

# VANTAGE Spring 2010



Formula Atlantic Club Racers at Westwood 1982. Jim Blackwell leads Ross Bentley and Bob McGregor



Bill Brack's Lotus 42B that retired with a broken rocker arm



Toronto driver Tony Simms in the Kiki Mk 6A Formula A



Rob Leeson of Nanaimo had a bit of an off in his Brabham BT16

## 1969 Pepsi Pro Westwood

Recently I was doing a search for some photos of a McLaren that raced at Westwood on the 1969 Pepsi Pro weekend. That year the Pepsi Pro Invitational, one of the biggest events of the year had two feature races. A formula car race for the Gulf Canada National Driving Championship and race for two-seat Group Seven Sports Racing Cars.

The track photographer in those days was Murray Chambers. Murray lent me his collection of negatives of his photos from the weekend.

Eppie Wietzes went on to win the Formula car race in his Lola T142 and Don Jensen drove the Burnett MKII to victory in the Group Seven event. Here are a few that didn't win.

In This Issue:	
Pepsí Pro 1969	2
President's Message	4
BCHMR	5
Feature Formula Vee Race	6
Westwood Reunion	チ
Arleigh Pilkey	8
New VRCBC website	11
Tate á Tate	12
VRCBC and SCCBC at VIAS	15
Market Place	16
Tom's Photo Page	17
Photo Caption Contest	18
About VRCBC	18

## President's Message

Happy New Year everyone. Funny how after the last race in 2009 it seemed like lots of time to get everything ready for 2010, now the 2010 is upon us there still is lots to do!

It is hard to predict how 2010 will be for VRCBC and racing in general. Our American friends are not coming out of recession as quickly as they hoped, the Canadian dollar has reached par, BC Ferry rates have risen sharply, race fuel is no longer available trackside, entry fees has also risen slightly for REVS races, and folks generally seem to be very careful about what they spend and where.

Despite those challenges eight VRCBC members enjoyed our first race April 4<sup>th</sup>, a smaller first race turnout than last year, but with the way weather looked Saturday; it was a surprise that anyone showed. Sunday was very cold in the morning but warmed to a spectacular day. As predicted last year, there are a significant number of cars that run within 2 seconds a lap of one another. A new entry is Denis Repel in his Camaro, who is not one of those, joined Paul Kuckein rocketing off into the distance, but great fun to watch and hear. The rest of us behind the two Camaros were pretty much nose to tail all the time. Mark Brown, Glen Gibbon, Alan Harvey, Evan Williams, Peter Valkenburg, and yours truly. Great fun.



Speaking of race kudos some of you will have been aware that there was an All Volvo Race in Sears Point on the weekend of April 10<sup>th</sup>. Our VRCBC representative Gil Stuart placed very well in the Saturday dry race. Sunday it rained, and just as Gil did in Seattle a couple of years ago, he won outright, over cars far, far quicker than his. Race organizer Alan Berry sent me this:

Some photos of the event

"Jim,

I was so happy for Gil on Sunday's wet race. His 444 is so pretty and well presented. Once the skies opened up he was totally uncatchable!"

are on the following site: <a href="http://www.tmsmini.com/">http://www.tmsmini.com/</a>. Congratulations Gil!

We enjoyed a wonderful partnership with SCCBC in the Vancouver Auto Show display. We had Ian's Rawlson and the CCGP BMW together with our projector and photos. See photo on

page 15. Many folks got information about VRCBC and SCCBC and all our events especially the BCHMR. Sincere thanks to all those who turned out to help by manning the booth, in partnership with Ryan O'Connor and his SCCBC team.

We hope that you can assist with the Tradex Show April 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>. Last year this show, combined with the All British Field Meet, were the best for exposing our program to the folks most likely to be interested in Vintage Racing.

Of course our big event is the British Columbia Historic Motor Races from July 16 to 18<sup>th</sup>. I know Tom will have lots about that in other parts of this issue of Vantage, an event of this magnitude will require lots of help as in the past. We will be counting on you to step up to the plate as members to make this be as special as Westwood50 was, stepping into the future.

