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Editor's Note:

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this edition of the Hollow Log.

Again, it was a struggle to get this edition out because of lack of content. Come on fellas, I need some help!

Hope to see some of you at the Melbourne Boat Show this year. Drop by and say g'day. Someone will always be there, or at least close by.

Please, keep talking to me

Greg Carr

Around the Traps

General:

- Member Darren Goldberg's boat *Steinway* is featured in the June/July edition of Australian Power Boat magazine. The boat had a photo session on the Hawkesbury River after this year's Sydney Classic & Wooden Boat Festival. The club also received some excellent publicity in the article. We have had some good exposure in the magazine recently and Power Boat is to be commended for giving our old boats a go. Many thanks to editor, Graeme Lloyd. If you read the article and enjoyed it, let Power Boat know about it.
- There was a considerable amount of excitement recently when the Lewis skiff *Mouse* was offered for sale on "E-bay". The discussion generated on the website's Bulletin Board about the length of the boat was very entertaining. It wasn't until Darren and Greg went and had a look at the boat and measured it up that it was finally solved! Unfortunately *Mouse* was in very poor condition. The boat has been offered for sale twice since then and was supposedly sold to persons unknown last week.
- Interest in the National Get Together has been exceptionally poor, so much so that it does not really seem worth our while organising a serious venue for it. We need some commitment to get this event happening. It's up to you.

- I am looking for info on the whereabouts of any "Elliscraft" boats, for sale or not.

Victoria:

- *Assassin II* has surfaced in Melbourne. The Lewis skiff has been converted to a runabout, but club member and new owner Ian Barber intends converting the boat back to its original skiff form.
- Darren Goldberg is progressing slowly but surely on his Simpkin runabout, *Toledo*. After some fairly extensive surgery on the stem, Darren is close to starting work on replacing numerous broken ribs, a consequence of that big heavy Y block that powered the boat.
- Mark Stevens is about to start work on his hydro and the new engine for his Seacraft *Willywood* is currently being built.

NSW:

- Belated congratulations to Rob and Therese Cranfield with the addition to their family on March 15th. Welcome to the world Master Michael.
- An attempt at getting Nostalgia boat racing going again at Taree is underway. It is hoped to have racing similar to the Nostalgia Cup with a couple of scratch races and some handicaps. The organisers are after runabouts, hydros and skiffs. For more details, contact Dave Pagano.

Coming Events

July 2004

- The Melbourne Boat Show. July 1 - 5, Melbourne Exhibition Centre. We have five boats on the concourse this year. Drop by and say hello.
- The Sydney Boat Show. July 29—August 3, Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour

National Wooden Power Boat Rally

- No firm dates or venue at this stage, but this event will happen this year. Lake Albert in Wagga is a likely venue and the time to be around October. We need serious expressions of interest for this event as there will be considerable organising to be done. More info next issue.

① *Please check for confirmation of dates and venues*

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For general information, contact Greg Carr by phone on: 03 9370 2987 or 0408 937 029 or by e-mail at: NH35_Stormy@bigpond.com or write to the address at the top left of this page.

Merchandise

Caps and polo shirts sporting the Association's logo are available again. Caps are available now and shirts on order. Enquiries/orders to Greg Carr via email.

Shirts are \$27.00 each and caps \$18.00 each.



THE HOLLOW LOG

Volume 4 Issue 3

June 2004

The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association

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Winter woes?

Well, here we are again - winter, our "off" season. The time of the year when, except for those of us in the north of the country, we basically park our boats away in the shed for a few months. This is the time when the temperature demands that we rug up and go and watch the footy or head off to the mountains for the alternative form of skiing or some other similar cold weather activities.

Some of us will continue to work on their project boat, maybe hoping to complete it in time for the start of the coming summer. Others will take the opportunity to do some maintenance on their boat, fixing all those 'annoyances' they put up with over summer or touching up paintwork or varnish. As for me, I had hoped to do both of the above this year.

