

# -GEARBOX-



**AUGUST 2024**

**HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INC.**

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**\*\* NEXT MEETING TUESDAY 13 AUGUST \*\***

**7.00pm for 7.30pm at the Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club**



*THIS GOLDEN FLEECE PETROL TANKER WAS SPOTTED AT THE MAITLAND TRUCK SHOW IN **2013** AT WHICH THE H.M.A.C. CLUB DISPLAYED.*

# HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB – SECRETARY’S REPORT FOR JULY 2024

## 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Christmas in July Dinner Meeting :

President Andrew welcomed all to our Celebratory Dinner Meeting.

This was our combined 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Christmas in July Dinner Night and as such we dispensed with our general business section except for the matters reported below.

Memorabilia including old photos, awards, previous issues of the Gearbox and a number of our Club anniversary models produced over the years were provided in a table display.

The meals, table decorations and the company were great and an enjoyable night was had by all who attended. We had 21 members in attendance, 3 guests and 2 apologies.

## Toy and Hobby Fair:

The Toy Fair was discussed briefly, being the second last meeting before the Fair date of Sunday 18 August.

Tables - We have 41 paid up stallholder tables. Won't know whether we can set up on the Saturday or Sunday until closer to the event. We anticipate that we will have sufficient tables even if we have to supply a few of our tables.

Advertising – We plan to have President Andrew do an interview on radio 2NURFM closer to the date.

Raffle Prizes – We would welcome member donations of suitable prizes for the raffle. See Scott.

## Club Membership Banner:

The proposed banner will be designed to fit our existing banner support stands. A draft legend for the banner was discussed with a number of changes now to be made. Our previous supplier will be contacted for a quote.

## Model Competition:

**“Virtual”** Model Competition: “A Vehicle with Any Part Brown” – Any scale, one (1) model only and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

1st.....,Paul Campbell.....1962 Leyland Tiger.....27 points.

2nd.....Mark Jenkins.....Road Services.....23 points.

3rd.....Matt Campbell.....DA88 Trade Tipper.....16 points.

**“Actual”** Model Competition: “A Christmas Vehicle” – Any scale and up to two (2) models.

1st.....Brian Blyth.....MG to the Rescue.....25 points.

Equal 2nd.....Brian Fairhurst.....Marine Foundation Truck.....20 points.

And Ken McGregor.....Jeep Ute.....20 Points

3rd.....David Standen.....Utes.....19 points.

## Next Meeting:

[Tuesday 13 August at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club.](#)

It will be a normal night with business to be conducted, and both model competitions to be conducted.

Next **“Virtual”** Model Category: **“A Vehicle with Three or Less Wheels”** – Any scale and up to three (3) models and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

Next **“Actual”** Model Category: **“A Recreation Vehicle”** – Any scale and up to three (3) models.

Meeting Closed: 8.30 pm.

Bill Kenchington – Secretary

--- PLACEGETTERS - JULY 2024 'VIRTUAL' MODEL COMP - TOP TO BOTTOM ---

1ST - Paul C - Leyland Tiger

[\*\* Category was vehicle with any part brown - One model only]