Jim Latham,



Entrant Information on www.vrcbc.ca



#### **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Vintage Racing Club of B.C. announces a name change and the dates for its main 2010 race event

The Vintage Racing Club of B.C. (VRCBC) announced today that it has changed the name of its annual marquee race weekend to better reflect its wider appeal. The new name is *British Columbia Historic Motor Races* (BCHMR), and the 2010 race dates will be July 16, 17 & 18.

"Incorporating British Columbia in the name reflects the true scope of our event, which attracts drivers from all over Western Canada and the United States," said VRCBC President Jim Latham. "We want it to be recognized as a destination motor sport event with a distinctive British Columbia experience," he added.

Since 1976, when the races were staged at the famous Westwood track in Coquitlam until the present location of the River's Edge Road Course at the multipurpose Mission Raceway Park east of Vancouver, this event has grown to become the largest vintage racing event in Western Canada and one of the largest in the Pacific Northwest. Last year, more than 130 vintage and historic racing cars were entered and over 3,000 spectators attended.

"The BCHMR weekend is a unique experience," said Event Chairman Ian Wood. "Nowhere else in British Columbia can road racing fans get so up close and personal with these wonderful machines and their drivers, and see some of the world's finest race-bred marques fighting for the checkered flag. The paddock is fully open to the public all weekend and the on-track racing is fast and competitive, stirring nostalgic memories from a bygone era of motor racing," added Wood.

The event has become an annual must-attend gathering for vintage racing drivers and their crews, as well as for many local classic car enthusiasts who create a show of their own, displaying their fascinating vehicles in a special area. Adding to the festival atmosphere are the many sponsors' booths offering everything from automobilia and artwork to automotive product displays. The excellent grandstand viewing, informative track side commentary and food concessions, all make for a great weekend.

The three day BCHMR is the largest of the five race events which the VRCBC organizes each year. The VRCBC is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to restore, race and exchange information concerning vintage sports and racing automobiles. The philosophy of the club's members is to encourage participation, sportsmanship and the display of vehicles in their natural state, on the race track. All VRCBC events are held in conjunction with the SCCBC and META, and sanctioned by CACC/FIA.

The VRCBC is currently working on this year's line-up of interesting racing cars and event activities. These will be announced later in the year together with an updated website.

For more information please contact Jim Latham at <a href="mailto:LathamConsult@telus.net">LathamConsult@telus.net</a> .







#### Entrant Information on www.vrcbc.ca





# Westwood Reunion 2010

British Columbia Historic Motor Races
Mission Raceway Park

July 16, 17 & 18, 2010

# Westwood

Reunion 2010
at the
British Columbia Historic Motor Races
Mission Raceway Park
July 16, 17 & 18, 2010

We had so much fun at the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Westwood Circuit last year that we have decided to hold a Westwood reunion every year in conjunction with the Vintage Racing Club of BC annual British Columbia Historic Motor Races.

There will be special area set aside for the Westwood enthusiasts, watch for the signs. bring your memories and memorabilia.

Barbeque on Friday night hosted by the old-timers Gio Coletta and Ed Clements just like they used to do at Westwood.

www.vrcbc.ca or tomjohnston@shaw.ca

### Arleigh Pilkey The Man and his cars, a real pioneer of BC motor sport



Arleigh Pilkey, 1960

In 1970, Toronto based sportswriter Len Coates wrote what is considered to be the first book about Canadian sports car or road racing entitled CHALLENGE! The story of Canadian road racing. In the book, Coates says "While the east was the focal point of racing, the first road race in Canada took place in 1949 at Abbotsford Airfield, about 43 miles from Vancouver across the Fraser River". Coates goes on to talk about one of the drivers that day: Arleigh Pilkey. History has questioned Coates' facts about that race but one thing is for sure, Pilkey was one of the earliest road racers in these parts and had that race actually taken place, Pilkey would have been there and likely would have won something.

