

Baby Torque

February 2024



Charlie and Linda Mitchell enjoying maiden outing in recently rebuilt U7.

Baby Torque is published by

The Austin Seven Club of Western Australia (Inc)
34 Honey Road, Forrestfield, WA, 6058

Club meetings and Spares Shed
First Sunday in the month—General Meeting at 10.00 am
34 Honey Road, Forrestfield

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Notify Registrar Gordon McManus of any changes of ownership, change of plate and disposal of any vehicle.

Disclaimer

Responsibility for errors lie with the Contributor and the Editor. Articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the Austin Seven Club of WA (Inc) committee.

President's Report

Musings from February 2004

Our Baby Torque magazine has been in publication since 1986. I often read through our old Editions. I have always loved looking back in time so see where we have been and compare with where we are now. It is wonderful to see photos of members who have come and gone and also those who have been with the Club since its inception. There is also a wealth of technical knowledge in these tomes.



Today I was reading the BT from 20 years ago. Malcolm Little was President and Jeanette Bannister was BT Editor. The lead story was about the January breakfast run (which we resurrected a few years ago) at Belmont Race Course followed by a run around the river.

There is a great story about a 1926 Austin 7 costing ~ AUD\$30 that a couple of young men drove 10,000 miles in five months round Australia without a single breakdown. Petrol was 6 pence per gallon and the minimum mileage was 35 mpg. The roads were a little hairy in parts but they said the magnificent views were worth the drive.

There is a story about one man's struggle to register his 1923 Metallurgique with the Transport Department Office. It is worth a read. The last line says "Graham drove to the Transport Department Office in a blue 1923 Metallurgique tourer, he drove away in a green Miscellaneous wagon."

General Meeting Sunday 4 February 2024 – 34 Honey Road Forrestfield

We have our first meeting for the year on Sunday, 4 February at 10 am. We would love to see you all there at 10 am for the meeting followed by a very collegiate morning tea and visit to the spare shed if required.

We are again asking everyone to donate one gift to the raffle this year. That will allow us to raffle off three prizes each meeting. The morning tea roster will be on hand for you to sign up for one meeting. We are also looking for volunteers to host events. This is not an arduous task and can be quite fun thinking about new places to go to or old favourites to revisit. You can be as adventurous as you like but I promise this year not to give our cryptic clues. (this year the whole fleet of Austin 7's sailed past the first meeting point even with me on the side of the road waving madly – perhaps that's why).



Looking forward to a terrific 2024

Keep on Sevensing

Alexandra McManus

President

JANUARY MEET AND GREET

Gracie's Café, Forrestfield

A new year and another “new” car out and about for its maiden run Sunday, 19 January 2024. What a beauty! Charlie Mitchell's beautiful Ulster boat tail with a Bill Sheehan Austral body painted in its original colour was admired by Austin 7 enthusiasts and others in Gracie's car park .

Everyone made their own way to Gracie's with five hardy members driving their Austin 7's to display in a huge car park. These were Gordon and Alexandra McManus with granddaughters Charli and



Leigha who loved riding in the Box Saloon, Jim and Kaye Reid, Barbara and Neil Cavanagh, , Doug Baker , Charlie and Linda Mitchell. Other attendees in moderns were Barry and Dot Ryle up from Mandurah, Clive Ball from the Hills, Brian Haines from way up northern suburbs, David and Heather Harvey, Marion Gathercole and new members Graham and Barbara Bowman with daughter Elizabeth from downtown Daglish. Rodney and Kay Kneuss arrived with Noelle Gray who enjoyed an opportunity to catch up with Austineers.

After a series of extremely hot summer days we were blessed with a relatively cool day to head to a delightful meeting place at the foothills of the Darling Ranges. Surrounded by a beautiful garden setting we opted to sit in the airconditioning where, as always, lots of catching up after the Christmas New Year break and the interesting chatter was enjoyed along with a delicious breakfast.

A great way to start 2024.