2ND - Mark's Spiers Road Services

3RD - Matthew C - DA88 Trader Tipper - British Railways

1962 Leyland Tiger



Entry D



Entry A



Entry C

DA88 Trader Tipper - British Railway

## *Mark's short history of the Routemaster Double Decker bus.*

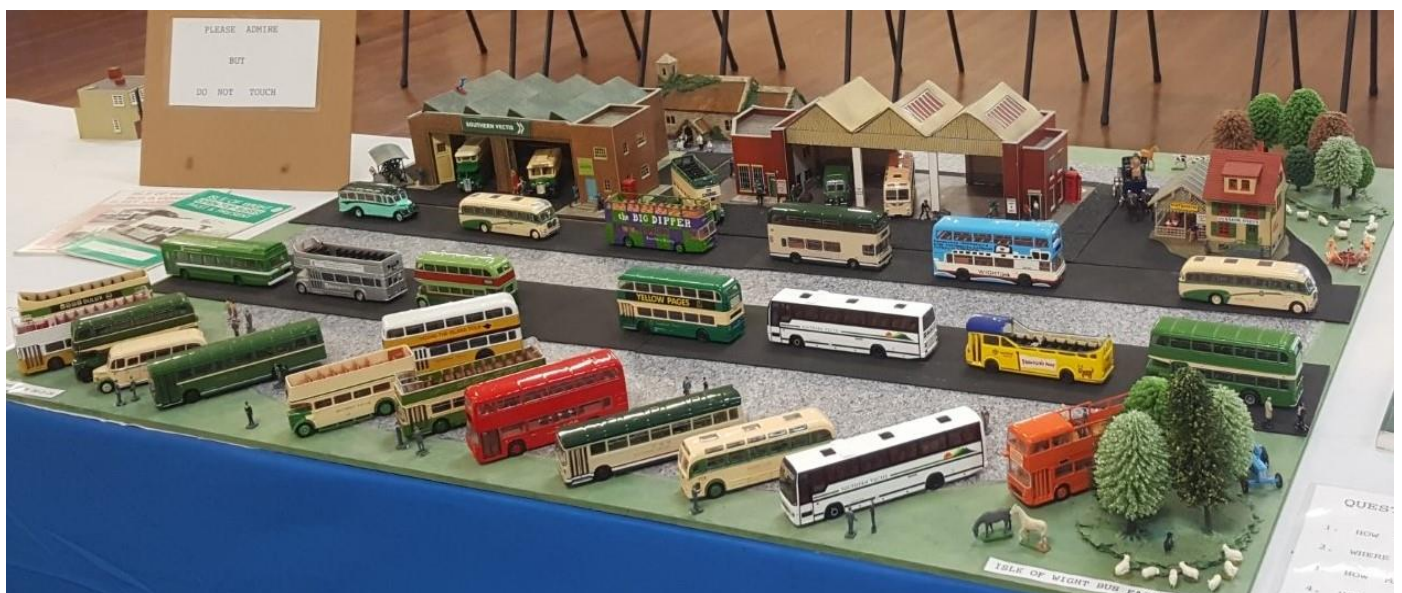


The *lead in pic* is Mark's recently completed 1:24 scale model of a London Routemaster double-decker bus as featured in the [JULY GEARBOX](#). Mark has kindly sent a brief history of the Routemaster bus as follows:

Designed by London Transport (LT), built by AEC (Associated Equipment Company) and Park Royal Vehicles, the first prototype Routemaster came out in September 1954. LT then between 1956 -1968 purchased 2,123 Routemaster buses. It is without doubt the most recognized bus in the world. They were originally designed to last in service until the late 1970s. Instead, with rebuilds and engine changes, the Routemaster could still be found on the streets of London two decades into the 21st century. Of the total production run 2,876 there is still approximately 1230 still in existence. So if you get a chance take a ride on a Routemaster it is still a great bus. One of the things Sue and I can remember when using the Routemaster in London was the ease of access via the open rear platform where locals always jumped on and off at traffic lights. Today's safety standards did not apply in the 1980s.



### *LITTLE 'PEOPLE' - ANOTHER INTERESTING SNIPPET FROM MARK.*



At our last model display at Kurri, I displayed my 1/76 scale Isle of Wight buses. *See previous pic.* These, as most of you will know, fit in with OO railway. Having to think of a reason for the buses from different era's being in the one place I made the display a bus show. This then gives a reason for all of them to be there, but you need *'people'* to make the scene work.

Anyone with a railway layout will also know, as in life, *people* do not come cheap. The answer is to paint your own Dapol models. Other companies also make these and you will find them in my displays. I have also come across another supply of cheap *'people'* and they are the ones found in the Lledo models.

There is a couple of problems with the Lledo figures. The first is like matchbox scales, that is a little, well shall we say fluid. This is easy to work around. The trick is do not put your figure too close to something of a known height, for example a door of a bus or building. The second problem is your figures came in a box with a model. In this case a horse drawn vehicle. It goes against the grain to condemn this to the bin even after only paying \$5 for each box. So I painted the plastic horses to make them more realistic. *See next pics.* They can then be used when I want my trains to have an Edwardian feel. *Mark.*



## Jacques Saoutchik – An Innovative Coachbuilder

There was an article in the [MAY 2024 GEARBOX](#) about a *Pegaso Z-102 Berlinetta Saoutchik Series II*, a beautiful coupe designed and built by *Jacques Saoutchik* that was due to appear at the *Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance*.

The coupe *in the next pic*, a later iteration of that Pegaso Z-102, shows the elaborate styling cues so familiar with car bodies styled and produced by this famous coach builder. He had commenced his career in an age so different from today's automaking industry, the Golden Era of custom coachwork. In France, this period was known as the 'Belle-Epoque' which is French for 'Beautiful Era.' Historically, the term was used after the First World War to describe the so called 'golden' period from the late 1800's to the beginning of the First World War and a period of great scientific and technological advances and artistic and cultural refinement. Saoutchik became one of the most famous artists in the coach building industry during this period and maintained an astonishing reputation for turning out award winning autos that continued up till the early 1950s. *But who was Saoutchik?*



*The Pegaso Saoutchik Z-102B Coupe- Courtesy of the Hagerty Group.*

Born in Belarus of Ukrainian-Jewish ancestry in 1880, *Iakov Savtchuk*, already trained as a cabinet maker, left Russia in 1899 to become a partner in a minor furniture making business in Paris. However, he had aspirations of becoming a coachbuilder and in 1906 started up his own coachbuilding company in Neuilly-sur-Seine, an expanding industrial area of Paris. At the same time he changed his name to *Jacques Saoutchik* and started to build bodies on a basic chassis supplied by the early auto manufacturers such as Panhard and Berliet.

