

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INC.



Spotted in Glasgow - 1955 Ford Popular 103E.

GEARBOX

JUNE 2022 EDITION

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ABOVE: MAY MODEL COMP WINNER – KEN MAC'S RESIN TRUCKS. NEXT PAGE - SECOND PLACE - ANDREW V'S TNT TRIO AND THEN IN THIRD PLACE - PAUL C'S DINKY TRIO.



***** HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INCORPORATED *****

Minutes of Club Meeting Held at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club on 10 May 2022

Meeting Opened: 7.35 pm

Members Present: 18 Apologies: 4 Visitors: Nil

Previous Minutes: Moved: David Rosser, Seconded: Ernie Williams, "That the April 2022 Club Minutes be accepted". Carried.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reported that the Club funds stand at \$1,453.49 and the Club's 2022 Subs are now due.

Moved: Paul Campbell Seconded: Peter Ralston "That the Treasurer's Report be accepted" Carried.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

- i) Australian Red Cross – Request for various donation amounts.
- ii) All Australian Journeys – Holiday Tours 2022 Catalogue.
- iii) Mick Haven (SHMAC) – Thank you for "Gearbox" magazine and liked Allan Evans' "Lamborghini" story.
- iv) WAMCC – April 2022 "Showcase" Magazine from Perth WA.
- v) SHMAC – May 2022 "Wheel Nuts" Magazine from South Hants England.

Cont.... vi) CDMC – Spring 2022 “Wheelspin” Magazine from Coventry England.

vii) Gearbox Editor – Appreciation for articles and a request for further articles from members. Refer to item in General Business.

Outwards:

i) Prospective Stallholders – Invitation to submit an Expression of Interest for 2022 Hunter Toy and Hobby Fair.

ii) Club Members – Reminder email for May “Virtual” Model Competition.

Moved: Matt Vile Seconded: Allan Evans “That the Correspondence be accepted”. Carried.

Matters Arising:

i) George Thompson Auction – The Auction consisted of about half TRAX models with balance being Daysgone and Matchbox models.

TRAX models went for as low as \$15 whilst the full set of the small FJ Holden Van Club Year models went for \$70.

ii) **Club Raffle** – This is to be held tonight with tickets for \$2 and prize being a \$25 voucher from Frontline Hobbies.

iii) Hunter Toy and Hobby Fair – Expressions of Interest have been sent out to prospective stallholders.

A draft table layout has been prepared comprising of about 48 tables plus the portable stage units.

iv) Singleton Army Infantry Museum Visit – Planned for Sunday 15 May 2022 costing \$4.00 /person. Arrive at Lone Pine Café for morning tea at 9.15 am.

Self-guided tour commences at 10am. Lunch at Parkview Café, Singleton at approximately 12.30 pm.

v) Show Us Ya Slotz Visit – Planned for July 2022. Exact date and timing to be confirmed.

General Business:

i) Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club – The restaurant is now closed on Tuesdays.

Members decided to meet from 6.00pm at the Edgeworth Tavern for tea before our meeting at the Club at the normal time of 7.00pm for 7.30pm.

ii) Christmas in July – A decision will be made on this proposed event at our June meeting.

iii) Members’ Articles for the Gearbox - Terry has welcomed articles from Allan Evans and Mark Jenkins. He is requesting stories from other members, particularly “why they started collecting, what they specialise in today and is it the same as when they first started collecting?” together with photos (especially any unusual or special models) to support their stories.

iv) Life Membership for Brian Fairhurst – In recognition of Brian’s contribution to our Club over the many years, it was Moved: Trevor Palmer Seconded: Mark Jenkins “That Life Membership be granted to Brian Fairhurst”
Carried.

v) 2022 Toy Fair Charity – A vote was held and **Hunter Prostate Cancer Alliance** was chosen to be our Charity.

vi) **Club Raffle** – The winner of the raffle held tonight was Peter Ralston.

Model Competitions:

“Actual” Model Competition: “Truck” – Any scale up to three (3) models.

