

# COT RECCE



AUGUST 18-25, 2018

APRIL 2017



## COT UPDATE

EVENT DIRECTOR, PHILIP BERNADOU

It's almost 10 months since we departed Alice after the biggest and best Classic Outback Trial. The feedback and results of the survey we conducted justifies our decision to stage the event in Alice Springs and conduct 'the loops' and the 'one overnight stop' concept.

Congratulations again to Andrew and David Travis for their 3rd COT victory, a feat that will be difficult to better.

It was disappointing to see the retirement of the Viking Motorsport Escort. They may have given the Travis Nissan Gazelle a bit of competition on the last day. Jorge Perez

Companc's parting words to me were "we have unfinished business".

Next year we are extending the event by 1 day and will again be catering for four competitions, each with its own winners. These will be the Classic Competition for cars up to 1988, Modern Competition for cars post-1986, Cross Country Competition for cross country cars, and a Regularity Competition for all-comers. The start order seeding for each day will be based with the fastest vehicle starting first, irrespective of which Competition it is based in, unlike in 2016 when the seeding was within each

Competition. Regularity will of course be run separately.

I returned to Alice Springs in October to discuss the 2016 event and our return in August 2018. Everyone I spoke to was extremely complimentary regarding the event. In excess of \$1.5 million was injected into the community, not including the before and after tourism trips conducted by many competitors and crews. It was evident from my discussions that the town had no concept of the size and grandeur of the COT.

AUG 2018

THU 16	FRI 17	SAT 18	SUN 19	MON 20	TUE 21	WED 22	THU 23	FRI 24	SAT 25
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## EVENT CALENDAR

16 Crews and officials arrive.  
17 Documentation and scrutiny.  
18 Documentation and scrutiny continues; prologue close to Alice Springs (to assist with determining the start order); and welcome function for all participants.

19-25 Classic Outback Trail rally.  
25 Presentation dinner function.

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## CROWN PLAZA ALICE SPRINGS – LASSETERS...

We are delighted to announce that Lasseters are again a major sponsor of the COT18. Special rates for accommodation are listed on our website and they will be renovating sections of the hotel accommodation over the next 12 months.

We will again be conducting documentation and scrutiny on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday, as in 2016, plus our competitor briefing on the Saturday followed by the Ceremonial Start and Prologue with the welcome function that night.



## NEXT SURVEY FOR 2018...

In the last week of April, David and I will head back to Alice for our first survey for next year's event. Several new properties will be surveyed and discussions with the various Northern Territory authorities begin. Hailed as the Red Centre of Australia, after the large amount of water that has been dumped on the centre, it could well be named The Green Centre of Australia. Great news for the pastoralists with the cattle getting the benefits, but there is always a downside, the prospects of bush fires with the amount of grass and flora growth.

## ENDURANCE RALLY CLUB OF AUSTRALIA (ERCA): – REGULARITY...

We were recently approached by the ERCA to discuss the possibility of their club joining the COT to compete in a regularity competition.

The Endurance Rally Club of Australia caters for enthusiasts of endurance rallies. In recent years many Australians have participated in international events like the Peking to Paris Challenge, Trans American Rally, Rally of the INCAS, The Haka Rally, Classic Safari, The Road to Mandalay and other endurance rallies.

ERCA was formed to foster friendships and provide social events and a forum for them to keep in touch. They are passionate about pre-war, classic & historic car rallying.

Due to the age of the vehicles the regularity will only be conducted over 1 or 2 stages per day.



## BOOK/DVD...

The 2014 COT book was a great success, however it's been overshadowed by the *2016 Classic Outback Trial: Commemorative Storybook*, featuring 300 images spanning 200 pages. Every moment is documented from scrutineering through to the presentation including detailed time sheets and daily commentary by Alan Baker.

We've also dedicated a section to the amazing officials who went out of their way to enhance the competitors experience.