Breakfast at Gracie's



CHARLIE MITCHELL'S ULSTER RESTORATION



8 January 1987
Ted Stokes, Tom Newsome, Ken Ingram



21 January 2024
Linda and Charlie Mitchell

Racing heritage - The Ulster model Austin Seven takes its name from the works team entered in the 1929 Ards Tourist Trophy race, in which they finished third and fourth. February 1930 the Austin Motor Company announced that their Super Sports model (first produced and raced in 1928) would be produced in both un-supercharged form (as the Sports) and supercharged (as the Super Sports), the style became generally known as the Ulster from August 1931 because of its competitiveness in racing, and particularly for its successes in both the 1928 and 1930 Ulster TTs/

Update of Restoration of 1935 Ruby ute

My last report on the progress of the ute was printed in the November 2017 edition of *Baby Torque*.

Progress was stalled due to health issues which are now stabilized, but these things can't be rushed. We have also had to contend with the heat to continue work on completing the ute.

So far, I have stripped down to the chassis, rust proofed and painted the fuel tank and chassis, and redone the brakes etc: Currently in the process of sanding and filling for priming the body ready for painting. Also redoing the spring on the driver's side.



Woodwork has been completed and a new rear window is starting to look in good shape.



I will keep you posted on the progress towards completion of the restoration of Ruby 1935 ute.

Jim Reid



Austin Works Railway

This is a short version of the Austin Works Railway not a history of the man himself, the development of the Austin motor-car but the Austin Railway Works
Extract from Blog by Peter Rowland

At a place called Longbridge, a rail junction was built, to facilitate rail communication GWR branch between Halesowen, Rubery and Northfield, called the Halesowen to Northfield railway.

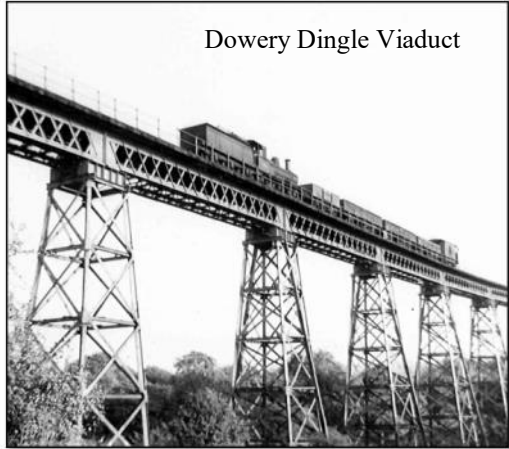
This was to help move the growing working population into and out of Birmingham. Work started in 1878. One obstacle, to span the Rea which at one section, ran through a deep wooded valley called Dowery Dingle, to keep the tracks level a viaduct was built some 660 ft in length supported on two stone abutments and eight cast-iron piers, standing 100 ft above the river.

Opened in the autumn of 1883 and with a third-class ticket costing just 1d per mile you could now travel from the surrounding towns and villages relatively quickly to Birmingham and work. And where the two tracks met, they called it the Halesowen Junction.

In 1902/3 the farmer (Long bridge Farm) saw a business opportunity and sold some of the farm's land just south of the rail junction to a Birmingham based printing works. By 1904 the Long-bridge printing works was not doing well, by 1906 they were in liquidation. The rail connection Birmingham to Bristol had passed them by, with cheaper works in the Second City the site and buildings became vacant.

In the meantime, a young engineer, Herbert Austin, returned from Australia with his new wife. Sometime before this Herbert's mother had persuaded his uncle to take the young teenager to Australia, which at that time was a two or three-month sea passage in a sail assisted steamer.

He did not return until after his father's death. Herbert worked for his uncle and eventually became the manager of a small engineering works. During this time, he attended night school and acquired a technical education. In 1887 he married his Australian girlfriend Ellen Dron and went to work for Fredrick Wolseley. Wolseley was the Dublin emigrant who had patented the Wolseley Sheep Shearing Machine. This was an ingenious device but machined parts were "crap". Improvements were needed. To supply the parts, in 1893 Wolseley decided to start an engineering works back in England, making Austin a shareholder giving him the job of running the English company. However, all was not well, the Sheep



