

MODIFIED EH HOLDEN CLUB of SA ('MEHHC') - EARLY HISTORY Circa 1975-1982

Compiled by Trevor Cass, April 2021, updated by Mark Burridge 2025, *if you can add to this, please contact the club.*

Preamble: -

The following details are written from records of the Modified EH Holden Club of SA; recollections from discussions with the two other initial Club founders (Ian Aplin and Richard ('Rick') Cybul) were used to compile these records. In addition, information provided by Gary Merton related to primarily post 1980 activities and some photos from the earlier period were used. The original MEHHC Secretary's book was used to support this history and assistance with some event history was provided by Alex Garrard from the EHCC Victoria, Grant Murdoch, an early member; and Kevin McCall and Jim Wolf ex SMASA co-founders.

Whilst these details may not be correct in every way or as comprehensive as would be liked; they should provide some assistance and encouragement for future record keeping of this Club, and the building of additional information from other members.

The general focus of this document is on the first 5 to 7 years from the Club's inception in 1975 to around 1982. Some later photos were included where these were available. It is understood that other records from the following period are retained by Club member, Gary Merton and perhaps others, and many other photos are in other albums from this early period. The focus of this history is from inception of the Club, with other information added where this could be sourced.

The details within this history also incorporate some information on the inception of SMASA, the links to the ASMF and some references to the early days of inclusion of street machines like the EH Holden within the SA and Victorian Hot Rod and Street Machine shows. Sincere apologies to anyone missed or mis-represented.

Brief History on the formation of the Club: -

Ian Aplin, Trevor Cass, Richard (Rick) Cybul, Andy Vassalo all originally met in 1975 to drive the formation of the Club; and after brief discussions on that potential, a formal, initial Club Meeting was held 2 July 1975 (attended by Rick, Trevor, Ian and partners Karen, Colleen and Alison respectively; and Andy)

The initial acquaintances formed between Rick Cybul and Trevor Cass, when both EH sedans were used in Rick and Karen's wedding in 1974; and Ian Aplin worked at Wormald Fire Systems in Ridleyton, SA with Trevor at the time. EH Holdens were much more commonplace in the 1970's than now and the trend towards modifications to street cars was growing. Some Clubs at the time used the term 'modified' or 'street' in their Club name, in addition to the particular model of the Club's focus.

Originally, general Club meetings were at the Walkerville Town Hall, SA (as advertised in the Advertiser Club Notes section every Friday), and at the personal homes of Trevor and Ian. The initial focus of the Club was on shows, displays, street drags, along with social activities. In later years, meetings were held at the Church Hall in Oban Street, Ferryden Park, SA.

Other special interest Car Clubs in operation at the time included: -

Street Machine type Clubs existing in SA through these early times included the

Houghton Modified Street Car Club, SA Modified Street Car Club (SAMS) Early Holden Club, Generals Car Club, Studebaker Club, Chrysler Club, SA Panel Van Club, Ford Customline Club, VW Club, Escort Club, Morris Club, Mini Car Club, Hot Bricks, Southern Earlies FX-FJ Club, '48 FJ Car Club, Mount Gambier Modified Street Car Club, and Corvette Owners Car Club

Recollection of some early Club members' names: -

In addition to those who brought about the inception of the Club as listed above, recalled names of some other earlier members and associates of the Club include:

Angelo (Andy) Vassalo (red EH sedan 327/350 Chev)

Charlie Vignale (light blue metallic, 202 EH sedan)

Mick Herraman and Sonya Bolzon white EH utility

Al Gallagher

Grant Murdoch, white EH sedan

Grant Hanan

Michael and Dale Randall

Bruce Coombe (red EH wagon triple SU's)

Carmino Scalfino/Scarafano? (Royal Park) building light blue sedan

Peter Andresen, white EH sedan

Ray & Carrol (from Victor Harbour, EH sedan with murals)

Trevor & Diane Cornelius

Beau Dolan, white EH Sedan 'Pegasus' muralled sedan, now Dave Warneke's

Gary Merton, EH Panel Van

Bob and Karen Hawke, EH Sedan (and EH sedan build with Chev 6)

Mick Miller, red EH Wagon

Also, with time, Robert Gaetjens, Grant Zippel, and a number of others.

