

# ELFIN

OWNERS AND DRIVERS CLUB INC.

# NEWSLETTER



NUMBER 149 - September 2018



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## ELF - IN



❖ Small, slight, and delicately - made or proportioned, quick, agile and delicate ( as in movement or thought ), having an otherworldly, unearthly or magical quality.

- Webster's Dictionary.



## ELFIN OWNERS AND DRIVERS CLUB INC.

Well it's September newsletter time. As I write this it is raining here in Melbourne – we are certainly having a variety of weather at the moment! In this issue you'll read about....

60 years of Baskerville Raceway, the longest continuously operating licensed motor racing circuit in Australia. Celebrations marking this milestone included a reception at Government House where two Elfins were proudly on display.

VHRR's Historic Rob Roy, unfortunately with only one Elfin competing – my Type 3 Clubman. I have a soft spot for the Elfin. Since I built it in 2006, it has been very reliable and great to drive.

Mark Goldsmith, along with Grandson Eddie, visits the Elfin Heritage Centre and catches up with Peter Ffrench and Nigel Tait. I am sure young Eddie enjoyed the experience.

Speaking of the Heritage Centre, Bill Hemming flew the Elfin flag at Monterey in the U.S. for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of F5000 racing at Monterey, and whilst on the subject of anniversaries, next year is the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Elfin cars!

You can also have a quick look at Ron Lambert's Elfin 300.

Australian Drivers Champion, John McCormack, returns to Baskerville, along with some of the cars he raced with success.

A number of Elfin owners and drivers were successful at Mallala with Laurie Bennett taking out the Driver of the Meeting.

A clipping of an article from a 1962 'Pix magazine (remember them?) is included – along with a picture of a very young Garrie Cooper.

Happy reading....

**MIKE BARKER**



### EODC CONTACTS:

President: **MIKE BARKER** - mbar6415@bigpond.net.au 0407 825 545

Membership/Newsletter: **CHERYL REID** - reidywithchampers@yahoo.com.au 0419 581 815

Memorabilia: **BILL HEMMING** - bill@elfinheritage.com.au 0408 059 002

### TELL US ABOUT YOUR CAR...

There are a number of Elfins out there in various stages of repair. We know about the ones that are up and running but are eager to hear about the others. If you (or someone you know) has an Elfin that is hidden in a 'chook house' under a tarp, in bits and pieces in a box in the garage, ready to be restored or nearly there, let us know - preferably with a couple of pictures. It is an interesting story and who knows, we may be able to help you move it to the next stage....



# ELFIN OWNERS AND DRIVERS CLUB INC.

## BASKERVILLE RACEWAY CELEBRATES 60 YEARS

Historic Racing Car Club of Tasmania President **GRANT TWINING** played a significant role in the tribute to Baskerville Raceway - the oldest continually licensed racing circuit in Australia - by the Tasmanian Government earlier in the year. 100 past and current drivers, officials and people who had contributed to Baskerville Raceway over the 60 years, were welcomed to a formal reception at Government House where the Elfins of **STEPHEN BYERS/NOEL CLARK** (700) and **JAMES CURRAN** (623) stood proudly on display.



Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2018, turned out to be a beautiful day for the Annual VHRR Historic Rob Roy Hillclimb. "The early morning drive to the event proved to be very invigorating in an open sports car - particularly one without a windscreen - you could feel the temperature changes as you dropped into and out of the dips..." quipped our humble President **MIKE BARKER** in his Elfin Clubman Type 3 before



posting the fastest time of day of 22.79 seconds.



Mike is pictured here in action at the Rob Roy event. Driving his Hayward O6 formula libre, he has since been named runner-up to the Victorian Hillclimb Champion for 2018. Congratulations Mike!