Dowery Dingle Viaduct

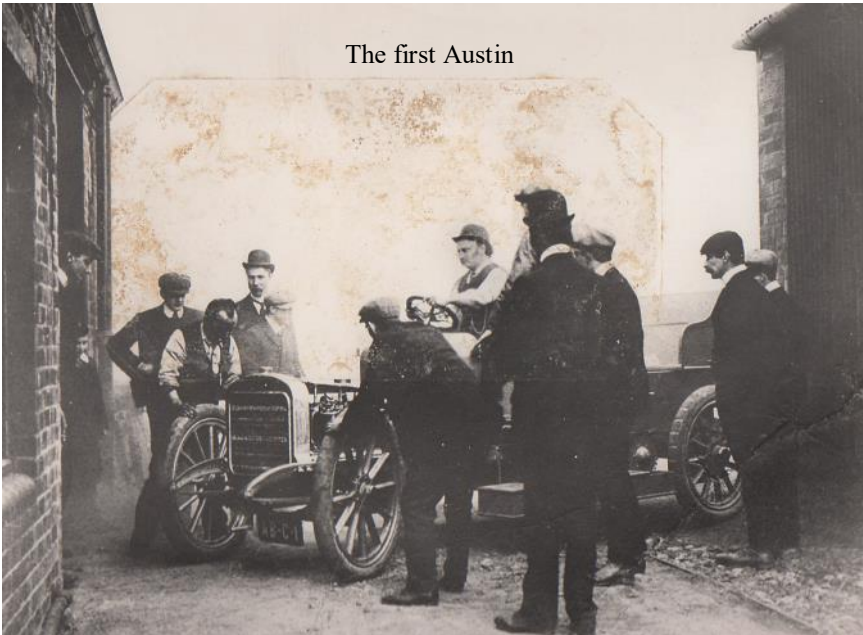
Sheerer proved unreliable. Austin had to look for another way to make Wolseley's factory pay or be out of a job. So began the manufacture of the cycle parts and after a visit to the 1896 Paris Exhibition the production of a Three-Wheel motor Car. This was swiftly followed in 1899 by the Voiturette, the first four-wheel Wolseley Motor Car.

The Vickers Co was so impressed with this that they agreed to finance further production until, in a board room tussle, they fell out with Herbert. So, in 1905 Austin left to start the Austin Motor Co Austin was now looking for a factory site on a tight budget. With outside finance the old Halesowen Junction printing works was acquired and within one year he had the 8HP motor on the road, he was then 39.

One of the reasons Herbert Austin located his company at Longbridge was because it was already served by two railway companies. The Halesowen to Northfield railway (GWR) and the Midland Railway (MR). The two railway tracks met at the Halesowen Junction. Here there was an established covered building with water power rail connections, and by now a reasonable road into the city, and more important it was cheap.



Herbert Austin 1905



The first Austin

A 'BOY'S OWN' ADVENTURE PART 3

*The following extract is from "Telegraph Tourists Crossing Australia with "Vauxie" and "Baby" in 1929. Frank Wright and Penry Goldman.
(Available from our library)*

Diary of Penryn Goldman

Newcastle Waters to Daly Waters (pages 112 –113)

After covering 20 miles (32 kms), I noticed that something was wrong with our balance, the left side of the back sagged badly. Another spring had gone, and I failed to understand the reason, for by now our load was light, and, apart from the usual jumpy rattle there had been no severe jerk or impact since Newcastle. Having used all the spare springs I was obliged, as before, to resort to wire.

Half an hour on we were just drawig out of an uneasy patch but ot too bad, when a loud clatter started up, followed by resounding thumps under my legs. It was the main driving shaft that had become slightly twisted and also bent while the arch of the bend was striking against the base of the handbrake; How could a shaft of finely tempered steel, without any abnormal strain become twisted? I snapped the handbrake off, which lessened the thumping though when we bounced the whacks continued against the floor.

Things were going beyod my understanding. We carried on, but with a growing sense of coming trouble.

I was soon held up by a tearing from within the engine. It proved to be a screw which had worked loose from the fan and had torn a hole I the radiator. Daly Waters was still 35 mils (56 kms) ahead, and Newcastle Waters 52 miles (83 kms) behind us, while between was not one inhabitant. All that we could do was to slowly carry on, and keep going until the lack of water circulation should finally disable the engine.

We crawled mile on mile after mile until, having covered 15 miles (24 kms), frequently stopping to cool the overheated engine ,and dreading lest she might seize, we came to a wide patch of sand between a number of bush trees. I backed to assure a better run, and turned off the engine in order to obtain more power since I was in no mood for being stuck.

After a few moments' pause, I restarted her, and letting in the clutch, moved forward with a rattle of noise. We reached to a lively speed, and entered the sandy patch. Then suddenly came a slipping movement sideways and .. we crashed.