Arleigh Pilkey of Aldergrove and North Vancouver, BC started his race driving career in 1918 on the dirt horse oval at Vancouver's Hastings Park driving a Maxwell. His last



TC at Grouse Mountain 1951



**MG Monoposto** 

race as a driver was in a Cooper Formula Junior in 1964. In between he participated in and often won, hundreds of races from California to Alberta, and built three wonderful specials and if the rumours are true worked for US Naval Intelligence during WWII. Pilkey was one of the founders of the SCCBC and held various records and championships at Westwood and other tracks. All of his cars were yellow and carried the number 5.

Pilkey started his road racing career in an MG TC but he soon decided that he, an engineer and mechanic could do better so he started building his own cars.

Pilkey had accompanied another BC motorsport pioneer Roy Shadbolt to the Pikes Peak hill climb in 1951 when Shadbolt decided to run his Mercury engined Alta. (another whole story in itself). Enthused about what he saw, Pilkey returned home and commenced construction



The Two Seat Pilkey MG Special

on his first self-built car, the Pilkey MG single seater hill climb special.

Now single seat racing cars were pretty rare in road racing circles in those days, I'd like to say the Pilkey's car went on to great success but un-anticipated rule changes rendered the car obsolete before it ever raced. Never one to give up, Pilkey simply converted the car to a two seat sports car which he did race extensively.

Never quite satisfied, our man Arleigh decided to buy a new British sports car of the type that his pal Fred Leverington was importing: a Fairthorpe Electron. The Electron had all the right bits such as a Coventry Climax 1100 cc SOHC all aluminum motor but it was heavy and not really all that fast. Pilkey decided he could do better and took all the good bits and put them in a tiny aluminum bodied tube frame sports racer of his own design, a car that became



Pilkey Electron Special at Westwood 1962

known as the Pilkey Electron Special, that first ran at the Okanagan Hill Climb at Westbank in 1958.

Pilkey at age 62 and his special were there the day Westwood opened in 1959.

Prior to Westwood in 1958, the Calgary Sports Car Club ran what was to be the first sports car race in the Canadian prairies at Shepard Airport near Calgary, Pilkey and his car travelled over the Rockies to be there. After impressing the Alberta racers by the little car's performance at the Shepard race, Pilkey eventually sold the car to the Edmonton based Gene McMahon, owner of the Corvette engined "The Beast". McMahon was flabbergasted when he couldn't catch the tiny car. For some reason the Alberta racers dubbed the Pilkey car "The Thing".

Later the car ended up in Winnipeg where it raced as the Carter Climax Special. I actually raced against it in the 1960s with my Lola Mk1

Now Pilkey decided he wanted to get really serious and he purchased an ex team Lotus Sebring Lotus Eleven from well known Toronto motor sport magazine publisher Jerry Polivka. Arleigh cut quite a swath with the Lotus up and down the West Coast but he was getting along in years.

In 1964 At the age of 67 He did his last race, he had purchased the ex-Bob



The Lotus Eleven at Westwood - yellow number 5



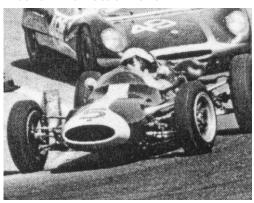
There he is at Hastings Park.

McLean Cooper Formula Junior, did a few races with it (with number 5 and a yellow stripe and band around the nose) and decided that he might be getting to old for all this. McLean kindly agreed to take the car back and Arleigh finally retired.

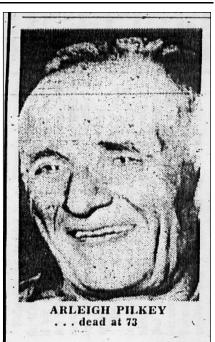
Arleigh was named Honourary Track Marshall by the SCCBC and drove the Westwood pace car for several years after his retirement. Pilkey died in 1970 at the age of 73, few could boast of a motor sport career of such length and accomplishment.



Above: The Lotus Eleven



McLean in the Cooper with the 5



# Auto racing pioneer dies

A pioneer of auto racing in B.C. died Tuesday at the age of 73.