Other names that were mentioned in discussion with Rick Cybul & Grant Zippel are:

David Rawlins, Daryl Beasy (from the Riverland?) the late Mark Youngman, (white EH panel van).

Some photos shown attached included EH vehicles for non-members; it is difficult to recall whether some were Club members, or simply friends of the Club members, and associated with Club members at various events.

Events and Activities of Interest

The Club initially displayed 3 cars at the Adelaide Hot Rod Show (circa 1975)

Other early organised events to promote the Club included a display at the Arndale Shopping Centre in Kilkenny (Circa 1975-6), (Trevor, Ian, Rick, and one other, Bruce Coombes?) cruises to and attendance at the Adelaide Raceway ('Street Drags') a Victor Harbour run in around 1975 with non-member enthusiasts Dave Crispin (metallic brown EH sedan), and Don Lillus (metallic brown EH sedan)

The most radical vehicle in the Club's first few years was that built by Andy Vassalo, a red sedan with a 327/350 Chev engine and light tan trim, rumoured to have been sold not long after the build to a member of the Auger family ('Auger Speed Shop' in Adelaide) and not seen driven since. The vehicle may not have ever been registered. (see photos) A member of another Club has recently (2020) advised that this vehicle is still stored away in Adelaide.

Ten Pin Bowling nights with the SAMS Club, a drive-in night at West Beach, and parklands picnics were held in the early years, and even Bingo was listed as an activity for Club Members!

The Adelaide International Raceway Street Drags on 30 May 1976 was attended by several members.

The Houghton Modified Street Car Club, SAMS Club and MEHHC associated well in early years with joint cruises and events.

Early discussions in 1976 were held with members of SAMS including Jim Wolf and Kevin McCall, and Trevor from the MEHHC regarding the ideal formation of a SMASA type organisation to create greater affiliation between Clubs. On 17 July 1980 (date of Incorporation) these discussions progressed to the formation of SMASA. This was in line with the formation of the same bodies for Victoria, NSW and Queensland.

Representatives were from the formation of the Street Machine Association of SA (founders in 1981 were Jim Wolf, Kevin McCall and Trevor Cass) Nationally, Chic Henry then Les Hathaway in Qld; when Chic Henry went on to organise the Street Machine Nationals in Canberra, John Toovey from Victoria, and the late Graham Stubbs from NSW.

On 25 January 1981, a meeting of all national committees was held and agreed on the formation of a national body to represent street machiners; this was the inception of the Australian Street Machine Federation ('ASMF')

To this time Street Machines including EH Holdens, early Falcons, Chryslers and the like were not given a recognised status within the Hot Rod and similar shows and events. These vehicles were traditionally classified as 'Exhibition' vehicles. The move to grow the EH Club, establish the SMASA and similar bodies interstate all followed the need for recognition of these types of vehicles and the interests of their owners.

The 1977 SA Hot Rod Show in October 1977 saw entries from Trevor, Rick, Ian and Mick. Andy Vassalo had his own individual stand at the Show. Through the exposure of members' cars at the Arndale Shopping Centre, the Adelaide Hot Rod Show and Adelaide raceway events, the focus to attract other new members continued, and this remained a focus for many years to come.

On 12 November 1978, 4 Club members attended the Kilburn Primary School Fete.

Also in November 1978, both the SA and Victorian Clubs met at Mount Gambier SA, for what would later become joint state events. This occurred again in 1979 at Mount Gambier.