For a few years now I have been promising myself that I will put a new deck on my runabout as well as start the restoration of a skiff I have in the shed. What always happens is that because I can never decide which one to begin, I end up not starting either and nothing gets done.

I've told myself "This year is different!". The runabout is going elsewhere to have the work



done on it, that way I *know* it will get done. My boss has been hassling me to use up the excess of leave owing to me at work, so I've decided to take a few weeks at the beginning of July allowing me to start the skiff.

Yeh, best laid plans! The runabout has been sent away, so at least it will get done. As for the skiff, well, the way work is, I may be able to take some leave towards the end of August, but I'm sure something else will come up to delay that as well. I can see summer coming and going with the skiff still being many months away from being water-worthy.

But, I *will* make a start this year,

that's for sure, and while I slowly work my way through the skiff's refurbishment, I'll put some photos and text in the newsletter to keep you all up to date with its progress. You never know, it might even encourage some of you to do the same - you know, send in some pictures and text of your boat's progress (or anything else) for others to see.

As a bit of a tease, there is just one photo of the skiff in this issue of the newsletter. Most have probably seen it already. It was taken in early 2001, so you can see that this project has been sitting around for a while.

Until the next issue . . .

Reader's Boats

This photo was sent in by Paddy Milner, the proud owner of *Lotus*.

Lotus is a late early 1960's 16' clinker runabout.

The boat was purchased new by Paddy from boatbuilder Lionel Duffin and has remained with him ever since. Victorian based yacht builder Duffin only ever built a few runabouts.



Paddy says the boat is still absolutely original. Power is from a

Falcon 6 cylinder running through a dog clutch.

Quote for Today:

"Silence is golden when you can't think of a good answer"

Victorian Wet Together at Nagambie

Greg Carr

A very relaxing day was had by those attending the Wet Together hosted by Derek McLaughlin at his site on the Goulburn River at Nagambie.



Ross Foster and "Screwit"

The cool and overcast April morning in Melbourne when we left home was a worry but after getting over "the hill" the skies cleared and the sun came through.

Four boats were there for the day, actually five including Derek's Hartley, *Bonded Pleasure*. Dave Powley's brought his Eddy Puff along (and had a better day at Nagambie this time with no split planks), Ross Foster brought along *Screwit*, Alan and Melinda Price and family arrived with their plywood runabout and Greg and Jacqui Carr with their Eddy, *Stormy*.

Met at the ramp by Derek, we quickly launched the boats, made easy by many hands. After a few comments about my 50 foot launch rope (who says it's too long?) and Ross's knot tying ability that saw his boat float away after it came off the trailer, we headed around to Derek's for a bit of a chat and get to know each other session. A short time later we jumped into our boats and

Derek led the way on a tour up the river.

We headed north and the 5 knot speed limit for much of the way gave us a good opportunity to sit back, relax and admire the scenery.

I was amazed at the size of the Goulburn River, never having had a boat on it before. Returning for lunch, we detoured via the lake, giving everyone an opportunity to put the foot down and blow out any cobwebs. I was following *Screwit* for a short time before Ross took off. That is one very quick boat

with its 186 engine sounding very sweet in the process. All the boats behaved themselves on the day after sorting out a couple of battery problems at the start.

Alan's yet to be named runabout is still to be finished off but is well on the way and is very useable. Alan's plan was to have a running boat for summer, giving the family the opportunity to go boating, which he achieved.

A BBQ lunch, a few beers and glasses of champagne and a chat in the warm sun made for a very pleasant afternoon.

Jacqui and I decided to take a run down the

river to the south after hearing that it was better than to the north. After another 5 knot cruise to Chinaman's Bridge, about 600 metres down from Derek's, the river opened up and away we went. After several kilometers of high speed cruising we arrived at the Chateau Tabilk winery, where we turned around and headed back. What a fabulous run it was, sun through the trees, good wide river and amazingly, only one other boat was encountered.

All too soon it was time to pull the boats out and head home. Made easy again by many helping hands, the boats were back on their trailers in no time.

