

RETROMOTIVE

VOLUME TWO



DE TOMASO MANGUSTA



LAND-ROVER
BEUGO LYNN

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PUBLISHER

Nathan Duff

PHOTOGRAPHY

*Nathan Duff / Isamu Sawa
Shauna Maluga / Brier Thomas*

WORDS

*Nathan Duff / Matt Wood / Bruce McMahon
Nik Bruce / Isamu Sawa / Shaun Maluga*

ART DIRECTION & DESIGN

Nathan Duff

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SPECIAL THANKS

Byron Mathieudakis / Tim Robson

CONTACT

*contact@retromotive.co
PO Box 3403 Victoria Point West QLD, 4165*

SOCIAL

*www.facebook.com/Retromotive
www.instagram.com/retromotive*

SUBSCRIPTIONS

www.retromotive.co

FRONT END

GREETINGS! Volume one is out of the bag and I'd like to thank all those who have supported the magazine so far. It's been a bit of a slow burn, but it's picking up momentum thanks largely to a lot of people taking the time to get the word out. A sincere thank you to you all!

So welcome to Volume two! The magazine is already starting to develop beyond the original idea, but the core goal of sharing stories of people and their cars remains. This time around, you'll notice a few new sections that I'm super proud of and humbled by the people willing to contribute.

First up, 'The Iconic Series' delves into a vehicle that has stood out in automotive history, for better or worse, as a car that disrupted the game or had significant influence on future developments.

Where do you start with something like that? There are countless possibilities and contenders. Selfishly, I wanted to start with a car that has always fascinated me both historically and aesthetically. I went with: The Road Runner Super Bird. With its audacious styling and pant soiling speed it seemed to be as good as place as any to start.

Contributor, Nik Bruce tackles the history of the Super Bird and its development through NASCAR and paints a vivid picture of the Aero wars of the 60's I'd love to open it up for future contenders for 'The Iconic Series'. If you have any suggestions, please get in touch via the contact details below.

Bruce McMahon, long time automotive scribe and master of the yarn, debuts his regular column 'Idle Torque'. Pining down historical figures and all round good characters that have been part of the game long before I was born.

Isamu Sawa, renowned commercial photographer and absolute vintage watch tragic brings us 'The Analogue Wrist'. He will be sharing images and stories from like-minded enthusiasts about

particular time pieces they have acquired and their significance. His photographic prowess is second to none, a true and very humble master of his craft.

Shaun Maluga, a sensational New York based photographer will be hunting down people to find the origin of their automotive obsession with his column, 'It All Started When...'. His stories are complemented by his beautiful portraits and automotive photography.

Some great features are unearthed in this issue too.

I catch up with the owner of a very special Lotus II LM 150. One of only two in existence in the world. We tell the story of his encounters with the car during its early racing days at Lowood and his subsequent acquisition and restoration of the car some 30 years later.

I spend some time with a very special De Tomaso Mangusta. Once owned by the late Ricci Martin of the Martin Family. Its lineage is not the only thing that makes this Mangusta special. It is a one of a kind 'Targa top' and has been restored to absolute showroom condition. Just don't try and get in it if your over 6ft tall!

We visit Rod & Clayton Wilson with their stunningly restored Volvo 242 GT. It's a gorgeous car and perhaps one that has been a little bit forgotten unnoticed for a number of years. That plus much more!

Work is already underway for volume three and four and you can expect to see some slight changes here in there as the magazine continues to evolve. I welcome any feedback or correspondence in relation to the articles or the magazine. You can get in touch via our social accounts or email me at contact@retromotive.co Thanks for supporting independent publishing and taking the time to be part of the Retromotive family.

- Nathan. 27/6/18



'The Iconic Series' Features the Plymouth Road Runner Super Bird with its audacious styling and pant soiling speed!





*Bill Mallalieu stands in front of a Bentley hand built by Derry Mallalieu
(a distant relative), based on a MK6 Bentley.*

IT ALL STARTED WHEN...

FOR Bill Mallalieu it all began as a child playing with die-cast Dinky Toys in Barbados. Growing up with little money and at a time when post-war fuel rationing meant that seeing a real car, let alone driving in one, was a rare and exciting treat, it is not surprising that his focus turned to cars as he grew and prospered. In 1963 Bill was able to purchase one of three brand new Volvo 122S' imported into Barbados, which became his every day car as well as a competition car.

He subsequently purchased the Governor General's Vanden Plas Princess, a car that transported the royal family during a visit to Barbados. Then, by pure chance, he was offered a 1947 Bentley MK VI, custom built for Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and with that, a collection was born.

Fast forward some 40 plus years and Bill has amassed an impressive collection of cars, all with some relationship to Barbados or significance to himself. Despite some truly magnificent cars, the Volvo 122S remains his favourite in the collection due to its rich history in the life of him and his family. Believing that the pleasure in owning anything is in sharing it with others, Bill opened The Mallalieu Motor Collection to the public. Bill's collection is a particularly important cultural addition to Barbados given the scarcity of vintage cars on the island. Bill is also a founding member of the Barbados Rally Club and has a strong and

successful history in motorsport where he still holds many records. In fact, one of his fondest memories in his Volvo is driving it to victory in a rally in Jamaica, beating the then hot Lotus Cortina.

Bill makes himself available most days to give personal tours of the collection, housed in his garage/museum in the historic Pavilion Court in Hastings. As you walk from car to car he rattles off interesting facts about the production details and particular history of his cars. This is a man who knows his cars and their histories inside out. Ask a question out of left field and Bill will surprise you with a rich and detailed answer and, if you're lucky, regale you with an interesting tale or two. You get the feeling that he could talk for days about each car and that every one holds a special place in his heart.

A mechanic maintains the collection daily and the cars are run on a regular basis. However, the lack of space in the garage has meant that cars closest to the door are more inclined to see the road. With the garage at capacity, Bill seems content with how his collection currently stands. The one exception being if he could ever find an increasingly rare, early, right hand drive, Studebaker Hawk.

If you ever find yourself in the Caribbean, be sure to make time to visit the Mallalieu Motor Collection, and allow Bill to share his piece of automotive history with you.



SHAUN MALUGA

Shaun Maluga is an Australian born, New York City based Photographer with a penchant for automotive photography. When not shooting cars, he is happy photographing everything from the streets of NYC to portraits, weddings, events and travel. You can follow his work at [instagram.com/shaunmaluga](https://www.instagram.com/shaunmaluga) and [instagram.com/fujifilmxpro2](https://www.instagram.com/fujifilmxpro2)



Photo: ©Isamu Sawa

*The "Heuer Autavia Viceroy – ref 1163V" chronograph. Offered for US\$88
with the end flap from a carton of Viceroy cigarettes.*

I wasn't born a watch collector - it's a recent hobby. I blame Instagram. Trolling through the plethora of ubiquitous 'wrist shots' on the popular social media platform lead me to be obsessed and steered me on a path of discovery...and a slightly smaller bank account.

Born of that obsession is an intrigue about the stories behind vintage watches and their owners. Their stories really resonate with me and - like any true obsessive - researching and making the connection with a particular piece serves only to fuel my passion and drives me to find out more.

My Instagram feed The Analogue Wrist started as a photographic project initially only to shoot my own humble collection, but I soon found it to be a vehicle to connect me with other like-minded individuals and their journey.

I acquired this particular piece - my very first vintage watch, actually - from a reputable second-hand watch dealer in Melbourne. Pieces like these are very hard to come by in Australia, and I was thrilled to find one locally that I could see in person before committing to the purchase. The clincher? I was born in 1972, the same year as my Heuer Autavia Viceroy (pictured, which I discovered after I cross-referenced the serial number with historical records published on leading Heuer expert Jeff Stein's website OnTheDash. It's easily the most comprehensive source of information about vintage Heuer chronographs, dashboard timers and other time pieces on the internet.

Unlike the famous Heuer Carrera from the 1960s, which started out as a wristwatch, the Autavia (which takes its name from the words automobile and aviation) began its life in 1933 as precision timing instruments for the dashboards of rally cars.

In 1958, the company's then-new CEO Jack Heuer, a keen rally driver, participated in a Swiss rally as a co-pilot. After leading the race, he eventually came third after misreading the dial of the car's Autavia 12-hour dashboard timer by a minute.

After realising that the dial was confusing to read, he decided to redesign the device, subsequently changing the name to Monte

Carlo, in honour of the famous car rally above the tiny principality of Monaco. The redesign was a real hit, and the new dashboard timer quickly became a must-have for the world's top rally drivers. He revived the Autavia name in 1962 by creating his first new product for the company, a chronograph wristwatch which established the brand as a leader of racing-inspired chronographs. The defining feature of the Autavia chronograph was its rotating bezel; in addition to being able to time events with the wristwatch face, the rotating bezel also provided the user with a supplemental timing device.

In 1971, an American tobacco company called Brown & Williamson approached Heuer with the idea of offering the Autavia in a joint promotion to boost declining sales of its Viceroy cigarette brand. A special edition Autavia was thus created; the Heuer Autavia Viceroy - ref 1163V chronograph. It was offered for US\$88 if the end flap from a carton of Viceroy cigarettes was supplied, which marked a considerable saving over the \$200 mainline Heuer Autavia model. The movement powering the Viceroy is known as the Calibre 12, and is a derivative of the original Calibre 11 automatic chronograph movement. With its crown located on the left hand side, the Calibre 11 was one of the world's first automatic chronograph movements, and was developed in 1969 by a consortium of manufacturers including Heuer, Breitling, Hamilton-Buren and Dubois-Depraz. The collaboration with Heuer was unfortunately a failure for Viceroy, but it was a real success for a watch company which was struggling with declining sales in the US at that time. The promotion boosted sales of Heuer's automatic chronographs from less than 500 a year to 900 per month during the first four months of the promotion in 1972.

The Heuer Company was acquired in 1985 by the TAG Group (Techniques d'Avant Garde), which subsequently renamed the brand TAG Heuer.

For me, the hunt is half the game, but finding a rare piece like the Autavia Viceroy that I share a connection with really brings my hobby - okay, my obsession - into sharp focus.



ISAMU SAWA

Born in Japan and raised in Australia, Isamu Sawa, or Issey to his friends, is a commercial photographer and a watch collector. He enjoys connecting with other like-minded enthusiasts (read "obsessives") sharing their passion and watch stories...

You can follow his work at Instagram @analogwrist



Photo: ©Brier Thomas

*"Lakeside, 8 July 1962 - John French with the Australian GT Championship
winning Centuar Waggott."*

IDLE TORQUE

CHAMPION racer and champion bloke John French was a top cyclist back in his day, won 18 state titles before marriage, new house and kids put the brakes on that.

So the young Queenslander turned to motor racing part-time and kept on winning. Beating more famed and fancied rivals. With a clutch of sandwiches in the console for enduro runs at Mount Panorama. And forever a smile. Most remember French partnering mate Dick Johnson to take out the 1981 Bathurst in the Tru-Blue Falcon. Yet a storied career was already well on track by then, back to 1957 when the milking machine salesman modded his company FJ into a race Holden for weekend outings.

“I raced pushbikes from when I was 14 to when I was about 24 with a fellow called Bill Jeffs. Then I had an idle time for a bit but when we were bike racing we’d go for training rides and come back past the Strathpine motor races or ride south and watch open wheelers and such at Southport. I said to Jeffs we should hot the Holden ‘cause it was the thing to do back then and go and beat these fellas.”

And that’s what happened. The work-day FJ with Repco head and limited slip differential rewarded the part-timer with Queensland and New South Wales touring car championships in the late 1950s before French and mates built the celebrated Centaur Waggon, a one-off, locally-designed and built sports machine which took out the 1962 Australian GT championship.

From there it was Mini Cooper S and French became a British Motor Corporation works driver before moving to Alfa Romeo 1750 GTVs, still terrorising the southerners. Now Ford came knocking and partnered French with Allan Moffat for the 1969 Sandown Three Hour race; the pair delivered the legendary Falcon GTHO’s first victory. By 1970 the astute businessman owned John French Motors in inner-city Brisbane, selling and servicing Renaults, then Alfa Romeos and Subarus, but racing big

Australian Fords. He was on his way to more wins, more laughs and, all up, 19-odd Bathurst starts including a 1972 solo drive, with home-made sandwiches aboard.

Then came that 1981 win with Johnson in a crash-shortened Bathurst 1000.

“I suppose I’ve won classes in Australian championships, won grand touring car championships but you never become famous until you’ve won Bathurst. When people ask how do you win there I tell ‘em you have to have a little bit of class and a fair bit of arse. And as much arse as class, I can tell you.” Plus a grin.

When French, hustling the XD around Mount Panorama in 1982, was asked how he got on with Johnson he replied with a smile for Race Cam: “He knows I’m better than him and we don’t argue about it.”

