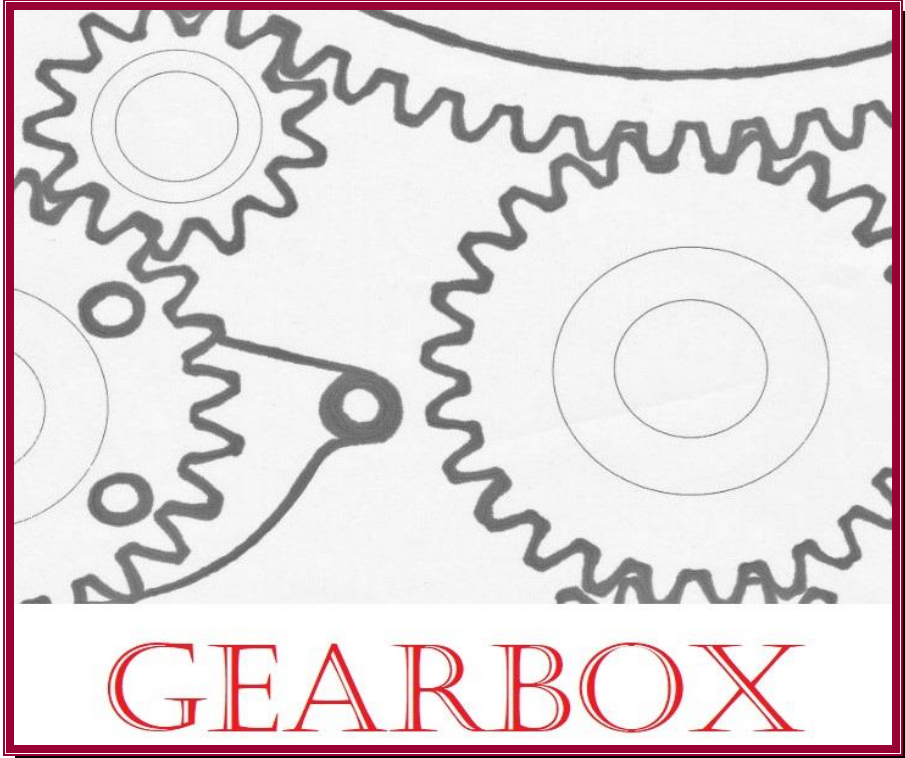


HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INC.



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JANUARY 2022 EDITION



A HAPPY & HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE.



One of the highlights of the past year for the HMAC - The March 'Fighter World' visit.

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB – SECRETARY’S REPORT FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER 2021

Christmas Dinner Meeting:

On Tuesday 14 December 2021 we held our Club Christmas Dinner Meeting in the club auditorium at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club.

President Andrew welcomed the members and their guests to our dinner meeting. We had a total of 17 (members and wives) in attendance with 3 apologies. Our numbers were down on what was normally expected. This could be attributed in part to the current flare up of Covid cases reported in the Hunter. Having ordered our meals from the Bistro, we were able to partake of our dinner in the privacy of our normal meeting room.

Here the tables were set up with a Christmas theme thanks to Beth and Diane.

With the appetising food and the pleasant company, a relaxing and enjoyable evening was had by all.

Towards the end of the evening, Paul presented overhead photos of the December “Virtual” model competition entries for those who hadn’t already submitted their vote.

Santa Claus Diorama Model Truck: This unknown model featured on the front page of the December Gearbox with the question “whose model is it?”

We were able to locate it and have it displayed at our meeting and by process of elimination it was able to be identified as belonging to Brian Fairhurst.

This rather unusual but interesting model can be seen on our Club Facebook page playing the Christmas carol “The First Noel” with a train set revolving around the Christmas tree in the snow scene diorama.

Model Competitions:

We received only six entries for the December “Virtual” Model Competition which was somewhat less than expected.

The “Virtual” Model Competition will continue to be held throughout 2022.

Our first “Virtual” Model Competition for the new year will commence on **Tuesday 11 January 2021** (see details below).

We would encourage those of you who have not already joined the Hunter Model Auto Club Group on Facebook to do so. To date we have 27 members in this Group.

If you have any questions in this regard, please don’t hesitate to contact Paul Campbell or myself.

Please note that provided no new Government restrictions are introduced at our Club meetings in 2022, we plan to reconvene the next “Normal” Model Competition at our February 2022 meeting. You will be further advised of any changes that might prevent us from holding this competition.