Several Club members and 4 cars attended the 3rd Street Machine Nationals in Shepparton in 1978 including Ian and Alison Aplin, Trevor and Colleen Cass, Rick and Karen Cybul, and Bob and Karen Hawke. Ricks, Ian's and Trevor's vehicles had problems, (Ian RHS rear wheel came off, Ricks with radiator issue; and Trevor stripped a timing gear, damaged valves and damaged pistons. Donor parts came from old farms, workshops, and local auto suppliers by way of axles and cylinder heads, timing gears. Bob Hawke assisted well with repairs for all at Shepparton. All cars were repaired in time to return home well and safely.

At the Street Drags in October 1979 some 4 members entered.

Around 1979 Ian showed his yellow EH wagon for the first time at the Victorian Hot

Rod Show. In 1980 Alex Garrard from Victoria brought his EH Holden wagon to the Adelaide Hot Rod Show and was entered in 'Custom Class' under the ASRF guidelines.

An organised run by the Club was to Victor Harbour with 8 vehicles in June 1979.

In 1979 the Club had some 4 vehicles at the Adelaide Hot Rod Spectacular, (Gary Merton (EH Holden panel van), Ian Aplin, (EH Holden wagon) Frank Navacchi (EH Holden sedan) and Peter Andresen (EH Holden sedan)

In 1980, members of the Vic and SA Clubs met while at the Street Machine Nationals event in Narrandera, NSW and discussed the potential for joint state runs, and discovered details of other state clubs in existence.

In 1980 the Club had 4 vehicles at the Adelaide Hot Rod Spectacular: -Gary Merton (EH Holden panel van) Grant Murdoch (EH Holden sedan), Frank Navachi (EH Holden sedan) and Robert Gaetjen (EH Holden sedan)

In around 1981, Club members attended the 'All State Run' at Griffith, NSW along with the Victorian, NSW and Queensland EH Holden Clubs. This was organised by Alex Garrard from the Victorian EH Holden Club and another member. This event was brought about through the liaison between the SA and Victorian Clubs.

On 8 February 1981, the Club through Gary Merton organised its 1st Annual Sports Day named the Car Club Olympics and ten events were held, and the MEHHC placed third overall. The Club came first in the Men's Tube Relay, Tailshaft Throwing, and its part in the Tug o' War, jointly with the EHCC, Studebaker CC.

In both 1981 and 1982, the Club was represented in 'Exhibition Class' at the Adelaide Hot Rod Spectacular; at the Victorian Hot Rod Show and also the Victorian Street Machine Show by Trevor Cass who attended along with Paul Atkins in his HR Premier. Competition for the EH group, was John Dascoli's black EH Premier sedan from Victoria, Rob Grambau's black 350 Chev powered EH sedan also from Victoria.

In later 1981, Trevor, Jim and Kevin from SMASA were approached by John Bryant as organiser of the SA Hot Rod Spectacular. John was concerned that with us creating our own Street Machine shows; he considered that the SA Rod Show might start to look a bit sparse with fewer street machines entered, leaving them with a much smaller car show. As a result of his concerns, he stated that from that point forward he decided that the SA Rod Show would become known as the SA Rod and Street Machine Show, with street machines getting their own judging classifications.

On 9 July 1982 the Road Traffic Board in South Australia opened the new inspection facility at Regency Park. Trevor Cass's EH (MEHHC and SMASA founding member) was used along with a Ford T Bucket from the ASRF, belonging to Frank Noto, as a general demonstration on appropriate modifications to vehicles with SA. An EJ Holden with 'dog kennel' bonnet scoop and oversized rims was also displayed by the SA Government to illustrate a different and less legal approach.

In 1983 SA 'Car Clubs Olympics' featured entries from, amongst other, Clubs the Modified EH Holden Club of SA. Club participation in joint Club events was common through the early years.

Some Club Members participated in the Inaugural SMASA Show & Shine on 12 April 1981 at the Modbury Sporting Club Oval (and further events years held thereafter)

Partners were well engaged with the Club activities. Colleen Cass assisted Trevor with Secretarial duties, typing, copying, organising; and both Karen Cybul and Alison Aplin took roles as Treasurer at one time, and all three assisted with general support. Many members assisted with early events and Club organisation, The lack of memory is frustrating us being able to thank all concerned for their early support.