1 st	Ken McGregor	Resin Trucks.....	26 Points
2 nd	Andrew Vile.....	TNT Trio.....	20 Points
3 rd	Paul Campbell.....	Dinky Trio.....	14 Points

“Virtual” Model Competition: “Blue Coloured Vehicle” – Any scale up to three (3) models and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

1 st	Paul Campbell.....	Corgi Gift Set #15.....	19 Points
2 nd	Peter Ralston.....	Panel Vans.....	16 Points
3 rd	Terry Payne.....	HT Monaro.....	14 Points

Next Meeting: Tuesday 14 June 2022 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club.

(FOR MEMBERS WISHING TO HAVE TEA BEFORE THE MEETING WE PLAN TO MEET AT THE EDGEWORTH TAVERN FROM 6.00PM)

Next “Actual” Model Category - June: “Open” – Qualified**

** Any number of vehicles and combination of scales are allowed, provided that the allotted points do not exceed 6 for the display. 1/18 Scale (or bigger size)3 Points, 1/24 Scale (or smaller than 1/18 scale but bigger than 1/42 Scale).....2 Points and 1/42 Scale (or smaller size)....1 Point.

Next “Virtual” Model Category - June: “Open” – Any scale up to three (3) models and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

Meeting Closed: 8.20pm.

MERCEDES-BENZ 190 - Another 1960's car - Quality and safety you paid more for.



An interesting quote in the British book *'Cars we loved in the 60's'* by Giles Chapman stated, *'You had to pay for Mercedes-Benz quality. This along with import duties, conspired to make even the most basic 190 expensive in the UK – it was never a taxi here.'*

I think the same applied in Australia as we didn't have the Mercedes-Benz 190 as a taxi either, but a good summing up of the Mercedes-Benz 190 was written by the British *Autocar* magazine as follows, *'There is no 2 litre car in the world which can surpass the Mercedes 190 in the amount of passenger space and luggage accommodation provided. Above all, it feels exceptionally strong, rigid and safe.'*



Above & Lead-in pics - Author's Vitesse 1:43 scale diecast model of a 1963 Mercedes-Benz 220SE sedan.

The problem sometimes with Mercedes-Benz is trying to figure out what car is what in their model designation. The series of sedans we are looking at here were designated as **W110**, **W111** and **W112** and became the first sedans in the world to incorporate front and rear crumple zones. The idea was that bodywork sections were designed to collapse upon impact and absorb the crash energy, leaving passengers more protected in a central safety cell.

As an example of the confusion of models, the lead-in pic is actually a **W111** model and badged as a 220SE. The **W111** models were introduced in 1959 and made till 1965 in a four door sedan, two door coupe and convertible models and initially with a 2195cc straight six cylinder engine producing 118hp or 88Kw. Some **W111** series models actually lasted through till 1971. Upon release, these Mercedes-Benz models were referred to then as the *'Fintail'* models with their modest fins blended into the top of the rear mudguards and were probably aimed at the US market where, in fact, they sold quite well.

Yet the *'190'* models in Giles Chapman's story were **W110** models and not introduced till April 1961 as a Mercedes-Benz 'entry level' model. There were two models available, a 1,897cc straight four cylinder petrol engine that produced 80hp or 59kw in power and a 1,988cc four cylinder diesel engine that produced 55hp or 41kw in power.

The **W112** models were also released in 1961 with a 3 litre fuel injected six cylinder engine and were designated as the 300 series luxury models and still based on the **W111** 'Fintail' models. They had more distinctive external trim and double bumper bar, as well as more standard luxury appointments such as air-conditioning power steering and self-levelling air suspension.

So, with the **W110, W111 and W112 series**, there were plenty of Mercedes-Benz models around this time, but sticking with the '**190**' we'll go back to Giles Chapman's book. He wrote that it '*was a much more important car, with four-cylinder engines, and a diesel option, it would be the biggest-selling Merc range of all.*' The body of the **190** models were actually a **W111** series sedan shortened 14cms or nearly six inches in the front segment and this meant that the 190 models had the same large glass area ensuing exceptional visibility, a spacious interior and a massive luggage capacity, but with smaller engines. These engines may have been low in power, but they paid off in excellent fuel economy. They had the same rear end appearance as the **W111** 'Fintail' models but with a single round headlight compared to the **W111** models having vertical extended headlight bezels.

