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Or Facebook page [www.facebook.com/clubmotoriitalia](http://www.facebook.com/clubmotoriitalia)

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**Full yearly Membership fees:**

1 January to 31 December  
Social \$45  
Motorsport/Competition \$65  
Family \$90  
(2 adults + kids under 18 - Family rate allows up to two competition members.)  
Note: Applicants who wish to join part-way through the year will be charged a pro-rata membership fee based on the number of months left in the membership year. See the application form for details.

**Meetings**

Southern members meet on the final Tuesday of each month, January through to November, at the Civic Club, 134 Davey Street, Hobart.

The committee meeting is held between 6.30-8.00 pm. Drop in any night.

CMI's AGM is generally held at 7 pm on the last Tuesday of November at the Civic Club, Hobart.

All contributions to Veloce Nota are welcome and when published earn points towards the Clubman of the Year Award.

Please send all letters and contributions to The Editor: [cmi.editorial@gmail.com](mailto:cmi.editorial@gmail.com)

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David Mitchell  
Steve Caplice  
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Another lightweight issue; Covid-19 is doing that to us. I would love to tell you that the OT 1600 is going strong after six months off the road, but it's not. Problem after problem, and a new one at every step of the gearbox/engine installation. I think I will do a list of them for the next issue. It'll give your *schadenfreude* a place to go.

The most recent problem relates to the 18-mm sideways engine movement we did several months ago. As clearances to the subframe at the rear were already very fine, that small movement has meant that the subframe sits up against both the top coolant hose and the alternator pulley nut.

Then, and probably more im-

portantly, there is the lack of gears. I have four positions for the gear lever, but on my Boxing Day test run they only produced first and second gear—twice. That is my first post-Christmas job.

The only upside is that I do have reverse—which suggests that between the first/second position and the reverse one, the third/fourth movement should be available.

A further upside is that it appears to accelerate better than it did before in second gear. This is interesting because second in the VW box is a higher ration than it is in the old Renault box. The acceleration (unless I'm imagining it) probably comes

from the combination of a much lighter flywheel and an overall weight reduction of 10 kg with the new gearbox and ancillaries.

**2022 Membership payments are now due.**  
**For details of how to renew, costs etc, go to**  
**<https://cmitas.org/membership/>**

Presidential Patter

I am writing this on Christmas Eve and like everyone else I am very much looking forward to the end-of-year break. I've had a mixed couple of months as far as cars and car club matters go. The end-of-year dinner at the Australian Italian club was excellent food and company and I was very pleased to be returned as Club President for another year. I also got my Corolla motorkhana going nicely with an engine transplant (thanks Blakey for the donor vehicle). In the not-so-good column my trusty Alfasud expired at a recent track day with oil surge taking out the big end bearings. I was disappointed but given it was a 40-year-old motor which had been driven mercilessly for the past 13 years I can't complain and I am quite looking forward to rebuilding it. In addition to the engine rebuild, my eldest son has started an Alfasud restoration and with Graham Mitchell's help we have removed and replaced rusty sections from the front end and are ready to paint the engine bay and get an engine into the car in the next few weeks.

Looking to 2022 we have the club breakfast to look forward to on Sunday 16 Jan at the Waterworks to kick the year off. I hope to see you there.

Robert Madigan



If you do any of your own work on your car, you have seen 'Now attach special tool AT3197/B' or something similar. This will be accompanied by a photograph of something that looks like an Inquisition torture instrument. We seldom have these tools, but a little bit of thought can take the place of a lot of money.

Bill Freame has sent me the attached notes about some Fiat and other tools that he and Phil Buggee have made, and I have added some of my own.

### Bill Freame:

At the top are two tap helpers, drilled to control the stem/shank to tap vertically, so the thread will be square to the surface. The threaded part of the tap should be given lots of clearance within the helper, lots of room for the swarf to gather without lifting the helper off the surface.