While over in Melbourne helping his Brisbane family unpack and settle in, it was an opportunity for Grandpa (**MARK GOLDSMITH**) to take Eddie Goldsmith (at right) to **BILL HEMMING's** Elfin Workshop. They had a great catch-up with **PETER FFRENCH** and **NIGEL TAIT** and so the kettle went on. Nigel then showed Eddie the Match SR4 with a Quad Cam Repco Brabham - the only running of its type in the world - and the Lolita Clubman. A great day of 'boys stuff'!



After being given 'yet another leave pass' from his patient wife Deb, **BILL HEMMING** recently took off again to the US to compete in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of F5000's at Monterey.

Lucky boy!





# ELFIN OWNERS AND DRIVERS CLUB INC.

## RON'S 300

The HRCCT visit to **RON & WIN LAMBERT's** earlier in the year enabled many excited members to view under the skin of Ron's Elfin 300. His car is potentially the most original Elfin ever built. It has not been restored, it is as it was. Ron was happy to display this marvellous car, and all were happy learning so much about how Elfins were designed and built.



## JOHN MCCORMACK SALUTED AT BASKERVILLE HISTORICS

**JOHN MCCORMACK** was recently reunited with several of his former cars (picture below) at the September meeting at Baskerville in a tribute to his wonderful career. His nine-year association with Ansett Team Elfin resulted in two Australian Drivers Championships (1973 and 1975) and John was thrilled to be seated in his Elfin MR5 (left).



Well done to **BOB ANDERSON** for getting the MR5 to Tassiel!



# ELFIN OWNERS AND DRIVERS CLUB INC.

## ELFINS STRUT THEIR STUFF AT MALLALA



Elfins were proudly represented at Mallala earlier this year, with **LAURIE BENNETT** (right) taking out The Driver of the Meeting award and dominating all races in Groups M and O. Both he and fellow driver **PAUL HAMILTON** finished first and second in all



four races in their Elfin 600's and **NORM FALKINER** (Elfin Mono) joined them in the final race to make it Elfin 1, 2 and 3! Well done chaps!

Adding to the fun **NORM's** Mono (below left) was proudly decorated in a halo (by a mischevious EODC member - your secret is safe with us **BILL**) in tribute to the innovation added to F1 cars.

Finishing first and second in the final F5000 event were the MR8's of **BILL HEMMING** and Michel Glynn, whilst Jamie Larner driving father **PETER LARNER's** Elfin 700 (right) took out second place on each day.



**SAM NITSCHKE** took out the final Regularity race of the day in his Elfin Clubman and **DAN JEFFRIES** (Elfin Streamliner) was successful in the Groups K,L, Vb Handicap race taking fastest lap time and third position.

All in all a great weekend with everyone eager to return next year!



## FOR SALE:

### ELFIN 600D

Repco Brabham V8 engine. Fully restored and logged with CAMS. **GARRIE COOPER's** personal car. (NB: only one 600D ever made)

Further details: **JOHN DALZIEL**

**0409 334 303**

## CALLING ALL TASSIE OWNERS

**CHRISTIAN WILLING** is calling for Expressions of Interest for his Elfin Number Plates.

Please note they are only valid in Tasmania.