As the 190 was a base model, there were less options compared to the **W111** models such as fixed-back seats and plastic trimming instead of wood grain panelling on the dashboard. It was for this reason that the Mercedes-Benz 190 models, and mostly the diesel versions, were an excellent choice for the taxi industry especially as the German taxi driver of that era was considered to be struggling financially. I read that twice as many diesel models sold as the petrol versions of the 190. **Next pic is a Kyosho model of a Mercedes-Benz 190 showing the single headlights. Below that is a Maxichamps version showing the 'Fintail' styling. Both are in 1:43 scale diecast.**



Before the release of the **W111** models in Europe, Mercedes-Benz cars were fully imported into Australia. **Unique Cars** wrote that '*from early 1960 on, the Mercedes-Benz 220S and SE sedans [W111 series] were assembled in Australia, and these cars established an unequalled reputation for performance, reliability and prestige in the upper-price class of cars. Things changed in 1963 when the 190 started rolling off the assembly line at Australian Motor Industries Port Melbourne plant. And to make the 190 even more inviting, it was the very latest German model.*'

Mercedes-Benz didn't produce its own station wagon or, as it was called in Europe, an estate, however they sourced them from IMA in Mechelen, Belgium, a company that assembled the sedans in CKD form and were the official Mercedes-Benz importers in that Country. All up, the 190 series models were considered to possess an excellent build quality that Giles Chapman said, '*was making Mercedes-Benz cars legendarily tough.*' Terry.

- 1962 Pontiac 'Royal Bobcat' Catalina -



I had decided **NOT** to buy any 1:18 scale diecast models for a fair period of time into the future. Except, maybe... the VN Commodore 'SS' to be released later in the year. *Perhaps!* Then I spotted this *Auto world* 1:18 scale 1962 Pontiac Catalina diecast model on Ebay and it was advertised at a great price and a birthday was close. **You know the rest.**

I have always been a fan of the '*muscle car era*' Pontiacs, especially the 1960's GTO range. In later years I admired the Aussie made CV8 Monaros converted to left hand drive, badged as a Pontiac GTO, and sent over to North America. We have had plenty of articles written up in the **GEARBOX** over the years about various Pontiac models.

As an aside, General Motors used letters of the alphabet to designate the platform of a range of models in their Divisions per their chassis or body type. Prior to the muscle car era of the 1960's, the full size bodies were designated as either 'A' or 'B' bodies and related to Cadillac, Chevrolet, Pontiac, Buick and Oldsmobile. Importantly, in 1959 when the *muscle car era* seemed to be starting, GM dropped the 'A' body designation for the 'B' body as the standard platform for all full size models. However, in 1964, the 'A' body would return for GM's mid-sized autos, so GM's new muscle car range was switched to the 'A' body models such as the new Pontiac GTO range, Buick's GSX and Chevrolet's Chevelle. The 'A' body would remain the platform for GM rear wheel drive models till 1981.

As mentioned in a previous **Gearbox**, when looking at the Pontiac 'B' body or *full size* vehicles, it appears that into the late 1950's and early 1960's, the pick for enthusiasts in this category was the '*Catalina.*' It was the cheapest and lightest Pontiac model in coupe and convertible form. As well, it would subsequently become available with light weight panels and high output V8 engines to become, back then, the image leader in the '*full size*' Pontiac performance vehicles, and that leads into my new model.

The 1962 Pontiac *'Catalina'* 1:18 scale model in the *lead-in pics* is special, and it has a story behind it. On 22 December 1961, this particular 1962 model year Pontiac Catalina in Aquamarine Poly paint with a 421 cubic inch *'Super Duty'* V8 engine under the bonnet was acquired by Royal Pontiac, located in Royal Oak, Michigan. It is believed to be the first **1962** model *Catalina* *'Super Duty'* model to have rolled off the Pontiac assembly line. Upon Royal Pontiac's receipt of the Catalina, it had their *'Royal Bobcat'* exterior package added that included white accents in the side body trim strip, special Bobcat decals and the eight bolt aluminium rims with centre spinners.

