

H.M.A.C GEARBOX.

OCTOBER 2022 EDITION

**CONTACT: Bill Kenchington Ph (02) 4945 4830 or Andrew Vile Ph (02) 4933 5607 in business hours only.*



After a successful HMAc 2022 Toy and Hobby Fair, HMAc President Andrew Vile presented a cheque for \$2000 to Alex Sovechles, the CEO for the Hunter Prostrate Cancer Alliance & ProCare Mental Health Services.

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB'S 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting (Election of Office Bearers, Selection of Model Categories and Setting the Club Subscriptions for 2023) will be held on Tuesday 8 November 2022 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at our normal venue Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club.

Members are reminded to give some thought as to who you want as our Club Board, what categories you want for the 2023 Model Competition and what the Annual Subscriptions should be set as.

Following on from this year, we propose to continue with the "Virtual" Model Competition in 2023 in conjunction with the "Actual" Model Competition. We will only need to select categories for the "Actual" Model Competition as we will use those categories from the 2022 "Actual" Model Competition for the 2023 "Virtual" Model Competition. This will save us having to select two lots of categories.

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INCORPORATED

Minutes of Club Meeting Held at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club on 13 September 2022

Meeting Opened: 7.30 pm

Members Present: 15 **Apologies:** 6 **Visitors:** 2

Welcome and Club Presentation: President Andrew welcomed Alex Sovechles from the Hunter Prostate Cancer Alliance (HPCA) and presented him with cheque in the amount of \$2000.00 being the proceeds from our recent Hunter Toy and Hobby Fair. Alex thanked our Club for our generosity and spoke briefly on the role carried out by the Alliance and reminded our over 50 male members to have regular PSA checks.

Previous Minutes: Moved: Mark Jenkins Seconded: Ernie Williams "That the August 2022 Club Minutes be accepted". Carried.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reported that the Club funds stand at \$864.09.
Moved: Paul Campbell Seconded: Matt Vile "That the Treasurer's Report be accepted." Carried.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

- i) South Hants Model Club – "Wheel Nuts" magazine.
- ii) West Australian Model Club – "Showcase" magazine.
- iii) PH Cheah SMAC – Commented on the good stories in the Gearbox and sent his best wishes to the Club.
- iv) Terry Quinlan – Positive feedback on Toy Fair.
- v) Peter Finch – Positive feedback on Toy Fair.
- vi) Radio 2NURFM – Appreciation of positive feedback to radio station re Toy Fair.

Outwards:

- i) Paul Hentschel – Request to confirm mailing address.
 - ii) Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club – Thank you for assistance with venue for Toy Fair.
 - iii) Radio 2NURFM - Thank you for assistance with promotion of Toy Fair.
 - iv) Non-Club Member Stallholders – Thank you for being a stallholder and request for feedback on Toy Fair.
 - v) Richmond Vale Railway – Application to display at September Family Fun Fest.
 - vi) Club Members – Re deadline for September "Virtual" model competition entries and voting.
 - vii) MAR Online UK – Forwarding of Club meeting details etc. for publication on website.
- Moved: Trevor Palmer Seconded: David Rosser "That the Correspondence be accepted". Carried.

General Business:

- i) 2022 Hunter Toy and Hobby Fair – Paul reported that our Fair which was held on 7 August was a huge success with over 300 adults in attendance. As a result, we were able to donate an amount of \$2,000.00 to our nominated local charity HPCA (refer to Item above).
- ii) Show Us Ya Slotz Visit on 26 August – Those members who attended/displayed enjoyed a great day out.
- iii) Richmond Vale Family Fun Fest Model Display – This is planned for the weekend of 24 and 25 September 2022. We have been assured that our model displays would be safe as they will have plenty of presence overnight. The following members have indicated that they plan to display – Brian F, David S, Paul C and Bill K.
- iv) Lake Liddell Display – We have been invited to display at this event on Sunday 23 October. Being an outdoor event, members were reluctant to attend. David R plans to have a stall on the day.
- v) Kurri Kurri Public School Family Day – Members were reminded of this event which is planned for Saturday 29 October. Our Club has been invited to provide a display on the day.
- vi) Procurement of Club Shirts and Jackets – Brian F and Bill reported on their visit to the Hip Pocket Store at Rutherford which included an overhead presentation to members on some of the available apparel (thanks to Paul). It was resolved that members wishing to acquire any Club apparel would visit the store individually.