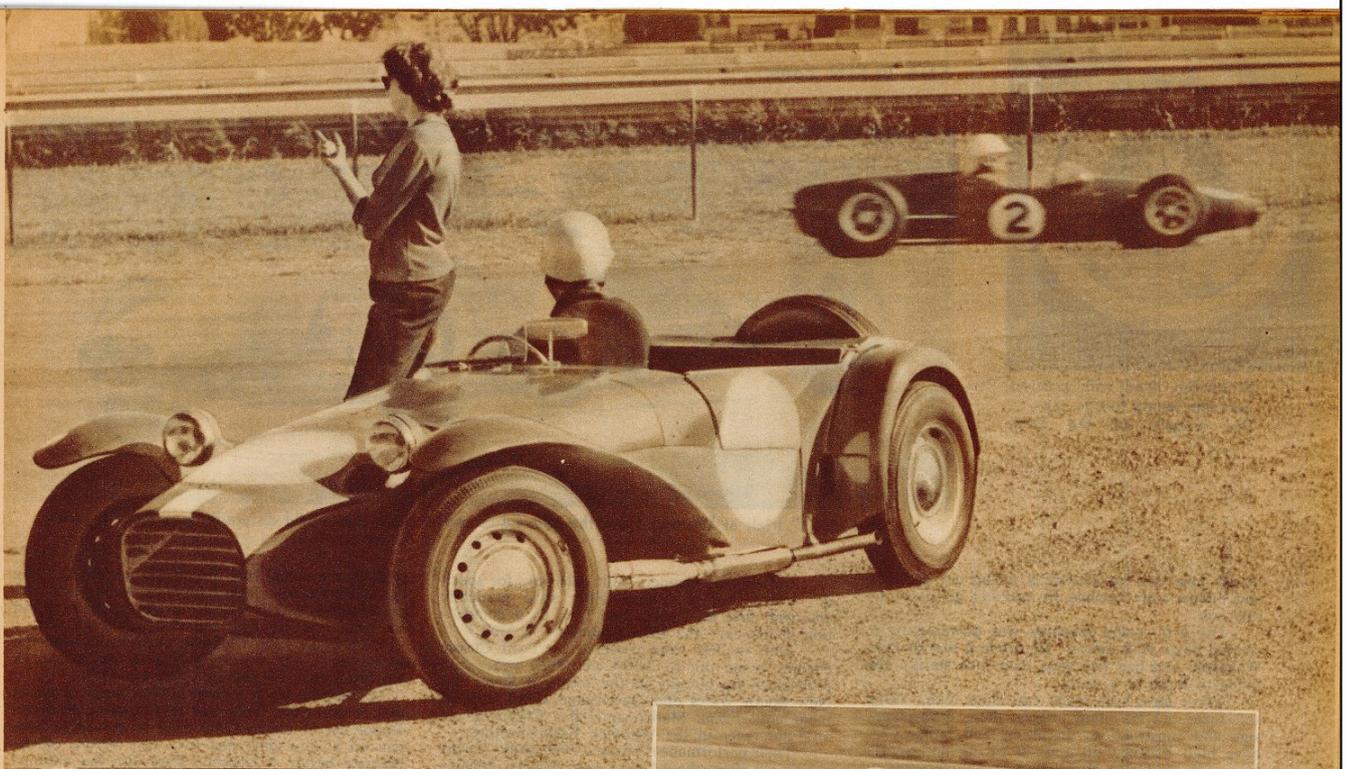
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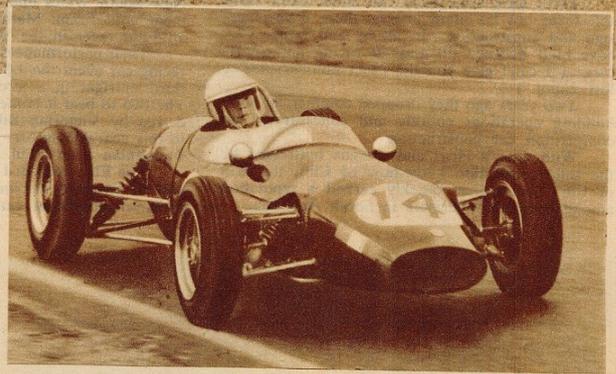


## ELFIN OWNERS AND DRIVERS CLUB INC.

The following article, which appeared in the PIX magazine November 1962, gives us a glimpse of the early racing days of Elfin.



The Elfin string of competition cars. Above, the Elfin Clubman pulls into the pits while the FJ continues to hurtle round the Warwick Farm practice circuit. At right, Frank Match in the winning Elfin 1,500 racer at Catalina Park.