It was then road tested for *Motor Trend* magazine with Pontiac advertising chief, Jim Wangers, driving. With poor winter weather conditions on the track, it still achieved a 0-60mph in 5.4 seconds. It was suggested that with ideal conditions, this would have been 4.5 seconds. Wangers said that there was no need to modify the engine in the test car as it was already designed for maximum performance and the Royal Pontiac mechanics only fine-tuned the motor for the test day. The road test article became one of the most famous *'Super-Duty'* Pontiac reviews ever, according to *Auto world's* notes for their model release.



So, a little background on the *'Super Duty'* Pontiacs. The big automakers in North America came to a gentleman's agreement in 1957 to stop factory support for motor vehicle racing. This was bad timing for Pontiac as they had just given their new, and quite young General Manager, Bunkie Knudsen, the job of dragging the Pontiac brand out of the doldrums and to take Pontiac out of their then dreary, conservative image and develop it into a vibrant car that would appeal to the young *'baby-boomers'* genre.

To achieve this, Bunkie had intended for Pontiac to *'Go racing.'* He had already assembled a special team to work on the Pontiac *'Super Duty'* engines and with designing Pontiac authorized equipment and performance packages aimed at dominating the high speed oval tracks of NASCAR and drag-racing in the NHRA. He had also started to work with some of the top racing drivers of that era and, basically, Knudsen had totally ignored the ban on factory support for racing and started a successful stock car and drag racing program.

Back to Jim Wangers. He had been a sales and promotion manager for Chrysler's Plymouth Division who had moved over to Pontiac's advertising agency in 1958 when Pontiac was just starting to achieve some success in car racing. Wangers, besides his advertising wizardry, already had his hand in auto competition, especially in drag racing.

On the move now, and with the newly developed 389 cubic inch *'Super Duty'* V8 engines, Pontiac won seven of the Forty-four NASCAR races for 1960, and in 1961, with *'Super Duty'* engines being improved again, Pontiac won thirty of the fifty-two NASCAR races. One thing though, the motor racing success of Pontiac was not reflected in sales of their *'Super Duty'* performance equipment and this worried Knudsen and Wangers.

In the meantime, the large Royal Pontiac dealership in Michigan had started to tune selected demonstrator models that had immediate track success and led to a sudden surge in sales of these *'hotted-up'* autos. In 1959 they had a fully setup Pontiac Catalina with *'Royal Pontiac'* livery become an S/S class winner in the NHRA Daytona *'Winternational'* drag racing competition. Royal Pontiac then prepared a 1960 Catalina in their workshop to which Wangers took over and drove to victory in the NHRA National drag racing titles.

The Royal Pontiac dealership had also started to experiment more with their own engine modifications as well as special engine-tuning packages together with Royal Bobcat badging and were turning out quite a large number of customer special orders. Business was booming.

With Wangers knowing that Pontiac's own high performance equipment advertising was not leading to sales of Pontiac's 'Super Duty' gear and, disappointingly, counter sales staff at dealers did not understand much about performance equipment, something 'new' was required. Wangers, after consultation with Bunkie Knudsen, decided to organise a mobile training program to hit the road in an effort to educate Pontiac dealer sales, service, and parts staff about, not only performance equipment as such, but more importantly, the potential for increased profits in the supply of Pontiac's 'Super Duty' gear to customers. Though not supported by Pontiac, and again through Knudsen, Wangers sought out the young owner of Royal Pontiac, Asa 'Ace' Wilson, and, starting there, quickly had the program up and running.

For the 1962 model year, and for the first time, Pontiac's 'Super Duty' team would end up making available complete factory prepared racing specials. From my research, and an article in the **November 2016 GEARBOX** about the 1963 'Super Duty' models, it appears that for the 1962 season, *the National Hot Rod Association [NRHA] had a rule that cars competing in the 'Super Stock' class had to be normal production stock cars coming off the assembly line and at least 50 a year had to be sold to the public. Pontiac also had to produce these same packages for Drag racing and NASCAR.'*

Besides the powerful big block 421 cubic inch 'Super Duty' V8 engines, these specials came with competition heavy-duty competition suspension, strengthened frames, limited-slip differentials and front section aluminium panels and bumper bars. They also had an option of Plexiglas windows and interior delete items, all to reduce weight. Royal Pontiac would later successfully campaign one in Royal livery and Wangers would also be successful with wins at the Detroit Dragway.