As Derek has hinted previously, I can now see some definite potential here for a winery run, putting the boats in at Nagambie and running up the Goulburn to Chateau Tabilk Winery for a stop and then going a little further on to Mitchelton Winery. Watch this space



Derek McLaughlin's Hartley "Bonded Pleasure"

Assassin II

The 17' Lewis skiff, *Assassin II*, has surfaced in Melbourne after being tracked down by club member Ian Barber.

Assassin II was raced in the early 1970's by Trevor Matthews from Bendigo (Matthews also very successfully raced a hydro called *Assassin*).

Assassin II has been converted to a mid-mount with the installation of a front cockpit, but is still very original and should be a relatively easy project to convert back to its original configuration, something Ian intends to do.

The previous owner fitted a fairly well worked up 350 Chev in the early 1980's after the original 302 Chev dropped a valve and threw a rod out the side, pretty well destroying the engine in the process.

The hull is very original and virtually all the original fittings are still with the boat.

See Page 6 for an article from Power Boat & Yachting magazine talking about the skiff after completing a successful 1970/71 racing season.



Assassin II and admirer/future driver.

"Why On"

Why On, a Lewis runabout and ex racer, was seen recently at the Wooden Boat Shop in Sorrento in Melbourne.

The early 1960's 17' mid-mount is undergoing a total hull restoration before heading back to its owner to have all the mechanical work completed.

The boat appeared to be in very good condition structurally, with very little rot found. The bulk of the work needing to be done was tightening of the hull, some transom work and of course, a new deck.

What really impressed me was the boat's original striped deck. Of contrasting red and natural timber colour, it is to be reproduced for the new deck and should look fantastic when finished, particularly with the wings refitted.

It is understood Lewis built only 50 of this style of boat.



Relaunchings - "FOX"

Rod Howard and Jim Smith and friends and helpers have been busy during the past couple of years with the restoration of the 1964 20' Lewis runabout, *FOX*.

The boat was a basket case when discovered and Rod said at the time that it was really a bit past it, but being true enthusiasts and being able to find a sympathetic boatbuilder meant that the boat would once again grace the waters in Queensland.



The boat's restoration has been extensive and the results are impressive. Power is from a Chev V8.

FOX was re-launched earlier this year and word is that the boat behaved beautifully and all involved are very pleased.

There will be more on *FOX*'s restoration in a later issue.



Assassin II and others

Further to the article on Page 2 about the re-appearance of the skiff Assassin II, some racing info and history on the boat is written in this article, provided by club member Colin Shallcross.

The following article was written by Ted Madden and appeared in the Power Boat & Yachting magazine.

POWER POINTS:

Victoria:

When the VSBC came to wind up the 1970/71 racing season with an Albert Park Lake meeting in May, it was in for quite a shock. Caught in the clammy grip of a Melbourne winter, the season usually dies with a whimper. This one went out with a

bang, but for the temperature would have set the lake on fire. Cheeta streaked across the lake in the 300 scratch in a style which left Trevor Matthews and champion skiff Assassin Too with nothing much inure rewarding than an attractive view of a rapidly receding rooster tail.

Les had steering trouble in his class handicap, but fixed it up in time for the first Butchers' Picnic in which he flew home from the back mark to snatch a minor placing.

Cheeta is a cut down version of the standard fibreglass, Ramsay 17 footer, and the new donk is a Repco Holden, within a whisker of the 300 cubic inch heart. It will be exclusive to Ramsay I believe, and Les plans to go into production right away with this boat and motor combination as the Ramsay Cheetah. The donk can be had standard (that is, mildly warm), hotted up to deliver another 130 bhp,

ning the final race of the year, the second Butcher's, in dashing style, fully creditable to the man who is going to take out the 1971 Sporting Globe Medal.

Trevor's Assassin Too has gained a new lease of life since she was virtually rebuilt by Dave Gill and eased back from a 325 to a 300 class motor. But the hydroplane, Assassin, has had the gong.

Trevor believes that the old hull is finished: anyway it's too short and light to tackle today's aircraft engine monsters.