Club Committees

The Committee in 1975-1976 comprised Ian Aplin President, Trevor Cass Secretary, Rick Cybul Treasurer. In late 1976 Rick resigned as Treasurer and Karen Cybul was elected to that role.

The Committee in 1976-1977 retained Ian Aplin as President, Trevor Cass Secretary, Karen Cybul Treasurer.

The Committee in 1977-1978 remained the same as 1976.

The Committee in 1978-1979 saw Ian Aplin President, Trevor Cass Secretary, Alison Aplin Treasurer.

In August 1978 Trevor resigned as Secretary. Mick Miller was elected as Secretary. In April 1979, Bob Hawke was nominated as President, Gary Merton as Secretary; no other records are recalled of other positions.

In 1980 President was Bob Hawke, Secretary Gary Merton, Treasurer Alison Aplin, Social Secretary Malcolm Palmer.

In 1981-1982 President was Gary Merton, Secretary Daryl Beasy, Social Secretary was Mark Youngman, Treasurer Julie Merton.

Other photos in Club records photo album retained by Gary Merton include amongst others: -

Club run to Mount Gambier Nov 1978

Club entry in Hot Rod Spectacular in October 1979

Club run to Mount Gambier Nov 1979

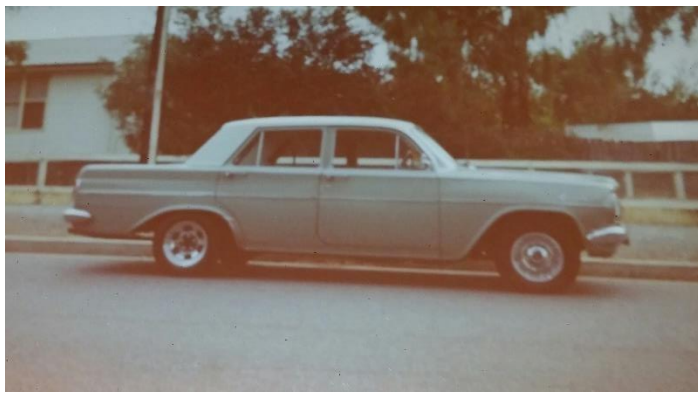
Club entry in Hot Rod Spectacular in October 1990

Footnote to History

Ian Aplin now resides with Alison in Tweed Head, NSW along with his original EH wagon. Rick and Karen Cybul sold both EH Holden sedans; the blue one in circa 2015 which then resold on Ebay again in 2021 for three times the value. Trevor & Colleen Cass returned to Adelaide after 24 years in Melbourne; Trevor re-joined the EHC SA circa 2015 and remains a member today. His blue EH sedan remains in Adelaide, and he is a member of the ASRF, Life member of SMASA, and President of Aces Rod & Custom Club Inc.

PHOTOS

Original Club Founders' Vehicles



Photos of 3 Founding Members' EH Holdens; Top row, Ian Aplin's EH Wagon, Rick Cybul's EH Sedan,
Middle row Rick Cybul's later Sedan,
Bottom row Trevor Cass's EH Sedan (1969 original modified condition, and as rebuilt Circa 1978)

MODIFIED EH HOLDEN CLUB of S.A.

The Modified EH Holden Club caters for the general sporting and social interests of owners of this particular vehicle and this vehicle alone.

