to me that wherever you looked on this car everything was different from any other car I had encountered. For instance the Clutch pedal was connected to a free-wheeling device that operated the built-in oil cleaner which was known then as an Auto-Kleen and was a series of micro disc ,one set fixed and the other set turned. Pushing the clutch out, turned the moving discs one way only. It was very compact and did not need replacing ever... engine designers please take note!! The engine was suspended on four small flat steel spring blades, two each side of the engine, the radiator was bolted to the engine... Not to the chassis, thus the hoses were only about two inches long, the water pump was also on the radiator, and the generator went thru the centre of the radiator with the cooling fan attached, with a simple eccentric to adjust the belt drive, brilliant! To change the brushes on the generator was a breeze, you took the cover off , and there they were, do the job in ten minutes

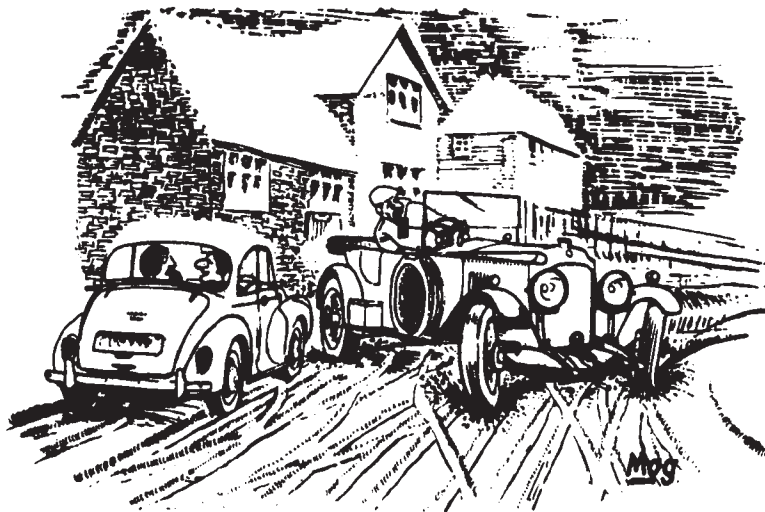
La Lancia Aprilia Contd.

and not even soiling your hands!! The radiator was also fitted as, all Lancias are with thermostatically operated blind shutters for fast warm up...A La Rolls-Royce The first engines were fitted with Duralumin con. rods with no shells, however they wore out the crankshafts too fast, so they went to shells, but they still retained the Duralumin rods. The clutch was very interesting in that it was a very lightly built flat plate with a large coil spring being the source of pressure, the later models having a three bladed flat spring, which if you had to replace the driven plate, you merely undid two bolts on each blade, from underneath the car and the bellhousing bolts and the rubber drive coupling and pulled the gearbox back 1 inch and drop it down and that was it!! To anyone who has had to replace any of the British cars clutches it will seem just incredible. But the brilliance of the design goes on...!! Lockheed hydraulics, operated the 10in. finned aluminum drums with cast steel liners and were two and a half inches wide. The shoes were cast aluminum of the same high quality, no roughness anywhere. The front suspension was carried on a forged steel beam attached to the chassis, The Lancia pillar type suspension was attached to each outer end of the beam, the supporting spring was enclosed in a sturdy cast casing which also contained the integral shock absorber which ran in oil. However the car also was fitted with Andre type shocks, which were hand adjusted from the dash hydraulically by turn a small wheel. How is that for ingenuity? For those who are not familiar with the early Andre s/absorber, they are friction type using discs, which could be adjusted by tightening or otherwise by hexagonal nuts, when the car was at a standstill. The rear axle housing was bolted to the body which also held the attachments for the two rather short torsion bars, and under the housing was bolted the transverse leaf the ends of which were hung on wire cables. The inboard brake drums were right close to the axle housing, and the constant velocity joints were a joy to behold. They are the only joints that seemed to have more thought put into their design than any I have seen before or since. Even the axle shafts were utterly different than any other. AS you know all axles working thru an arc are in two pieces in other words they must slide in and out. Most of these kinds of axles use a splined joint a male and female, with some kind of seal to retain the oil or grease, to prevent them seizing. Lancia designers as usual approached this problem from a more aesthetic and pure form of frictionless operation. They used splines but, instead of straight cut, they were semi-circular, the inner driven end contained roller bearings and the outer end slid (the male end) in and out on the roller bearings so friction loss was kept to a minimum. The seal was encased in a steel ring, the seal itself was of leather inside of which was a spring under tension to maintain an even pressure to prevent water and dirt from ruining the rollers.

