



*Motor Enthusiasts Club
of
Central Australia*

Incorporating Alice Springs Vintage & Veteran Car Club Inc



Preston Tucker Tucker at his Chicago plant; 1947

CENTRE SPOKE

August 2010

THE GOOD OIL

Hello MECCA boys and girls.

July has been a good month for our club despite the unseasonal amount of winter rain we have experienced. (nearly 4 inches of rain this month). Good shed weather to carry out those little repairs so important to keeping our old dears on the road.

We had a good attendance at our meeting on Sunday 4th with about 30 or so members attending. We were pleased to welcome new member Kylie to the club. Kylie is the daughter of well known member Trevor Hyman. Dieter suggested that we should make ourselves available to the Masters Games for transporting dignitaries to the opening ceremony. A letter has been sent regarding this offer. The Club is in a healthy financial state says our treasurer Frank, currently living it up in Singapore!! Meeting finished as usual with a cuppa and a helping of Marie's MECCA pie.

The July run on Sunday 11th was to Aileron. It had been raining Friday and Saturday and still drizzling and misty on Sunday morning. It did not look very promising. I was sure that there would be a poor attendance. How wrong I was. We had one of the best ever roll ups with 32 people.

B.E., Michael, and visitors from Darwin, Lachy and Patrick, sitting in the back seat of B.Es 66 Fairmont with Fred.

Sandy and Mal in their trusty R series Valiant with passengers Marie and Stuart.

Connie and Vaughan in their leaky LJ50 Suzie. First prize for the toughest couple.

Dieter in his lovely, newly acquired 1983 380SL Mercedes with passenger Arvin.

Trev, Kylie, Jessica and Jacob in their 1977 F100 twin cab. This vehicle has been completely rebuilt and styled by Trev and is a tribute to his artistic and mechanical skills.

Col and Vicki in sons XR8, that oddly enough, appeared to have no tyres on the rims. Most have been a bumpy ride Vickie?

Chips Sue and friend in their Mazda.

Alvina and Wally in their Prado.

Heather and Laurie with grandies Jade and Dean in Hilux.

Kerri and Nicole in Magna.

Jess and Lee in a well presented, rare HSV XU8.

Last Sunday, 8th of August the Club had our last General meeting and club run for the current year of office.

The meeting was well attended and many issues were sorted out. Mr. Tim Schubert, a staunch supporter of MECCA for many years addressed the meeting giving us an idea of life in the Adelaide fast lane. He thanked the Club for the great friends he had made and the good times had. We also thank you Tim and wish you all the best. Hope to see you from time to time. Be careful loading and unloading your Vinnie.

We also welcomed a new potential member, Guenther Seidel. Welcome Guenther. The Club would also like to wish Trevor Hyman a speedy recovery from a recent bout of pneumonia. Get well soon Trev.

After the meeting a number of us headed out to Coroborree Rock for a picnic lunch, taking advantage of the beautiful winter day – sunshine, blue sky and a gentle whispering breeze, just enough to make the mulgas sing.

The Buick's dominated the run, with Wally and Alvina in there lovely Staight 8 and BE in his Staight 6. BE had a bit of drama on the way out when the tread started separating from the rear near side tyre. With many members assisting (thanks for the jack Laurie) we soon had the Buick back on the track and all arrived safely at our destination. Dieter was in his well presented Merc, with Laurie and Heather in their GTS Monaro, Allen and Aileen in one of their many Cortina's. Ian and Allina, with Guenther, drove their normal vehicles and yours truly on the MAC Velocette. (only bike again)

During the jovial conversation over lunch, Wally and Alvina told us that they had just closed their business after nearly 50 years of operation. What a great achievement. All the best to the both of you, for your now fully retired future. Wally reckons he's got plenty of shed room now to complete the A model.

See you all at the AGM.

Regards Fred.

Club Activities

Date	Activity	Start Venue	Start Time	Organiser
15 August	AGM followed by BBQ lunch	Masonic Hall	10 am	Fred

All listed events are official club activities. Non club members are welcome to attend these activities.