A skid on the slippery sand must evidently have pitched us against a sapling, jamming the sump under the radiator, while the pole snapped across, knocking me silly. The burning fountain I had felt spraying my face when I first regained consciousness was, I discovered, coming from a tin of petrol on the seat beside me, which, inflated almost to the point of exploding by the heat of the sun, had been punctured by the sapling as it fell.

The damage done to the car was irreparable, for all that had before been straight on the front bearings, was now bent. The steering was twisted, and the bent axle brought the wheels close together , throwing them out of alignment and forcing the front spring into a deep arc. The bottom of the radiator was mutilated beyond repair, and the shock absorber looked as though it ad received its last shock. I tried to insert

the starting handle but found that the grip through the radiator had been displaced and I was obliged to smash at the base before I could work the handle in and give it a twist. She started at the first turn. When the heart beats there is life; and again I put my trust in Baby, knowing that somehow she would pull me through. I was desperate to get her into Daly Waters. I could not abandon her by the wayside.

Wondering what would happen next, I reversed the gear and tried her gently. Baby moved and cleared the stump. I tried her forwards: she moved again, but the wheels were out of alignment, the effort to keep her straight was continuous, and the steering with three turns of play, extremely uneven. First one wheel and then the other refused to respond and wobbled gaily on its own. Every tree, ant heap and telegraph pole appeared out to bar our passage: we dodged and swung and swayed and lurched, but Baby, as I knew she would, got us into Daly Waters.

Diary entry:

“A fighter to the last jolt. Baby is dead.”



‘Abandoning Goldman’s Baby at Daly Waters.’

FOR SALE



1936 Austin 7 - running and registered.

OFFERS

Contact Richard on mobile 0408 486 413. or TimBennett4@gmail.com

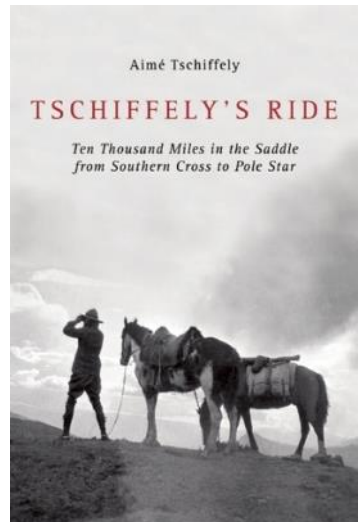
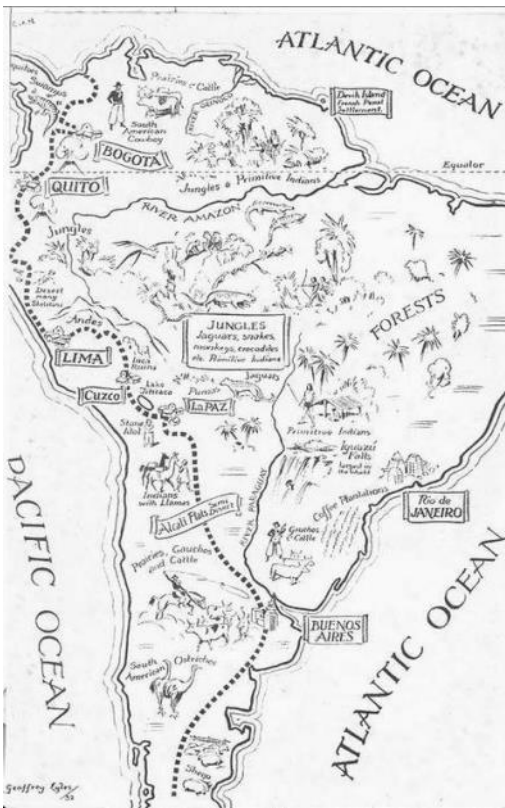
Owner Mark Bennett was a member of Donnybrook Classic Auto Club for many years.

MORE BOY'S OWN ADVENTURES

From *Olive Ball*

I finally got round to reading *Tschiffeley's Ride*, which was the book that inspired John Coleman to drive his 1925 Chummy from Buenos Aires to New York. It is a great read! Tschiffeley did the journey in 1925 with two horses and took about two and a half years.