His first car was built on an Isotta-Fraschini chassis and was an example of meticulous attention to detail resulting in a high quality luxurious automobile. This would be the start of the company's production of a number of bodies being built over various chassis brands that [Hagerty on-line](#) claimed were unrivalled anywhere in the world. They added that... *'During the early 1900s, the car was also an art form, a source of individual expression that made minor celebrities of the men creating them and established an enduring mythology around their rarefied craft. Perhaps the most visionary of these traditional coachbuilders, sought-after by the great and good across Europe and beyond for almost half a century, was Jacques Saoutchik.'*

The 1910 Concours d'Elegance de La Grande Cascade was an exhibition aimed at showing the Parisian high-society all they needed to know about fashion, art and the new automobiles. With two of his bespoke autos on display, Jacques Saoutchik's exhibition became the standout and led to his gaining a list of clients over time that would include Monarchs and dignitaries from all over Europe as well as leading industrialists worldwide. The exhibition also led to an order for the first Popemobile in 1911. Over time, many famous celebrities would also become owners of Saoutchik's creations such as movie stars like Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks who took a Saoutchik-bodied six-cylinder Delage coupe back to Hollywood in 1921. His vehicles would feature luxurious interiors that would be unprecedented in the industry. Rare hardwoods of exceptional quality and intricately hand-stitched quilted leather were used to provide what was considered the ultimate comfort level in any privately owned motor vehicle.

**Motor Trend** wrote that Saoutchik was also the inventor of many innovative vehicle mechanisms that he patented. saying that *'he created an adjustable windshield... a convertible top, a removable windshield, an apparatus to lower and raise a car window, and the cantilever door system.'* According to **Motor Trend**, his vehicles *'incorporated the V-split windshield, chrome embellishments, ornate interiors, vibrant colors, and most notably swoopy-curve fenders. Novelties that defined Saoutchik's signature style were the teardrop fenders, folding windshield, rearward-opening doors, stretched tails, and low windscreens that could sink into the body.'*

Saoutchik had a relationship with the top engine and chassis builders by the mid-1920s and these included Rolls Royce, Bentley, Hispano-Suiza and Mercedes to name a few. Overall developments in engineering processes, as well as Saoutchik's own manufacturing progressions, allowed more flowing designs in body styling with lower roof lines and extended curving mudguards and bonnets.

The Great Depression saw all specialist coachbuilding firms badly affected with diminished sales and this impact was carried over into World War Two. To top it off, when the conflict ended, Saoutchik, like many other leading French industrialists, was accused of collaboration with the Germans. He subsequently spent a short time in prison and had to pay a large fine to have his conviction revoked and his reputation restored. In 1946, having suffered this disgrace, he soon became disconnected with society and handed the management of his business to his Son, Pierre. The business started to thrive again with many new ultramodern and sporty styled creations leaving the factory.

In 1952, Pierre established a relationship with the Spanish firm, Pegaso, to produce the Z-102, as mentioned in the previous [Gearbox](#). However, the Italian coachbuilders were now employing a different style in specially commissioned sports cars and there was a decline in demand for Saoutchik's services. Costs were increasing rapidly and with sales decreasing, Saoutchik was declared bankrupt in 1955. Jacques passed away soon after. However, any examples of a Saoutchik's creations today, are usually the recipient of numerous awards and are worth millions of dollars. They are often the main attraction at 'Concours' events and other forms of motor shows.

**The next two pics** are examples of famous Saoutchik creations that have appeared at various Concours shows.



**Above pic** is a 1936 Hispano-Suiza K6 Cabriolet. At the time, Hispano-Suiza produced rare, but beautifully crafted bespoke autos and were actually challenging the luxury vehicles coming out of prominent automakers like Rolls Royce and Cadillac. When Saoutchik became associated with the Spanish Company, his creations were considered masterpieces as can be seen in this K6 Cabriolet. **Below pic** is the one-off 1949 Delahaye Type 175 S Roadster once owned by the British actress, Diana Dors. It had a lavish interior and an exterior that displayed a sleek, long-flowing body line featuring closed wheel arches in long teardrop mudguards. Just two examples of the differing styles over time, but with beautiful lines that were always associated with Saoutchik's artistry. [Terry](#).



## WHO REMEMBERS THE POPULAR AMT KIT OF THE MEYERS MANX DUNE BUGGY?



*The Meyers Manx Dune Buggy is now sixty years old and many members that were into AMT plastic model kits would remember how popular this AMT 1:25 scale model kit was. For its creator, Bruce Meyers, who passed away in 2021 at age 94 from a form of leukemia, his creation has a bitter sweet story to tell.*

To start with, Bruce always said that it wasn't designed as a so-called 'Dune Buggy.' In an interview he once said, 'I've been called the inventor of the dune buggy, I'm not. I'm the inventor of the fiberglass dune buggy.' Bruce has often said that his initial idea wasn't anything to do with the surfing culture that it became associated with. He just wanted to build something that would get him and his mates and their surf boards to remote beaches in the sandy desert Baja region where there were no access roads. He thought he would end up with about twenty at the most, but he ended up turning out around 7,000 Meyers Manx Dune buggy kits.

