

**OUR CLUB IS IN ITS 13TH YEAR!?**

As one of the original members of this Association, I have been asked to write about its formation, and early years. It will probably come as somewhat of a surprise to most of you to know that the Association originally commenced its operations in 1992, and as such, is now in its 13th year of existence!

The Association was founded in 1992 by longtime Brock "enthusiast" (fanatic would probably be a better word), Paul Dillon. Paul lives in Canberra, and for several years organized the H.D.T. Special Vehicles stand at the Canberra Motor Show, where his displays won awards on several occasions. Paul has a "flair" for these sorts of things, and he designed your Association's Logo, which is still currently in use.

As I mentioned, Paul is a long time Brock enthusiast, and I suppose his first involvement with Brock would have been in 1975, when he was an H.D.T. crew member in the Don Capasco Rally – of course, at that time, H.D.T. was headed by the legendary Harry Firth. Since then, Paul has had a continuous association with Brock, and H.D.T. Adam Stancombe has a very special piece of memorabilia from the 1984 Bathurst race, which lists Paul as being responsible for H.D.T. apparel, at that race.

In Paul's previous home, he had a massive "Marlboro" logo painted on the floor of his garage! Paul's car carried the registration number "BROCK05". His memorabilia collection was HUGE, and is now owned by Peter Champion. Actually, Paul is currently working for Peter, being responsible for the final design, construction and integration of Peter's Brock Museum. There is no doubt that he was absolutely the best person, with the required credibility, to get this Club off the ground.

Paul first started talking to like minded enthusiasts in mid 1992, but the first official gathering of the "Club" was at Bathurst in 1992, where approximately 50 people – enthusiasts family and friends, were brought together by Paul.

I wasn't at Bathurst, but I'd known Paul since 1986, so early in 1993 we started talking about how we would promote the Club, an official name for the Club, apparel, logos, what the "Club" would stand for, and all that sort of stuff. Both of us knew Brock personally, and we advised P.B. every step of the way, of what we were doing. The fact that we were able to talk to P.B. personally gave the Club credibility from the start, setting it apart from other similar clubs.

As there were other "clubs", I decided that "Association" sounded a bit more "upmarket", and was more suited to the image we were trying to create! Paul was not immediately in favor, but after a bit of discussion amongst ourselves, and with P.B., it was decided that "Association" was the go, so we became the Brock Commodore Owner's Association of Australia.

At this time, Paul and I were both working, so there were times when not much happened, and it would be fair to say that most of the Association's activities were in Canberra. And, as most of you would know, all clubs have their problems – Mark and Deanne Sicura, Karen and I, flew to Canberra on one occasion, to assist Paul with a few "difficulties" he was encountering. I well remember the flight back to Melbourne – Mark Sicura, through business, was flying business class, and although Karen and I were in economy, Mark was able to organize Champagne on the flight for us!

During 1995 and 1996 we made some real headway, and although it would be fair to say that the Association's focus was still in the A.C.T., I started to make progress in Victoria, signing up all the original Victorian members myself. I think Paul was member No.1, I was No.2, and Brock was, of course, No.5, or "05". Whilst the Association had, and still has, members in other states, Victoria soon had the most members.

Most of the people that I encouraged to join, came from my friends in the H.S.V. Owner's Club. I can remember the question being asked, (was it by you, Len?) Why do we need to join another club – we've already got one? I would simply explain that there was absolutely no conflict, both clubs has their advantages, but that if you wanted to get a bit closer to Brock, then the B.C.O.A. was the way to go. Most people retained their H.S.V.O.C membership.

We'd held minor events during the ensuing two years or so, but the Association's first major event was "Echuca" 1996. This event was simply sensational, and really put the Association "on the map". Bev and Peter were there, and we held our Saturday afternoon display in the central park tourist area of Echuca, adjacent to the port. We had coverage in the press, over 20 cars were on display, Brock was mobbed, (nothing unusual about that!), and we had trouble getting P.B. back to the motel on time. Peter Champion was also there, he was actually in the process of delivering a big Front End Loader to Brock, with a large "05" painted on it! Subsequently, several Echuca

events were held, and they were all brilliant.

Since that time, there have been many people who have assisted in the running of the Association. As I do not currently own a "Brock", I am now "only" an associate member, and have not had an active role for some time. However, my associate membership gives me the opportunity to still feel a part of the Association, and to get close to some sensational cars, which form an integral part of Australia's motoring history. I also enjoy seeing the pride with which cars are displayed and cherished by their owners, some of whom were barely, "out of the cradle", when these cars were made!

My congratulations go out to the current leadership and committee members, who have worked tirelessly during the last couple of years, to make your Association what is certainly the premier "Brock" car organization in Australia. Paul Dillon's vision has been realized.

Keep on Brocking!!!

Martin Hayden



Photo not supplied