So the dual Griffiths Cup winner is up for sale, and Matthews has commissioned Dave Gill to build him a new hydro for his assault on the 1972 Griffith's Cup.

It will be a 25 footer, with lines reminiscent of Pickle Fork forward, and the power plant will be a 500 cubic inch hemi-head Chrysler

Trevor is still firmly wedded to the sports car motor concept, and shows no signs of going aircraft happy.

Another man with a new boat (or two) in mind is John Lewis, who was at the Lake looking fit and well after his bout in hospital following injuries sustained on Griffiths Cup day.

John is having Dave Gill build him a new rear engined Vulture to replace the old one. She

will have much the same lines, will be about 8 in. longer, and will have a single, well padded cockpit AND a seat belt. Lewis expects to start racing again in the old boat at the beginning of the season and take delivery of the new one later in the year.

Lewis has been thinking about big hydroplanes for a long time now, but has decided to wait and see how the new Assassin turns out.

or as Les has it set up himself, with fuel injection and all the trimmings.

This could really be something: as on her Albert Park form, Cheeta definitely has the legs of anything and everything else in the hotly competitive 300 cu. in. class, and usually to race a boat and win you need to have one custom built, not bought cheaper by the dozen.

Trevor Matthews copped the wash in his dice with Les Ramsay in the 300 scratch, but he certainly made up for it later in the day, win-



Trevor Matthews and Assassin round a buoy in the VSBC's final meeting of the season. Trevor scored an easy win in the 1971 Sporting Globe's "best and fairest" medal.

bang.

No fewer than 39 boats appeared at the lake-side, raring to go - and race they did, until a washed out sun, bloated from the effect of the unequal struggle against the elements, lowered its colours below the western horizon.

Everybody finished the season hankering for more, which augurs more than passing well for the prospects of the 1971/2 season.

Star of the day was Les Ramsay's Cheeta, appearing with a new Repco Holden which,

2004 Heritage Boat Show

I received a phone call from one of the organisers of the Heritage Boat Show asking if we were interested in putting some speedboats on display. Ever keen to promote the Association, I readily accepted.

The Show was staged in the Melbourne suburb of Williamstown in March. Williamstown is a seaport with a natural deep water anchorage that has been synonymous with wooden boats and boat builders since it was first settled in 1835.

We put four boats on display at the show: Darren (elephant man) Goldberg's *Steinway*, Ian Barber's *Torque's Cheap*, Ross Foster's *Screwit* and Greg (the cripple) Carr's *Stormy*. *Screwit* and *Torque's Cheap* are two boats we haven't seen on show before.

Screwit is a home built plywood runabout that was started by Ross's uncle in the 1980's. The story goes that apparently an old boat that was a bit ordinary was obtained and then systematically pulled apart so that the pieces could be used as patterns. This was done and the new boat began to take shape.



Then, for whatever reason, interest waned and the unfinished project sat in a shed for the next 15 or so years until Ross was told to take it home.

Ross and his father decided to complete the project and spent the next year finishing it off. The result is a very attractive 14' 8" twin cockpit runabout powered by a not-so-standard Holden 186 ci motor. There will be a more detailed account of *Screwit's* story in the next issue.

Torque's Cheap was purchased by Ian Barber about 10 or so years ago. Ian actually bought the boat for the trailer and the 302 Chev and running gear that was fitted and was going to burn the rest (shock! horror!!). Fortunately a friend convinced him that the boat was worth restoring.

Ian spent the next 12 months or so working



on the boat, replacing the deck and transom.

The remainder of the hull was left alone as it was in very good condition, and still is for that matter. The hull still has its original paint and signwriting. Ian had many "friends" telling him he was wasting his time and that the boat would never see the water again. As Ian says, "I showed 'em, and now they all love the boat too".

Attendance over the weekend was excellent and we had a good deal of interest shown in our boats, even if the public had to endure the noise and fumes from some antique stationary engines close by. Mind

you, we gave them some competition at one stage when we lit up a couple of V8's.

Quite a few members dropped in for a chat as well, something which is always very pleasing.