# AUSTRALIAN DESIGNER'S CHALLENGE

The top imported cars were clearly the favourites but the cars of the young man from Adelaide scored all the points.

by VIV DAWES

As the blood-red bullet coasted past the checkered flag and began its rolling deceleration around the Catalina Park motor racing circuit the sun glistened on a spritish, emblematic head with pointed ears and jaunty forage cap.

That spritish head proclaimed that here was an Elfin, and elfin, as the Oxford Dictionary clearly states, pertains to a class of supernatural beings, dwarfish in form and possessing magical powers.

A better definition of the tiny racing car, silent and still now from lack of fuel, would be hard to find.

For the dwarfish little car had shown almost magical powers in the way it careered round the tight Catalina Park circuit to whip the top imported cars in Australia and win the Australian Formula Junior Motor Racing Championship at its first start.

And back in the pits a young man with the gentle brown eyes of a dreamer silently agreed with the Oxford definition. He was Gary Cooper, the brilliant 26-year-old Adelaide designer and

co-builder with his father of the Elfin string of racing and sports cars.

This was his peak triumph in a day of many triumphs—a day when three cars carrying the Elfin emblem were piloted across the line by Frank Match for five firsts, a second and a third out of seven starts.

But the Formula Junior win was the greatest win, not only because it was the major race of the day, but because of the way it was won.

Match had to coast his little machine for the last few hundred yards because of an empty fuel tank but he had built up such a commanding lead in the 40-mile event that he still won by four seconds from the fast-finishing Brabham racer, driven by Tasmanian Gavin Youl, and the Lotus 22 driven by Leo Geoghegan.

In this one day Coopers and their cars were established as factors that may well dominate Australian motor racing and competition.

Since that meeting at Catalina Park on October 28, and one at Warwick Farm a fortnight

earlier, orders and inquiries from racing and competition drivers eager to try the Elfin's magical powers have deluged the Elfin works.

Already there are Elfins in every State of Australia and there have been inquiries from overseas. But for New Zealand's import regulations, at least three of them would be racing now in that country.

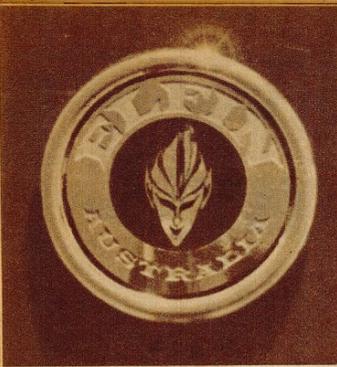
All this has been achieved in only two years as a full-time designer and builder but Gary's first attempts at car design date back much further. He inherited his love of cars from his father, Cliff Cooper, who operated a bus and commercial vehicle body building works at Edwardstown, Adelaide. From earliest memory, Gary had been pottering around the factory and when he left school it was only natural that he join the business.

Almost immediately he began tinkering with sports cars in his spare time. He began building his first car at 16 or 17. It was basically an Austin Seven and Gary drove it in his first competition—a hill climb—in 1954.

His interest turned to road racing and it's a

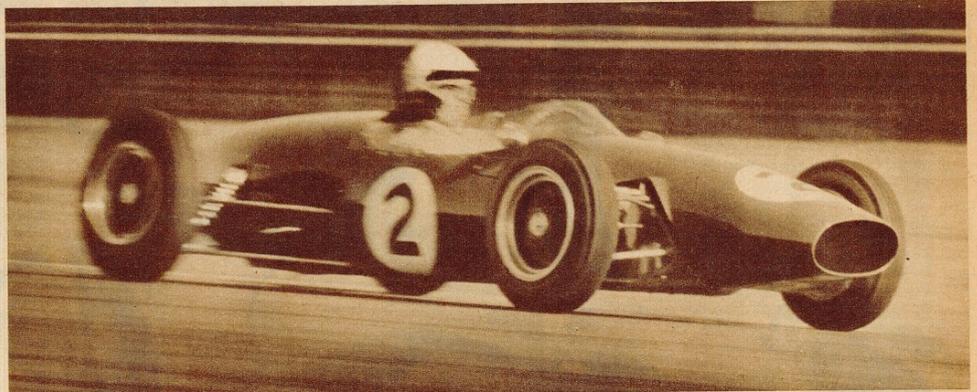


## AUSTRALIAN DESIGNER'S CHALLENGE continued...



A spritish head with pointed ears and jaunty forage cap . . . the insignia of the Elfin.