The Bruce Meyers story is very interesting and started when his father, John, being a good friend of Henry Ford, was hired to set up Ford dealerships across the United States. When he arrived in Los Angeles he decided it was time to settle down and he purchased a home there and continued setting up Ford dealerships. Though now a successful businessman, the Great depression ruined him, as it did to many others, and the family was soon living in poverty. A rare upside for Bruce was rental homes were cheap near the region's beach area and he was soon surfing the beaches nearby.

By now, he was among a group of young men who were actually pioneering surfing in the Baja region of California before World War Two. And to prove that some of the special things in life come from the minds of extraordinary people, Bruce Meyers enlisted in the Navy for his country World War Two and ended up a hero. He was aboard an American aircraft carrier, the USS Bunker Hill during the Pacific conflict and when near the Japanese Island of Okinawa, they were attacked by two Japanese kamikaze planes. Those on board had to abandon ship which was engulfed in flames. Meyers, being a strong swimmer gave his life jacket to a sailor who did not have one on, then found an injured pilot and towed him through the burning oil slick and held on to him for two hours till rescued.

After the conflict ended, Meyers was back into surfing again and also embraced sailing and hot-rodding, a life that some called 'living the Californian dream.' He soon became one of the first involved in the mass production of fiberglass sailing boats and then surfboards. However, it was his automotive competence that led to his building the first Manx which would take nearly twelve months to complete. He said that it was always in the back of his mind that he had no idea whether it would be a success or not. It was a success from day one, and he even had the fortune of Steve McQueen driving one in the 1968 movie 'The Thomas Crown Affair.' I read that this particular Meyers Manx sold at auction in the U.S.A. a few years ago for the equivalent of nearly one million Aussie dollars.

The first Manx was basically a light fiberglass body that Meyers designed himself with a hint of 'hot-rod' in the styling and built on the chassis and reliable engine and mechanics of an old VW Beetle. One advantage of using a fiberglass body was that it did not rust in that beachside area and was a snack to clean out after a day's surfing. It was a vehicle that could virtually float over the sand compared to other machines that would more often than not, get bogged in the type of sandy terrain that made up the Baja region. So, Meyer Manx dune buggies were soon involved in off-road motor racing with one winning a close to 2,000 kilometres race held over California's Baja deserts.

The Meyers Manx company made around 7,000 Manx Dune Buggies, including other variations on the theme and that led to it becoming a profitable enterprise. **Auto Week** said that Meyers Dune Buggy *'brought off-road joy to thousands.'* However, the sad part of the Bruce Meyers story was that many companies worldwide were quickly producing copies and look-alikes and Meyers patent on his design was challenged. He eventually lost his copyright protection in a court case in that regard, and that would lead to financial difficulties as well, so he left the company in 1970 and it then ceased trading in 1971.

It is estimated that there are around 300,000 dune buggies in the world today and **Auto World** wrote that *'The majority of them are knockoffs (or, more accurately, rip-offs) of the first fiberglass-tubed, Volkswagen-parts-bin Manx that Meyers himself designed and built in a garage in Newport Beach almost 60 years ago.'*

Of note, Bruce did revive his company in 1999 and released the Manx as limited editions called the 'Signature Series.' That company has survived and still produces models in various configurations including planned EV models, though Bruce Meyers sold the company before he passed away.

**The next pic** at left shows another version of the **AMT** Meyers Manx Dune Buggy plastic kit and probably the street legal model. At right is an old black and white pic of the original Meyers Manx.



The Meyers Manx has been modelled, not only in kit form as in the **AMT** versions, but in diecast as shown in **the next pics** with the Spark version close to the original Manx. **Terry.**



**Above –Meyers Manx model in 1:18 scale diecast by Solido. Below – Spark's version in 1:43 scale.**



## ~ FOR THE *CHEV* FANS – 1963 CHEVROLET IMPALA *Z11* ~



The 1963 Chevrolet model range was introduced at a time when General Motors was at its peak, laying claim to just over 50% of the US car sales market. Ford had about 27% and Chrysler around 10%. However 1963 would also see GM encounter issues that could have had a negative impact on the company. Some may not be aware of this fact, but GM was so successful that they came under the scrutiny of the U.S Justice Department who, because of anti-trust laws, were considering breaking up the Company if they continued to grow. The anti-trust laws were supposed to be in place to support fair competition that would benefit consumers. I don't understand the idea that if you make the best product, that could be an un-fair advantage over the competition. But anyway.

However, GM may have reasoned that by withdrawing from motor sport, you might decrease your sales numbers and be able to keep the U.S Justice Department happy. A bit strange perhaps, but that is exactly what the General did in 1963, and that decision would impact on the Pontiac and Chevrolet Division. All GM racing programmes ceased and the teams still racing GM vehicles would have no further factory support from the General. And this was after plenty of money had already been spent to prepare new cars for the upcoming season, and many drivers had signed contracts for the 1963 racing season. Performance equipment supplies started drying up which led to many professional teams having to switch to other brands for 1964.