December “Virtual” Model Competition: “Defence Force Vehicle” – Any scale up to three (3) models.

1 st	Bill Kenchington	1941 Chevrolet – US Navy.....	22 Points
2 nd	Allan Evans	Dinky Command & Tank Transportation Vehicles.....	17 Points
3 rd	Brian Blyth.....	Matchbox/Dinky /Trax.....	12 Points

2021 “Virtual” Model Competition (Overall Winners):

1 st	Terry Payne.....	152 Points
2 nd	Bill Kenchington.....	148 Points
3 rd	Matt Campbell.....	115 Points

(As stipulated at the start of this competition no prizes are to be awarded to the placegetters)

Next Meeting: We have been invited to a Private Opening of The Frontline Hobbies Store, Broadmeadow on Tuesday 11 January 2022 from 7.00pm (Club shirts are desirable for a group photo).

Next “Virtual” Model Category (January 2022): “Horse Drawn Vehicle” – Any scale one (1) model only and one (1) photo only.

(I will send out a reminder email with the entry and voting instructions closer to the deadlines)

WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES A HAPPY AND COVID FREE NEW YEAR IN 2022.....Bill Kenchington, Secretary.

Entry D



World War II 1941 Chevy Pickup **Navy Recruiting**

Entry F



DINKY TOYS
ARMOURED COMMAND VEHICLE

DINKY SUPERTOYS
THOPRNYCROFT MIGHTY ANTAR
TANK TRANSPORTER
AND
CENTURION TANK

Entry A

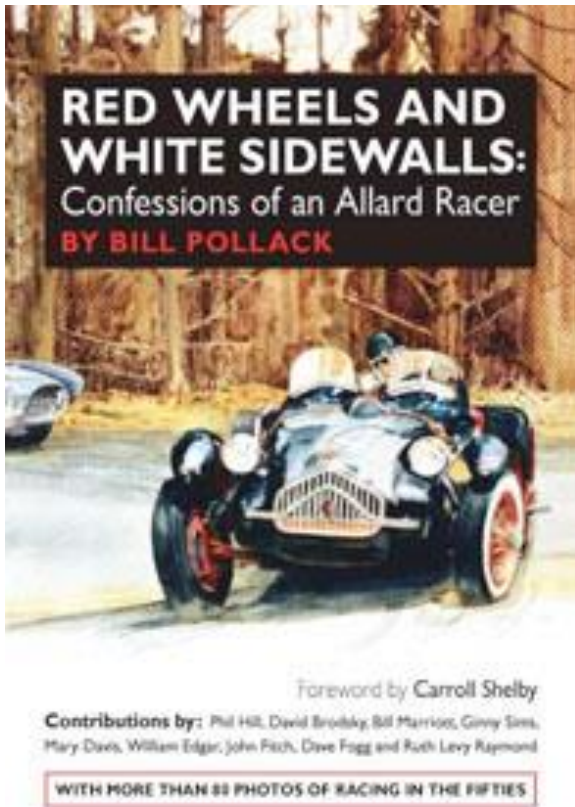


MATCHBOX DINKY TRAX

Final 2021 'Virtual' model competition results – From top to bottom - 1st: Bill's U.S. Navy vehicle; 2nd: Allan's Dinky Command and Tank Transporter; 3rd: Brian B's Matchbox, Dinky and Trax Military vehicles.

-ALLARD- Another British car with an American V8 engine-

Our late member Phil Cohen once loaned me a book called 'Red Wheels and White Sidewalls' written by Bill Pollack, a pioneer in the California sports car scene of which Phil himself was a big fan. Pollack was a very successful racing car driver in the era of Phil Hill, Carroll Shelby and Ken Miles and he passed away in 2017 at the age of 92. According to Phil, one of the chapters in the book related to Pollack's driving of a red-wheeled Cadillac V8 powered Allard 'J2' owned by Tom Carsten and Phil told me how he was actually there watching one of the more spectacular races Pollack recounted in the book, a race he said would always remember.



I have just written about a Ford V8 powered Jensen from the 1930's for the upcoming [March 2022 edition of Gearbox](#) taken from a [Veloce](#) book 'Anglo-American Cars from the 1930's to the 1970's.' In recalling Phil's story of having watched Bill Pollack drive the Cadillac V8 powered 'J2' Allard, I have used the [Veloce](#) book again for a story on the Allard marque.