Store details are: **Hip Pocket Workwear & Safety, Shop 15, 15 North Mall Rutherford, NSW 2320. Phone: 4934 8313**

Model Competitions:

“Actual” Model Competition: “Vehicle starting with S” – Any scale one (1) model.

- 1st Ken McGregor Suzuki Bloomfield Construction Co.....25 Points
- 2nd Bill Kenchington.....1937 Studebaker Pick Up.....21 Points
- Equal 3rdPaul Campbell’s Scammell Scarab, Gerald Kominatos’ Eddie Stobart Scania and Andrew Vile’s Matchbox Scammell tipper.....all on 9 Points.

“Virtual” Model Competition: “British Vehicle” – Any scale up to five (5) models and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

- 1stMatthew Campbell.....Foden.....13 points
- Equal 2ndBill Kenchington’s British Jaguars and Terry Payne’s Austin Healy 3000.....12 points
- 3rdMark Jenkins.....Rolls Royce Silver Ghost.....10 points

Next Meeting: Tuesday 11 October 2022 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club.

Next “Actual” Model Category - October: “Bus” - Any scale up to five (5) models.

Next “Virtual” Model Category - October: “Two Tone Vehicle” – Any scale up to five (5) models only and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

Meeting Closed: 8.30pm.

THE PLACEGETTERS IN THE SEPTEMBER CLUB’S ACTUAL MODEL COMPETITION



Above - First – Ken Mc’s Suzuki – Bloomfield Construction Co.

Below – **Second** – Bill's 1937 Studebaker pickup. Then, and all **Equal Third** are Andrew's Matchbox Scammell tipper, Gerald's Eddie Stobart Scania and. Paul's Scammell Scarab





A LITTLE HUMOUR:

Being twenty in the Seventies was much more fun than being seventy in the twenties.

Aging: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it. This is so true. I love to hear them say "you don't look that old."

It is okay to talk to yourself....and okay to answer yourself. But sad when you have to repeat what you said because you weren't listening.

I am staying up on New Year's Eve this year. Not to see the New Year in but to make sure this one leaves.

Did you know that fourteen muscles are activated when opening a bottle of wine. Fitness is my passion.

I love to make shopping lists. I also like to leave them on the kitchen table and then guess what was on the list when at our local IGA store.

Wife to husband, "What surprised you most about the Coronavirus?" Husband replied, "It did what no woman has been able to do. Cancelled all sports, shutdown pubs and kept men at home."

And finally. Paddy took two stuffed dogs to the Antiques Roadshow. "Wow." Said the presenter. "This is a very rare breed. Do you have any idea what they would fetch if they were in good condition?" "Sticks." Replied Paddy.

.1961 Triumph TR4 – Another 1960’s car with gutsy performance we loved.



In the **December 2019 Gearbox**, we ran an article on the TR6, Triumph’s little sports car that replaced the TR4. The TR4, as shown in **the lead-in pic** taken at a car show in England, was produced from 1961 till 1965 and sold over 40,000 units, so that was quite a successful run because the TR6, though selling 94,000 units, was produced from 1968 till 1976, so twice as long as it’s TR4 predecessor. Of note with both models is the fact that only around 10% were sold in Britain with the vast majority being exported to North America. This shows how popular this type of sports cars was in America where, as **Giles Chapman** writing about the TR4 in America said, ‘... **the stylish new looks and gutsy performance went down a storm.**’

Chapman’s book ‘**Cars we loved in the 60’s**’ has provided great research material to use in the Gearbox in relation to the many British cars of that era that also appeared on our Aussie roads. Chapman called the earlier TR3 a big-hearted and big-engined performance machine from the 50’s, but its ageing appearance and cramped accommodation made it off-balance for the approaching 60’s. **See next pic at left & compare it to the TR4 at right.**



Triumph had excellent reviews for their new **Herald** sedans and called in its Italian stylist, Giovanni Michelotti, to create a new body for the TR3 replacement, albeit with a tight budget. So, thanks to the bean counters, the new model had to keep the body on chassis structure of the TR3, though it did have to be longer with a wider track to enable better handling, as well as having better accommodation space internally. Chapman likens the new TR4 body as having been transformed from a mongrel dog into a suave looking greyhound.