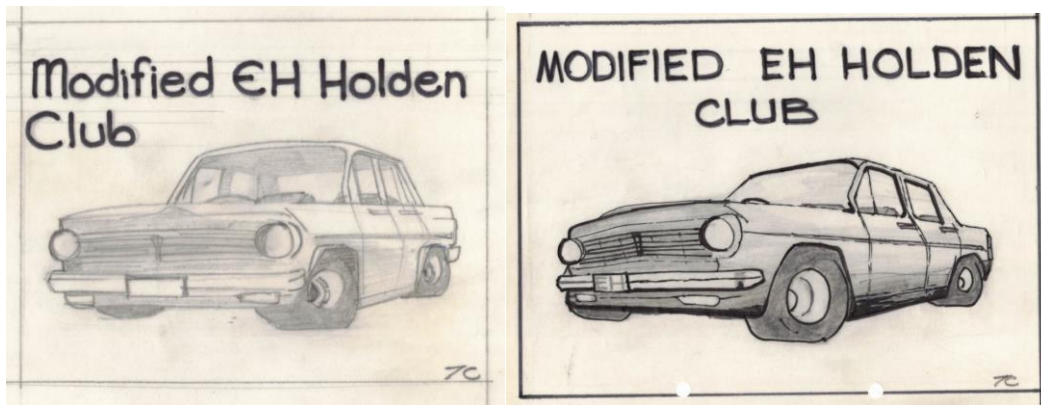
Activities: include participation in street drags, shows and any other sporting activities for which members vehicles are suited. Social evenings including barbeques, slide and film nights etc. are organised periodically. Organised runs and displays are also arranged by individual members.

As the accent is on 'clean' cars we appreciate members with neat street or off road vehicles.

Meetings are held every 2 weeks, rear of Walkerville Town Hall. (corner Walkerville Tee, and Stephens Tee.) at 8:00 p.m. Our meetings are advertised in The Advertiser Club Notes every second Friday.

Further details from Club President Ian Aplin
phone 473095 or Secretary Trevor Cass
phone 3562510

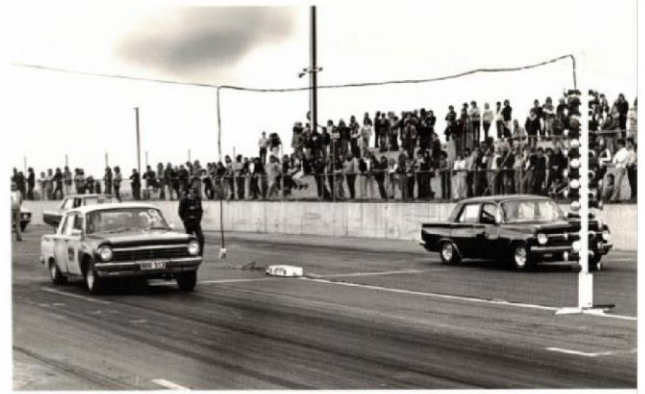
Original Modified EH Holden Club poster board used for promotional purposes Circa 1975



Original sketches by Trevor Cass for Club logo for T shirt design Circa 1975



Photos taken at the Adelaide Hot Rod Show Wayville, SA Circa 1975 Trevor Cass's EH sedan (2), Ian Aplin's EH Wagon, Rick Cybul's EH sedan foreground, and Mick Herraman's EH Utility at rear



Top row - Ian Aplin's EH Wagon at Arndale Shopping Centre Club promotion; Trevor Cass and another member at Street Drags, Adelaide International Raceway 1979; Bottom row - Member vehicle at Street Drags, Adelaide International Raceway 1979; Early Club vehicle line up at Victor Harbour. Early Club vehicles Circa 1978



Trevor & Colleen Cass with EH Sedan, purchased 1969, at Greenacres, SA Circa 1970, pre-commencement of the MEHHC



Ian Aplin and Trevor Cass at Adelaide International Raceway Street Drags,
Carpark and on track photos, Circa 1977



Above top left - Club vehicles at Arndale Shopping Centre Club promotion, Circa 1977 including Rick Cybul's Sedan foreground, Trevor Cass's Sedan
 Above top and lower right - Club vehicles at West Beach Drive-In C 1978-1979.