The proven '*Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday*' policy was no longer applicable to any GM Division now, and early into the 1963 motor racing calendar, only private teams were promoting the Chevrolet product on the race track in a weakened GM supported motor racing environment due to a lack of visible Corporate sponsorship.

The General would now have to rely on the standing of each newly released product, especially in their leading brand which was Chevrolet. They commenced a very expensive programme to test the durability of their vehicles and extended their factory warranty to 24 months or 24,000 miles and new model range prototypes now underwent a 36,000 mile endurance trial at GM's test tracks. They were very successful in this regard as Chevrolet had produced record vehicle sales by the end of 1963 and one model stood out, the Impala 'SS'.



For Chevrolet models, 'SS' stood for 'Super Sport' and was an option commenced late in 1961 to boost the sporty image of the top-of-the-line Impala models. It came with special trim, a deluxe interior and the option of a performance built 409 cubic inch V8 engine and available only with the four-on-the-floor manual gearbox. When the re-designed 1963 Chevrolet model range was released, these very attractive Impala models continued with the 'SS' option that included an upgrade in power for this iconic 409 V8 engine.

Compared to the 1962 models, the new Chev had a more attractive body style and the most noticeable change was the different side profile that had a sharp line running the length of the body ending with a new concave rear section and tail light panels. In June 1963, the 50 millionth Chevrolet rolled off the assembly line and by end of the 1963 model year, Chevrolet had increased their vehicle sales to 2.3 million, a new sales record which was repeated in 1964 and 1965. It appears that GM's decision to withdraw support for motor racing had no impact on product sales.



*Above two pics are of a 1963 Chevrolet Impala `SS' with the 409 cu ins V8 engine.*

It was around this time that motor vehicle sports in the U.S.A was growing, especially NASCAR's (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) tin-top racing on the oval tracks. As well, U.S. drag-racing was 'big' and growing in popularity. Wisely, Chevrolet introduced their new 409 V8 engine so that it could compete against Ford's 390 cubic inch V8, initially in the 1961 Impala `SS' and then in other Chevrolet models.

In any case, with the introduction in 1958 of their first Chev Impala trim level model, Chevrolet had started to produce more powerful engines as each new model year Impala was released leading to the 1961 `SS' optioned Impala. Special performance packages were available from Chevrolet through what was termed a '*Regular Production Option*' or '*RPO*'. In order to gain some form of dominance in the above mentioned two most popular forms of motor sport, and chiefly against the Ford Thunderbolt, Chevrolet's constant engine development saw the release of a 7 litre or 427 cubic inch V8 engine midway through 1963. It would be the '*RPO Z11*' option and led to the production of the *Chev Impala Z11* just before the GM decision to withdraw all its brands from competition.

The *Impala Z11* was a sensational machine designed with one aim, NASCAR competition and drag racing domination. It could be described simply as a lighter Impala model with a larger and more powerful V8 engine, but it was more than that. The 427 V8 engine had a two-piece, high-rise aluminum intake, ran two four-barrel carbies, and had a special cowl induction system producing a massive 430 horsepower or 321kw. As well, and for the drag-racing fraternity, many of the steel panels of the body were replaced with aluminium and it came without a radio, heater, sound deadening material and other unnecessary components such as the front anti-sway bar. All up, the *Impala Z11* weighed in at around 300 pounds or 135 kgs lighter than a standard Chev Impala SS.

Performance wise, a *Z11* could run 0 to 60 mph or close to 100 kph in 4.3 seconds which is amazing considering many modern supercars are only getting close to that today, and no car of that era even came close to that figure.

In NASCAR, it became the first stock car to exceed 120 mph or 193 kph over a quarter-mile run. Then there was drag-racing. One of the most famous American drag-racing **Impala Z11** machines was known as '**Old Reliable**' and came out of the Ammon R. Smith Chevrolet dealership in Pennsylvania. It was prepared by Bill Jenkins and driven by Dave Strickler and won nearly every event it entered. This type of performance was unheard of in that era of drag-racing competition and led to the **Z11** being recognised as an extremely fast, yet reliable factory produced automobile. However, due to their withdrawal of sponsorship, GM's factory drag-racing programme soon folded.

Another famous **Chev Impala Z11** was raced by Ronnie Sox, a prolific winner in Pro-Stock drag racing who would win five National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) championships. **See next pic** of a scale model of his **Z11**.



**Ertl 1:18 scale diecast model of a 1963 Chev Impala 'SS' Z11 drag-raced by Ronnie Sox.**

In the **JUNE 2020 GEARBOX** there was an article on Junior Johnson, an American racer and former 'moonshiner' who ran a 1963 Impala 'SS' in NASCAR just before GM pulled out of competition support. The specially built 427 cubic inch V8 engine in his Impala was known as the 'Mystery Motor' and was a precursor to the Chevrolet **RPO Z11 427 V8**. **See next pic**. Johnson's 1963 Impala won seven races and achieved nine pole positions, 13 top-5 finishes, and 14 top-10 finishes in just 33 races in the 1963 season.