Looking at **the lead-in pic** we can see a totally new look in the body styling of the TR4 starting with the previous curved body sections of the TR3 being replaced with a much more rectangular and flush sided body style. The headlights were now set more inside the grille panel, rather than on top as with the TR3. Adding to the fact that it had a wider stance and a slightly lower bonnet profile, the marginally protruding wheel arches enhanced its wider appearance over the TR3. Though the TR3 body shell was built by Mulliners Coachbuilding in Birmingham, a company owned by Standard-Triumph since 1958, the TR4 body shell was produced in Standard-Triumph’s new factory in Liverpool. Of note is that the styling profile at the front was designed to fit around the dimensions of the engine bay and the interesting bonnet bulge was due to the positioning of the twin-carburetors.

A significant outcome from the TR4's door design was being able to fit wind up windows instead of the curtain style type on the TR3 that was due to its cutaway profile at the top of the door. As well, with the squared up rear boot lid area profile not dropping away, it meant a larger internal boot luggage space for the TR4. Instruments and dash styling remained pretty standard for British roadsters but the TR4 now had adjustable air vents on the fascia meaning it was amongst the first standard production British cars to do so. Though the old TR3 shaped seats would remain for some time, the TR4 featured a new safety item, a collapsible steering column.

Another change from the TR3 was its 'cam and lever steering' being replaced with a 'rack and pinion' system as fitted to the Triumph Herald. The front suspension setup was stiffened and the front towers repositioned, though in 1965, an all independent rear suspension was also thrown in. Pressed steel rims were standard on the new TR4, but wire wheels were an option selected by many owners. The engine was a 2138cc 105hp [77kw] twin SU carbie 4-cylinder unit driven through an all synchromesh gearbox. The TR4 had a top speed of 110mph [177kph] and was actually very close to the performance figures of the TR3, however, the TR4 quickly started to sell well from its introduction in 1961 and motoring journalists felt that it's wider track, larger engine and better all synchromesh gearbox, made it easier to drive. The British magazine, *Motor*, wrote, 'Its forte was masses of mid-range power which could eat MGs and the ability to cruise at the ton in overdrive top with the engine pulling just 4000rpm and yield as much as 28mpg while doing so.'

Interestingly, Triumph made the TR3's 1991cc engine available as an option so the TR4 could still be run in the under 2 litre motorsport competitions. In January 1965, Triumph updated the little roadster to the **TR4A** version which is where the independent rear suspension came in. Production for the TR4A ceased at the end of 1967.

FOR THE COLLECTORS:

I noticed that the old *Revell* brand have the TR4 in 1:18 scale diecast and they are very nice, but usually priced above A\$350 landed from Britain. *JADI*, a brand I had not heard of before, also produce the TR4 in 1:18 scale, but again are quite expensive. I saw one on GB Ebay for A\$270 plus around A\$70 shipping costs. The best are in 1:43 scale with old Dinky models selling at very cheap prices on Ebay. Then there are the usual excellent Vanguard 1:43 scale versions sometimes around A\$100. *Terry*.



Diecast models of the TR4 - Top left in 1:18 scale by JADI. Top right is Spark's version in 1:43 scale. Bottom left is the old Dinky standby and bottom right the usual excellent Vanguard's model & both in 1:43 scale.



--MARKS SCALEXTRIC STORY--

After the club outing to 'Show us yar slotz' at Lemon Tree Passage, I thought I'd do a quick story on Scalextric.



This was my first visit to [Show us ya slotz](#) and I have to say I was surprised how quick it was after arriving that I got bitten by the slot car bug. This is due to the great crew at Show us ya slotz. They were very friendly, more than willing to talk about the hobby, and share their knowledge. The main thing you come away with is it didn't matter if you wanted to just use the cars supplied with your entry, use an old car from the Tri-ang days, or a modern speed machine with all the bells and whistles. Everyone was there for the same reason and that was to just enjoy slot cars. Sometimes it is the simple things in life that give the most pleasure.