During the 1930's, and in part due to the Great Depression, many prominent **British** automakers either disappeared from the scene or were absorbed into other companies. Around this time, enthusiasts were becoming engaged in building locally produced autos, but with American built engines. Granted, this was for a small niche market mainly involved with competition or high speed touring. One automaker involved with this trend was **Allard**.

Sydney Allard loved racing and rallying cars and took an interest in American V8 performance. His family owned a large **Ford** dealership, Adlards Motor Company Limited, London, and they assisted in financing Sydney's pre-war 'Allard Special' vehicles.

Sydney, then a director in the family firm, went on to form his Allard Motor Company of London. He produced *trials* cars by re-building other makers vehicles and won the 1928 Novice Handicap in a modified Morgan three wheeler. He soon saw potential in being able to use a Ford chassis and running gear on a 'Special' of his own design. Initially, he used a four cylinder Ford engine from a 1934 Model 'B' but soon progressed to a Ford V8 engine for motive power. It wasn't long before Allard was breaking class records in Tourist Trophy events.

The next step was to build a car bearing his name and using the running gear from a 1934 Ford V8 fitted with a second-hand Bugatti Grand Prix body shell. He gained plenty of success in 1936 at Hill climb and trials events and soon had orders from other enthusiasts for replicas of his Allard Special. Sydney commenced building his vehicles in the family's Adlards Motors establishment.

Everything was put on hold with the outbreak of World War 2 when Adlards became involved in Ministry of Defence work, especially in servicing and repairing Ford based military vehicles.

Fast forward to post WW2 and we find Britain was a car starved nation, though its economy was struggling to recover. Allard was in a position to return to motor vehicle sport quickly and by 1946 was back in competition mode. He knew that his *Specials* could only be hand built on a small scale compared to established automakers, but he had the advantage of the Adlards company's widespread Ford dealership, their ready access to Ford parts, and a network of proven service and maintenance staff.

The 1939 British Ford V8 models were almost identical to the American versions and Ford had continued to build their chassis during the war for military vehicles. Allard knew Ford would probably continue using most of their components on immediate post WW2 Fords, and with Adlards established and trained-up workforce, they would be able to modify their infrastructure easily to produce the components required for Allard's proposed new vehicles.

Basically, Allard was now making high performance road cars as well as competition models. In 1946 and 1947, Allard offered his 100 inch wheelbase two-seater 'J' models specifically for competition use followed by road-going models such as the semi-competition type 106 inch wheelbase two-seater 'K', a four-seater open tourer named as the 'L' and the 'M' model which was a four-seater drophead or convertible. Both the 'L' and the 'M' as well as a sedan model known as the 'P' were built on a longer 112 inch wheelbase. It was a shame that the sedan version didn't make it to the salesroom till 1949 because it became the company's most popular model. The 'M' drophead went on to become the next most popular Allard model and became very successful in rallying with one taking first place in the tough 1949 Lisbon Rally.

The *Veloce* book states that, '*... the Allard marque became a household name...*' and Allard continued to make headlines in many forms of motor sport reinforcing the view that winning events means sales will follow on quickly. The Allard had advantages in motor sport competition over other makes as its design led to an excellent ground clearance structure and a beneficial power to weight ratio. Sydney Allard and his wife, as well as other team members, became very successful in rallies, trials and hill-climbing events. Allard himself won the Monte Carlo Rally outright in 1952 making him the only automaker to drive a self-manufactured vehicle to victory in this famous event and also making Allard the first British winner since 1931.

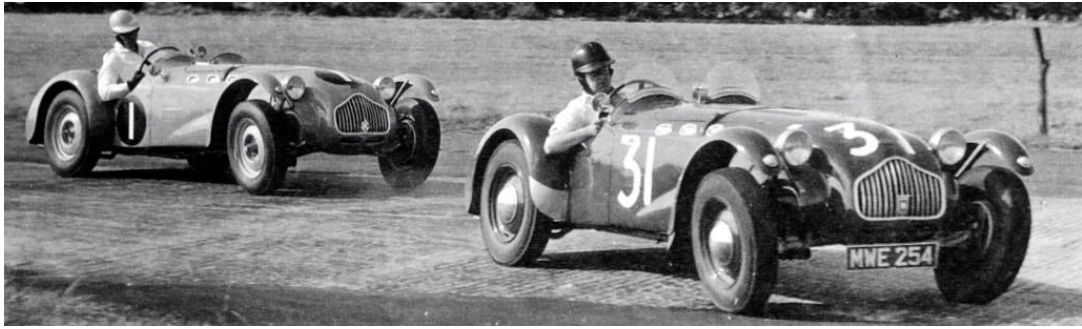
Though Ford parts were readily available to Allard, there was often a shortage of parts from other suppliers and this led to glitches in production which was always a big problem for such a genre of hand built autos. On average, Allard would turn out around 300 of his *Specials* each year and his vehicles always received excellent reviews leading Sydney Allard advertising them as being '*Still Britain's Premiere Competition Car.*'