The long, stepped rods are used for aligning the FIAT twin cam head as it is lowered onto the head gasket, with some of the valves well off their seats.

This is especially important when replacing a head gasket on a motor, in a car, with two people at arm stretch, lowering the head onto the motor.

The rubber tipped aluminium rod is for installing spark plugs without fear of cross threading them. Getting the plugs started in the head, the rubber will slip on the ceramic of the plug if the threads are not aligned!

At the bottom is a single hex 8mm spanner for brake bleeding. It is made from a trimmed down, socket head, cap screw bronzed onto a scrap steel strip.

Above that are two aluminium pins, stepped to slip into wheel hubs to align the 'bolt on' wheel

when refitting a wheel on a stud less hub.

Left of that is one of several 10mm single hex tee spanners I've made. The socket end is from a Datsun 1600 head bolt and is ideal for any 6mm bolts.

The ruler is trimmed to a point and used for measuring from the centre of the curved undercrown of a piston or anything else I want to measure.

That's just a small selection of the special tools that can be

made to solve problems, improve preparation and speed up servicing.

### Philip Blake:

The aluminium wheel alignment tools and the tap helpers are my favourites among Bill's tools. My own are shown opposite.

From left to right:

Spanner for setting bearing tension on Renault gearbox (redundant now, I hope); converted Fiat auxiliary shaft to





## Fiat 124 Pininfarina Spyder

Many years ago now, for various reasons, then-CMI member Darren Stops sold his beloved black Fiat 124 Pininfarina Spyder.

Before he did, I wrote a story about it for Australian Classic Car, illustrated by my son John's photographs.

Ever since he sold it, Darren has been trying to keep track of the car, and when it finally turned up back in Hobart the opportunity was too good to miss, so he bought it back!

The car has a worked two-litre motor—prepared by Autocraft back in the day and good for about 150 bhp, which is a tidy output for a roadgoing twin-cam. (It's more than the Editor has in the OT 1600.)

Darren brought it out to Sorell for me to have a drive, and apologised for the paintwork. (It looks fine and mostly is fine, but in a few places it has deteriorated over the years.)

I had not driven the car when I wrote the first story, so I had nothing to compare it to but my own car. Darren reckoned it was down on power, but when I took it out along my own personal racer road, it seemed pretty good apart from a very heavy throttle pedal.

It's remarkable how much difference a heavy throttle can make to the apparent willingness of a car.

This one is fuel injected, so the throttle cable rotates a large drum to work the injectors. There doesn't seem to be a lot of stiction when you turn it by hand, but the feeling at the foot is a bit leaden. However, with 6000 revs on the clock it was happy enough to go.

A very nice car and one I hope we will see at club events. P.B.