One thing that stands out is that Sheila and I covered a lot more of Tschiffeley's route (though in the reverse direction) than John Coleman did, a fact which seems to have eluded others who have re-enacted his journey! None of them went through Bolivia, which presented some of the most challenging conditions, not to mention a climb to nearly 17,000 feet in Peru.





Coleman's Drive
John Coleman



Seven Years with Samantha
Clive and Sheila Ball

We didn't intentionally set out to follow Tschiffeley's route, but diverted through Bolivia because we understood that we'd have to spend considerably more than our budget in Chile.

Later we were told of a way around this so crossed the Andes to Chile after reaching Argentina.

Clive Ball

Reply to articles *Another Adventure (p8 and p14)*
in January 2024 *Baby Torque*

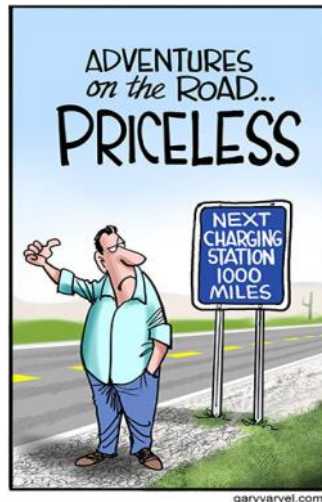
“Good to see Tom causing mayhem still.

And what a great bit of tv 10 minutes of John Coleman. I met him at our xxxx Gaydon rally when he got Howard Annett to bring his chummy absolutely unrestored, complete with machete on the back seat “for clearing a way through the jungle” but equally useful as a deterrent. Howard said no way would it pass an MoT so he trailered it for John. The machete did not stop the theft of some of his films in the US which set him against writing too much about Americans between Mexico and New York.

At Gaydon it was decided not to leave the machete on display so it might still be UNDER the back seat. Over the weekend he gave us two mid-day talks with slides and questions afterwards. We needed to move his car at one point and I went to ask him to do it. He said you have a 1925 so you know how to drive it. Just turn on the petrol tap, there is no mag switch. I did and could see what Howard meant about MoT. John’s talks and answers were quite entertaining. Getting the mag wet at river crossings was easily solved by putting it in the sun to bake! One crossing really was too deep and he was lucky to see a man on a horse appear, who was persuaded to put a rope between saddle and car and pull him across. No doubt the mag needed baking as before. Such a pity no recording was taken at these talks. John’s son Kai took ownership after he died and then in his will it went to permanent display at Gaydon.”

Regards, *Phil Baidon*

A modern adventure.



BUYING AN AUSTIN 7 - PART 1

Before you start:

- Join a Club - loads of useful advice and support
- Look at as many models as you can
- Read the many books on the A7
- Choose your 'target model'
- Test drive a 'good one' in the Club
- Research typical prices

General (non-technical):

- Buy through a Club - member/advertisement
- Take someone knowledgeable along
- Check it has a valid Log Book/V5C and MoT
- Check numbers match those on the car
- Ask about car history - ask previous owner
- Check for originality - if that's important to you
- Assess the current owner - engineering, knowledge
 - Determine reason for sale

General (technical):

- Check paintwork and upholstery - expensive items
- Any signs of water leakage into the car
- Look at the oil - dipstick and under car!
- Look at water - oily surface or obvious leaks
- Is the car level both ways? and proper ride-height
- Do the lights work? - including stop-lights and indicators if fitted

Some Specifics (technical):

- Check hand and footbrake travel
- Check clutch travel
- Look at grease nipples - and where its supposed to come out!
- Jack up back wheels - check slack-motion and bearings
- Jack up front axle - check king-pins, steering slack and bearings
- Run engine and listen for timing gears, big/small ends and mains

On the road:

- Test drive for pick up, pulling, steering, stopping and general feel
- Do you feel comfortable driving it?

Enjoy Your Austin Sevensing!

Ian Mason-Smith

da7c.co.uk/technical_toque_articles

Quick tips useful to Austin Seven Owners

From website *Austin7.org/quicktips*

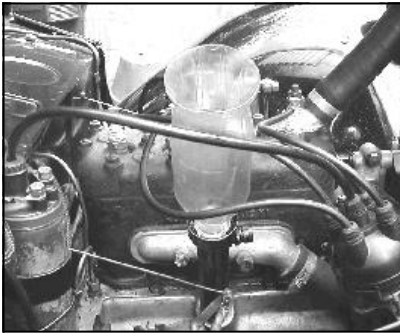
Carrying Oil in a Seven

Use a one pint plastic milk bottle with a screw lid. When the oil level drops about half an inch on the dipstick you know that you need to put the whole of the contents of one bottle into the sump.