Basically, his models were uniform in having the Dagenham British Ford factory built 85hp [62.5kw] 3,622cc Flathead V8 engine and a three speed manual gearbox. They were also offered with the Canadian Ford built 100hp [73.5kw] 3,917cc V8 engine. However, towards the late 1940's, Allard purchasers started to fit the V8 engines from other marques. An example here would be the Cadillac V8 powered Allard 'J2' model driven by Bill Pollack.



The Allard 'J2' Original 1951 Le Mans 24hr race competitor, restored and sold at auction for US \$313,000.

In relation to his road going 'P' model sedans, they had an aerodynamic body style and, though only ever produced as a two door saloon, were advertised as a '*family model with sports car manners.*' Built on the longer wheelbase chassis, they had aluminium body panels, a leather and timber interior trim and had similar mechanicals to the 'L' and 'M' models, but with the gear lever on the steering column rather than on the floor. The 'P' model was slightly more expensive than its main competitors, the four door Riley 2.5, 3.5 litre Jaguar and the Jaguar Mark V. However, with Jaguar's XK120 and sports cars from other high volume marques taking Allard head-on, he produced the 'J2' competition two-seater and the 'K2' road and competition two seater with both aimed at the American market. More often than not, these models were shipped without an engine, as the trend in the U.S. was for the fitting of a V8 engine of choice and usually from Cadillac, Chrysler, Lincoln or Ford.



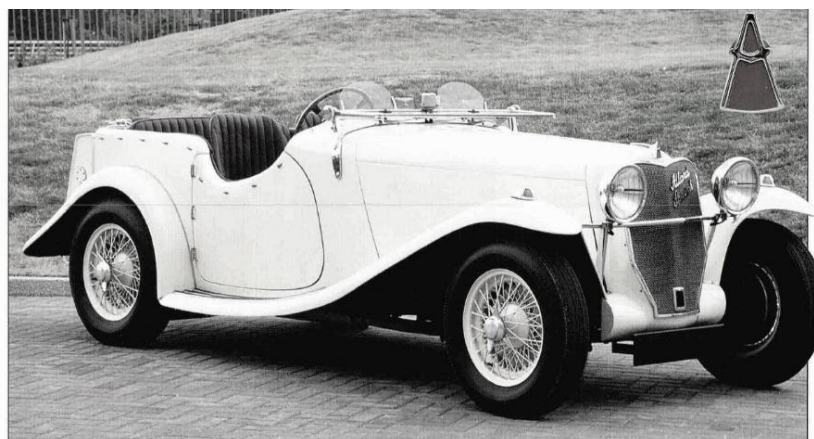
Vintage photo of Allard 'J' models racing – Courtesy of Pendine.

The 'J2' became legendary on race tracks around the globe. In 1950, A 'J2' driven by Allard and Tom Cole came in third at the 24 Hours of le Mans which was a remarkable achievement for a small automaker competing against teams such as Ferrari, Jaguar and Aston Martin. Allards achieved wins in seventeen major events in the U.S. with notable drivers such as Carroll Shelby, and in Europe, Allards won eleven major events with seven seconds and two thirds. Interestingly, back in Britain, Sydney Allard had employed a young engineer called Zora Arkus-Duntov and he developed an overhead valve [ohv] hemispherical alloy cylinder head conversion that increased engine power. Arkus-Duntov would later become famous in the US with Chevrolet and the Corvette Sting Ray.



Fully restored 1949 Allard 'J2' and possibly the one our late member, Phil, watched race.