This show really does have a lot to offer and we can only hope it continues to develop and grow. Melbourne does not have a show of this type and judging by the support and enthusiasm of the sponsors, exhibitors and the public it is certainly something that has considerable potential.

Thanks Darren for the special effort to get your boat in and also Leigh Falcke for his assistance.



REVIVAL FOR TRUSTY 'SIDE-BASH' SIX

The following article has been reproduced from Power Boat & Yachting magazine, May 1966.

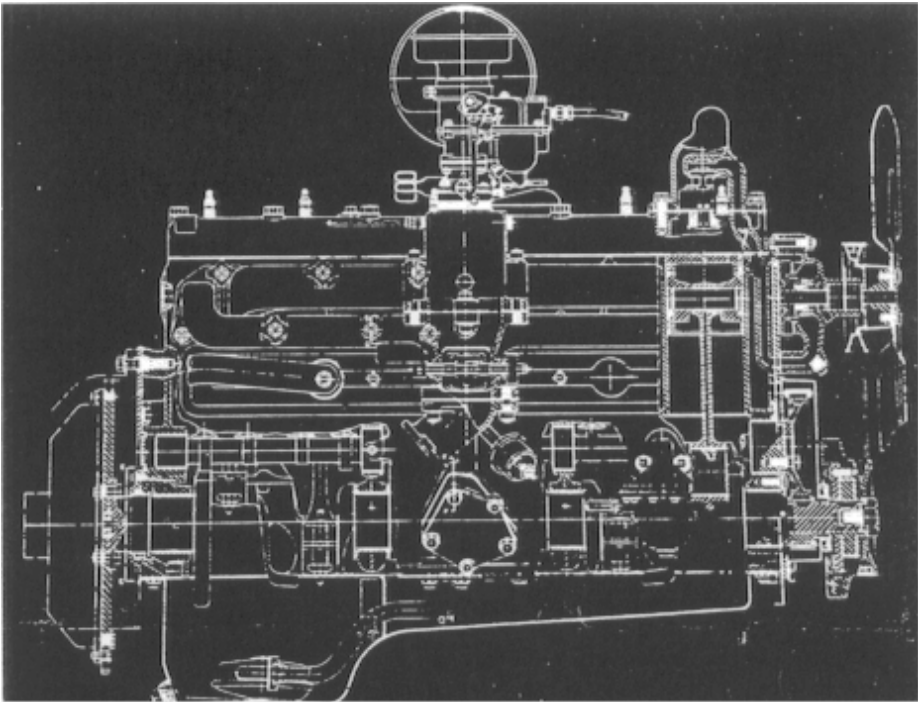
One of the best known car engines of the last decade is at present undergoing a tremendous revival at the hands of an Australian marine engineer.

The motor is the 1956 sidevalve Hudson Hornet 6. A surplus supply is being imported in their short motor form by West Ryde (Sydney) automotive and marine engineer, Clive Gibson.

The manufacturer's rating is 175 brake horsepower, but after improvements by Gibson, output is upped to 240. The motors are in brand new condition, and are surplus stocks from the Hudson factory in America. Supplies of spares are guaranteed.

The motor is also undergoing a rejuvenation in America, where its use in dragster and production racing cars is increasing. In its standard form from the factory, the hornet displaced 308 cubic ins, with a bore of 3 3/16th inches and a stroke of 4 1/2 ins. Compression ratio is 7.5 to 1. On their arrival at the Gibson plant, the short motors are fitted with twin dual throat Stromberg carburettors, alloy cylinder head and exhaust manifolds, chromed clips and head bolts and a heat control cutout. The exhaust manifolds are water cooled, as is the sump. The flywheel is rubber mounted for smoothness of operation.