To start at the beginning of the story of Scalextric there was no track and no electric. Scalex were run by a keyless clockwork motor. You would put downward pressure on the car, this would allow a wheel under the car to engage with the floor, you then dragged the car backwards to wind the motor and just let it go. This was great because there was no key to lose. Scalex were invented by a man called Bertram "Fred" Francis. He was born in 1919 and left school at 14. At 20 he set up a tool-making workshop that was kept busy throughout the War. He always wanted to be a toymaker and in 1947 he founded Minimodels. They made mechanical tinplate toys from typewriters to articulated lorries and shunting locomotives. The first Scalex model appeared in 1952, a Jaguar XK120 in 1:32 scale.



Scalex cars were all built to scale. The sports cars were 1:32 and the Grand Prix cars (Ferrari 375 *[Above left]* and Maserati 250F *[Above right]*) were in the larger scale of 1:28.

In the mid-1950s Scalex sales started to fall. It was time to come up with a new idea. On a visit to the London toy fair, Fred saw a battery powered racing car set running on a track. He took this on board and added controllers for the cars to make a true racing car set where there was competition between two drivers.



Bertram "Fred" Francis sold his business to Lines Bros (Tri-ang) in 1958 and moved on to marine engineering. The popularity of Scalextric grew through the 1960s. Back then, Tri-ang treated the slot car market in the same manner as the model railways it was more well known for. That is as a model making hobby to make a racing circuit with all the trimmings of grandstands pit areas and control towers. As time went on, the hobby of slot cars moved on to racing the cars and not making model race tracks.

The Ford GT40 was introduced in 1966 and has had several incarnations in the life of Scalextric.



In 1971 the wheels came off with the collapse of Tri-ang. The railway models went back to the Hornby name under the ownership of Dunbee-Combex-Marx. (DCM) Scalextric kept the name and were also part of the DCM stable. The 1970s saw some forgettable moments in the history of Scalextric and these included Motorbikes, Go-Carts and, without doubt the strangest idea, Race Horse's.

Add to this the concept of steerable cars and low build quality, and it's a wonder the company is here today. It will come as no surprise that by 1980 DCM went into liquidation, but Hornby and Scalextric were saved by a management buyout.



Since the 1980s, both Scalextric and Hornby have gone from strength to strength using more technology to their advantage, also the popularity of tv and cinema. They have also milked the nostalgia market for all its worth. Always a great business plan. *Mark Jenkins.*



Next Page – My Scalextric collection. The cars were both made in the mid-1960s when Tri-ang owned Scalextric. They are a Mini Cooper and a Lotus 25 as used by Jim Clark. Those of you who know about motor racing will be aware of the fact that Jim Clark's Lotus was green and yellow and its number was 25. So those who know me well will know what is going to happen to this model.



Above - I have also been given this old racer. I love the challenge of a project. [Mark Jenkins](#).

[A big thanks to our member Mark for this article. Ed.]

The three pics below were sent to us by a friend of the HMAC club and were featured on our Facebook page recently. They are original tin-plate Scalextric autos with the red model a Maserati 250F version similar to the one shown in Mark's article. [Terry](#).



~BILL'S DODGE POWER WAGON~



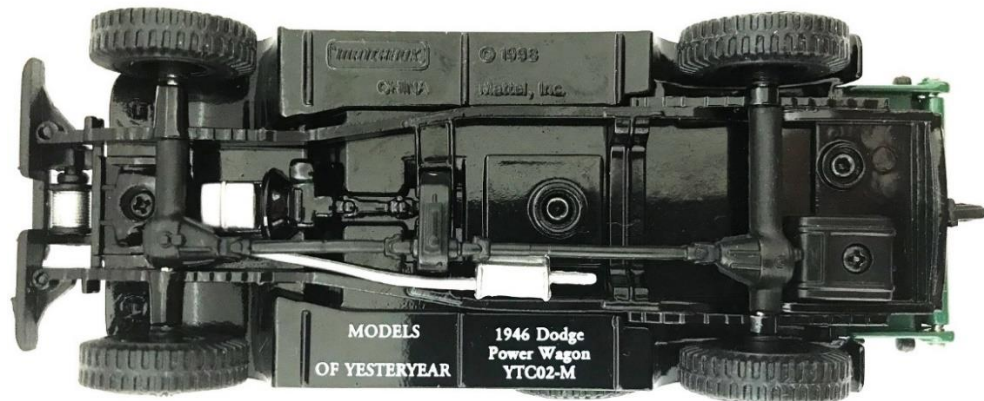
Seeing Bill's previous Facebook post about his Matchbox model of a Dodge Power Wagon as shown in *the lead-in pic*, reminded me that one of my favourite makers of diecast model trucks, *First Gear*, modelled the Power Wagon in 1:30 scale diecast. For some reason I never acquired any of these Power Wagon models sticking mainly to their 'B' Mack trucks. With a name like *Power Wagon*, you would be sure to assume that this particular Dodge unit would be tough to look at and also a tough work horse. And you would be right.