### THE ELFIN cont.



In "shakedown" trials at Warwick Farm the Elfin FJ recorded times that would do credit to a full, 2.5 racer.

family joke that he became a racing car designer and builder only because he couldn't get a car to suit him.

His first racing machine was powered by a sleeved down A30 motor. He drove it first at Port Wakefield and had two wins from two starts. He failed to finish at a third.

There have been many cars since then. Gary still races but his main interest these days is design and construction. In all he and father Cliff have built between 30 and 40 racing and sports cars. ("I can't give you the exact number—we've lost count.")

Two years ago they dropped commercial body building operations entirely and concentrated on competition car construction.

With Gary's ideas and designs buttressed by the solid production know-how of Cliff, the firm of Elfin Sports Cars quickly earned a reputation among competition drivers in South Australia.

Initially the Coopers built cars only for specific orders, but a definite Elfin style gradually emerged, first as a racer and later as a competition sports car—the Elfin Clubman—as well.

Both models were powered by Ford Classic engines bored out to 1,500 c.c. They were soon established on circuits in the southern States but New South Wales and Queensland heard little of them until Frank Match entered a Clubman and an Elfin racer in the Warwick Farm meeting.

Their performances amazed everybody. In the racing car event the 1.5 litre open wheeler finished third outright in a strong field of 2.5 litre cars. The two to beat it home were 2.5 Cooper-Climaxes driven by Victorian Bib Stillwell, who is leading in this year's Gold Star drivers' championship, and Tasmanian John Youl.

The Elfin recorded third fastest lap in practice and so provided the unusual spectacle of an Australian-made racing car on the front row of the

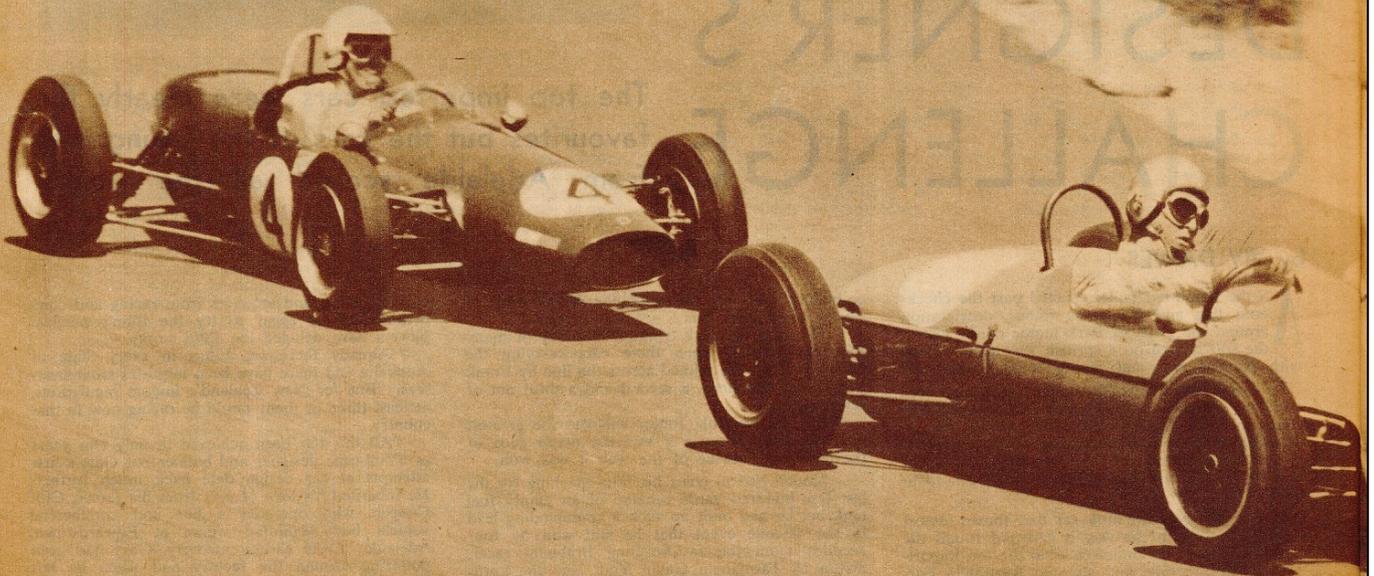
grid. In the actual race Frank Match clocked one lap at 1m 42.3s—a new lap record for its class and one that was fourth fastest outright in the race and six seconds faster than the next 1,500 c.c. car.