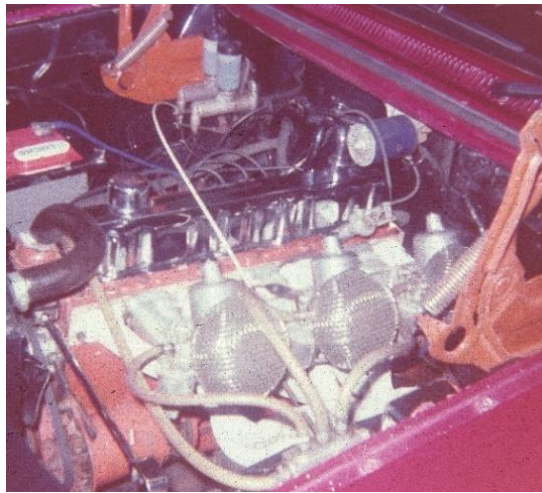
EH Sedan belonging to Peter Andresen at the Narrandera Nationals 1980



Top –Bruce Coombe's wagon, Rick Cybul's Sedan;
 Middle row – Rick Cybul's Sedan and Trevor Cass's sedan at West lakes, Circa 1978
 Original EH, Trevor Cass's Circa 1975
 Bottom - Ray Tuckey's green EH sedan, non-member (associated with Club members
 for weddings)
 Blue EH Sedan belonging to Charlie Vignale



Top and Bottom -Adelaide Hot Rod Show entries early 1980's; Ian Aplin and Carmino Scarafano? Centre – The 'boys' are Rick Cybul wearing original MEHHC T Shirt (right) and Trevor Cass (left)at the Adelaide Hot Rod Spectacular Circa 1974



Above photos - Adelaide Hot Rod Show early 1980's Bruce Coombe's EH Wagon (?)



Above – The EH Sedan of Bob Hawke at West Lakes, Circa 1976



Above photos –

Top row - EH sedan owned by Andy Vassalo Adelaide Hot Rod Show Circa 1979 and
EH Wagon owned by Bruce Coombes Circa 1979 SMASA Show & Shine C1981

Bottom -EH Sedan Andy Vassalo circa 1979 Adelaide Hot Rod Show
Circa 1981- 82 EJ Sedan owned by Gran Zippel at Adelaide Hot Rod Show



Above -Laurie Wickes (non-member) Adelaide Hot Rod Show.



Andy Vassalo's red sedan entry Adelaide Hot Rod Show Circa late 1970's to early 1980's



Trevor Cass's rebuilt EH Sedan at its debut Adelaide Hot Rod Show 1978 with the late Terry Willshire motor trimmer



Thought to be late 1970's Mount Gambier - SA cars are included



Thought to be late 1970's Mount Gambier



Thought to be late 1970's Mount Gambier



Possibly Mount Gambier. SA cars?



Shepparton Circa 1979; on very LHS is Bob Hawke, and RHS is Ian Aplin. Vehicles belong to Bob Hawke and Ian Aplin.



1982 Street Machine Nationals Canberra. First EH in line belongs to Grant Murdoch.



Street Machine Nationals, Canberra 1982
Trevor Cass with friends cleaning roadworks spoil from underside, and trusting the trolley jack!



Early Years Melbourne Street Machine Show Paul Atkins' HR Premier sedan and
Trevor Cass's EH sedan Circa 1981



Top - Rick and Karen Cybul Wedding; vehicles are Dave Crispin, Don Lillus, Trevor Cass, Rick Cybul. One of the first gatherings of the initial vehicles and associated friends Circa 1975-1976

Middle - Wedding with vehicles from Trevor Cass and unknown. Circa 1979

Bottom - Wedding, vehicles Trevor Cass and Rick Cybul. Circa 1976





Members photo - from left - Daryl Beasy, Grant & Sandy Hanan. Other member unknown



Club members and Modified EH Holden Club banner Circa 1982. Club members including from left: Mark Youngman, Grant Hanan, Grant Murdoch, unknown, Julie and Gary Merton, Chris Warner, Karen Warner, unknown, Lee Murdoch



Modified EH Holden Club stand early 1980's Campbelltown Show 'n Shine 1982