The **lead-in pic** and **the second pic** is of one of the few surviving **Impala Z11** units known to exist today. With GM's ban on any of their Divisions involvement in motor sports, it meant that the Chevrolet **Impala RPO Z11** was only produced for one year and it is believed that just 57 units were produced in total. It had not been available to the general public, only to those directly involved with, or who had approval from Chevrolet to participate in the Super Stock racing class. However, a few owners were able to continue racing the Impala Z11 successfully over the next two seasons with many race wins. The interesting thing is that the **Chev Impala Z11** was an exceedingly expensive option at just over 30% dearer than the standard Impala SS, a car designed as a luxury trim model for Chevrolet. Yet with the **Z11**, there wasn't much luxury left, just a very loud high performance racing car designed to dominate the oval track and drag-racing lanes. **Terry**.

-- Another look at an old Gearbox article - 1969 XW Ford GTHO Phase 1 --



Above is the [Biante](#) 1:18 scale diecast model of the Ford Australia Team [XW Ford Falcon GTHO](#) driven by Allan Moffat & Alan Hamilton in the [1969 Bathurst Hardie-Ferodo 500](#). The race was over 500 miles or 806 kms. Allan is doing it tough today with age related issues and I thought I'd throw this old article in again as a tribute.

To help the struggling racing division of Ford Australia, Al Turner was sent from the USA in 1969 with the aim of getting the Ford Team back on the Bathurst podium. Their weapon would be the XW Ford Falcon GT, later branded as the [Falcon GTHO 'Phase 1'](#) of which three would be built by Ford's Special Vehicles Division to compete at Sandown and Bathurst. The odd thing is that only one survives today after restoration by David Bowden. It was the actual 'Phase 1' GTHO driven by Allan Moffat. *[At the time of writing the original article. Ed]* At the end of its racing career, Ford converted it back to a road car and subsequently on-sold it to New Zealand interests in 1972. In 1998 it was purchased and returned to Australia for Bowden. In all, only 260 GTHO so-called 'Phase 1' models were built by Ford.

Turner knew that the former Canadian Allan Moffat, now residing in Australia, had a testing background at Kar-Kraft's establishment in the USA and was living in Melbourne where Ford's Factory was located. *[The firm known as Kar-Kraft, was an independent race shop with one client: Ford.]* Turner asked Moffat to be a development driver for Ford and gave him the task of preparing a prototype Ford for the October 5th race at Bathurst within Turner's nominated specifications. A Bathurst drive also appeared probable, though Moffat was considered a third string driver to Ford's pairing of the Geoghegan brothers and Fred Gibson and Bo Seton. Basically, Allan was the new boy on the block ... for now!

The new car had a 351-cubic inch 'Windsor' V8 motor to compete with the Holden Monaro's anticipated Bathurst iteration of their 350-cubic inch V8. Turner's aim was to enhance the handling of the car as well as increase the power output, hence the 'GTHO' tag. The term 'HO' was to indicate 'handling option' according to Ford, yet most of Turners mods were directed at increasing engine power. The term was often used in the USA to indicate 'High Output' such as the 1968 and 1969 Pontiac 350 HO V8 motors. Ford has used the term previously and in 1996 even produced an 'SHO' engine, short for 'super high output.'

The first race for the new GTHO was the Sandown 300 *[3 hours then]* with John French as Moffat's co-driver. The other factory cars had engine problems which threw a scare into the Ford camp. However, Moffat led from Pole to take the chequered flag. Though Bathurst looked promising, tyre problems would haunt the Fords after Turner decided to use a softer compound Goodyear over the proven Michelin XAS. The other factory cars were out, yet Moffat, driving with a smooth style, conserved his tyres and stayed in contention to come in 4th. Then a win in the Phase 1 to Moffat in the 20 lap 'series production' race at Sandown in November, followed by a win in the Tasman 'touring car' series, enhanced his reputation. This series took place at Surfers Paradise, Warwick Farm and the final race at Sandown. In June 1970, he contested the 2UE series for a win as well as a win at Mallala, South Australia in his Phase 1. Its final race was at Calder in August where he lost out to Bob Jane in a Monaro. A new XW GTHO, the Phase 2, soon hit the track and would earn Moffat, and Ford Racing, the much sought after win at Bathurst in 1970. The rest is history.

Though not mentioned in the same revered terms as the later Phase 2 and Phase 3 Ford Falcon GTHO, the Phase 1 model achieved an excellent racing history in a bit under 12 months and certainly helped launch the Alan Moffat legend in Australia. *Terry.*

**-- LaSalle - A SPEECHLESS DESIGN, BUT STILL ONE STEP DOWN FROM THE CADILLAC --**

**TWO NEW LaSalle's**

TODAY, THE SHOWROOM of your Cadillac-LaSalle dealer is virtually an entire automobile show in itself. There you will see—summed up in seven superb, new motor cars—everything that's fine in motoring, and *everything that's new for 1940*. You'll see two new LaSalle's—one entirely new—larger, more powerful, more economical, and unapproached for beauty. You'll see a new Cadillac—one of the finest cars Cadillac has ever built, yet the *lowest-priced* Cadillac for 1940. You'll see four new Cadillac-Fleetwoods—including the Sixty Special and a completely new, *lower-priced* Fleetwood—which represent the highest point yet reached in luxury, comfort, and performance. You'll see, in short, the leader in every price-group above a thousand dollars, because *these seven new cars give Cadillac complete dominance of the quality field*. That is an all too brief picture of the Cadillac presentation for 1940. It merely suggests the tremendous progress these cars represent. It leaves out any discussion of the new ride, the new ease of control, and the mighty new Cadillac V-8 engines which power them all. It does so deliberately, for only a look and a ride can demonstrate the greatness of these cars. Why not make a personal investigation—today?