Pontiac's 'Super Duty' models had been designed for oval track and drag racing and Wangers knew that Pontiac dealers, on the whole, make money from selling road-going autos, so his proposal to Royal Pontiac was for an enhanced Royal Bobcat package for the new 1962 Catalina 'Super Duty' models suitable as a legal road-going sedan. Along came the **Auto world's** subject for modelling, the first model Royal Bobcat 421 'Super Duty' **Catalina**, as used in the Motor Trend road test. With its reputation spreading, it wasn't long before Royal Pontiac could no longer turn out their 'Super Duty' Royal Bobcat models as Pontiac had stopped taking any more orders for 'Super Duty' models.

All up, Pontiac had produced 179 'Super Duty' Pontiacs for the 1962 model year, with the 'Super Duty' 421 Cubic Inch V8 fitted to 155 models and their 'Super Duty' 389 cubic inch V8 fitted to the remainder. Wangers proposal for a road-going 'Super Duty' model, and the reputation it gained, led to a massive uptake in Pontiac performance equipment. **How Stuff Works** wrote that the *'Super Duty 421 Catalinas were fearsome muscle cars on the street.'*

The famous **Motor Trend** 'road test' 1962 Royal Bobcat **Catalina** was sold as a 'new car' not long after Wangers had driven it and it became lost in time. A number of years ago it was found and after certain elements of the vehicle were noted, it was soon verified as the original Motor Trend test 'Super Duty' Catalina. Over a twenty year period, it was carefully restored back to original in all respects, and now wins top honours at various shows around North America. **See next pic.** 'Ace' Wilson's Royal Pontiac dealership's successful racing exploits, though frowned on by GM, established Royal Pontiac as the first high-performance mail order dealership and their business model became the foundation for today's GM performance parts companies. However, Wilson, with continual pressure from GM, could see the future and subsequently on-sold the business. **Terry.**



A VAUXHALL MODELLED – ‘F’ SERIES VICTOR & ‘PA’ CRESTA



The lead-in pics - above - Vanguard's 1:43 scale diecast model of an 'F' series Vauxhall Victor. *Below* - Vanguard's 1:43 scale diecast Vauxhall Cresta model. [This model represents the updated late 1959 version with a single piece rear windscreen.] Vauxhall turned out their 'F' series Victor models in February 1957 and followed up with the 'PA' Cresta models in October of the same year. Something I read indicated that these two models, are probably a genuine image of the milk bar jukebox, coffee shop and the new Bill Haley, Chuck Berry and Elvis Presley rock 'n roll era in Britain. To me, they are both a reflection on how so many other elements of everyday life and fashion ideas in Britain were influenced by North America.

When their 'rock 'n roll' era **replacements** arrived on the scene in 1961 (for the 'F' series Victor, and in 1962 for the PA Cresta,) John Lennon and Paul McCartney had formed their band the Quarrymen which would soon lead into a new age of British music led by the Beatles, Jerry and the Pacemakers, the Shadows and many others. It seems that most things will always change with time.



This article is not about statistics and performance, but on how these cars were seen at the time. Most everything I read about the 'F' series Vauxhall Victor implies a belief by motoring historians that Vauxhall's design centre within their headquarters in Luton, Bedfordshire in the South East of England, was under the thumb of their parent Company, General Motors, as far as vehicle design went. And, in reality, that goes without saying. British Ford was the same.

The new Victor replaced the 'E' series which bore a resemblance to the post WW2 Chevrolet sedans, even if they were a reflection of the more sedate Chevrolet versions available in the US. However, the 'F' series had a more deliberate North American design cue firmly directed by the Chevrolet design studio in the U.S. It bore a strong resemblance, in body shell style, to the 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air with its wrap around front and rear windscreen and its fins. Similar styling appeared on the 1960 FB Holden sedans in Australia.

In Britain, opinion was divided on whether this was 'British' enough in appearance, especially as other features in the design were a bit 'out there.' To start with, though the wrap around windscreens, called a 'panoramic' windscreen, were new to British vehicles, and it was accepted that they increased overall vision when driving, they also became a problem due to water leaks around them. Some felt that the tall body shell appeared quite large in comparison to the wheels that were only 13 inch in diameter and seemed slightly shrunken against all the metal work surrounding them.