Then the Elfin Clubman cleared out with the sports car event, averaging five to six seconds a lap faster than its nearest 1,500 c.c. rival.

The Elfin really arrived in New South Wales at that meeting but more was to follow—a Formula Junior car of under 1,100 c.c. It arrived in Sydney on a Thursday, just two days before official practice began at Catalina Park for the national FJ championship.

That afternoon it was taken to the Warwick Farm circuit so Frank Match could get the feel of his new mount. After only six circuits of the track he was lapping at times that would do credit to a full 2.5 racer.

Designer Cooper made a few adjustments and the car was taken out again. This time disaster





## AUSTRALIAN DESIGNER'S CHALLENGE continued...

struck—the Elfin clipped a post, wrenching off a back wheel assembly and damaging the chassis.

It looked hopeless but the Coopers, together with Frank Matich and his engineer, Ian Maudsley, went to work on the injured beauty.

They worked until midnight on the Thursday and were back on the job early next morning. At midnight Friday the FJ Elfin was loaded on to its transporter and the twisting, 60-mile haul to the Blue Mountains resort of Katoomba began.

The four didn't get to bed until after 3 a.m. but at 8.10 Saturday morning Frank Matich was pounding on Ian Maudsley's door.

The Coopers, who didn't get any sleep at all on the Wednesday night and very little since then, managed an extra two hours before they too had their heads under the bonnets of the various Elfins.

**SATURDAY** was a scramble of last minute tuning, warm-ups and car-hopping as Frank Matich drove practice laps to record qualifying times for the three Elfins and his big Lotus.

But Sunday made it all worthwhile. The 1,500 c.c. scored two firsts, the Clubman scored two firsts and the FJ took off the championship. And on top of this, each car set a new class lap record.

So when Gary and Cliff Cooper headed back home to Adelaide the next morning each had a comfortable feeling of achievement. Already selling as many cars as their Edwardstown plant could turn out the meeting had prompted many more inquiries and the promise of many more orders.

So what of the future?

Both Cliff and Gary are willing to take that as it comes but a few things are reasonably certain:

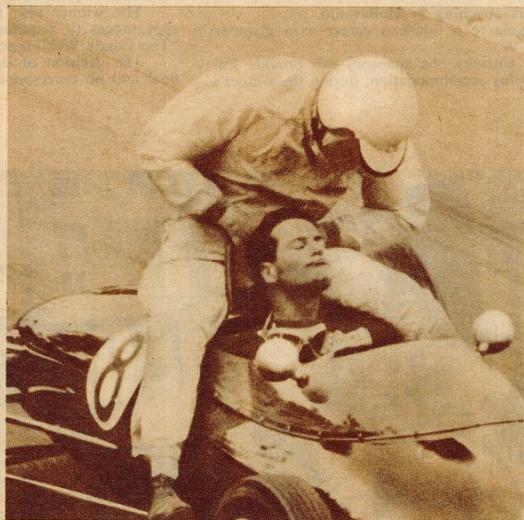
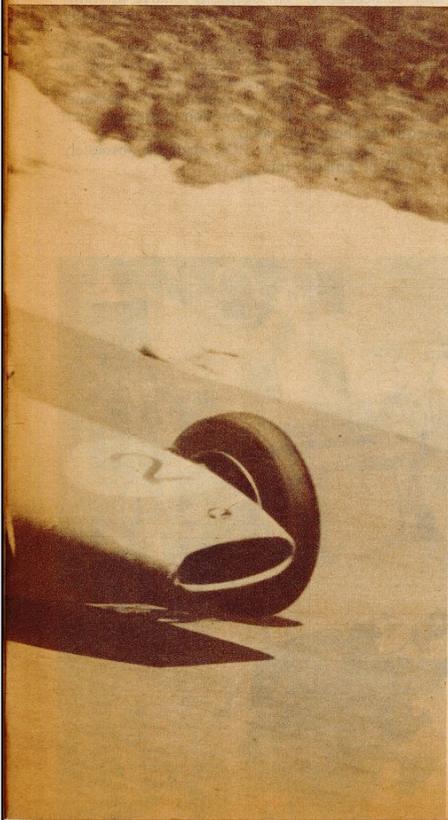
With their racing cars, both FJs and 1,500s, selling in ready-to-race condition for about £600 less than a comparable imported car in kit or assemble-it-yourself form, they are assured of a steady market.

The Clubman sports car, with its stark, back-to-the-old-square-look lines so popular with competition drivers, will be in growing demand.

And on top of all this a new, rear-engined sports car with an aero-dynamic body design they are working on. If plans come off to incorporate in it a new-type, entirely Australian-developed motor prove as successful as early hopes indicate, there should be a lot of elfin magic spun around racing circuits for years.



Adelaide's Gary Cooper, at 26, has designed sports and racing cars that rank with the world's best competition models.



For seven laps the Elfin clung to the tail of the Brabham, left, but finally got around and opened up a lead of 16 seconds before a fuel shortage caused Matich to ease up. After coasting in with tank empty Matich hitches a ride with Leo Geoghegan.

### ASTHMA BRONCHITIS

Up till now, to get relief from an attack, you used a drug of some sort; no doubt you have been doing that for many years—and you'll continue doing it if you don't use Membrosus. You wonder what this Membrosus is? Well, it's a dry inhalant, completely different in every way from all other treatments. There are no drugs and you don't use it just to get relief from an attack when it comes. Instead, you inhale regularly every morning and evening whether you have an attack or not—it takes about 10 minutes. What happens? Something different to what you are accustomed. You'll find the attacks will become less severe and less frequent, and after a while—no attacks at all! That can happen, even though you have had the complaint for many years and you have despaired of ever getting worthwhile relief. Here's what one happy user says: "Yesterday I got up without coughing—the first time for fourteen years. Four months ago it took me on an average 35 minutes to walk from the station to my work... not a great distance either, and I was always knocked up and short of breath. Someone told me about Membrosus, the DRY INHALANT TREATMENT. I tried it as I have tried a dozen other things, hoping for relief. Imagine my surprise and intense joy when, after a short period, I felt a definite relief. And when the other morning I got up without coughing for the first time in fourteen years, I began to look at life anew. Now I walk to my job comfortably in seven minutes, smoking my pipe, and suffer no discomfort. Now there is no coughing, no tight bound-up feeling. I am able to lie down and sleep at night without the nightmare of an attack and enjoy meals without any ill-effects."

For particulars, call or send 5d stamped addressed envelope to Sole Distributors: MEMBROSUS CHEMICALS C/- Irvine Pty. Ltd., Chemists, No. 40 St. James' Buildings, 109 Elizabeth St., Sydney, NSW. There is also a special Membrosus treatment for Catarrh, Hay Fever and Antrium Trouble.