His biggest crash was there in 1969. French qualified his Alfa Romeo in the top ten but was overhauled by bigger cars heading up Mountain Straight on the first lap. Ahead, just beyond Skyline, was a massive crash of front-running Falcons. French went right, onto the brakes, but was hit from behind, ran up an embankment, landing on top of another Alfa. Smelt petrol. “There was a bit of quietness and a head comes in through the window and it’s Dickie Johnson (spectating up the top). I said can I get out? And he says yes. But I wasn’t scared, too busy thinking about how to get out.”

It was hard to scare a driver who, in King Gee overalls, topped 127mph (204km/h) down Conrod Straight in a skinny-tyred FJ Holden with three-on-the-tree back in the 1950s.

As mate Dick Johnson says: “John French is a gentleman and a real fucken’ racer, one of the most underrated drivers of his time.”

The man himself, now 88, has no regrets. “I wouldn’t change anything I did because we had a lot of fun.” He grins again.



BRUCE McMAHON

Bruce McMahon started out with a '49 Riley Roadster moving on to 911s, Range Rovers, Fiat coupes, Alfas and utes - including three cars from John French Motors. He's also spent time as a motoring and motorsport writer.



LAND ROVER

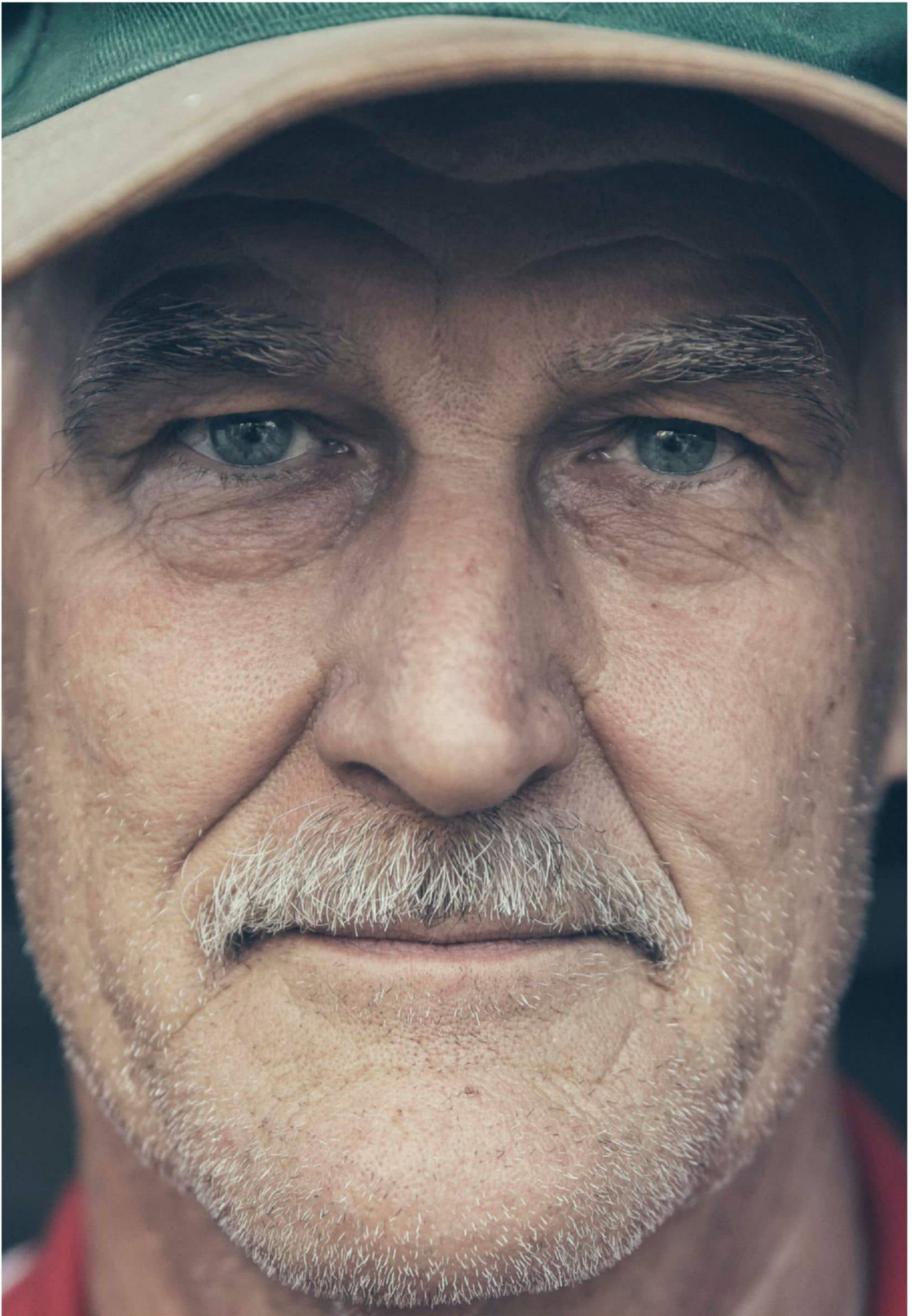
SERIES 1A



WORDS **MATT WODD** ★ PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**







WHEN I first met Russell he was just a guy walking his dog. I was leaning against the front guard of my Land Rover Defender with a coffee in my hand and habitually flicking through widgets on my phone with the other.

“Nice Landy,” he said as his dog sniffed my shoes, I smiled, used to the regular comments about my Land Rover Perentie. We started chatting, I was parked out the front of his favourite coffee roaster, he was as much a coffee tragic as I am.

He told me he had a Land Rover in his shed, an ex Australian army Series 2A. It’s a short wheelbase Vietnam War veteran with the cut out wheel arches that makes these jungle spec vehicles stand out from the rest. We chatted about our respective Landy afflictions and after a while itzzzzzz was time to go.

We said our goodbyes, “nice talking to you,” I said with a wave and roared off in a cloud of diesel smoke. A pleasant chance meeting not likely to be repeated.

But the caffeine laden air of that coffee roaster kept drawing me back on a regular basis to indulge the bent for the bean. And I continued to bump into Russell on a number of occasions, as before we talked cars and travels.

While chatting with Russell during our accidental meetings it rammmed home the fact that everyone has a story. The arc of life experiences, challenge and turmoil that makes up the tapestry of our brief existence.

Russell’s life has been one of sun, surf, family and, of course, cars.

Over a number of weeks it became clear that this dog-walking, coffee lover was not only a car tragic but also someone who’d made a living from fettling, massaging and building, the sort of exotic automotive machines that many of us rarely encounter in the flesh.

Now retired, Russell was ex Army but has spent the bulk of his working life as a mechanic.

“My first car was an Austin Healy Sprite, I once

drove it from Townsville to Brisbane using my 9 foot long board as a roof. A lot of that road was dirt back then.”

Russell eventually ended up plying his trade in Sydney in the mundane world of a dealership workshop.

“I was working for a Toyota dealership in Sydney when I saw an ad in the paper for a Bugatti mechanic and I thought to myself; how hard can it be? I got the job!”

As Russell came to grips with the intricacies of vintage French iron he also came to the attention of a prominent car collector.

“He had a Type 51 Bugatti and that’s how I started with him. From there I worked on Bentleys, Brabhams, all sorts of exotic stuff.” He eventually offered Russell a full-time job.

Russell spent over a decade tweaking Dellortos, tuning Webers and rebuilding and maintaining all sorts of automotive exotica. He also travelled with some of those cars to racetracks around the country as they were put through their around various circuits.

On one occasion the boss even casually asked Russell to have a look at the engine on his plane. Given the legal ramifications, he politely declined.

These days Russell lives a quiet life. The pictures in his photo albums yellow and fade and the Land Rover sits patiently in the garage under a tarp waiting for the next flurry of activity.

He invited me around to have a look at it. We dragged the tarp off it and let the dust and spiders settle. Like so many old Land Rovers it’s load with character and wears the patina of age well. It’s provenance lies under thick coats of paint and faded surf stickers. I have to admit that the Land Rover bug really is an affliction.

I asked Russell if it will ever be finished. “No car project is ever finished,” he said, “This one will be my last, but it will never really be finished, they never are.”







LOTUS 11

150 LM

TURNING LAPS AT THE TRACK THAT NEARLY
ENDED ITS CAREER FOR GOOD IS SWEET VICTORY
FOR RICHARD AND HIS AMAZING LOTUS 11 150 LM

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**

R

FROM an early age, Richard was infatuated by British sports cars. He spent countless weekends admiring the sleek machines cut through the air at the deft hands of racers at Lowood in his home state of Queensland, but that didn't satisfy his burgeoning desire.

While working as an apprentice panel beater, he would regularly ride his pushbike across Brisbane during his lunch break to Blair Sheppard's showroom just to gaze upon the latest MGs, Austin Healys and Triumphs on display.

"My first car was 1959 Austin Healy Sprite MK2," he recalls. "I had my mind set on something like that. I would never have been happy with a Holden or a Zephyr."

Attending race meets in the early days of Lowood was, however, the spark that ignited Richard's interest in competition sports cars. "I spent four or five years of my life out there watching those

"EVEN THOUGH I HAVE DONE OTHER THINGS WITH MY LIFE - I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A PANEL BEATER."









things run around,” he says. “You had the likes of Ann Thomson’s Lotus 15 and the Lotus Elan of Bill Gates, which were incredible machines.”

(No, not THAT Bill Gates, but the Bill Gates who would actually discover the Bee Gees.)

Those old Lowood days would actually be the first time that he would come into contact with the Lotus 11 before becoming its owner, custodian and restorer some 30 years later. Lowood was the premier racing venue in Queensland during the late 1950s and early ’60s, and consisted of an old WW2 airstrip that combined runways and taxiways into a racetrack. The Australian GP was held there in 1960, and the Lotus 11 LM150, piloted by then-owner Charlie Whatmore, was one of the cars competing.

Eventually, grass grew through the tarmac and the site become unusable. Lowood has since been redeveloped into a residential area, but there are still some faint remnants of the old taxiways if you know where to look. A stone monument with the starting grid from the 1960 GP stands there today.

The now-older Richard still loved panel beating,

but needed to be able to support his growing family. “Completely by accident I moved into property, then went back to school to undertake property valuation studies,” he explains. “After graduating in 1989 I worked for a number of government agencies. Even though I have done other things with my life, I’ve always been a panel beater.”

During those years in property valuation he would visit repo yards and bring home bargains to do up and sell off. A succession of Minis and Cortinas passed through his garage, as well as a rare Nissan A200 GTB – a car that he still regrets selling.

Richard had a bit more time on his hands when the 1990s rolled around, and he started to hunt around for a new project to occupy himself. Amazingly, it was by complete accident that he came across the Lotus 11, some 30 years after last seeing it at Lowood. “No-one quite knew what it was,” Richard explains. “It was with a guy call Terry Healey, who used to own Old Timer Garage in Fortitude Valley.” The memory came straight back to Richard of the old Lowood days, and he quickly made the arrangements



to purchase the Lotus II as his next project.

Built in March 1957 at the Lotus factory in Hornsey, England, the car was commissioned by John Coombs, a racer who already owned a series one Lotus II, and who wanted to try and beat the Porsches at Le Mans. Coombs and Lotus's legendary frontman Colin Chapman got together and came up with the Lotus II 150 LM.

The specifications of the new car included a 1.5-litre Coventry Climax FPF motor, SU/DU6 dual-throat carbs, a close-ratio MG gearbox, long range fuel tanks and dry-sump lubrication and uprated drive shafts, while the series two DeDion rear axle and four-wheel disc brakes were retained. There are only two genuine LM 150 cars in existence; this is chassis 305, and the other car is 322/332, which still belongs to Team Lotus.

The Lotus only stayed in England for about 12 months. Apart from a brief steer by Roy Salvadori in

1957, Ron Flockhart - known for winning the 1956 Le Man in a Jaguar D Type - was the wheelman for most of that time. The Lotus raced at Goodwood, Silverstone, Mallory Park and other circuits throughout Europe... but for unknown reasons, it never actually made it to Le Mans.

The Lotus arrived in Australia in 1958, after a deal was struck between Coombs and Whatmore. The Lotus certainly lived an active life in Australia; it started with Lowood in 1958, Bathurst at an Easter event later that year, and then went onto race at Albert Park in the 1959 Australian GP.

Unfortunately, the steering rack parted company with the chassis at Lakeside's Hungry corner in 1962. The Lotus left the track, ran across the infield and

ended up against the dam wall. Within a month Whatmore had transferred the go-fast the bits across to a new standard-spec Lotus II series two chassis and was off racing again.

It was from there that Lotus 305 was bandied around various owners over the years, and things were done to it that would make any purist weep. It was eventually found in a garage in Maryborough in 1996, with fibreglass parts Frankensteined on it and a Toyota Corolla engine installed. "There wasn't much left of the original car, but it was a start," says Richard.

Firstly, the body chassis was returned to its original specifications, before Richard set out to source the correct mechanical components for the restoration,

as many things had been changed, robbed or lost over the years.