Then there were the little 'things' like the twin bulges over the centre of the leading edge of the bonnet similar to the US Pontiacs, and an exhaust pipe that exited through one of the bullet like sections at the edge of the rear bumper bar. The Victor was the smaller four cylinder engined model in the Vauxhall range and for the 'F' series, the single Zenith carbie 1.5 litre 'E' series engine had the compression ratio increased to be able to use Super petrol rather than the Standard variety for a bit more get up and go.

New luxury items were added such as two-tone interior colours, upholstery in rayon or a stretch material known as 'Elastofab', arm rests and courtesy lights hooked up to the opening of the doors. It still retained the three speed manual gearbox, but with the gear lever on the steering column, it had a bench seat that could almost take three adults across the front. So, for the British public, it had the benefits of space and comfort and there was even a luxury model with leather front bucket seats available.

In 1958, after many production delays, Vauxhall introduced a Station Wagon, or as it was called over there, an Estate. It was the first locally produced Vauxhall Estate and was praised for its very useful load area and a convenient low sill. *See pic below that shows up these features in the export model.* However, it too had shades of GM styling and some commented that the tail section resembled the then current Chevrolet Nomad station wagons. The two tone colour scheme as it applied to the Estate, was less garish than presented on the sedan and I think that is why the Estate looked more streamlined on the road.



Above – pics of the 'F' series Vauxhall Victor Estate courtesy of Classicandsportscar, and below, part of an ad for the left hand drive 'F' series Victor Estate model bound for export.



Demand for the 'F' series was great in Britain, and it soon became Britain's best-selling export vehicle as well. It sold well in Canada through the Chevrolet and Oldsmobile dealerships. However in the US, where it was sold through the Pontiac dealerships, it was not a long term success as rust and water leaks soon led to it becoming known there as a lemon.

A few of the startling body styling aspects were removed for the first update of the 'F' such as the bullet heads at the edge of the bumper bars which were now more wrap around, the Pontiac style bulges in the bonnet and the pronounced hip effect that commenced on the rear door panels. Overall, the 'F' series, was never considered a high speed Motorway type of cruiser by motoring journalists, but was considered a very proficient urban and highway family mover.

The larger 2.2 litre six cylinder **Vauxhall PA range** consisted of two models, the lower specced **Velox** and the top-of-the-line **Cresta** models. This was a new design that was born in the Luton design studio in 1955 and I read that when compared to the common vehicles on British roads then, the PA Velox and Cresta looked like roadgoing spacecrafts.



Above – pics of the first series of the PA Cresta sedan courtesy of Classicandsportscar.

It was long in appearance with thin fins topping the rear mudguards, large vertical cats eyes tail lights, plenty of chrome and had wrap around windcreens with the rear glass area being in three pieces. It was American rock `n roll with, as someone said, '77 Sunset Strip' flamboyance. So there you have it, a need for British elegance by an auto maker, but with more GM inspired design cues that startled the motoring public at the time, and became the talk of the town when shown at the London Motor Show in 1957.

Again, a practical motor vehicle with the same three on the tree and full width bench seats as seen on the Victor, and it could accommodate six adults at a pinch, but five in comfort. The six cylinder engine was quite powerful with a top speed of 90mph or just over 140kph. Road tests indicated excellent performance and handling compared to similar vehicles being driven around Britain at the time. **Motor** Magazine wrote in 1958 that the new PA series vehicles were big, but not so bulky as to be a nuisance when driven around those narrow roads that harked back to Britain's pre-motoring days. It was lively and fast, yet not overly expensive to run and offered a high standard of refinement. Some of the standard accessories included a cigarette lighter, a clock above the rear-view mirror and windscreen washers.

As with the Victor, two tone paint schemes were offered, however, a bit of America had crept in here as well, with some vivid colours available such as a bright pink and an apple green. Even the white walled tyres on the Cresta and their anodised full wheel-cover hubcaps, were very American. Two tone interior colours, leather, herringbone weave Nylon and the new Elastofab interior materials were the go as well. Export numbers were also important with many going to Australia and Canada, though none to the US.