Allard went on to produce other road going vehicles including a luxury estate or station wagon called a 'Safari' with a variety of British and American V8 engines. The last Safari' produced had a 5.2 litre Lincoln V8 powerplant installed. He also offered customers a vehicle with special coachwork by Abbot and other British coachbuilders, though these were rare. However, competition from larger teams in the motorsport arena and sales dwindling due to the larger automakers products taking control of the new car market as the 1950's rolled on, meant that Allard production was stalling and in 1954, only 30 Allard models were sold. Allard continued to make vehicles by way of special orders from 1956 to 1959 as well as Ford Anglia based products till 1966. Sydney Allard also introduced 'Drag Racing' into Britain in a big way before the automaking side of the company became non-existent. Today, the Allard company continues on in England as a specialist tuning and auto performance firm. **Next pic – What started it all, a pre-WW2 Allard Special.** The badge on the grille says 'Allard' with 'Special' under that. *Terry.*



THE SIMCA VEDETTE – A LATER CHALLENGER TO THE FC AND FB HOLDEN



In a previous article on the Ford, and later Simca *Comete* models, I mentioned the Vedette, a front engaged, rear wheel driven, family sized vehicle produced in France from 1948 to 1961. *See lead-in pic*. Initially this was made by Ford SAF, Ford's French subsidiary, in two and four door sedans, convertibles and station wagon models and powered by a 2.2 litre [136 cu ins] V8 engine. They also produced the top-of-the-line Ford Vedette Vendome, which had a more powerful 3.9 litre [239 cu ins] V8 engine. *See next pics*. Though SAF stood for 'Société Anonyme Française,' it had been known by many names since being formed by Ford Britain in 1916, but it was sold to Simca in 1954.

The Vedette V8 engines mentioned here were of US design but modified and built in France. The French division of Ford produced the 2158cc 'Aquillon' side valve V8 engine that powered **Ford Vedettes** and was sometimes known as the 'Poissy's Petit' V8 after the Ford France's plant in Poissy. In 1952 SAF re-designed the V8 engine increasing the displacement to 2.4 litres and, after the company was sold to Simca, they completed the project and this engine would then power the 1955 **Simca Vedette**. The 3923cc version of Ford's side valve V8, also used in Ford France trucks, was made in France and known as the 'Mistral' V8 and fitted to the Vendome.

Ford SAF's version of the Vedette was produced from 1948 till 1954 in their factory in Poissy, France. Taking into account the state of the manufacturing infrastructure that remained in France after the desolation of World War 2, it was a miracle that they had this car up and running so soon after the conflict ended. However, though it was powered by French built V8 engines, in reality the Vedette model was designed entirely at the U.S. Ford headquarters in Detroit with body styling based on their then proposed 106 inch wheelbase medium sized models and a 112 inch wheelbase model for the larger Mercury models.

The odd thing is that this 'light' car program was in fact a failure. It had been commenced by Ford in Detroit immediately post WW2 and was intended to create a mid-sized vehicle with a new chassis derived from the one being developed for the 1949 models and powered by a five cylinder engine. Engine selection issues and material shortages caused many hold-ups and eventually the idea of a five cylinder power plant was dropped in favour of a V8 engine. Unfortunately, the end result was a heavy prototype with poor fuel efficiency that didn't match the aims of the project, so it was back to the drawing board.

But then the Ford SAF president saw the project prototype when visiting Dearborn and realised it could suit the French market. The prototype was shipped to Poissy where re-tooling to metric specs was undertaken and the new French Ford Vedette went into production as a 1948 model. The shame of it all is that the Vedette was expensive to buy and expensive to run with the then European petrol prices rising, and this would lead to poor sales. Of note, till Ford SAF was sold to Simca, this would be the only V8 powered car manufactured in France and the first to have the new independent front suspension using struts designed by Earle MacPherson.

It should also be noted that the 1948 four-door models were of a full fastback design with a cabin that was slightly pre-WW2 in style with suicide or rear hinged back doors before a more standard body type four-door sedan was added later. *See lead-in pic*. Besides a two-door coupe and two-door convertible, they also produced a 'landaulet' model which was a two-door model, based on the sedan but with a roll down roof over the entire cabin. There were minor upgrades made by Ford in 1950 with a more substantial upgrade in 1952.

This included a new interior, newly designed bumper bars, an extension to the rear overhang and boot, better brakes and the fitment of a one-piece windscreen. In 1953, realising the old fastback style was not in vogue, Ford made design changes around the rear roofline as can be seen *in the next pics* of the 1954 models. They also introduced a five-door station wagon and the previously mentioned luxury model with the larger 3.9litre V8 engine, the Vendome. *Next pic at left is a factory ad for the 1953/54 Vedette.*



Above right - Atlas 1:43 scale diecast models of Ford's 1954 Vedette. At bottom, the Vendome.