Dodge introduced the multi-purpose 'Power Wagon' early in 1946 with the slogan '*The truck that needs no roads.*' The company had gained plenty of experience in building 4-wheel drive lorries during World War 2 for, not only the United States armed forces, but for their allies as well. Upon release, it became, alongside the Willys Jeep, the only general purpose 4-wheel drive truck in North America and was described by Dodge as a one ton general purpose truck designed for off-highway work on unimproved roads.

Between the wars, there had been plenty of heavy duty 4-wheel drive autos available, but they were mostly designed for commercial or military use, so post WW2, there should have been an advantage for any auto maker to produce this type of vehicle for civilian use. And the reason for this was that Army personnel had had a taste of the capabilities of the Jeep and Dodge ½ ton military trucks under war conditions. *How Stuff Works* wrote, '*... the company's marketing group saw a ready market for the versatile, rugged, go-anywhere truck they had created for wartime use. Better yet, from their perspective, they could produce it at very low cost because the bulk of the engineering development costs had already been paid for by the huge government orders for the military trucks that Dodge had built.*' The 1946 Power Wagon's previous military pedigree can be seen in *the next pic* of Bill's model.



Our Club member Cameron commented that '*They had an articulating (or "swivelling") chassis to help keep all four wheels on the ground for traction.*' In this regard, for Dodge Power Wagons built from 1946, a clever device known as the '*Willock Swivel Frame*' became available. Basically, the chassis was modified by Willocks into two separate sections, the cabin unit and the load unit, and they were held together by a special centrally positioned heavy duty hinge. In this way, the cabin and load sections could twist separately keeping all tyres in contact with the ground. It was available on many similar styled trucks having been patented in Canada in 1944. Lock pins were fitted to allow both chassis sections to be held together in a rigid form for normal road use. It is thought that as many as one hundred Power Wagons were modified with this system over time. Today, for severe off-road use, automakers rely on longer-travel suspension designs, rather than expensive twisting frames as devised by Willock.



Above pics show up the excellent detailing of the suspension on the Matchbox models of the Power Wagon.

The Power Wagon had fully floating axles front and rear, and semi-elliptical springs with 11 leaves in front, and 14 leaves in the rear. The front suspension had double-acting hydraulic shock absorbers as standard but they were an option at the rear. The cab chassis design allowed for the fitting of different bodies and popular types were stake trucks, tow trucks, firefighting vehicles, station wagon bodied power wagons, and school buses easily suited for rough country road areas.



Another of the popular liveried models from Matchbox.

How Stuff Works wrote, *'With the winch and tail shaft and appropriate equipment, a Power Wagon could sweep streets, remove snow, stretch wire fences, remove rocks and stumps, operate belt-driven equipment, load logs, hoist pilings, and install pipes.*

Alterations over the years were few -- tinted windows and power brakes in 1953, power steering and synchromesh transmission in 1957, an alternator and larger six in 1961, lock-out hubs in 1962.

When it was withdrawn from the U.S. market in 1968, production had reached 95,145. Still, the Power Wagon wouldn't die, for it was destined to soldier on in export markets through the late 1970s. That's greater longevity than the Model T and equal to the VW Beetle.' Terry.

Not everyone can win, so I have thrown in a few pics of displays from the 'Actual' model comp that I liked. These are from the February and April meetings. Ed