It is without doubt a memento not to miss. Limited copies are still available and you can [order online](#) with payment through PayPal on our website.

Likewise the feedback on the 47 minute TV production has been extremely well received. The only negative received was "there were too many advertisements"!! Well you can overcome that concern by purchasing an ad free DVD. The show is also available, add free, on [YouTube](#).



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## INTERNATIONALS JOHN MIDGLEY...

While in NZ for the Silver Fern, who should I park next to but our dear pom, John Midgley. With the savings of doing the COT and not the East African Safari, John saved up to enjoy Christmas with his family enjoying the summer delights around New Zealand.

On his return to the UK, John manned a stand for the COT at the Historic Rally Car Register Open Day at the British Motor Museum in January then in February, then a trip north to Wales to hand out some brochures in the cold and snow, only to see the event cancelled after the first stage due to the ice and snow conditions. Then back to Coventry for the stand at Race Retro, the event Ian Swan and I manned in 2015. Thank you John it has been a great effort and I am sure the hard work will pay off with entries. We have received many emails requesting further information from interested parties after they received our flyers and visiting the stands. We all look forward to you and John Pullen returning next year.



## NEW ZEALAND...

I travelled to Christchurch last November to have a look at the Silver Fern Rally. With 13 international entries it was too good of an opportunity not to miss handing out some brochures for the COT18. Many Australians swam the "ditch" to compete in the Silver Fern 10 day event. Conducted on sensational gravel roads, it covers some fantastic GREEN scenery around the South Island. Mary Anne Callinen described it by saying "the roughest road on the Silver Fern is the smoothest road on the COT"!! It may be smooth but the drop offs are severe.

Not many of the competitors had heard of the COT, but they do now. We are expecting several crews from NZ to experience the Red Centre and hopefully entice some internationals to compete in the COT in August and Silver Fern 3 months later.

## NEW ADDITIONS TO THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE...

With the lure of financial security, I was disappointed to lose the services of Steve Hollowood. Steve has been a huge asset to the COT with his skills in mapping and being the webmaster for the past 2 events. Steve will continue to maintain the website with the assistance of Craig O'Brien. Steve has offered his services during the event but on a much less onerous level.

However we are delighted to announce, after heavy negotiations with his wife Kate, that David (Dinta) Officer will be assisting me. David brings another dimension to the team with his vast experience in outback rallying. David has been Victorian champion driver in 1983 & Australian champion driver

## NOMINATIONS...

With the early bird offer expiring on 31st July this year (2017) and a maximum field of 60, at the time of writing this newsletter we have received more than expected 15 nominations. [A nomination will guarantee your start in the event.](#)

Shane Attwell - Falcon GT  
Richard Bennett - Ford Mustang Coupe  
Michael Coates - Leyland P76  
Andy Crane - Peugeot 504  
Hilary Evans - Datsun 1600 SSS\* John Henderson - Volvo 144  
Richard Huelin - Ford Escort\*  
Simon Line - Ford Perana\*  
Robert Mifsud - Datsun Stanza  
Peter Neal - Subaru WRX  
Mark Pickering - Datsun 240Z  
Ian Swan - Volvo 242  
Michael Ward - Toyota Corolla Heather  
Worth - Volvo\*  
John Young - Peugeot 504\*

\* - First time in the COT

It is great to welcome 5 newcomers into the COT and the continued support from some "old" faces.

in 1984. David and wife Kate have competed in 2009, 2014 and 2016 COTs and is an Inductee in the Victorian and Australian Halls of Fame.

After a very successful introduction to the 2016 COT, Craig O'Brien has also joined the industrious team on the COT committee. Craig is our Publicity and Media Manager. Craig has been an accredited photographer since 2011. He expanded into journalism in 2015 writing for Auto Action magazine, Rally Sport Magazine and Brakemarket.com.au.

We welcome Craig and David to [our small organising band](#).

Others on the Committee are Tom Snooks, Stuart Snooks and myself.