To be contd.

Most people would say, who did not realise just what this meant, in terms of cost of production, would have to say, So what! However when we talk in terms of roller bearings we have first of all to take into consideration the very close tolerances involved, as any old clearance will not suffice...we are talking in terms of plus or minus one half of one thousandth of an inch! As roller bearing surfaces are extremely hard mirror finish it means those surfaces they are in contact with must be the same hardness, and must be ground as well, not just machined. It would be absolutely impossible today to make such equipment as it would be uneconomical. How they even did it in those days I don't know. The Aprilia was sold in the U.K. for 350 pounds with leather interior. This was quite a lot of money in those days of course, but the high quality of the Lancia put it in a class by itself. It would show a clean pair of heels to many of the so-called High Tech garbage that sell for megabucks, to-day. The top speed was not all that wonderful the factory quoted 82 m.p.h. with four people up. Another unusual design feature was the fact, that the engine, if my memory serves me right, was there was only the head gasket and paper inlet manifold gaskets, the rest of the engine had none, just face to face, that will give you some idea of the precision of the engineering. This little car was produced for 14 years, during that time they also brought out a much smaller copy called the Ardea of 903 C.C.s and 28.8 b.h.p. it was a 90% copy of the Aprilia except wasn't independent rear end, a live axle with half elliptics.

One more point I must mention, involved the steering, which did not have any ball joints all moving parts of the track rod etc; were rubber under compression similar to the S/Absonher eyes on today's cars, therefore there was no greasing to do!! The electrical system was 6 volt and was Bosch, to start the engine you just pushed the key in, and pulled the starter lever and by doing this, you engaged the pinion then the contacts and this energized the starter motor and spun the engine, this type of design is very clever as it does not knock teeth off the flywheel like the modern ones do.



"Don't worry, these Vintage chaps know how to handle their cars!"



vintage
racing
club

25th. Anniversary Weekend.....cont.

Leigh Anderson will act on behalf of the club. He will report back to the members as more concrete plans are made. The club has committed itself to support this effort and we need input from the members, (racing and non-racing). This may be the last chance to speak up for Westwood, and to make known the other side of the 'racing - non-racing' question. This will be a chance for the members of the racing community to stand up and speak up. Let us hear from you.....

EXECUTIVE.....

President..Jack Hawkes....733-2662
Vice-President..Dave Birchall.....581-4685
Treasurer..Lorrie Hunt.....591-3025
Secretary..Pamela Wood....581-6170
Race Co-Ordinator.....Leigh Anderson...536-5292
Past President..Rob Follows....926-3338

FOR SALE...TYRES....4 FIRESTONE
INDY'S 5.00/7.30 - 13's - \$40.00
2 DUNLOP 6.00 L 13's - \$30.00
CALL JOHN....581-6170

JOHN AND BETTY HUNHOLZ
19529 45th. N.E. SEATTLE, WA.
ANNUAL GET TOGETHER.....APRIL 15th. SUNDAY
AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET SOME OF OUR SOUTH -
OF THE BORDER MEMBERS.....PHONE ANY OF THE
EXECUTIVE FOR MORE DETAILS.....

VINTAGE RACING CLUB
Box 23393, Vancouver A.M.F.,
British Columbia
V7B 1W1