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# ELFIN OWNERS AND DRIVERS CLUB INC.

## MEMBERSHIP:

We wish to introduce our new members and hope they have a long and happy association with the EODC.

### No 671 - PETER GENTRY (NSW)

Peter has bought Elfin NG Vee 79-0017 and plans to use it with GEAR at Wakefield Park. He has participated in NZ hillclimbs and circuit racing whilst the car has history at Morgan Park, Mallala, AIR, Sandown, Calder and Winton. It sounds like they are both ready for a little more fun!

### No 673 - JASKO SOMIC (VIC)

Jasko has attended the last two Elfin BBQ's and has been persuaded to join the club too. Although not owning an Elfin he is always keen to admire their beautiful lines and the equipment beneath the bonnet. See at the next barbeque Jasko!

### No 674 - WILLIS MURPHEY Jnr (USA)

The ex- RICHARD CARTER/ DAVID MAJOR mono has made its way across the Pacific to the US where new owner WILLIS MURPHEY is enthusiastically flying the Elfin flag. This 1966 mono is also well known for its success in the hands of Johnnie Walker in the Australian Drivers' Championships of 1967 and 1968. We look forward to following its campaigns in America. Keep us posted Willis!

### No 675 - GUS BOOTH (VIC)

Gus has inherited his late uncle's car - a red/silver 2003 Elfin Type 3 clubman - chassis 30. With the help of BILL HEMMING the car has been brought back to glory and Gus hopes to race it in the future. Congratulations Gus.

### No 676 - GRAEME SHELDON (NSW)

Graeme is now the proud owner of the ex-Mark Textor 2007 MS8 Clubman, that CHRISTIAN WILLING enthusiastically zipped around Tasmania. We hope you have many hours of fun in this wonderful car Graeme.

### No 677 - WILLIAM TYMMS (VIC)

We are always delighted to have father-son combinations in the EODC. William's father BILL TYMMS owns an orange 2008 MS8 streamliner and I'm sure William is eager to get behind the wheel. Welcome to the club William!

## VALE:

### DAVID MEYERS by JAMES CALDER

We were saddened to hear of the passing of DAVID MEYERS. David was the owner of the Elfin Streamliner he purchased from the SHEARER family, but unfortunately ran out of time to finish the restoration. David worked on the Elfins of WILL WALKER and JAMES CALDER amongst others, and always prepared these cars to the highest standard. David was a lovely character, always ready to help others and have a chat, and passionate about all things Elfin and Ducati. He selflessly worked to make sure we were all safe out on the track enjoying the cars and sport we love. He was taken away too soon at only 54 after a short battle with brain cancer. Our condolences to his family and friends.



# ELFIN OWNERS AND DRIVERS CLUB INC. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name (PLEASE PRINT) .....

Address .....

Postcode.....Fax No.....Mobile No .....

Phone No.....(home) .....(work)

Email.....

I am an owner/ex-owner/entrant/driver/mechanic/enthusiast of Elfin cars. (Please circle)

CAR..... YEAR OF MANUFACTURE.....

CATEGORY..... CAPACITY.....

ENGINE..... ENGINE NO.....

CHASSIS NO..... COLOUR.....

Any other significant mechanical details?

### - HISTORY OF CAR -

EVENTS CONTESTED (include results and dates)

PREVIOUS OWNERS (and years)

◆◆◆ Please include a photograph of your car ◆◆◆

I wish to become a member of the Elfin Owners and Drivers Club, and

have enclosed a cheque for \$25 - membership fee (no cash please).

have paid my membership via direct credit -

Bank A/C No. 5003785 BSB 633-000 (Bendigo & Adelaide Bank)

Signed .....

Please return to Cheryl Reid  
2/6 Merton St  
IVANHOE 3079

or email reidywithchampers@yahoo.com.au

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