The block is anodised and the entire engine unit treated with an anti-corrosive compound. The use of alloy in almost all major



A diagramatic drawing of the 1956 Hudson Hornet 6. This is the basic unit from which Gibson obtains so much power.

components makes the motor extremely light, and well suited to marine use. Several of the motors have been used for racing in Sydney and Canberra and have won an amazing number of titles within a few months. H. Bink of Canberra, who uses a Hornet 6 in a Lewis skiff, *Dustfree*, has reported speeds in the vicinity of 70 miles per hour. D. Parrot, in *Lorelli*, recorded an average speed of 70 miles per hour late last year during the annual bridge to bridge ski race. He won.

The *Lorelli* averaged 59 miles per hour with two skiers in tow. All owners have reported excellent acceleration figures with addition to a remarkable top speed. We list performance figures for the Hornet engine as fitted to a Hammond runabout with a length of 16 ft. 4 ins. With a three blade Sainty 13 ins. by 14 ins. propeller, the Hornet managed 50 miles per hour at an engine speed of 4,600 r.p.m. When fitted with a two blade 13 ins. by 15 ins. propeller, it returned 54 m.p.h. with an engine speed of 4,800 r.p.m.

In Power Boat & Yachting's test on the Hudson unit, Gibson's own 16 ft. Hammond skiff, *Hornet*, was used. Power is transmitted from the big Hornet through a unique thrust which has its own built-in clutch. The test unit was fed by twin vcarburettors which were equipped with breathers to eliminate exhaust and petrol fumes. This robbed the engine of a few revs, but made the cockpit conditions very pleasant.

With an observer aboard, the Hornet revved out to 4,600 r.p.m. in a matter of seconds, and obtained its maximum torque below 2,600 r.p.m. Swinging a three blade 13 X 14 ski propeller, she peaked at 50 m.p.h. With a two blade prop, 13 X 15, revs increased to 4,800 r.p.m. to give a speed of 54 m.p.h. I feel these figures could be bettered with the removal of the breathers.

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With a little more attention to the head, speeds of up to 70 m.p.h. are possible. Towing two hefty skiers and swinging the 13 X 14 prop, the tacho showed only a slight drop in r.p.m. It reached and maintained maximum torque almost immediately, giving the skiers a smooth and comfortable tow. The engine is mounted amidships, and features twin exhausts which contribute to the power boost.

Gibson claims the unit will out accelerate a V8 mounted in a similar hull. It certainly reaches maximum torque earlier than a V8, which would generally need about 3,000

r.p.m. before achieving this. In an acid test recently, well-known Sydney racing identities, Jack Murray and Ray Layton took part with Gibson in a three-way race over half a mile. Both the Layton and Murray skiffs (all three hulls are identical) were powered by bigger engines, Murray's having a 318 cu. Inch Plymouth Fury V8.

After half a mile the three skiffs finished abreast - a tribute to the 308 cu. Inch Hornet. The Hornet unit also boasts better economy than o.h.v. motors, with figures of 3 1/2 gallons a mile at an average speed of 50 m.p.h. being recorded in the 1965 Bridge to

Bridge ski race by *Lorelli* - and this towing two skiers. Driver D. Parrot recorded speeds of up to 70 m.p.h. in this event. At cruising speeds, consumption figures of six miles to the gallon can be expected. Fully equipped, the engine weighs only 525 lbs. and in its short form can easily be lifted by two men. Price of the unit, ready to drop into a boat, is \$1180 (£590).

Please note that some pictures from this article were omitted due to poor reproduction quality.

A Hornet powered speedboat

The following was extracted from the "forward" written by Tim Laird for Issue #44 of HUDSON STEPDOWN REVIEW, February 1993, as a lead in to the main article reproduced below. Many thanks to member Anthony Krause for sending in this and the previous article.

We spent an evening with Clive Gibson speaking about some of the things he has done with Hudsons. We asked Clive about the Hudson powered speedboat he built during the mid 1960s and the details are in this issue. Clive also imported six 308 c.i. Hornet engines from A.M.C. which he marinised. There must have been some interest amongst the speedboat crowd in these 308 engines as they sold quickly.

Harry Bink and I built a Hudson powered speedboat in the mid sixties which we raced with a fair bit of success. We used a 308 cubic inch Hornet 6 in a clinker type wood hulled boat 13 feet 6 inches long.