By the early 1950's Ford SAF were making substantial losses and as mentioned in the Comete model article, Ford SAF was amalgamated into Simca in 1954 and they gained both the Poissy plant and the rights to all models currently manufactured there, and that included plans for what was to be the next generation Ford Vedette with a re-designed body style. *See next pic.* This became the new 1954 Simca Vedette model, though it was badged as a Ford for a short time in some European countries due to previous contract arrangements. This model would run through till a new model arrived in late 1957 as the 1958 model year Vedette.

Interestingly, this new 1954 Simca produced Vedette had been designed in secret by Ford SAF and a model was actually shown for the first time at the Paris Motor Show in mid-1954. What a shame Ford SAF was sold at that point, as this model Simca Vedette was still a sensible size for European conditions and became a reliable auto and a popular seller in France. The same body continued to be used by Simca as the 'Ariane' till 1963 and in Brazil till 1966.



1957 Simca Regence in 1:43 scale diecast by Atlas. The last model of this series.

These new model's sleeker body style included plenty of chrome trim and could be ordered with two-tone paint. Though very 'American' in appearance due to it being designed by Ford before Simca took over SAF, large fins hadn't quite made it on the Vedette yet. There were three different trim level models, the Vedette Trianon was entry level, followed by the Vedette Versailles and the top-of-the-line model called a Vedette Regence.

All models had the option of being ordered with a large sliding glass sun-roof called a vista dome. In 1956 Simca started to turn out a station wagon again and called a Marly. The Simca Vedette was still driven through a three speed manual gearbox with a steering column mounted gear lever, but in 1957, Simca proffered the French designed automated 'Gravina' clutch as an alternative. Over 100,000 of these models left the French production line.

Like many European automakers, as well as the Pinin Farina styled BMC sedans of that era, Simca incorporated fins in the body styling of their next iteration of the Vedette that ran from 1958 to 1961. Over 60,000 of this generation of Vedette were turned out in France.



Top left – Original Dinky 1958 Simca Vedette Chambord in reasonable condition and sold for almost A\$350. At right is an Atlas Dinky reproduction that can sell for between A\$50 and A\$70 landed.

In Australia and New Zealand, the then current French model Simca Vedette was being imported from around late 1956 as both Countries had previously been a market for the Simca 8 and its successor, the 90A model of the Simca Aronde, which was actually being produced here at the time and that little exercise had started in 1956.

A new Australian Government tax was introduced in 1957 that led to the imported Simcas becoming too expensive. As a result, Chrysler Australia who had gradually been buying into Simca, commenced assembling a Vedette Beaulieu model in a factory at Mile End, Adelaide, from imported CKD kits and locally produced parts. These included duco, tyres, battery and internal seat and trim materials, though in trying to keep production costings down, it meant that the Vedette Beaulieu was really only a base model compared to its European twin, though it was well optioned up compared to our Holdens, especially with a V8 engine under the bonnet. It was sold out here from 1959 till 1962 and, though a few unsold models sat alongside the new Chrysler Valiant for a short time, the Vedette ceased being assembled in 1962. Valiant became Chrysler Australia's sole *family* sized car produced here.

Sometime after Mitsubishi took over Chrysler, many records were lost or destroyed and the exact number of Australian assembled Vedettes is not known, however, it has been estimated at around 2,200 vehicles. *Terry*



Norev brand 1:18 scale diecast model of a 1958 Simca Vedette.

FORD CONSUL CLASSIC - Did we really love this car in the 60's?



Giles Chapman is a highly respected British motoring journalist and a prolific author of dozens of motoring books including the 'Cars we loved' series covering various decades. I have purchased a few of his books and they are very informative with the following article, to a degree, prompted from his 'Cars we loved in the 60s.'

One car I always felt *wasn't* the best looking auto made by Ford in Britain was their Consul Classic and Capri models from the early 1960's. *(I never even bought a scale model of either for my display cabinet.)* The picture of a two door version of the **Classic** taken from a British Ford advertisement, can be seen in *the lead-in pic*. Upon release, **Motor Sport** wrote, '... the new car is a trifle disappointing on first acquaintance as it resembles nothing more than an enlarged version of the 105E Anglia with the addition of some American styling gimmicks. In size the car falls between the Anglia and the Consul.' So, there you have it in just a few lines from a British motoring magazine.