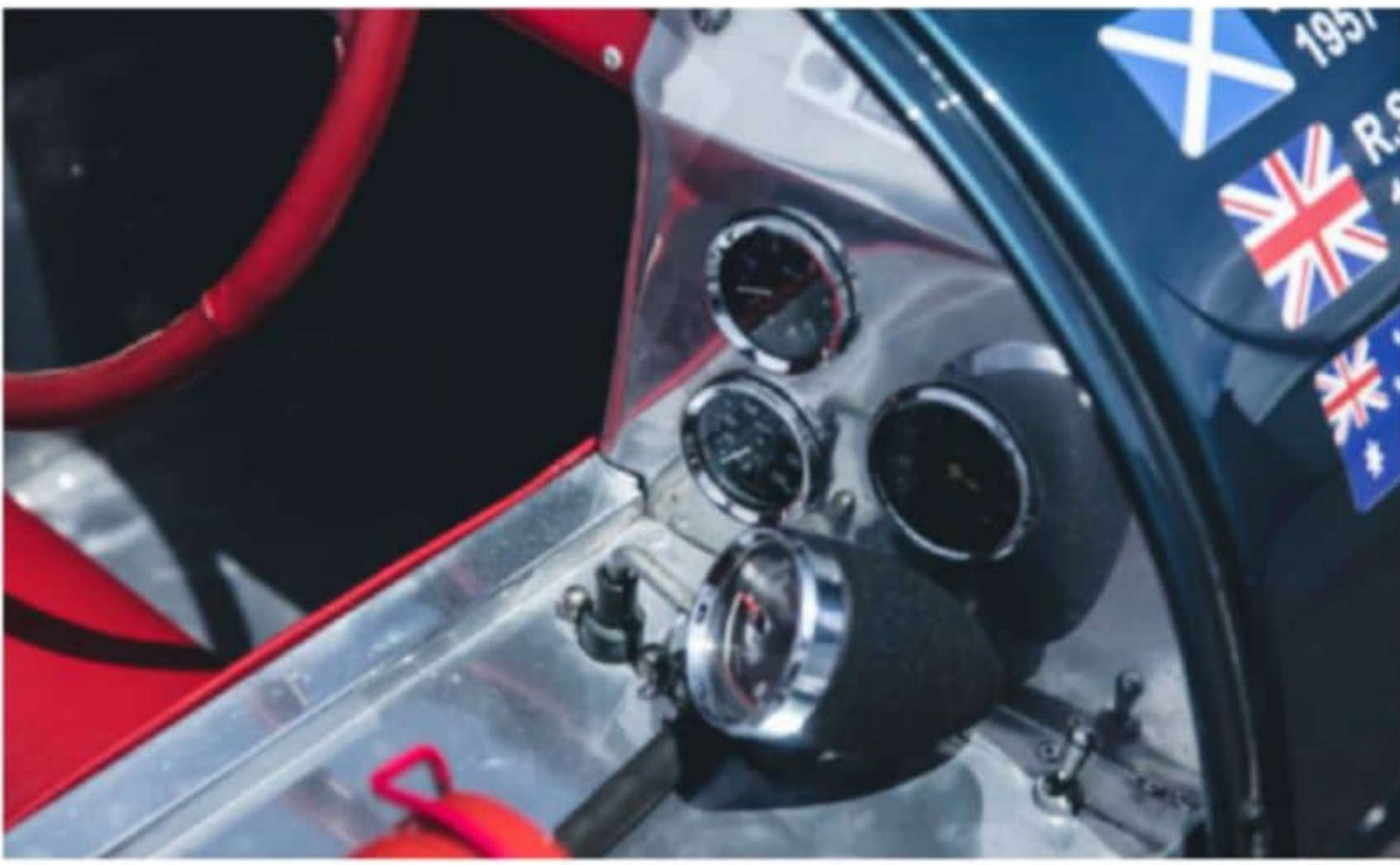
Coming across the late Adrian Schagen and late Graham Howard in Sydney was Richard's first piece of luck. Adrian and Graham had rebuilt a couple of Lotus



IIIs, they were aware of Richard's LM150 and they were very supportive of the restoration. "They actually had a lot of spares for my Lotus that originally come off the car," marvels Richard. "Fuel tanks Inlet manifolds, front dual braking systems, rear braking system, engine mounts and rear drive system. They made all of these parts available to me, which turned out to be just over 100 bits and pieces." They were only minor parts, but they were important in the overall scheme of things."

The chassis unit was ready to go, but he needed a motor to set up all the engine mounts and the correct position for the gearbox. However, finding a decent engine block stalled the process somewhat, as mounting positions had been changed over the years.





*“YOU BUILD THESE THINGS UP IN YOUR MIND”,
HE SAYS “LIKE IT’S GOING TO BE SOME SORT
OF SUBLIME EXPERIENCE.”*



It took seven years, in fact, to find a suitable block for the Lotus. A collector of historic and classic cars in New Zealand, Bill Clarke, made available to him a fully reconditioned Coventry Climax FPF twin cam block. It was enough for him to be able to set up the engine mounts and gearbox, and to start sourcing the remainder of the internal pieces.

Enter Ray Gibbs, who was best known for making oil pumps for these motors. The wishlist was long – a head, crank, rods and all the rest that goes with it. “Yeah, I got all that,” Ray says casually. It turns out it was left over from the Sir Jack Brabham days, and Ray had been his mechanic for a time. “Brabham would bring all of these components over to Australia in the Tasman days, but he never took any of it back with him,” explained Gibbs.

The pistons were sourced from Tony Mantle, also known as ‘Mr Coventry Climax’. Tony had had a set of pistons to suit the motor that had been sitting on his shelf in the UK for the past 25 years, and he had no idea what he was going to do with them. “He said I could have them for 100 quid,” laughs Richard.

That was the last piece needed to go ahead with the engine rebuild and move forward with restoring this classic racer to its former glory. The restoration took twelve years, and finding wayward parts wasn’t the only battle. Gaining eligibility to enable the car to take part in Historic Motorsport events was a long and complicated process; however, Richard’s persistence paid off. In recognition of this car’s international and national motorsport history,

Lotus Eleven LM 150 chassis 305 has been afforded international accreditation by way of an FIA Historic Technical Passport and an Australian CAMS Group L logbook.

The Lotus was finished just in time to be presented at the 50th anniversary of Lakeside in 2012; in another amazing twist, it turns out that the car had competed in the very first sports car race ever held at the small Queensland track. “And in fact, it won it,” says Richard.

Confident that the car would run, but never having driven it further than up and down the driveway at home, there was a sense of trepidation in Richard

before the car’s debut. But the Lotus returned to the very track that had put an end to its career as a racer, completing lap after flawless lap as part of the exhibition.

“You build these things up in your mind like it’s going to be some sort sublime experience. As

much as I love the car, it’s noisy and a bit rattly... kind of like doing laps inside a 44-gallon drum,” he laughs. “Mind you, it doesn’t get pushed the way it used to in the past; it’s driven reasonably sedately. It’s not sophisticated, but the more you drive it, the more you realise what it’s all about.”

These days, with only minor maintenance needed to keep the Lotus going for its occasional track days at Lakeside, Richard is back restoring another Mini Cooper just for fun. “All I’ve done all my life is rebuild old motorcars,” says Richard. I get the feeling that the Lotus is the one he is most proud of.



Charlie Whatmore at the

Wheel of the Lotus 11 LM 150 - Lakeside 1961.

Photo: ©Brier Thomas









B I L L M A R T I N

A RELIC IN TIME



WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**



AT just 11 years old, self-proclaimed surfer bum Bill Martin would pedal his bike, complete with his surfboard in a homemade trailer behind him, to the beach. This was in the 1950s, and it would take him four hours to pedal the 80km from Mt Gravatt in Brisbane's east to Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast. He would spend nearly every weekend at Burleigh camping and surfing, but the commute was tough and pretty soon, Bill was keen

to upgrade the pushie.

"In 1959, when I was about 14 years old, a couple of mates bought FJ and FC Holdens and strapped their surfboards to the roof. I thought that was a better idea than riding my bike, so I went and bought Bessie, the 1949 680 Wolseley over there," says Bill, motioning to a shed full to the brim with "stuff" and pointing out a well-worn tarp, under which Bessie resides. The black Wolseley cost Bill 225

pounds on hire purchase, which was a little more than usual because of his tender age. Bill paid it off at two pounds a week while he was working at Peters Ice Cream as a delivery assistant, a job he had held since he was 11 years old.

"Every Friday I went to Customs Credit at Stones Corner and paid my two pounds. My last payment was for three pounds but the manager came out and said that I had been such a



good client, not to worry about the last payment,” recalls Bill.

The legal age for driving then was technically 17, but Bill’s forthright manner found a way around that small inconvenience. “I just went to the Beenleigh cop station one day and out comes this big bloke and says, ‘what do you want, young fella?’ I said ‘I want a license to drive me car’ and I pointed outside. The cop said, ‘Well, how did it get here?’ ‘I drove it,’ I told

him. He paused a beat, smirked and said ‘Here’s a special license to drive it in daylight hours, sir!’

Years later, Bill’s third brother married the policeman’s daughter, and the senior sergeant still had a clear memory of Bill from that day.

The 680 has been with Bill long enough for it to be approaching its two millionth mile. I ask him when the first million clicked over, and he leans back on the carcass of a car and

scratches at the stubble on his chin. “Aw shit, must have been back in the 1970s, I reckon,” he recalls.

“I did get rid of it once, though,” he confesses. “A lot of my mates were getting Holden station wagons, so I went and traded the Woolsey in at Eagers Holden at Newstead. I went down the coast for weekend and I absolutely hated it. So on Monday morning I went back to Eagers and I said I want my Wolseley back. Cost





me twenty pound to get it back, too. I always said I would never sell it again.”

It wasn't always smooth sailing with the Wolseley, though.

“My mates used to call it a ‘Pommy heap of shit,’” he laughs. “We used to have races down the back streets of Burleigh and the magic mile at Lynton – the coppers would come down in their early models Falcons and try and catch us.”

Bill loved to drive fast, and eventually the allure of speedway came calling via a chance run in a mate's car. He continued to race speedway for 18 years, until a severe crash at a Toowoomba meet intervened.

“They were going to take me legs, they were,” says Bill, wincing at the memory. “You may have noticed I'm limping a bit.” He stretches down to point at the scars on his right ankle. “This was just pulp. They were talking about taking both legs, one above the knee and the other below.

“At the time, my sister was a matron at the Royal Brisbane hospital and I begged the Toowoomba hospital to call her. Thankfully, I was flown down there and they managed to save my legs. Got a few other things though, like a plate in my head, but I'm still here to annoy every bastard.” He laughs uproariously.

Bill leads me toward the back paddock through various parts and miscellaneous debris, a bonnet here and a guard there. “Watch your step – that's a motor out of an old Morris”. Parked, placed, forgotten... absorbed. We reach the top of the paddock and look down on the scope of what has been a lifetime of accumulation. At best guess, he has roughly 70 cars sitting here waiting for the scrap heap or for the earth to reclaim them. “Ages ago, you used to be able to see it all if you stood on the shed, but not now,” he says.

Nature has spread its own meticulous design across the countless rows in a way David Attenborough would articulate with poetic aplomb. The moss and prolonged years of exposure have rendered the wrecks beautiful – where parts have been stripped and abandoned without

any artistic consideration, nature has stepped in to finish the canvas. Seeing any one of these wrecks out of context in a commercial wrecking yard, without nature's intervention, wouldn't warrant a second look.

I glance over and notice time and nature has had its effects on Bill, too. He points to the cancers he has had cut out and the persistent battle of age. He blames welding without a shield back in the day. “Those ultra violets,” he muses. “They took a chunk out of me ear.” There is stillness here, only occasionally broken by the creak of a tree limb in the breeze. The crunch of the canopy floor underfoot almost sounds too loud. Subconsciously, I find my hands behind my back, wandering as if I'm in an art gallery or museum, careful not to disturb the finely curated display of forgotten time.

Bill parked the first car here 40 years ago, a 1952 Wolseley. It's dead and gone, but he takes me straight to where its motor still lies. Sure enough, Bill pulls back a fistful of grass to reveal the husk of what used to be an engine.