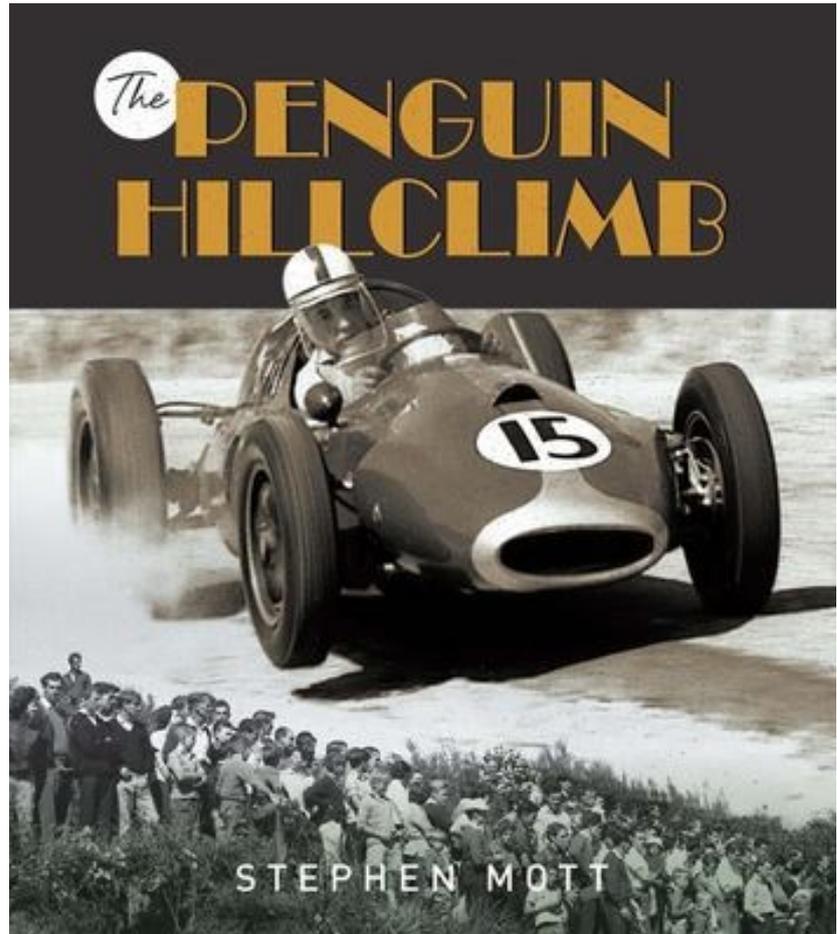


I have just read Stephen Mott's book, *The Penguin Hillclimb*, and found it fascinating. It was a much better read than I expected, given that it is largely a recounting of the results from each of the hillclimbs (sometimes up to four a year!) run at this interesting course.

The characters, and particularly their cars, come alive under Stephen's touch. If you have competed in the Baskerville Hillclimb or the CAMS club challenge, you may well have seen Stephen (a Tasmanian Hillclimb champion) competing and winning in his self-built Quoll open-wheeler. So he knows a thing or two about building specials, and about driving up hills.

A remarkable number of exotic vehicles ran at the Penguin Hillclimb between the mid-50s and the early 70s: cars that were ex-Jack Brabham, ex-Graham Hill, ex-Jim Clark, and of course the locally built specials that often borrowed both designs and actual parts from these exotica.

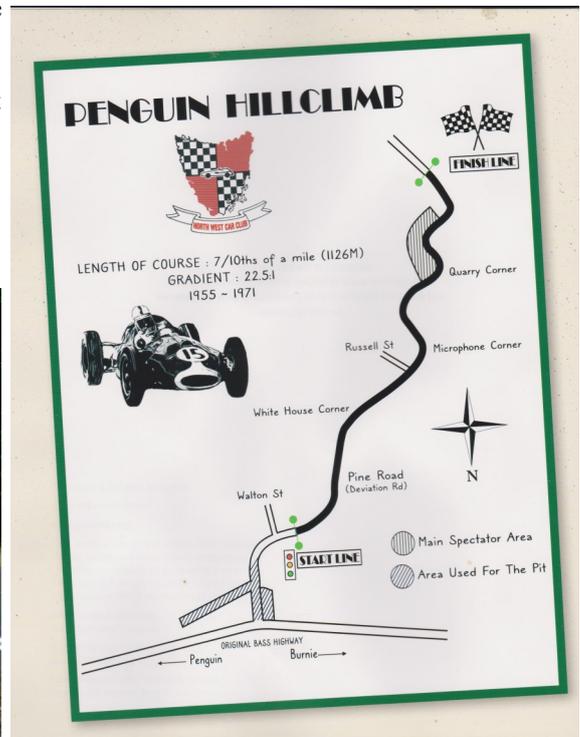
You can still drive the course today: it runs up Deviation Road in Penguin (called Pine Road on the map). Sadly it is no longer used: the council realised there was more money to be made from development than motor



sport, and some of the people who had bought or built houses decided they didn't like race cars hurtling past. 'If you don't like the heat, don't stand in the kitchen' comes to mind! P.B.