What was this new model all about? The Ford Anglia, [105E] and released in 1959, became a great seller almost immediately. In fact it went on to sell over a million models till replaced by the Ford Escort in 1967. So, Ford decided to produce a larger sedan with the hope of it being a runaway success also, and this became the Ford **Consul Classic** [109E] and a sister model, the Consul Capri. Ford wanted it to be modern, glamorous and with an up-market quality in order to get away from their traditional 'boxy' family sedans. It was produced as a two door and a four door sedan in either Standard or De Luxe trim and with a reverse sloping rear window, similar to the Anglia. As well, there was a two door fastback styled coupe which was the Consul **Capri** model. The Capri was a real 2 + 2 coupe and was all Consul Classic from the waistline down, however, it had a fastback roofline similar to a 1960 Ford Galaxie Starliner as *in the next pic of a slightly customised Consul Capri model*.



Unless you know something about the body styling of North American Ford vehicles of this era, you may not understand comments made about this new British vehicle upon release. Nearly everything written about its appearance indicates that motoring critics were of the opinion that Ford Britain was still taking orders from Detroit as far as design cues went. They compared the lower half of the new **Consul Classic** sedans to the Ford Galaxie in many areas, but in miniature, and with a Lincoln Continental roofline.

At the same time it was praised for its mechanical simplicity and a massive 21 cubic foot capacity boot which was much larger than that of the Ford Zephyr Mark II. As well, the boot had a flat floor because the spare was placed vertically on the left side.

It was fitted with a 1340cc 4-cylinder engine that produced 54 bhp or 40 kw through a four speed manual gearbox with a choice of either a column shift or floor mounted shifter and synchromesh on the top three gears. Braking was by Girling disc brakes at the front and drums at the rear and it had a Macpherson strut front suspension and a live rear axle with semi elliptic leaf springs. In 1962, the Consul Classic was fitted with a 1498cc engine that increased power to 59 bhp or 43 Kw and the manual gearbox now had synchromesh on all forward gears. Road tests showed a top speed of close to 80mph or 130kph and most journalists reported excellent handling and fuel economy. The front bucket seats and rear full width bench seat came standard in vinyl, but leather was an option. For the exterior there was the choice of both a single colour or an optional two tone paint scheme that enhanced the slight scallop feature along the length of the body just below the window line. The wheels were 13 inch pressed steel rims with tubeless tyres.



Above pic – 4-door model from a factory ad. Note the distinctive front end and the five stars that may have been a Ford emblem or represented the five bezants that appeared on the old 'heraldic' Ford shield badge in the 1950's. I noticed that Ford in Britain advertised their models with the wording 'Five Star Motoring' in this era.

In his book, Giles Chapman wrote, *'Time it seems left the Classic behind. It was conceived in the late 1950's, but because demand for the Anglia 105E proved so enormous and eventually required a dedicated new factory ... there was no space at Dagenham for another new model.'* Chapman went on to indicate that its late 1950's American sedan styling with the tail fins, quad headlights in hooded nacelles and the reversed rear window became a divisive issue amongst motoring critics. As design had commenced in 1956, it was nowhere near the style that was being led into the early 1960's by other British auto makers and was very 'busy' compared to the simple front end styling of the Anglia, even if the rear window of the Consul Classic mimicked that of the Anglia.

Oddly, the Consul Classic pioneered features that would soon become standard fitments in motor vehicles such as the high beam stalk on the steering column rather than a foot switch on the floor, and variable speed windscreen wipers. Even the front disc brakes as standard equipment was unusual on most 'affordable' family cars at that time. However, at the end of the day and whether you liked its styling or not, the Consul Classic, notwithstanding reported excellent handling, was virtually underpowered even with the engine update in 1962.

Alongside the release of the Classic models, Ford produced the two door **Consul Capri** coupe models on the same platform as the Classic but with a different roofline which was low, sloping and stylish. It was similar to the pillarless cabin of the 1960 Ford Galaxie Starliner and Ford advertised the Capri as a 'gentleman's conveyance.' It had been intended for export but, as it was not greeted with enthusiasm in Europe, very few were converted to left hand drive and exported.

One of the problems for the Capri version was that it was based on the Consul Classic structure, so was quite underpowered for your typical 2 + 2 sports car. In early 1963, Ford produced a 'GT' Capri model with the 1498cc engine but with a competition style cylinder head and camshafts, twin carbies, and sports intake and exhaust manifolds that increased power to 75 bhp or 55 Kw. The end result was a car that could just about reach 100mph as its top speed, so maybe that is the engine that should have gone into the Consul Capri in the first place.