Arleigh Pilkey was one of the founding members of Westwood in 1959 and retired from active racing in 1964. He had been involved in club activities following his retirement and drove the pace car at the Coquitlam circuit until last year.

The Vancouver native beganhis career in 1918 with a special and raced on dirt tracks at fairs in Seattle, Spokane and Idaho. He also competed at the old Hastings Park dirt track before quitting the sport in 1921.

Then, in 1949, Pilkey became a charter member of the Sports Car Club of B.C. and competed in the club's first race at the airport circuit at Abbotsford, an event which drew seven cars and no spectators.

No matter what car he drove, it always bore the No. 5 on its yellow sides. He did it well enough in 1961 to win the G Modified class at Westwood, the G class International Conference title and place second in G Modified in the Sports Car Club of America's North Western Region.

**Obituary 1970** 

# New website goes online Thanks to Stanton Guy,

Our new website is now live.

www.vrcbc.ca



**Endurance Race Pit Stop at Westwood Before the Invention of Fire Safety** 

## Mike Tate's 'Tate á Tate

### "THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH BEING FIFTY PUSSY CAT!





VRCBC Jaguar E Types Coupes in Their Element

Left: Gunter Pichler of West Vancouver Right: Terry Sturgeon of Victoria

The VRCBC's 'sister' key classic historic motoring event in B.C. this year the magnificent 'All British Field Meet' held in the incomparable and verdant Van Dusen Gardens on Saturday May 22<sup>nd</sup> is celebrating the **50**<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the E Type Jaquar and I for one can't wait! Now there will be all sorts of brouhaha about whether it is fifty, fifty plus or forty-nine years since its inception. My good friend Patrick Stewart, being a verbal scrapper of Irish descent, loves nothing more than to get a damn good debate going especially in his favourite watering hole the Wolf & Hound over a pint of the local brew. Patrick and Joan Stewart of course are the progenitors of the event which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

Patrick might be right because this is the way the chronology works and I won't be budged from this position. After their success at the Le Mans 24 hour races through the 1950s, Jaguar's defunct racing department were given a brief to use D-Type style construction to build a road going sports car to replace the XK150. It is suspected that the first prototype (E1A) was given the code based on the following (E): The proposed production name "E Type", (A): The first prototype Aluminium construction, in the end, of course the production models used steel bodies. The car featured a monocoque design, Jaguar's fully independent rear suspension and the well proven "XK" engine. The 1959 car was used solely for factory testing and was never formally released to the public, it was eventually scrapped. Sacrilege!

Jaguar's second E Type concept the *E2A* which unlike E1A was constructed from a steel chassis but used an aluminium body was built in 1960. This car was completed as a race car as it was thought by Jaguar at the time it would provide a better

testing ground. E2A used a 3 litre version of the XK engine with a Lucas fuel injection system. After retiring from the Le Mans 24 hour race in 1960 the car was shipped to the USA to be used for racing by Jaguar American gentleman privateer Briggs Cunningham. Already Leyland had its sights set on the US export market! . . . So there you have it an E Type Jaguar racing in front of the public, the real McCoy and the very first one too. In 1961 the car returned to Jaguar in England to be used as a testing mule.

The ownership of E2A passed to Roger Woodley, Jaguar's customer competition car manager, who took possession on the basis the car not be used for racing, so in fact it did become the very first road car. E2A had been scheduled to be scrapped but luckily it never was. Roger's wife Penny Griffiths owned E2A until 2008 when it was offered for sale at Bonham's Quail Auction. Sale price was

US\$4.5 million . . . not a bad mark-up for a \$4,000.00 automobile!

The E Type was initially designed and shown to the public as a Grand Tourer (GT) in two-seater coupe form (FHC or Fixed Head Coupé) and as convertible (OTS or Open Two Seater). On its release Enzo Ferrari called it "The most beautiful car ever made", now isn't that something to write home about!

Several limited-edition variants were produced namely:

The "'Lightweight' E Type" which was apparently intended as a sort of follow-up to the D Type. Jaguar planned to produce 18 units but ultimately only a dozen were reportedly built. Of those, one is known to have been destroyed and two others have been converted to coupe form. These are exceedingly rare and sought after by collectors.