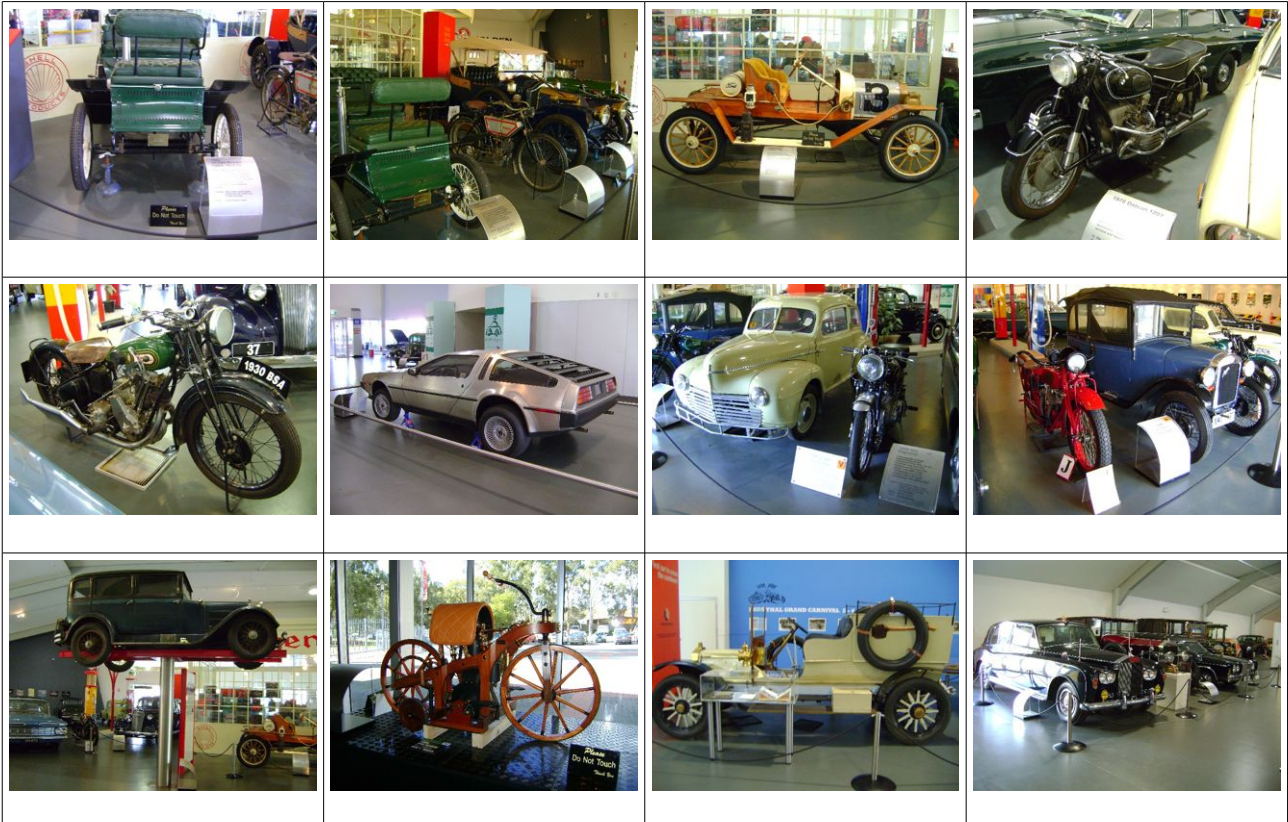
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Pictures from the Aileron Trip



Birdwood National Motor Museum



Here are some of the pictures taken at the National Motor Museum at Birdwood in South Australia

It is a magnificent exhibition of motor vehicles and well worth the visit.

EVERYTHING YOU DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW ABOUT FUEL

SO YOU WERE AFRAID TO ASK

Submitted by Jeff Cole

Although this extract is from a mower site it is still relevant to other engines. (<http://www.kedronmowers.com.au/sections/fuel.html>) I have taken the liberty of doing some editing.

The petrol used today is different in characteristics and components used as compared to the petrol seen even 5-7 years ago and vastly different than that seen 10-15 years ago.

Two factors are present to shorten the shelf life of fuel:

1. Economic: stretching the amount of petrol available from a barrel of crude oil
2. Environmental: addition of oxygenating ingredients in an attempt to improve overall air quality.

Both of the above factors result in fuel which has shorter shelf life, is harder on soft components (elastomers) and leaves deposits (gum, tar, varnish) at a far more rapid rate than for fuels of the past.

In the 1950s, approximately 28% of a barrel of crude oil was refined into petrol. This was known as straight-run petrol. As the most lucrative high-volume product of crude oil is petrol, petroleum companies have developed ever-more exotic refining and cracking methods to pull more petrol from a barrel of crude oil. Today, that 28% has been increased to over 45% and, depending on the source of the crude, can go to as much as 75%. The negative effect in the more exotic refining processes is that they create olefins and diolefins which shorten shelf life due to oxidation and promote the rapid development of tars, gums and varnishes. For this reason, most OPE manufacturers recommend 30 days as the recommended shelf life for petrol. If used in extreme high temperature conditions and stored in an above ground fuel container (plastic petrol container), we would shorten that to 1 week maximum.

Note: shelf life of petrol can be extended by use of an oxidation reduction compound known as fuel stabiliser. Several manufacturers offer this compound; among the most commonly used world-wide is Sta-Bil (tm) . Use of these compounds as directed can extend the shelf life of petrol as long as 1 year.