**FIVE NEW Cadillacs**

**THE NEW LASALLE SPECIAL**  
Now there are two LaSalle's—the Fifty series in two—hardly new styles . . . the completely new Special series styled and powered by Cadillac to lead the nation-price field in luxury, performance, comfort and economy.

**THE NEW CADILLAC SIXTY-TWO**  
Cadillac has conceived a great new chassis with an entirely new type of body to make the newest car in the world and the lowest-priced Cadillac for 1940—available either in the sedan body illustrated or a four-passenger coupe.

**THE NEW CADILLAC-FLEETWOOD SIXTY SPECIAL**  
A brilliantly restyled exterior, a greatly enriched interior, and a wealth of engineering advancements upon these "the most imitated car in America" far beyond competition in its field for distinction, luxury, and all-around performance.

**THE NEW CADILLAC-FLEETWOOD SEVENTY-TWO**  
This smart, low-priced addition to the Fleetwood line is completely new. With its companion cars—the sumptuous new Seventy-Five and the regal V-16—it provides, in every way, the very peak of luxurious personal transportation.

Many years ago, our late member Phil Cohen would send me old vintage advertisements that we would show in the **Gearbox** and it was an opportunity to take in a motoring scene from another era. One was taken from the May 1927 edition of the New Yorker and featured the 'La Salle.' The **lead-in pic** is courtesy of **La Escuderia** and is part of an ad for the 1940 LaSalle and Cadillac range. It would be the last year for LaSalle's production. The **next pic** is a part of Phil's old vintage ad for a 1927 LaSalle. Check out the pedestrians in this scene. With the tools they are carrying, possibly a scythe and rake, they could be farm workers. Certainly a different era for motoring in 1927.



According to the Spanish motoring site **La Escuderia**, between 1927 and 1940, General Motors had a luxury brand sedan located below their Cadillac range and these models, known as the **LaSalle**, played an important role in GM's history till the brand was discontinued in 1940. GM was on the rise in the 1920's and in 1926 Chevrolet outstripped Ford in sales for the first time. This would be the start of a great rivalry between these two automotive giants. **La Escuderia** wrote that this was also the time when GM's automaking strategies changed from having, '*several models of different ranges under the same name,*' to having the prestige of a vehicle being '*determined by the different brands that made up GM.*'

With the introduction of the LaSalle in 1927, GM then had a large range of Divisions or brands placed in ascending order of prestige as follows: Chevrolet, Pontiac, Oakland, Oldsmobile, Viking, Marquette, Buick, LaSalle and Cadillac. By today's standards, this may seem a bit over the top, but that was how it was then. GM had also hired the designer Harley Earl who became part of GM's philosophy of having new designs for their cars each year in an attempt to keep up public interest in all GM products.

One of Harley Earl's first tasks was to design the original LaSalle which was based on the luxury Cadillac V8 platform. **La Escuderia** said that his design was inspired by the then current Hispano-Suiza and, though one step in price below the Cadillac, it '*had different attributes such as a more stylized line or more agile behavior thanks to shorter chassis.*' The LaSalle marque became commercially successful for GM '*and their designs continued to leave the public speechless year after year*' according to **La Escuderia**. The LaSalle survived the Great Depression in part by taking up Cadillac sales due to their cheaper price. The brand went on to sell around 205,000 models over its fourteen years of manufacture. LaSalle was replaced in 1941 by the lower tier '61' series Cadillac. **Terry**.

## - Some nice Fiat models I like -

**Classic and Sports Car** ran an article recently called *'125 years of Fiat.'* I can't say that it interested me that much to be honest, even though I have admired a few Fiats over the years. I did drive a Corolla sized Fiat sedan that I hired for a few weeks in England once, and it proved a nice car for scooting around the back roads of rural Britain. We have had articles about Fiats in the *Gearbox* previously, but they were about ones I picked as special models in my eyes such as the 124 Coupe and Spider, as well as the very stylish 1953 Fiat 8V Supersonic.



**Above - Vitesse 1:43 scale diecast model of the 1970 Fiat 124 Spider. Below - Vitesse 1:43 scale Fiat 124 Spider and a Starline brand 1:43 Fiat 124 Sports Coupe.**



One of the better, and more popular models that Australia took in for local sale in the early 1960s was the Fiat 1500 sedan. It was a medium sized four door model with a nifty little four cylinder engine. For Europe, it was designed to be a practical working-class family vehicle, yet it had another side. A Fiat 1500 was raced in the 1963 Australian Touring Car Championship and came second in class to Harry Firth's Mark 1 Cortina. The Fiat 1500 was slightly more powerful than the equivalent EJ Holden at the time, and with a top speed of a tad over 90mph, was quicker as well.