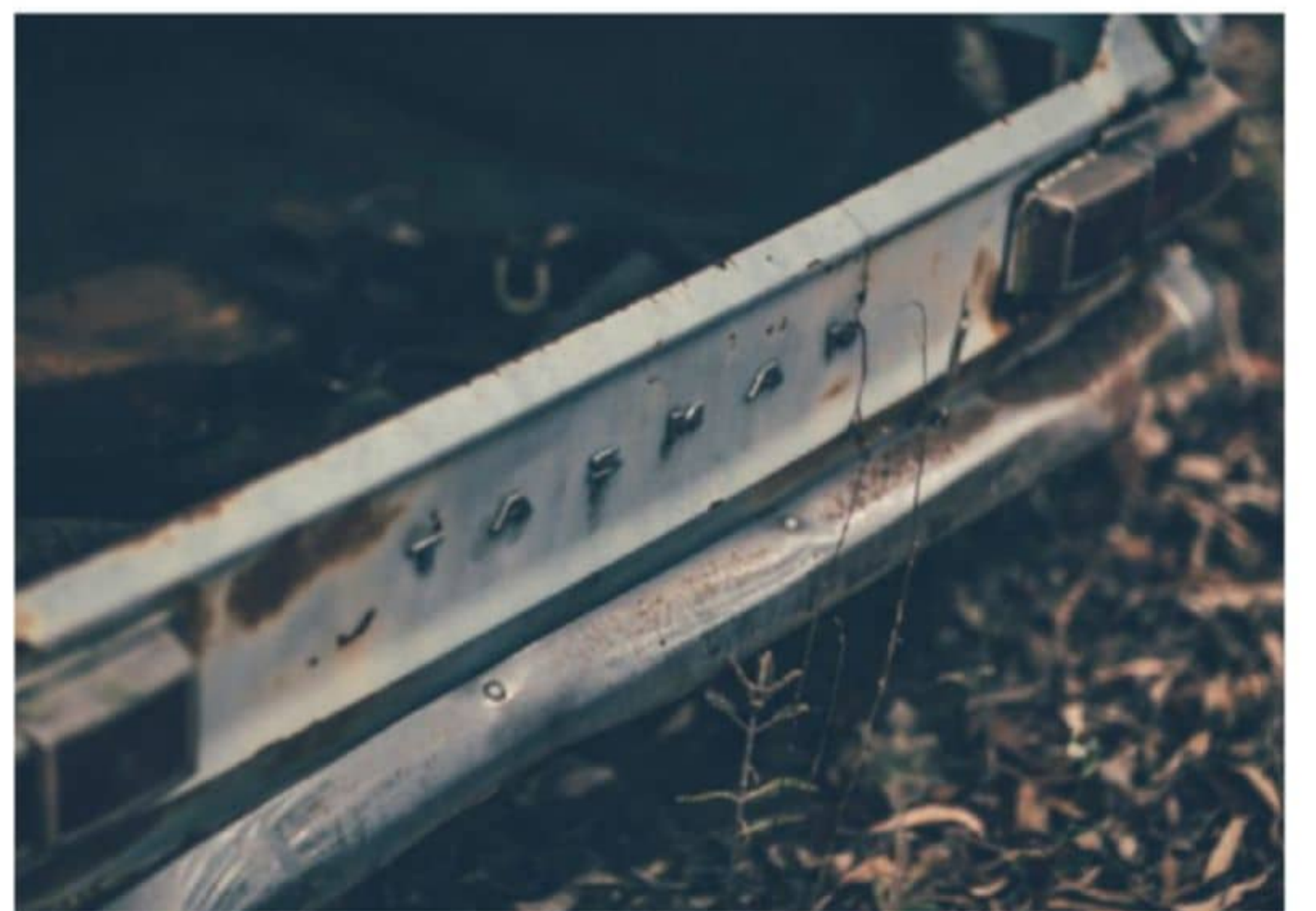
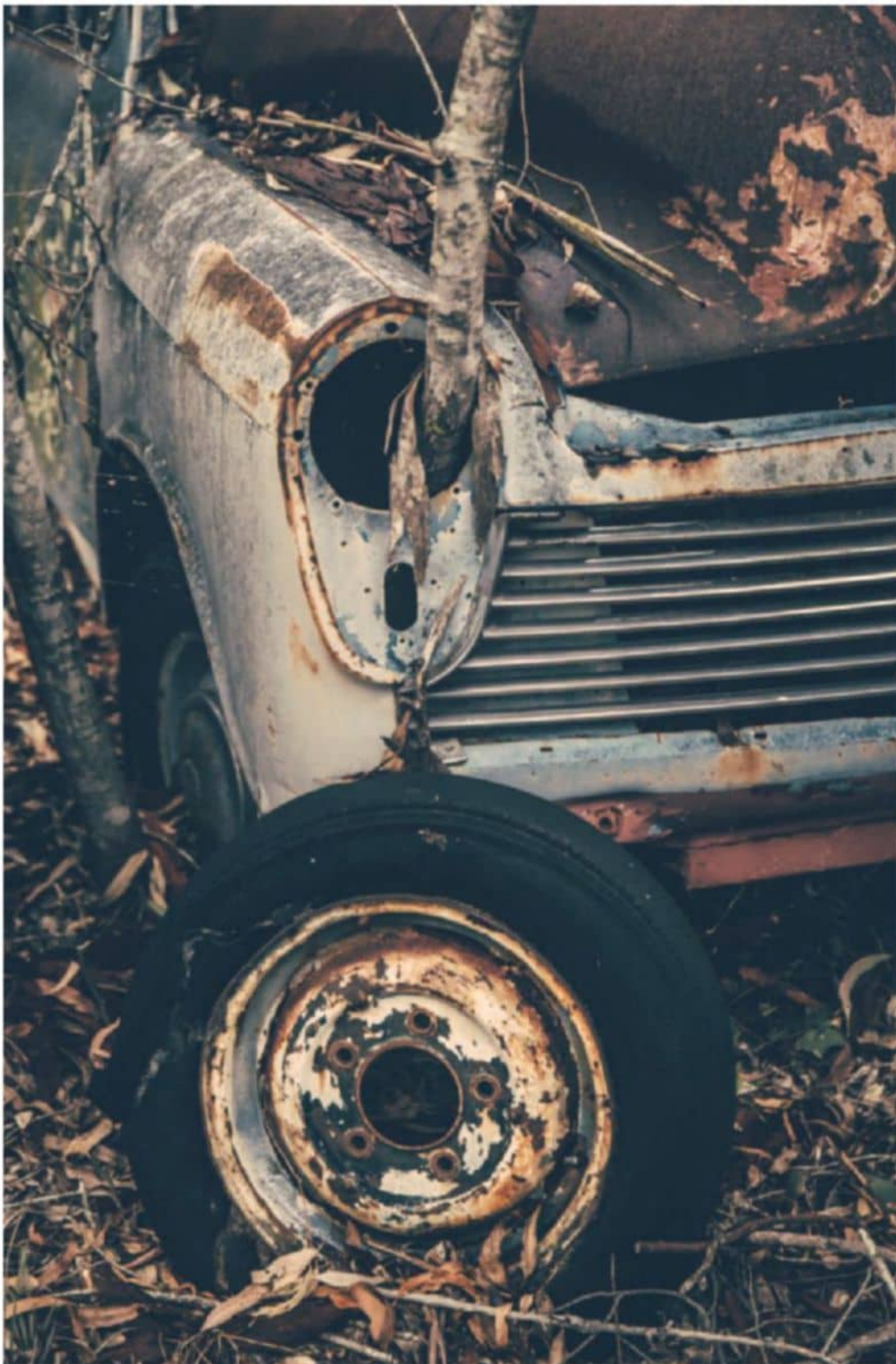
Bill worked for General Motors from 1967 up until 1984, when GM closed down the Acacia Ridge plant. “I was a bummer,” he explained. I screw my face in confusion. “I'd just do anything”, he says. “One day I would work in the supply section unloading containers, and the next I would be out stress-testing cars.”

He explains further. “GM used to stress-test the VB out at Augathella; they owned a big sheep station out there. It was about 80 miles to the homestead from the main road and the entire road was dirt. The road dropped down into a creek crossing and a big hop that we used to launch off. That's where most of them came unstuck.”

“We had to drive them until they busted,” he laughs. “The box subframe used to twist and one day we had three VBs with a gap in between the B-pillar and the roof!”

Bill was given 12 months' notice that GM would be closing the Queensland plant. “I started looking for a









job,” he says. “They (GM) were happy for you to clock on and then go out and look for work. If you didn’t have a car, GM would lend you a car or pay for a taxi to go to interviews.”

Bill was 38 by this time. “Everywhere I went for a job... I was too old,” he says. “So when I left, I used that old green truck up there to do pallet-on and pallet-off deliveries. My wife suggested that I should do something with Morris Minors because I was always tinkering with them; anyone can work on a Holden, but the BMC stuff was challenging.”

He didn’t exactly warm to the idea at first, but after 12 months he had enough work to give up the truck delivery work and concentrate on his repair and restoration business.

“I used to have to chase wrecking yards for parts, but these things came along,” he gestures towards the somewhat endless rows of decay. “I used them as my spare parts –if they were any good, I’d do ’em up and sell ’em off.”

There’s a British timeline of early automotive design scattered throughout the woods; Rover, Leyland, Jaguar, Austin, MG, Triumph, Kimberly and of course, Wolsley. Some of them were acquired through no fault of his own. “These ones here,” he says, motioning to a Mercedes, a Jag and the Rover (with the new addition of 12-foot gum tree branch that has decimated the roof). “Guy I knew just wanted a place to park them for 12 months. Well that was 12 years ago now, and he didn’t even leave me the bloody keys so I could move ’em,” he chuckles.

A keen eye can spot the oddballs amongst the collection; a Torana, a Bluebird, a Honda Civic. Even the occasional Alfa peppers the landscape, all in various states of disrepair, and all waiting for reclamation to the big scrap heap in the sky.

We wander the rows chatting, and he begins to narrate stories from the history of each car. “This guy wanted me to take the motor out of this Bluebird to put into his Wolseley. So I did and then he up and

died,” he says, deadpan. “His widow wanted nothing to do with the car, so it’s still here.”

He points to a Rover V8, sans engine. “I put that into a Morris Minor for a guy. I took it to the transport department and they just shook their head. So I took it down to NSW and they just said ‘fill out these forms, sir.’”

He recounts the story of the Morris he purchased for his mother in-law with genuine affection in his voice. “Poor old dear... the autos don’t have a park position; even though they have a handbrake, they don’t lock the gearbox up. So the poor old thing was a bit too frail to pull the handbrake on tight and she went crashing into a post one day.”

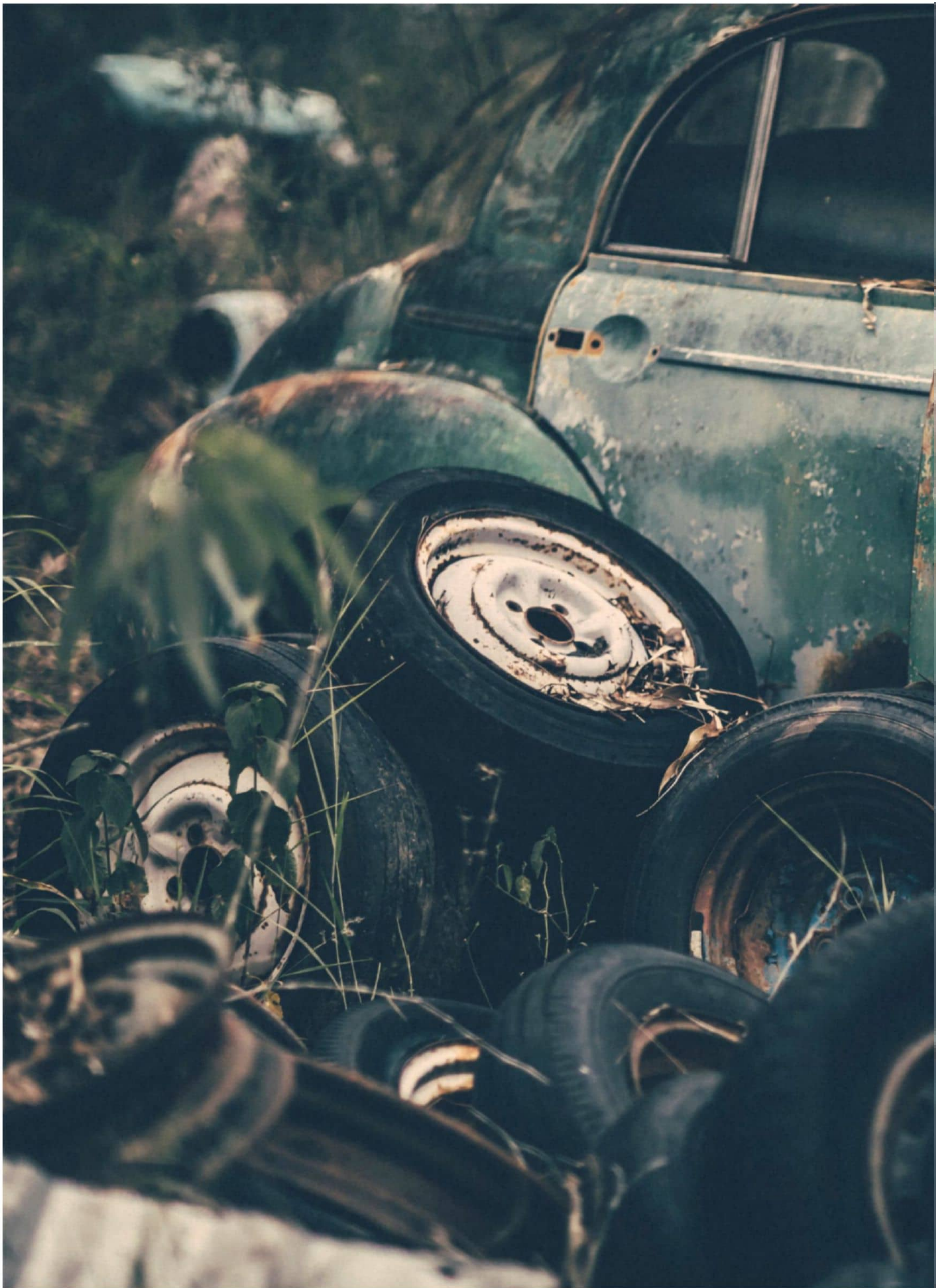
I peer in for a closer look at the damage. “A big carpet snake used to sleep in that one,” Bill winks. I gingerly retreat and take the long way round.