The stock 308 crankshaft, connecting rods and bearings were retained and proved to be no problem. We used Jahns pistons and an Iskenderain camshaft and valve kit. The inlet valves measured 2" in diameter and the exhaust valves 1.875". We did try the Hudson "Severe Usage" cam and found the performance was close to the Iskenderian cam. Mallory coil and ignition were used. We fitted an automatic flywheel which was lighter than a manual item. We adapted a supercharger from a Buda diesel engine which gave us 12 pounds of boost. Stromberg WW carburettors were fitted, we often used methanol as the fuel delivered through 1/2 inch hose.

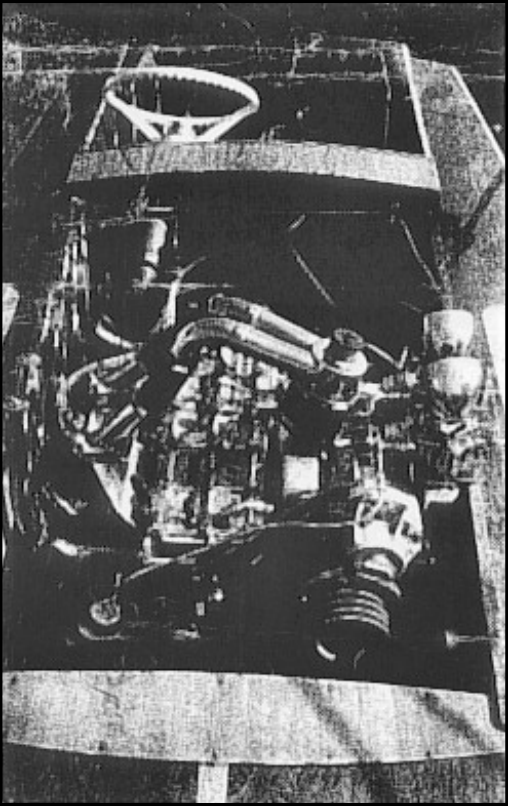
The bore was increased to three and fifteen sixteenths of an inch. Harry wanted to try a 4

inch bore. The 4 inch bore made the cylinder walls too thin and resulted in cylinder cave in. After we junked two or three blocks we stayed with the smaller bore which proved reliable. We used a 30% step up between the engine and the propeller. We would rev the engine to 5,000 rpm, which proved safe enough, and meant the propeller was rotating at 6,500 rpm.

On our first run we blew a head gasket 1/2 a mile up the river. We thought it may have been a faulty head gasket so we replaced it on the spot and blew another 1/2 a mile up the river again. I thought the problem could have been in the head design. Harry went halves with me and we built our own aluminium heads. We cast the heads in 2 pieces with special cross bracings which held an even pressure on the gasket and stopped the oil seepage down the side of the block. When we used the new head with a special gasket we had no problems blowing head gaskets. These heads were the forerunners of the "Clifford" heads made by Jack Clifford in America.

We were racing at Lake Kanahooka, near Dapto, one year. Harry was charging down

the main straight, with the engine singing beautifully, when I heard a loud BANG. I looked up to see the main airfeed from the supercharger to the inlet manifold shooting 50 feet into the air. The retaining clamps had slipped off because they lost their grip on the



chrome plated airfeed. The airfeed included a blow off valve to protect the supercharger if the engine backfired and the take off for the pressure gauge. It took 2 days to make. Now the rotten thing was at the bottom of the lake and I didn't feel like making another. There were some children snorkelling at the edge of the lake so we offered them \$5.00 to retrieve the airfeed which they did. We roughed up the airfeed with a file and refitted it to the engine. We continued racing without any other problems.

We competed in an Easter meeting at Lake Kanahooka, it must have been around 1970, with very different results. Harry woke early one morning and asked if I had moved the boat to be washed out. I hadn't. The boat had been stolen. It was found a couple of years later almost completely stripped. The joker who stole the boat was already in jail for stealing a Monaro.