This saves a lot of time pouring and dipping to make sure that you do not overfill the sump. These bottles are quite short and fit under the seats in the pre-Ruby Seven's.

If you have a Ruby then a Radox Herbal bath liquid bottle makes an equally good container and will stand upright in the under-bonnet tool box and take up very little space. These are 500 ml and therefore can be treated as a Pint and used accordingly. You can actually get a least 6 of these bottles in the tool box which is useful for long journeys.

Less Oil Spillage



One way to prevent oil spilling (or dripping) onto the ignition wires and the starter motor etc., is to temporarily extend the oil filler tube. I use a plastic Coke bottle with the bottom removed, the screwed top seems to just fit nicely into the top of the filler tube of my Box saloon and the ignition wires support the bottle too. Now I rarely spill any oil over the off-side engine area.

Sandy Croall.



Spares Shed 4 February 2024

Members who need spare parts old and new can ring Gordon direct on
Mobile 0417 988 190

happy
Birthday

February Birthday Wishes

Susanne Baker
Tito Teraci
Carol Wells

Nobody knows the age of the human race, but everybody agrees that it is old enough to know better.

Anon



Flowers for those who need to have their days brightened.

Baby Torque MARCH 2024

Closing date: **23 February 2024**

Please send items to gatherm@outlook.com.au

(Please note change to email address)



ENGLISH A7 VISITORS' RUN

18 February 2024

Meet @ 10.15 at Pan Pacific Hotel
Cnr Adelaide Terrace and Hill
Street, Perth

Bring your Austin 7 to showcase our WA cars and take the visitors for a run in and around East Perth Precinct. Nick Turley and Peter Rowlands were very involved in the organisation of the Austin 7 centenary celebrations in UK and are owners of numerous little cars. Plenty to talk about.

Picnic lunch will be enjoyed at Kaye and Jim Reid's home which will be a relaxed venue to have a great chat with the visitors.

Bring your Austin 7 and a chair.

RSVP by 16 February 2024
Marion Gathercole 0421 954 550, Kaye Reid 0422 895 068

Visit the website of "*The Great British Car Journey*" based in Derbyshire. It is quite unique as the cars all have their history and you can pre-book to drive one prior to your visit.

Nick Turley is one of the Directors.

SWAP MEET

Presented by the

Avon Valley Vintage Vehicle Association of WA Inc

Supported by the Shire of Northam

Sunday, 18 February 2024

WHAT'S ON WHEN IN 2024

2024

February	4	General Meeting	
	18	Club Run	Around the River and environs Visitors from UK
March	18	Avon Valley Swap Meet	
	3	General Meeting	
April	17	Club Run	
	7	General Meeting	
May	21	Club Run	Lois and Tom Newsome
	5	General Meeting and Spares Shed	
June	19	Club Run	
	2	General Meeting and Spares Shed	
July	16	Club Run	Ladies' Run
	7	General Meeting and Spares Shed	
August	21	Club Run	
	4	General Meeting and Spares Shed	
September	18	Club Run	Stanley Edge Run
	1	Father's Day	
October	8	General Meeting and Spares Shed	
	15	Club Run	
November	6	General Meeting and Spares Shed	
		Harvey Run	Hugh Fryer, Lyn and Paul Egerton-Green
December		General Meeting, Annual General Meeting and Spares Shed	
		Club Run	
		General Meeting and Christmas Windup	

Concessional Licence Code 404—Department of Transport WA

Single Event/Impromptu Runs notification

Email the Secretary with details of intended run date,
description of run and licence vehicle.

Secretary's email: jedda@inet.net.au

All Code 404 users—Impromptu Runs

Section 8 of the Concessional License Code 404 Information Booklet describes the conditions of restricted use for a vehicle licenced under the *Veteran/Vintage/Post Vintage/Invitation Class*.

<http://www.transport.gov.wa.au>



Special features of
Charlie Mitchell's Austin 7
(featured on front cover)