He rattles off intimate details of the mechanical workings of each of the models, secrets to getting at hard-to-reach places, idiosyncrasies that can only be acquired through years of experience that, sadly, will probably pass when Bill does.

A 1974 Leyland van materialises from the dense shrub. It’s something any hipster would trade a kidney for to sell bespoke deconstructed burgers from. The weather has worn away the last layer of paint to reveal the old signwriting underneath; SunBoard, it says. Bill seems surprised by the signwriting. The fact that he can still discover something new about a van that has been sitting in his yard for over 20 years is endearing.

As our tour winds down, Bill makes a confession. “In about a year or so, these are all going to the scrap heap,” he declares. “I don’t want to do too much heavy work any more. I’m 73, I’ve got a motorhome up there I’m working on. Once that’s done, you won’t see us for six months.”

Bill plans to keep a few of the Wolseleys for spares, but he holds no sentimental attachment to anything else here... or so he says, anyway.







PEUGEOT

205 GTI



WORDS **MATT WOOD** ★ PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**





ANYONE with even a hint of octane flowing through their veins can't help but be captivated by the era of the Killer B's.

During the mid-1980s flying Group B rally cars hurtled down forest tracks as camera flash bulbs stuttered amongst the spraying mud. Spectators with no sense of self-preservation dove off the track and into the undergrowth at the last minute high on danger and adrenaline

Barely resembling the production cars they were meant to represent, Lancia, Peugeot and Audi, amongst others, raced to push the envelope. Legends were born and also died ultimately bringing Group B to an end.

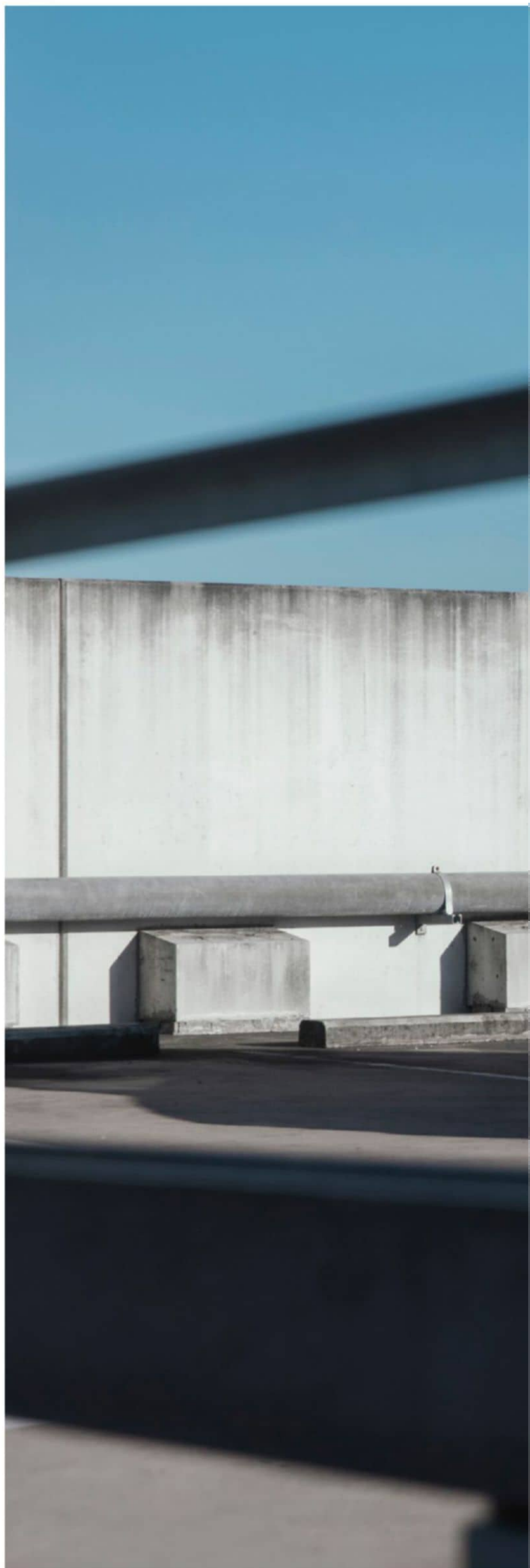
Clint Walzford's 1987 Peugeot 205 GTI may look quite unassuming compared to the dirt eating monsters of the day. But in many ways this car is Clint's homage to his own childhood experience of that era. The culmination of an Australian kid's day dreams, borne of watching the Group B spectacle from the other side of the world.

Often touted as being the original hot hatch, this little GTI is a labour of love for Clint. "I've had it for about 3 years, it was a barn find of sorts."

"A friend of mine's Uncle passed away, and he had a few projects he'd been trying to do." He gestures towards the white hatchback behind him, "There were 2 of these and a 405 donor car." "So I got to pick the best bits and put it all together. There's about 50 cars I'd love to own and this is one of them."

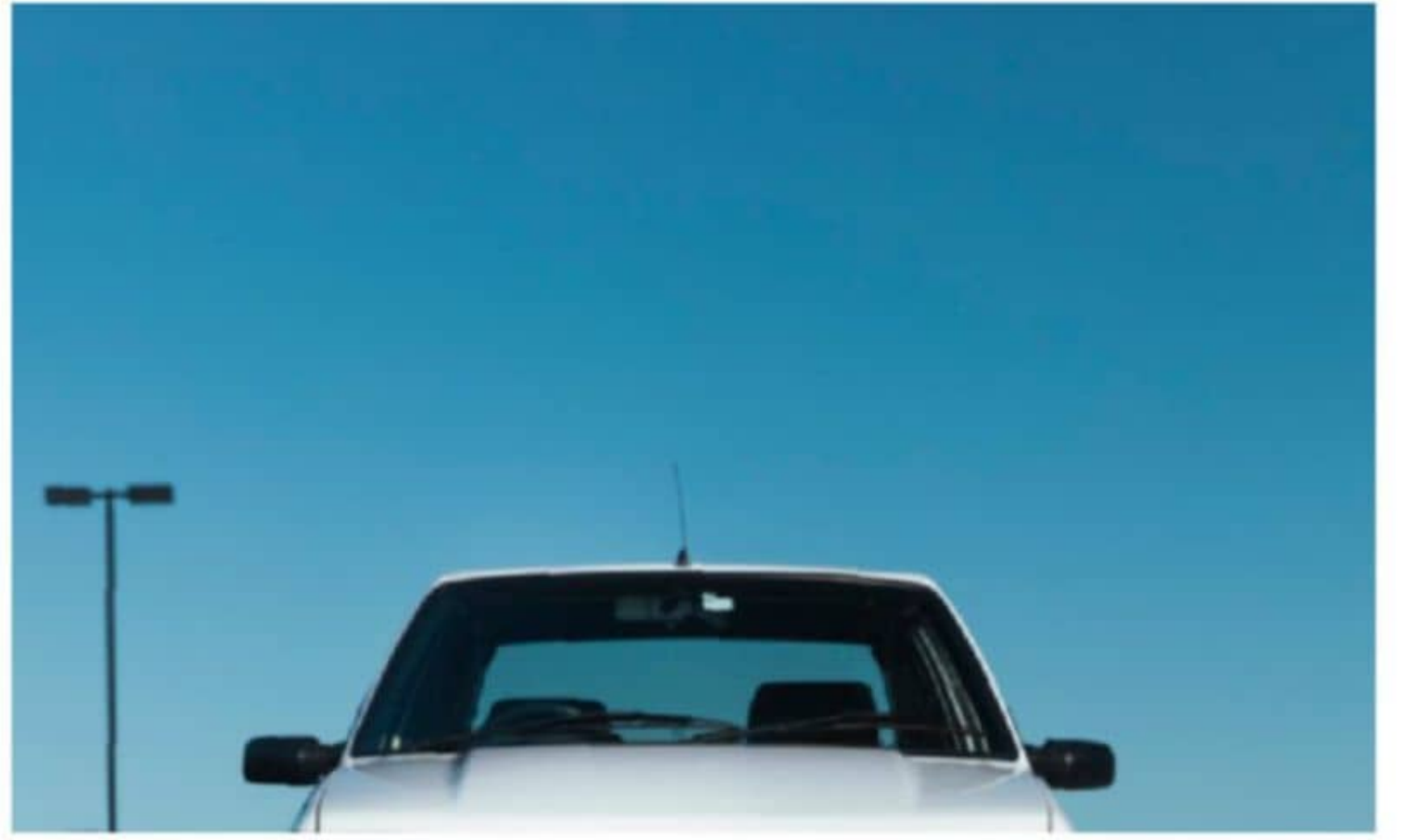
Getting the GTI back on the road involved mainly weekends tinkering in the garage. Any major undertakings, like electrics were outsourced.

He laughs recalling the process, "These things are made of eggshell! Every time someone hops in it I'm like; Don't touch this-don't touch that!"