It was replaced out here by the Fiat 124 model range which ended up as one of the best-selling Fiats world-wide post WW2, yet it did not really take off in Australia. Fiat next released the Fiat 125 in 1968 at a retail price of around Aust \$2900 and it offered good value as it could carry five adults comfortably and was basically a high-speed tourer.

I wrote in a previous *Gearbox* that, *'Fiat released the larger Fiat 125 in 1968 and at a retail price of \$2900 in Australia, it offered good value as it could carry five adults comfortably and was basically a high-speed tourer. It was a little longer than the Fiat 124 having the passenger compartment of the 124 extended by 20 odd centimetres making it very roomy. It was fitted with the 1608cc engine and, though longer, could be recognised easily by its four headlights..... Fiat ceased car sales in Oz in 1989 due to import quota changes.'* That has since changed of course.

For styling, another Fiat model I liked was the 2300 Coupe as shown in the *next Fiat Factory pic*.



The Fiat 2300 sedan was designed by Pininfarina as an executive style four door vehicle and was considered advanced for its time with a refined twin carburetor six cylinder engine that was very powerful and having power assisted brakes all round. As well, it was the first Fiat to be offered with a fully automatic transmission, yet it didn't set the European world on fire with sales success. But the Fiat 2300 Coupe was so different being a genuine four-seater 'Grand Tourer' class, two-door sports car and it featured a large array of extras over the Sedan. It was so different in styling to the sedan, having a sloping fastback roofline and it was not as boxy as the sedan. Fiat thought it was the right product for the time, yet it too was not a big seller overall.

Fiat produced the 2300 models from 1961 with the last of around 7,000 units leaving the assembly line in 1968. It was imported into Australia, but it was in very small numbers due to its high price which was much more than the E-Type Jaguar.

Continuing on with a 'nice' Fiats theme, I just read an article in **Petrolicious** about a very interesting and rare Fiat Station wagon. **See next pics courtesy of Petrolicious**. This is a genuine one-off Fiat station wagon and is the '**Fiat 130 Villa D'Este**' that has an interesting story according to **Petrolicious**. Using their article, I will relate the story as I thought it was interesting.



The **Petrolicious** author was in Milan at the time and had made arrangements to meet the current owner of this unique station wagon, Corrado Lopresto. He is an eminent Italian architect and businessman, and the passionate owner of one of the most celebrated and important car collections in the world. **Classic Driver** said that his collection includes over one hundred models that have won various awards. In fact, his collection has won more than 250 awards overall. Lopresto is the only person to have won the Coppa d'Oro at Villa d'Este four times. This is the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este which is translated as the Competition of Elegance of Villa d'Este, an event held each year in Italy for classic and vintage cars. **Classic Driver** said that he is known as a '*good-natured gentleman he is: always laughing, always smiling, a man who genuinely wants to share his passion with you.*'

As far as his collection goes, Lopresto has been quoted by **Classic Driver** as saying that his foremost passion for any acquisitions is focused on '*Special and unique coachbuilt examples, for which my collection is best known, but also chassis No.1 of a series of cars and prototypes of a series of cars.*'

Back to the Fiat 130 Villa D'Este, a Fiat 130-based station wagon built for Gianni Agnelli whose family was the original founder of the Fiat empire. Agnelli became the head of Fiat in 1966 and helped turn the company into one of the top automakers in Europe, at the same time becoming the wealthiest businessman in Italy. But there was a dark side to him and that involved his womanising with many so-called 'trophies' in that regard, with the likes of Anita Ekberg, Rita Hayworth and even Jackie Kennedy supposed to have been 'wooed' by Agnelli.

This station wagon has the 3.2-litre V6 engine, but unusually, it runs through a three-speed Borg Warner automatic gearbox. Agnelli preferred driving an auto and for a bizarre reason. In 1953, when he was escaping from another woman's husband, in his haste he crashed his Ferrari into the back of a truck. His injuries, particularly to one of his legs, caused almost permanent discomfort when driving for the rest of his life and he had to adapt to an automatic gearbox for this reason. I think there is a lesson there somewhere.

A small company on Lake Como, Officina Introzzi of Lipomo, specialised in building wagon conversions of standard cars. The Fiat 130-based wagons built at Introzzi were all called a '*Familiare*' (Family.) This silver *Familiare* was turned out in 1971 by Introzzi to be Agnelli's latest personal car and adding fake wood panels on the sides and a roof rack. It was garaged at his holiday house in the Swiss resort of St Moritz and used mostly in winter. Why the wicker basket? Would you believe it was used for carrying snow skis. With its history, and being such a unique hand-built station wagon, no wonder Lopresto added it to his collection even though it was not an expensive classic. **Terry**.