The "Low Drag Coupé" was a one-off technical exercise which was ultimately sold to a Jaguar racing driver. It is presently believed to be part of the private collection of the current Viscount Cowdray.

OK, OK! I hear some of you say but surely the first 'production E Type' came off the British Leyland lines in 1961?

True the Series 1 was introduced, initially for export only, in March 1961. The domestic market launch came four months later in July 1961; the cars at this time used the triple SU Carburettor 3.8 litre 6 cylinder XK engine from the XK

I say that the dispute could be settled various ways: the first test bed and design ~ 1959, the first produced race car ~ 1960 or the launch of the first final production model off the line ~ 1961 . . . but you know they were building them in

late 1960 for 1961 don't you? So it's all up to you . . . when was the kitten born?

I first had a ride in an E Type when the father of a school chum of mine, (who just happened to be the export director of Jaquar) brought one to take his son out for the half term break . . . 'Would you like to come along and see what she goes like?' I can't recall my clumsy stuttering reply but away we went. Oh my! I was in love from that moment on with the shape, performance and sheer blatant sex appeal of this design masterpiece from Jaguar. It was a metallic light blue series 3.8 fixed head coupe, I will never forget that day . . . Queen sang it best . . . "A certain kind of magic." The dales of Yorkshire flew by, as did the afternoon, far too fast!

The credit for the E
Type's design must go to
Jaguar's aerodynamicist
designer Malcolm Sayer and
chief engineer William
Heynes under the leadership
of Jaguar's chairman Sir
William Lyons. Well done
lads!

It is no secret these days, but was a big one then, that the 1961 press cars had 'tweaked' engines, suspensions and special tires; but by in 1962 the famous primrose press test car JDU 877 E came bog standard and was still a stunner. It could clock up 141 mph hood up and 131 with it down and your hair 'blowin in the wind' down from the 1961 press cars which turned out a genuine 150 mph, but now we know



Thor Thorson, Owner of Vintage Racing Motors in Redmond takes a D Type on to the Track at Mission



Lightweight E Type

why! The only car that came close in its league for overall performance of cars tested and the time was the nimble little Lotus Elan.

JDU 877 E that series 1 primrose beauty, actually it was known as a Series 1 1/2 because the headlights were not faired in as they were on the Series 1. JDU 877 E was used by every literary hack that could drive and write and was the work-horse of many an article. It hung around for a number of years and then disappeared from sight until reappearing in 1976 painted a dark green and not with the original bonnet either (Hood to the new continent devotees); perhaps a little continental ding and it was time for a repaint. It was bought by Jaquar fanatic Henry Pearman; having used it for club events it was eventually sold on and the new owner took it back to its original primrose yellow and that somehow seems the right and proper thing to do. It still sits on the rather slender 185/70 radial tyres but consequently it has no flares and that's a good thing too.

Various iterations of the E Type were manufactured by Jaguar between 1961 and 1974 Known as the XKE in the United States, its combination of good looks, high performance, and competitive pricing established it as an icon of 1960's motoring from over the pond. By the end of its life over seventy thousand E Types were sold.

In March 2008, the Jaquar E Type ranked first in the Daily Telegraph's list of the "100 most beautiful cars" of all time. In 2004, Sports car International magazine placed the E Type at number one on their list of "Top Sports Cars of the 60s". The plaudits go on and on and frankly Tata, the new owners of the Jaguar brand, could well re-introduce an up-dated version and it would still stand the test of time and sell like hot cakes. But alas L don't think we will see the likes of it again.

Last November, in Monterey, I was at the launch of the new Jaguar/ Tata line for **Western Driver** and though they are wonderful, better cars in fact, they lack the raw appeal of the E Type. It's hard to describe why or how the new car designs just don't quite hit you hard in the gut most of the time but perhaps it's

the difference between the wind tunnel, emission standards, crash testing and the pure free pen which, though more powerful, is not perhaps greener or safer! Times change but memories remain.