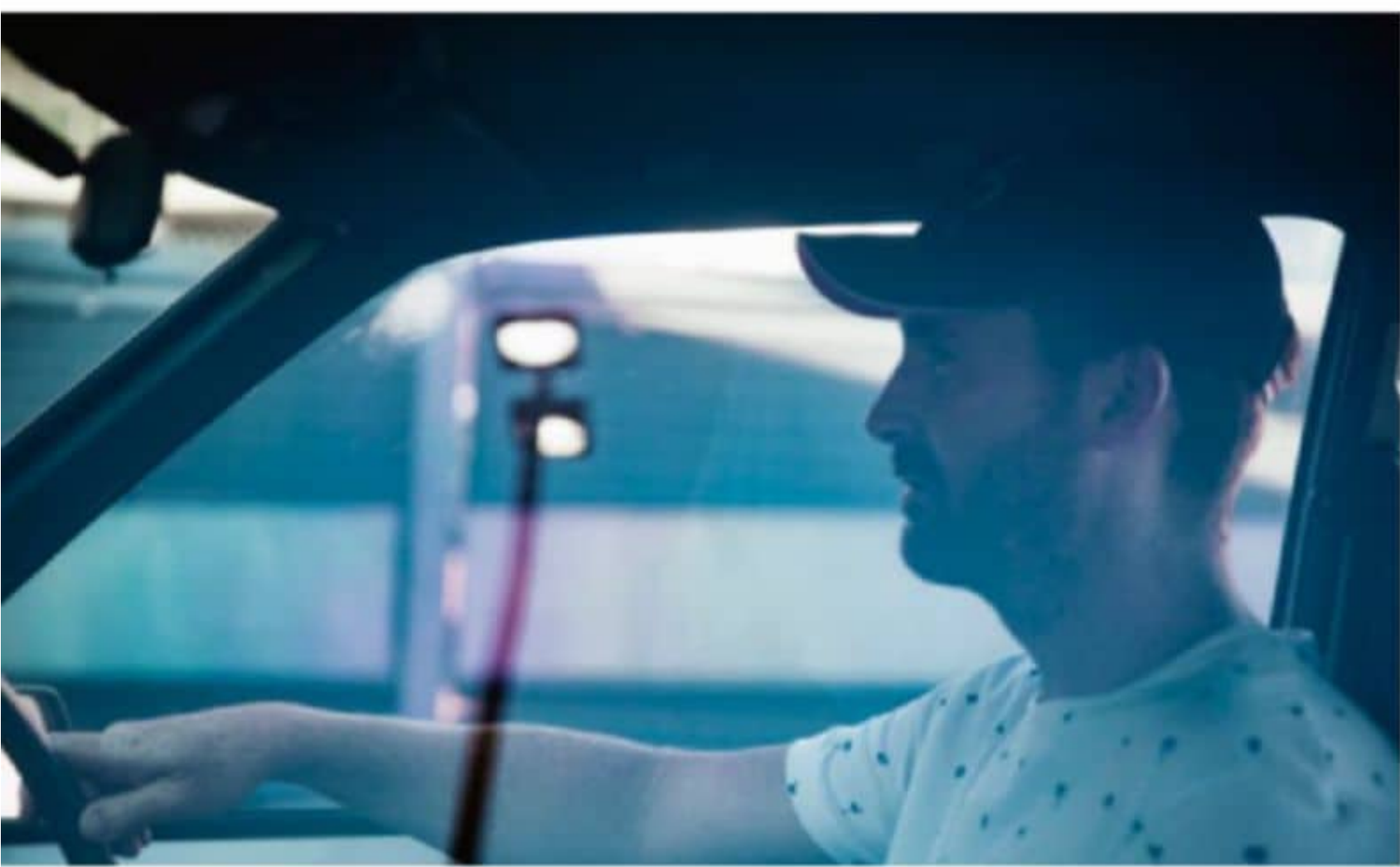




THE 205 GTI IS OFTEN TOUTED AS
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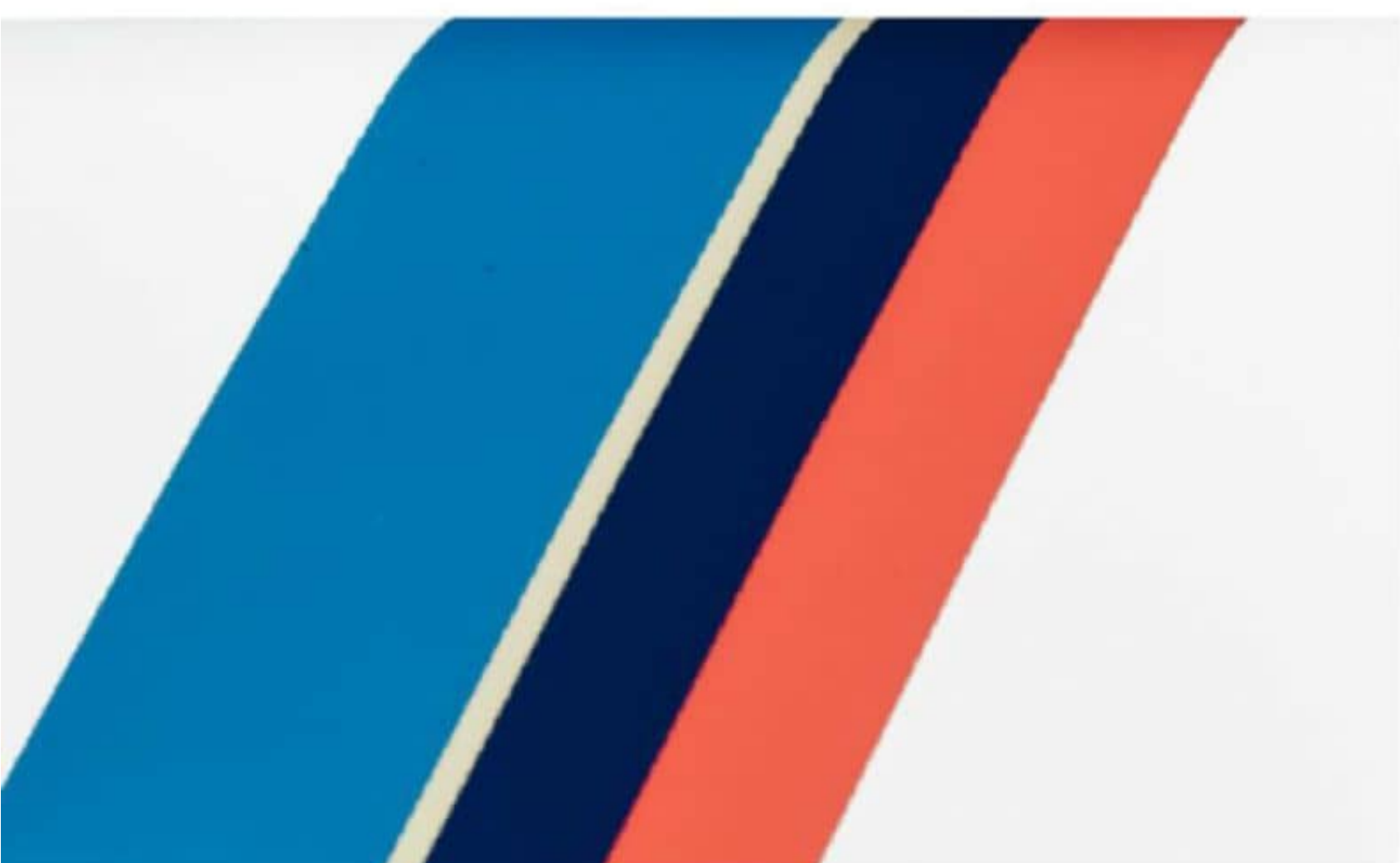
“Every time I give it to someone to work on it comes back with something broken. The interior is half plastic and half glue!”

“I guess the French guys weren’t counting on the effects of Australian UV light when they built it.”

For Clint, the attraction isn’t borne of being a Peugeot enthusiast as such, rather it’s more from being a fan of old-school motor racing.

“I love 80’s Group B, but I love other stuff as well. And I guess I just like stuff that’s a little quirky, a little left field. And this is just evocative of the best era of rallying ever.”

*WHEN I SEE IT, IN MY MIND’S
EYE I SEE A GROUP B
RALLY CAR.*



A self-deprecating grin crosses his face and gestures towards the 205 saying, “Still, it makes me feel a little like Ari Vatanen when I drive it sometimes.”

Spending 7 years living in the UK broadened Clint’s automotive horizons quite a bit, “When the sun comes out in Britain, all the awesome cars come out too. You just see all these amazing cars that you almost never see.”

While Clint has always been a car nut of the first order it hasn’t always been about rally inspired hatch backs, or even European sports cars. There’s even been room for Australian muscle.

“Before I went overseas I had a 1972 Charger. It wasn’t the fastest thing on the road, but it was a little bit different and it was a lot of fun.” Unbidden an incongruous image of a young Walter Rohrl behind the wheel of a Chrysler Valiant appears in my mind’s eye then vanishes with an almost audible pop!

This GTI is combination of phase 1 and phase 2 parts. The naturally aspirated 1.9 litre single overhead cam engine is, according to Clint, bog stock. But for Clint however, that's just fine, "It's raw when you drive it, it's got really short gears."

"The steering, the way it handles, you can see why back in the day everyone was like 'Holy Crap!' The way they just stick to the road!"

"When somebody else drives it they can't believe how raw it feels."

While Clint would prefer to only use it for the occasional drive down his favourite piece of twisty road, the 205 still clocks up plenty of weekly kilometres on family duties. "In fact I drive it more than I'd like to."

"Every now and then I'll be driving it, the engine note will be echoing off the houses and it just feels great. I'm sure when people see me driving it they just see a big grin on my face."

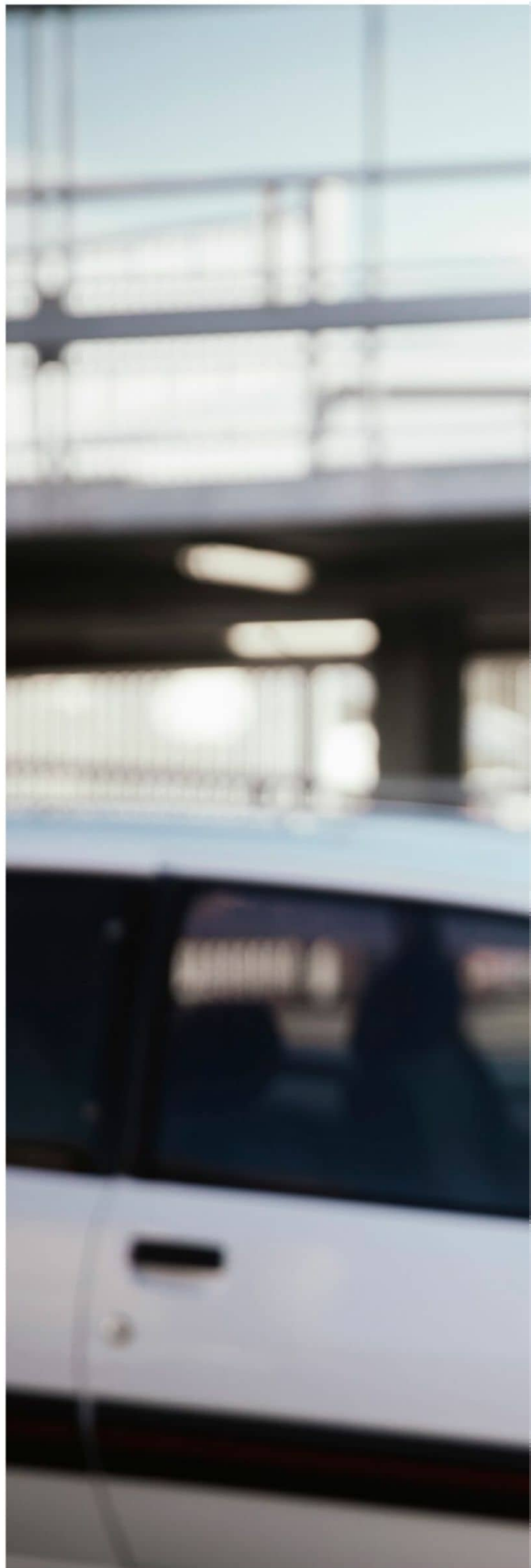
"Most people don't know what it is, but the people that do go crazy for it!"

The raspy exhaust note bounces off the concrete walls around us as Clint climbs behind the wheel and waves good bye. Even in that brief moment you can see the satisfaction he gets from owning and driving the GTi.

The Peugeot quickly disappears from view after a couple of enthusiastic gear shifts. A slight exhaust crackle punctuating the negative space between gears. I recall a couple of remarks made during our chat that sum up Clint's relationship with the little hot hatch as the engine note fades into the afternoon traffic.

"This car is just my little thing you know."

"When I see it, in my mind's eye I see a Group B rally car."







ROAD RUNNER
SUPERBIRD

Plymouth

AVENGER G/T

MASTERCRAFT



PLYMOUTH

ROAD RUNNER



WORDS **NIK BRUCE** ★ PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**





THE Sixties. For America, it was the decade that changed the nation – ten years of contrasts and extremes, of hope and heartbreak, flower power and moon landings, that would shape the country’s identity for generations to come.

Whether it was Martin Luther on the Lincoln Memorial, Hendrix with his guitar or Armstrong taking that one small step, the Sixties would become an era defined by America’s desire to push the boundaries and redefine possibilities.

But while Vietnam and the Apollo missions blanketed the news, on the streets of middle America it was all about the muscle car and the relentless quest for more.

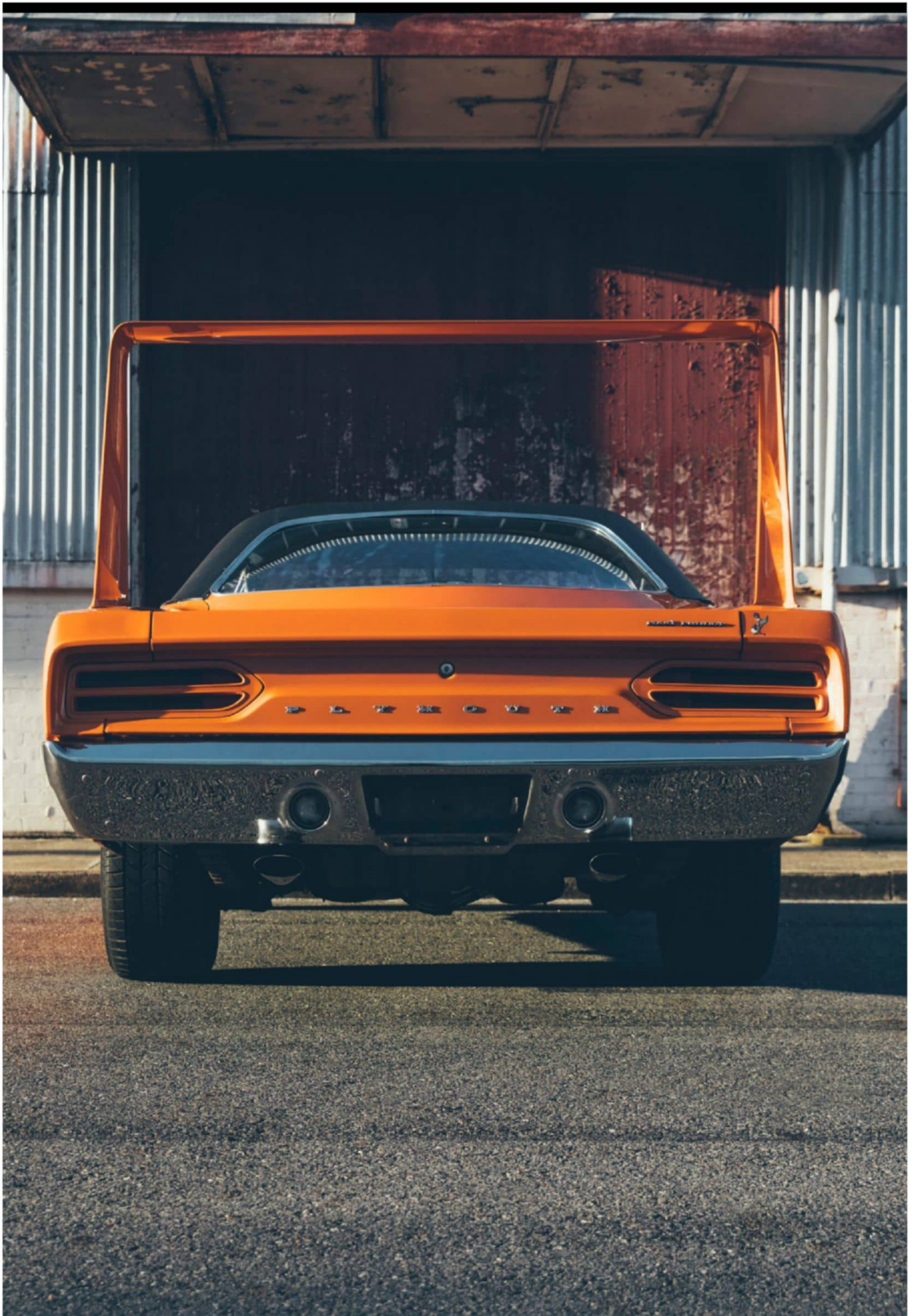
What had started as a battle for bragging rights between the ‘Big Three’ had escalated in to an all-out war by the end of the decade, as Ford, Chrysler and The General, sought to out-gun each other by squeezing increasingly ludicrous V8s in to their souped-up coupés.