Sales never reached the heights that Ford expected with only 111,000 Consul Classics selling till production ceased in 1963. 18,000 Capri models left the showrooms before it too ceased production in 1964 with 2,000 of those sold being the 'GT' version. The Consul Classic was replaced by the Ford Consul Corsair in 1963. Perhaps the motoring public never took to the so called 'Americanised' style of the Ford Consul 109E models and, coupled with mediocre performance, sales figures certainly reflected what **Motor Sport** wrote, *'the new car is a trifle disappointing.'* Terry.

A FEW MORE SO-CALLED FASCINATING – AND PROBABLY USELESS BITS OF AUTO INFORMATION.

Here is the final instalment of so-called '*fascinating facts*' from one of my new books that I am still not sure whether it was worth grabbing or not. Luckily it was cheap.

It's cold down here in Victoria so I'll start by letting you know that in parts of Britain, the 'lollipops' used by school crossing supervisors, have a heated handgrip powered by a rechargeable battery with a variable temperature dial.

Did you know that for the last 100 years, most toy cars have been made from 'Zamak' a little known alloy made of zinc and small amounts of aluminium, magnesium and copper? So, perhaps our diecast model cars should be called Zamak model cars. There are various types of Zamak used for different 'diecast' products including firearms.

Believe it or not – After a man was arrested for trying to steal a Police car with a Detective and two U.S. Marshalls sitting inside it, a Police spokesman said, "He's not one of your smarter ones." *[No, I don't believe it either]*

In 1655, a German watchmaker named Stephan Farffler, and said to have been an amputee, built for himself the first self-propelled carriage. It had three wheels and was propelled by handles that turned the front wheel and is basically a self-propelled wheelchair that is also known as a '*manumotive carriage*.'

The Wolseley Motors Company was a luxury British automaker that had been founded in 1901 by Vickers who manufactured armour plating and military equipment including machine guns. By 1927 it was Britain's largest car manufacturer.

Every Aston Martin badge is handmade by jewellers in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter using 21 stages of chroming, baking and polishing.

A former British Naval Petty Officer became a world renowned racing car driver and was the only man to have won the so-called '*Motorsport Triple Crown*' being the Le Mans 24 hour race, the Indianapolis 500 and the Monaco Grand Prix. [Incidentally, he won the Monaco F1 Grand Prix five times.] He went on to win the F1 championship twice and was runner-up three times. His name was **Graham Hill** and his son, Damon, also won the F1 championship making them the only father and son to have achieved this feat. Heart-breaking for the motor sport community was Hill's tragic death in 1975 whilst he was flying five of his racing team members in from France after dark and he crashed his plane in fog near London. Many followers of motor sport may not know that Hill was a proficient rower and was a member of the prestigious London Rowing club competing successfully whilst involved with the club.

For the fans of the '**Peanuts**' cartoon strip, the first animated **film** to feature the characters of Charlie Brown, Snoopy and Linus was actually a television advertisement for Ford in 1959.

A saying credited to have come from **Enzo Ferrari**:- "*If everything seems under control, you're not going fast enough.*"

And some humorous words spoken by that wonderful F1 commentator, the late **Murray Walker**:-

"With half the race gone, there is half the race still to go."

"The lead car is absolutely unique, except for the one behind it...which is identical."

"Even in five years' time, he will still be four years younger than Damon Hill."

"Eight minutes past the hour here in Belgium, and presumably eight minutes past the hour everywhere in the world."

"I don't make mistakes, I make prophecies which immediately turn out to be wrong."

Did you know that the original mini design was sketched on a napkin in a Swiss restaurant by Alec Issigonis or that sales of the (still British owned) Mini in 1991 were higher in Japan than in Britain.

In 1896 the world's first speeding ticket was issued in Kent, Great Britain. A Benz dealer, Walter Arnold, was caught travelling through the village of Paddock Wood at an estimated speed of 8 mph. This was four times the National speed limit which was 2 mph. And even worse, he did not have someone walking in front of him with a red flag to warn pedestrians of the approach of a motor vehicle. How was he caught? A Police Constable used his bicycle to chase Mr Arnold and it took him five miles to finally apprehend the offender. At Court, Arnold was fined one shilling for this dreadful offence. Activists (*even then*) must have protested this situation, as soon afterwards Parliament removed the requirement for a red flag waving vehicle leader and raised the National speed limit to 14 mph. **Terry**.