The VRCBC has some outstanding E Types racing in Historic Races, Evan Williams has one tucked away, but sadly we haven't seen it on track for some years now. Terry Sturgeon from Victoria also ran one up to about a year ago but the prize 'pussy cat' of them all has to be the perennial wonder prepared, tuned and raced by Gunter Pichler for the last 20 years plus.

What a joy that Gunter's E Type has been to watch. Always immaculately turned out and driven clean and very hard every time out. Gunter and his E Type are the embodiment of what vintage racing is all about . . great sportsmanship, that do it yourself attitude and aptitude and a car that gives so much pleasure to the crowds on or off the track.

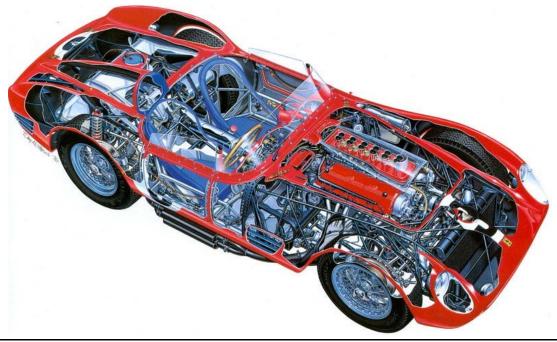
See you at the Races and at the ABFM . . . What's new pussy cat?

Tata for now! Sorry I couldn't resist it!





VRCBC and SCCBC Booth at the recent Vancouver International Auto Show



### Market Place

# A service for VRCBC members selling cars of historic interest

### 1961 ELVA MK6 SPORTS RACER

Chassis number 10, one of only 28 Mk6s made. The car has been raced on the West Coast of the USA and Canada since new. During the 60s the body was replaced by a Bruihl body. The current owner bought the car in 1982 and rebuilt it to become a vintage race car. It regularly ran successfully in vintage races at Westwood, Seattle, Portland, Olympia, Tacoma, Calgary and Mission from 1984 until 2009 The car is powered by a 1600cc Alfa engine.

Price: \$42,000. U.S.

Further details contact Leigh Anderson, 604-536-5292 or <a href="mailto:leighand@shaw.ca">leighand@shaw.ca</a>



### Monterey Historics 2010--Camping or Motor home site available

Chaparral Premiere Campground—electrical, flat, level site near showers and washrooms.

This is a deluxe site within easy walking distance to the track.

Rental cost for the entire event is \$270. (my cost)

Contact: John Carlson, carlson44@shaw.ca or 604-931-5948 PST



Ex-Frank Allers C5 Corvette as prepared for and raced in the 2000 and 2001 Speedvision GT series. Only two races since. These cars are now being accepted by some vintage organizers. tomiohnston@shaw.ca









**Ferret** 



Chinook



Dailu



Stebro



Astur



**Davies** 

## Tom's Photo Page

Canadian made road racing cars of note



Hayman



Comstock



**Hedrich Mono** 



Kelly



Sadler



Kiki



Magnum



Johnston



**Xpit** 



**Altona** 

### About the Vintage Racing Club of BC

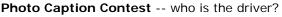
The purpose of the Club is to restore, race and exchange information concerning vintage sports and racing automobiles. The Club was established in 1976 by a group of Vancouver based friends as a means of sharing with others their enthusiasm for racing and appreciation of the incredible vintage racing machines of

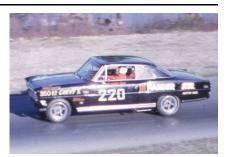
bygone days. The Vintage Racing Club supports the philosophy of racing competition that encourages participation, sportsmanship and display of the vehicle in its natural state on the track. There are no prizes or trophies, merely the great enjoyment of a well prepared vintage racing machine at speed.



Girling AR brake caliper







There was no winner of the Winter 2009-2010 Photo Caption Contest, in fact there were not even any entries, therefore the prize of the round the world cruise on the Queen Mary 2 goes unclaimed. Prize for this month's will again be one of Tom's books.

### Club Officials and contact details

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