Stephen Mott in his Quoll



When I was racing the Ducati 900 SS I was, as I said, a lot more competitive than I had ever been before, and now that I was among the people I had previously watched vanishing into the distance, I felt that I could stay with them. On the straights, at least. The bike was a rocket, I weighed nothing, and once I was tucked in behind the fairing we were headed for the horizon.

So when we turned up at Barkerville for what was vaingloriously called the Tasmanian Grand Prix, I was quietly confident.

But in practice, I couldn't hack it with the top three. I was struggling to get around corners – a rare experience on a Ducati.

Grid positions are determined by practice times, so when my first race started I was somewhere near the middle of the grid instead of in my accustomed spot on the front row.

I was among the 400cc Yamahas back there, and I quietly hoped I could get away from them, because they were not only indecently fast bikes, but were ridden by very good riders, who leaned on each other with abandon and went through corners three abreast. I wanted no part of this, so when the flag dropped I did my best to clear off, using

the pure grunt of the big V-twin. Through the first, twisty part of the lap I didn't have a lot of success, but I picked a couple of them off on the way up the hill, and on the succeeding straights I got a few more, so that when we swept back past the pits for the first time I had a bit of clear track in front of me.

Which I was going to need.

When I tried to lean into the first right-hander on the track, the bike just would not lean over. It felt as if the steering had locked. I knew I was in trouble, and that if I kept trying I would miss the apex of the corner by miles and run out of road on the exit – so I stood the bike up and went straight on, off the track and onto the grass. Then I paddled off slowly round the back of the pits and pulled up in front of the mates who were giving me a hand.

'Front tyre's punctured', said Herbie.

It didn't look it, but it was. It had been going slowly down, and we hadn't noticed. (Yes, I know we should have checked the tyre pressures. I know that now.) I had put my lack of pace down to me, rather than the bike, until it became unrideable.

The funny thing about motorcycle punctures is that they almost always happen on the rear tyre.

The front tyre flicks things up, and the rear runs over them and gets punctured. The bike then starts to weave a bit, and you are instantly aware that the rear tyre is going down. That's how it's supposed to work.

The very much rarer front tyre puncture is a different matter. When the planets are so aligned that something sharp goes straight into the front tyre, you lose steering control. When it's a slow deflation, you lose your steering gradually. It just gets harder and harder to steer. But most of us have very little experience of it – which is my excuse.

If it's a medium-rapid deflation, the bike can go anywhere. It just wanders all over the road like it's on ice.

And if it's a quick deflation you fall off immediately.

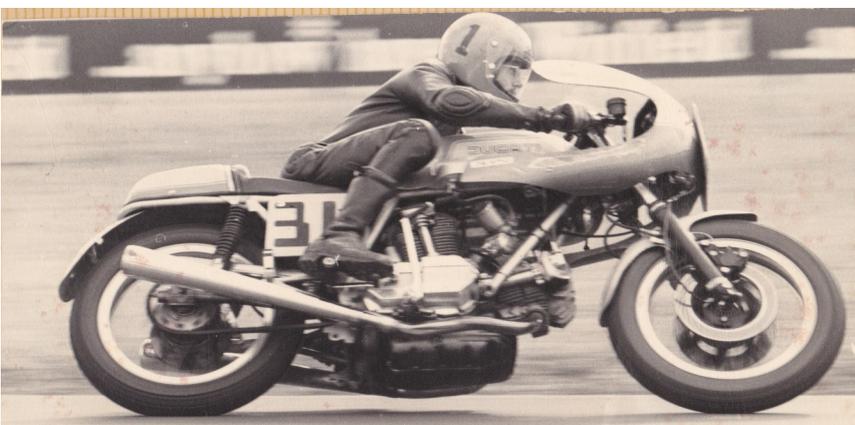
Mine was the first type, happening so slowly that it caught me out completely.