Continually chasing a bigger slice of the domestic market, the Big Three used any means they could to lure customers to their various brands - and there was no better way of peddling their wares by than racing them in NASCAR.

By the mid-Sixties, NASCAR’s popularity was going through the roof and the manufacturers were quick to realise its massive marketing potential. That was the unique appeal of stock car racing: fans could watch their favourite drivers race on the weekend and then go and buy the same car (or at least something resembling it..) from their local dealer during the week – and the factories were only too happy to oblige them. Ever wondered where the old adage ‘Win on Sunday, sell on Monday’ comes from? Yep, NASCAR.

Regardless of which manufacturer they supported, NASCAR’s legions of fans were always guaranteed a thrilling race – even after a 500-mile event, the winning margin would often be a matter of meters.

With the races being so tight, factories were desperate to



PLYMOUTH'S STYLISTS INSISTED ON TWEAKING THE DESIGN IN ORDER TO MAKE IT LOOK 'BETTER'

find any advantage, but by '68 the law of diminishing returns meant that simply squeezing more power from those big-block V8s wasn't going to be enough to dramatically reduce lap times.

Besides, the cars were already becoming dangerously unstable at their 180mph+ (290km/h) top speeds as it was.

To find a solution, Chrysler and Ford turned their attention to aerodynamics and so began the short-lived 'Aero War', that began with the '68 Dodge Charger Daytona 500 and ended with the iconic and outrageous 1970 Plymouth Superbird – a car that truly expressed the revolutionary spirit of the time.

In 1969, the Superbird's 'Winged Warrior' cousin, the Dodge Charger Daytona, had fulfilled its raison d'être by winning races and coaxing

Chrysler's former star driver, Richard Petty, back to the fold after he had defected to Ford the previous season.

But while the prospect of racing an 'aero car' was certainly tempting, if 'The King' was going to return to Chrysler, he wouldn't be driving no Dodge – no, sir! It would be a Plymouth, or nothing.

Having little alternative, Chrysler set about building a new aero car, based on the Road Runner – Plymouth's popular, low-budget muscle car – that

would emulate the Daytona's winning formula.

Despite the fact that Chrysler had spent thousands of hours and \$100,000s to develop the Daytona, recruiting aerodynamicists from its ballistic missile division whose ground-breaking work in the wind tunnel made it possible for it to crack the 200mph barrier (it would hit 243mph or 391km/h in testing), Plymouth's stylists insisted on tweaking the design in order to make it look 'better'.

At the front, the nose cone was still 482mm long; however, it had been reprofiled with a central ridge that extended up the bonnet, while the air intake



was enlarged and moved to the underside of the unit. The wing-mounted vents remained virtually unchanged, but while the rear wing still stood at a towering 609mm tall (as much for aerodynamic reasons as to allow access

to the boot...) Plymouth's stylists had made the aluminium uprights wider and raked them back to give them a more aggressive profile.

While Plymouth's stylists may have arguably made the Superbird a bit more attractive than its cousin, their tinkering actually made it slower by roughly 3mph (5km/h), which was a big deal over a 500-mile race. In the end, it didn't matter as between them, the Daytona and Superbird dominated the 1970 season, winning 17 and 38 races respectively.

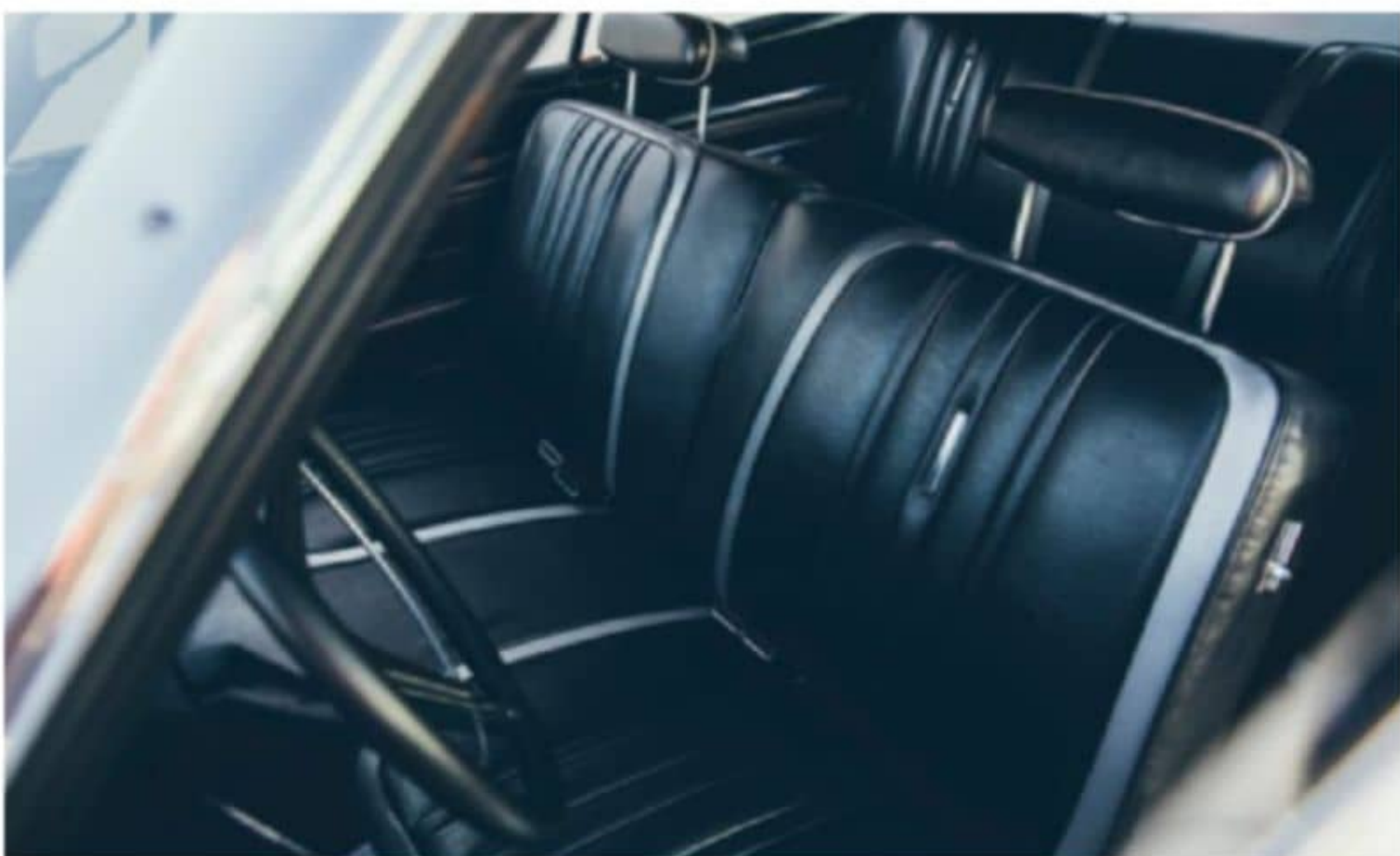
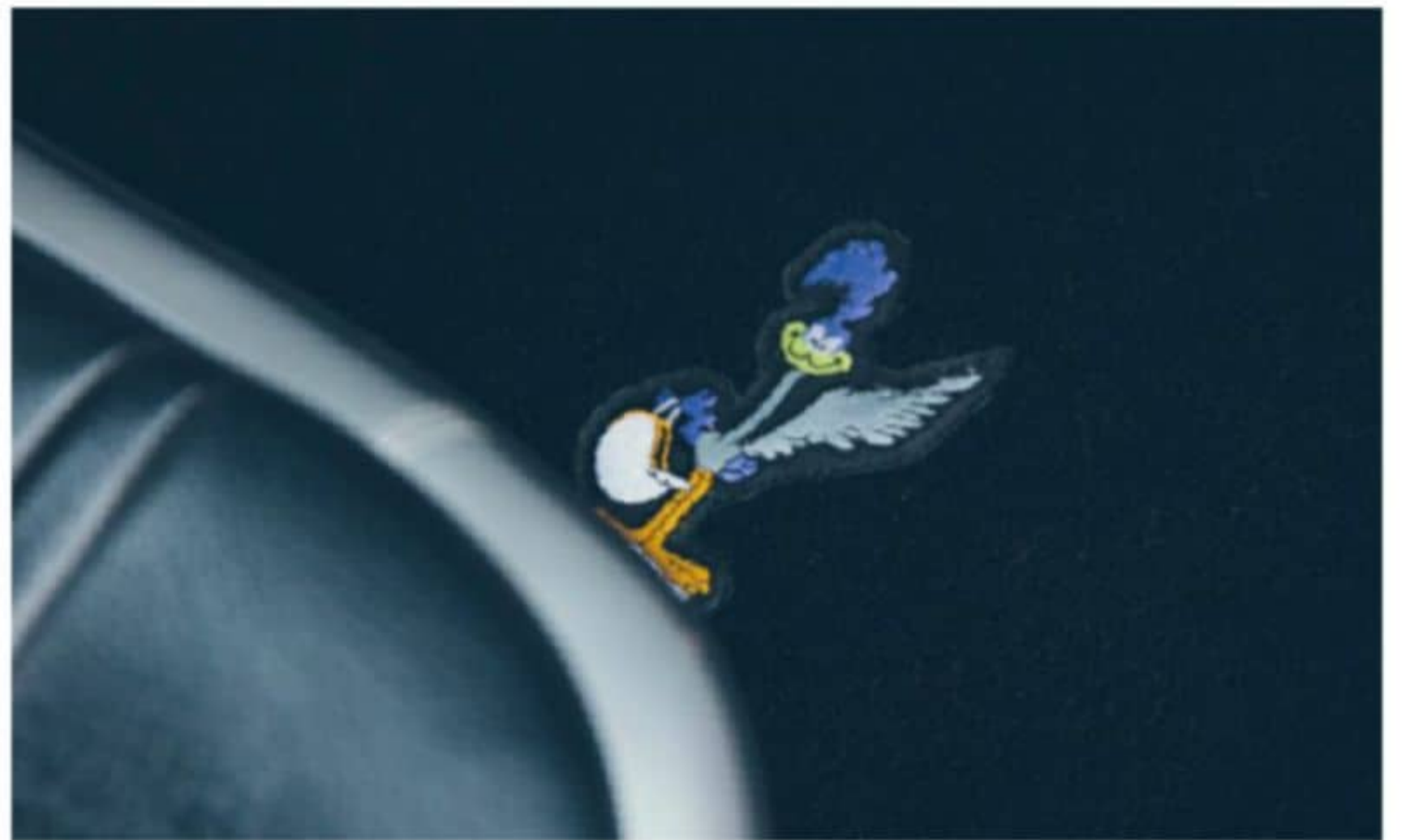


*WHILE ITS LOOKS MAY HAVE DIVIDED OPINION,
THERE WAS NO DOUBTING THE PLYMOUTH'S
IMPRESSIVE STREET CREDENTIALS*





*WITH THE RACES BEING SO TIGHT, FACTORIES
WERE DESPERATE TO FIND ANY ADVANTAGE*





Unfortunately for Chrysler, their success on track wasn't exactly matched in the showroom.