The PA was upgraded soon after with a new grille and the rear window becoming a one-piece unit. The wheels were increased in size from 13 inch to 14 inch in diameter and the engine was boosted to 2.6 litres, increasing the maximum speed to almost 100mph or 160kph. As well, an overdrive became an option and, importantly, front disc brakes were offered as an option as well as the GM Hydramatic gearbox. Though Vauxhall did not manufacture a station wagon, a spacious Estate was outsourced to the British firm of coachbuilders, Friary of Basingstoke in Hampshire, England. *See next pics of the Oxford model.*

I don't really like the end result and mainly due to the roofline being moulded around the top of the sedan's rear doors, though I realise this may have been for ease of modification as well as a costings consideration. No doubt there was a reason that Vauxhall could not make the Estate at Luton, and it may be that they did not have the facilities available whilst producing both the 'F' series sedans and station wagons alongside the PA models. One thing though, the Friary Estate must have been considered a very special automobile as the Queen had one as her personal vehicle with 'MYTI' number plates. *Terry.*



Oxford's 1:43 scale diecast model of the PA Cresta Friary Estate.

Mark's Blue Pullman models.



In 1955 British Railways were looking towards the future and for them, the future did not include steam. This also was the case for their first class travel. For years, Pullman was the name associated with the best in railway comfort and travel. The colour scheme of cream and brown *[see final pic]* was known throughout the country. So in 1960 the whole thing was turned on its head. The new diesel electric multiple units not only looked futuristic for their time, but the Nanking Blue paint was a complete change with tradition. *See lead-in pic.*



The Blue Pullmans had three different liveries and this is the second one introduced in mid-1966. (It is my least favorite, it does not look like first class travel). *See above pic.*



This is more like it! *See the preceding pic.* Introduced in October 1967 with the blue & Grey livery. It should be mentioned that some sets were still running around in Nanking Blue as late as 1969. Maybe this is how British Rail got its name for being late with everything.



Tri-ang made models of the Blue Pullman from 1964 in Nanking Blue and up to 1967 in the Blue & Grey livery. As you can see I have the later model. *Above pic.* It is not perfect. One of the locomotives has what looks like nicotine stain on the grey, but it runs very well after I had given it a good clean. The second locomotive has a missing buffer and the roof is play worn. This means that I have an excuse to do a full restoration on them. This for me is the best part of this hobby.



Luxury Travel
by Diesel Pullman



METROPOLITAN-CAMMELL CARRIAGE & WAGON CO. LTD.

HEAD OFFICE | LONDON OFFICE
SALTLEY · BIRMINGHAM 8 | VICKERS HOUSE · BROADWAY · WESTMINSTER S.W.1.

This shows the interior of the Blue Pullman. As advertised by the builders of the locomotives.

The Blue Pullmans only had a life of 13 years. In the end, their demise was due to being both unreliable and too expensive to maintain, but they did lead the way for high speed streamline diesel electrics and, only 2 years later, came the Intercity 125. *See next pic.* This much loved locomotive has an almost cult following with its revolutionary tilt mechanism for taking corners at very high speeds. For those who have watched the Hornby series on TV will know they have just re-tweaked this model again. *Unfortunately, no Blue Pullmans made it to preservation.*



Is the Australian XPT *shown in the next pic* the same locomotive as the Intercity 125? Well the answer is yes and no! While basically they are the same, there are quite a few differences in height and the layout of lights on the front. Probably the largest difference is their top speeds, the Intercity 125 is much faster than the XPT and this is not down to the locomotive so much as the quality of the track. *Mark Jenkins.*



A cream & brown vintage Pullman car, part of a tourist attraction I snapped on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway line.

The Pullman Company Ltd was formed in Britain in 1882, based on the Pullman concept of luxury rail travel in the United States. Sleeping cars were not practical in Britain due to shorter rail distances, so the company concentrated on luxury daytime travel. Originally built in the U.S., Pullman cars were soon being built in Britain after British financier Davison Dalziel bought the British Pullman operation in 1907. The British Transport Commission (BTC) purchased the Pullman Car Company in 1954 as part of its nationalisation of British rail services. By the 1970's the Pullmans, as multiple units, were being phased out, though some lingered on in use into the 90's. Today there are still around one hundred Pullman cars still in existence for tourism and other uses. *[Editor]*