It is our position that use of a fuel stabiliser for engines that will be stored for a period of time is superior to draining fuel and running the carburettor dry. The potential for damage to diaphragms and gaskets is far greater as those components dry out.

Oxygenated Fuel

Environmental concerns and subsequent regulations for improved air quality have lead to the use of oxygenated fuels; fuels containing an oxygen-bearing component. Adding an oxygenate will provide a lean mixture; improving overall emissions. These compounds also improve octane; something drastically reduced when lead was removed. At the same time, this is also a method to extend the quantity of petrol available from a barrel of crude oil. To the petroleum companies, this has become a very popular practice. The regulations, economics, concern for diminishing supplies and need to keep octane levels high have made use of oxygenates very attractive.

The three most common oxygenating ingredients are: methanol, ethanol and MTBE; a derivative of methanol.

Methanol is produced from natural gas or petroleum and is commonly known as wood alcohol.

Ethanol is produced from corn or grain [and sugar] and is known as grain alcohol and is commonly found in spirits, beer, wine etc. As it comes from a renewable resource, it is looked upon in high regard by environmental groups and the agriculture industry in countries with air quality problems [see comments at bottom].

All of these components are not without undesirable characteristics. Alcohols (methanol and ethanol) are chemically unstable in petrol. Specifically, they do not want to stay mixed due to the hygroscopic effect when water is present. Alcohol is naturally attracted to and readily absorbs water; to the extent that it will combine with water and, then as the heavier component, it sinks to the bottom of the tank. This process is called phase separation and is a serious concern when alcohol levels are high. As the alcohol/water combination is at the bottom of the tank, it goes inside the engine first and sometimes at a level that poses the potential for engine seizure. The alcohol also acts as a degreasing agent and washes the protective lubrication film off of components; leading to rust, corrosion and the potential accelerated wear. In addition, when used in high ratios, they can cause deterioration of gaskets, grommets, fuel lines, etc.

Another aspect of today's fuel is octane ratings. With the elimination of lead in automotive petrol in 1986, other compounds have been to regain octane ratings. Alcohols do an effective job of raising octane. 10% methanol can raise the octane rating by 2-3 points. MTBE is also an effective octane booster. As petrol has gone away from tetra-ethyl lead as the most common octane booster, these other compounds are prevalent. Simple to remember-if lead is out, what is replacing it?

An additional characteristic of lead for a 4-stroke is that of providing a cushioning effect for valves to prevent valve seat recession. Other than as an octane booster, lead is unnecessary in a 2-stroke. As a result, several compounds have been substituted as a means of providing this protective layer:

M Mobil: manganese (MMT)

M BP: potassium

M Shell: Phosphorous

Potassium has the effect the gumming or sticking valves.

Phosphorous can have a similar effect, as well as leaving a sooty appearance on all internal engine components.

Sodium is also used in some over the counter octane boosters, but has been known to corrode internal engine components in certain high-temperature engine conditions.

Fuel Recommendations

- Use fresh fuel [when possible]
- Avoid cut rate/economy brands [they probably contain ethanol].
- Do not store longer than 30 days (1 week in high temperature conditions).
- Use fuel stabiliser if equipment must be stored for long periods.

COMMENTS

1. Sta-Bil will be available at Supercheap Autos by the time you read this. It is \$25 for about 350mL but easier and cheaper than cleaning the carburettor every time you want to go for a run. Other brands are available over the internet.
2. Ethanol is NOT necessarily environmentally friendly and in many cases it is ENVIRONMENTALLY DISASTROUS as well as being BAD for your older vehicles. See Jeff Cole if you want some details.
3. Fred said that plain unleaded (not Opal) petrol is available at the Mobil depot in Ghan Road.

Coroboree Rock Picnic 8 August 2010



The 1948 Tucker - One of the Best 10 Vintage cars of all time



Photo by Sean O'Flaherty



<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

The Tucker was truly an innovation in the world of automotive design, and though the 1948 model was the only model ever produced its effect on the world of automobiles can still be felt to this day. Preston Tucker and Alex Tremulis designed the Tucker as an attempt to break into the automotive industry, and though only a handful of cars were produced the features that were present in those cars were extremely innovative for the time

Though the Tucker was doomed to failure due to Security Exchange Commission lawsuits and behind-the-scenes activities by major automotive companies who didn't want an independent automotive manufacturer to succeed, a significant number of the 51 Tuckers produced are still road-worthy and are considered to be one of the ultimate automotive collectibles for those lucky enough to be able to get their hands on one.



National Transport Hall of Fame Reunion
August 28 2010

Contact Fred if you can spare a couple of hours to help with the Bar Duties. This is our fund raising event for the year and is a great night out amongst fellow motor enthusiasts.

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