I had had a front-tyre puncture before, while testing a friend's recently bought 500 Velocette Venom on the motorway between Belfast and Lisburn – with him on the pillion. We had been doing about 140 km/h on the motorway, to 'see what she would do'; when we went down the exit lane at Lisburn, the bike suddenly skated all over the place like a jelly on a banana skin and ended up slithering along very close to the steel barrier on the grass beside the road.

In a lifetime of riding motorbikes, those are the only two front-tyre punctures I have ever experienced.

And either of them could have turned out very differently.

Very.



Pic by Ian Brickhill

While the Fiat 600 was off the road, and the new car was still under construction, we were, for a time, carless. This problem was more or less solved when I bought a 1976 Lancia Beta, partly constructed, from a friend. This transaction took place less than two months before Targa Tasmania 2011, and the car was less than perfect. We nursed it home with various ailments – but we finished, and won our class.

The second time my son John and I ran the Lancia, in Targa Tasmania 2012, we had one of the scariest experiences I have had in a competition car. The Lancia was a particularly fine-handling car, with amazing brakes, and both of us enjoyed driving it. It was the first front-wheel drive car I had had as a racer, and it was very well balanced. This year it was a lot better prepared and running much more sweetly.

Driving out of the Silverdome to take our place in the line headed for the Prologue at George Town, we found ourselves behind the Gulf Oil-liveried Porsche 911 of Greg Cook. Cooky stopped, I put my foot on the brake, and there was a good, solid pedal, but no braking effect. Nothing at all.

I had known Cooky for quite a few years by then, but I felt it would be presuming on our friendship to use the back of his Porsche as a buffer, so I whipped the handbrake on. There was a tense little discussion in the car.

'What is it?'

'I don't know.'

'Can we fix it?'

'I don't know.'

'What are we going to do?'

'I don't know. But I know one thing. We're not trying to fix it here. If we tell anybody we have no brakes, that'll be the end of us. We'll have a look at it in George Town.'

So we set off on the 50-km touring stage to George Town, testing the brakes all the time and using the handbrake when they weren't there. They mysteriously came and went.

If you've never had brake failure...well, you don't want to. As a driver you are completely conditioned to putting a foot on the brake pedal and feeling immediate retardation. When that doesn't happen, it feels like the car is accelerating. If you've never had this experience, try remembering the first time you applied your pushbike brakes in the wet.

As we lined up for the start of the Prologue, I confided to John, 'They've gone again.'

Not surprisingly, we took it cautiously. On the way around the course, John would call the length of each straight, and as we approached maximum speed, he would say 'Test the brakes.'

Usually there was nothing there when I tested them. Or if there was something, I couldn't guarantee it would still be there at

the end of the straight. So throughout the Prologue, in front of probably the biggest crowd the event attracts, I used the gearbox to slow the car down for most of the corners. I felt like a complete Wally. And I have news for those who boom down through the gearbox to slow down: it may sound good, it may feel good, but it doesn't work very well at all. It hammers the clutch, it risks over-revving the engine and wrecking the gearbox, and it is nothing like as good as a working set of disc brakes. My 'braking' distances were about three times the usual length.

Naturally we set a slow time. When we arrived back in the marshalling area we lifted the bonnet and had a look. And there was your problem right there, as mechanics like to say.

Because the Lancia was built originally as a left-hand drive car, the master cylinder and brake booster are still on that side of the engine bay. The brake pedal operates via a number of linkages and a crossover shaft on the firewall. And one of those linkages was occasionally jamming and preventing the shaft from applying the brakes.

The brakes were fine...we just couldn't use them.



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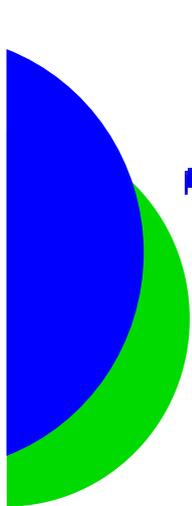
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