To homologate the Superbird for 1970, NASCAR demanded that Plymouth sell at least one car per dealership, which equated to 1,920 cars. It's widely believed that that 1,935 'birds were built in total with anywhere between 34 to 47 cars shipped to Canada; however, because of its polarising appearance many of them would hang around car yards for months or even years after delivery.

As legend has it, some dealers ended up converting the cars back to ordinary Road Runners just to sell them, while one desperate dealer apparently sold the Hemi V8 from his car before reporting it as being

stolen and filing an insurance claim!

Most Superbirds (1,084 to be precise) were built with the entry-level 375HP four-barrel 440 V8, with another 716 fitted with the 390HP 440 Super Commando engine.

Just 135 were specced with the ferocious 425HP 426 Hemi, which was capable of launching the Superbird from 0-100km/h in just 4.8 seconds, while demolishing the quarter mile in 13.5 seconds at 105mph.

While its looks may have divided opinion, there was no doubting the Plymouth's impressive street credentials.

As was typical for the era, buyers had countless

UNFORTUNATELY FOR CHRYSLER, THEIR SUCCESS ON TRACK WASN'T EXACTLY MATCHED IN THE SHOWROOM.

options to choose from including a Torqueflight automatic, power steering, various styling accessories and wide variety of 'High Impact' colours such as Hemi Orange, Tor Red and Limelight Green.

All Superbirds came as standard with Road Runner decals on the wing uprights and nose cone and the infamous 'Beep, Beep!' horn.

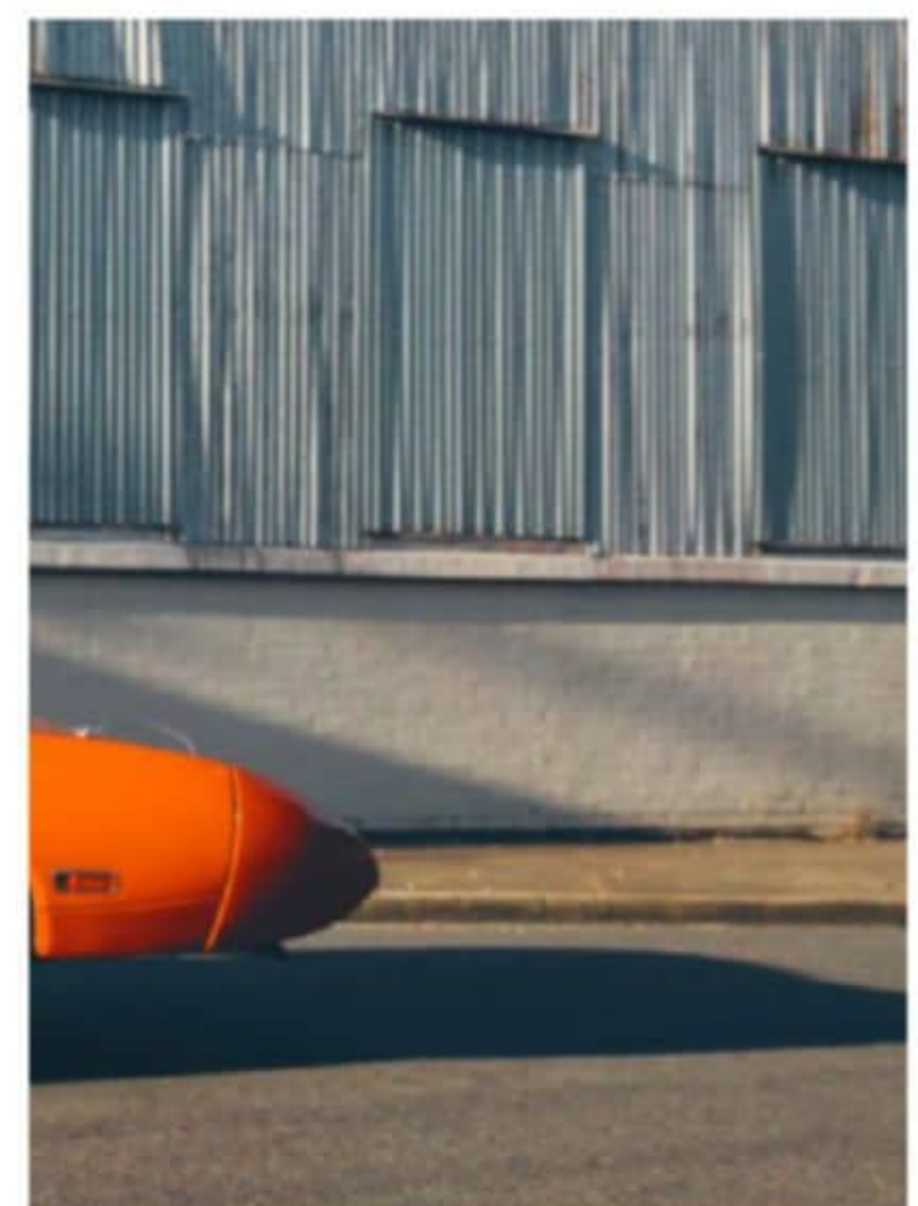
Although Chrysler had planned to launch a Daytona and Superbird for the '71 season, NASCAR's czar, 'Big Bill' France, effectively ruled them out by imposing a 300ci capacity limit on all aero cars. Just like that, two of the most technically advanced, outrageous cars America had ever built were killed off.

With so few of them made, it wasn't long before the

Superbird caught the eye of collectors. It's ironic to think that while dealers literally couldn't give them away 38 years ago, these days you could pay anything from \$100,000 for a 'project' car to \$500,000+ for a good Hemi.

In all, it's estimated that just 1,000 Superbirds survived, but while the bulk of the cars have remained in America, a handful have made their way to Australia and New Zealand, such as this Vitamin C 440 Super Commando, which has found a home in Queensland.

Radical in concept and astonishing to behold, the Superbird has become a true icon of its age. Built for the single purpose of going as fast as humanly possible, we will probably never see it's like again.

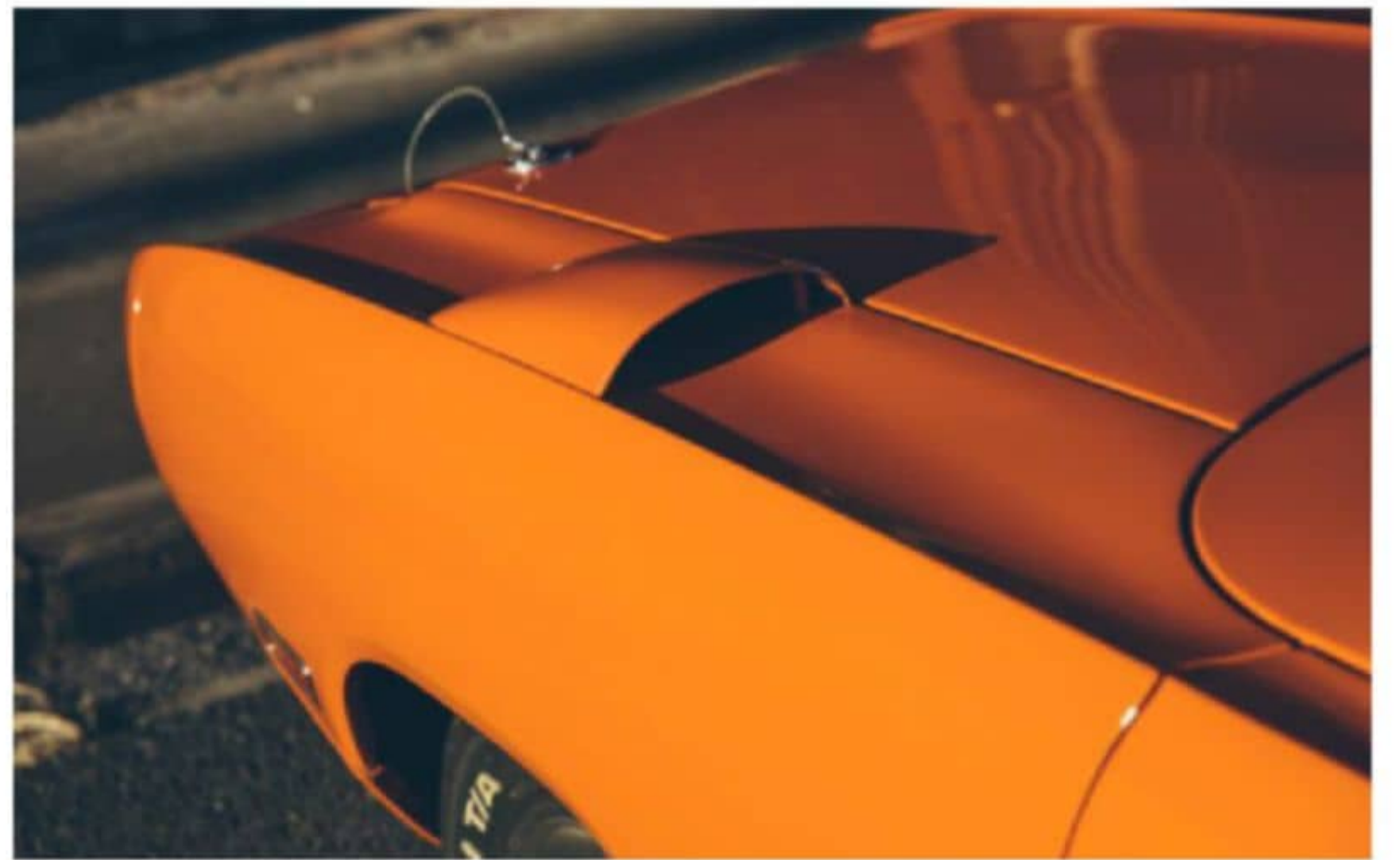


This Super Bird is currently for sale through John Conroy Classic Cars

Specail Thanks to John for brining it out for the shoot.

www.johnconroy.com.au







VOLVO

242 GT



WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**





I

pull into a quiet residential street, turn the music down and scan the old brick letterboxes for a number matching my scrawl on an old fuel receipt. No need really, I spot the only house with a Volvo parked out the front about half way down. It's a warm afternoon and brothers Rod and Clayton Wilson are perched on the veranda when I arrive. They're admiring the view of the Swedish siren parked at the curb. It's not the car I'm here to see but one of the many Swedes that reside here. Rod's daily is a 1998 S70. His son, Jarrod, has an 850 R wagon and an 850 T5. Add to that a couple 242 GTs out the back (one that has been meticulously resorted) and you begin to understand the love the family has for the somewhat underappreciated marque from Gothenburg.

The brothers fondly recall early days on their family property on the east side of Brisbane, thrashing paddock bashers within an inch of their lives and resurrecting them as a means of their mechanical education. It's evident that they bonded over cars from an early age.

"YOU HAD TO BE CAREFUL YOU DIDN'T TAKE THE DOOR HANDLES OFF GOING AROUND A CORNER."





“One day Dad turned up at home with an old Austin A40 when I was 11,” recalls Rod. “God, we used to tear around in that thing. The old man said ‘if breaks down you gotta fix it’, so we learned the hard way. I reckon by the time I was 12 I knew how to put an engine together.”

Clayton got his hands on an Austin A40 Farina, “...which would be worth a truck load these days,” he laments. “I used to tow a Customline bonnet behind it and dare my mates to get on it and go sledding – they all survived surprisingly.”

“Dad loved trucks and bikes, but he also had a somewhat eclectic taste in motor vehicles,” admits Rod. “A Rambler Cross-Country station wagon, Pontiac Strato Chief ‘54 and an Austin Lancer.” It wasn’t your typical Ford or Holden household.

Rod purchased his first Volvo, a 1978 244DL, in 1982. “It held the road and went from point to point beautifully, but the body roll was alarming!” he said. “You had to be careful you didn’t take the door handles off going around a corner.”

“Even though there has always been a diverse mix of cars in the family doesn’t mean we didn’t bag the shit out of him when he bought that Volvo,” laughs Clayton.

“Yeah, copped heaps from all of my drag racing mates over that Volvo,” Rod admits. “My mates still give me a hard time about owning a Volvo... until they get in it. Volvos are the best kept secret.”

Clayton nods in agreement. “Volvo engines will go 500,000km, no problem at all. Anything under 250,000km we consider them still being run in.”

Clayton’s introduction to the marque came via his step son, Wayne, on the lookout to replace for his worn-out Holden Barina. He was intrigued by the 242 GT and although Clayton had never been near a Volvo in his life, he was open to the idea of having one in the family.

Admittedly a Volvo isn’t the first thing that springs to mind when you mention a two-door GT sports sedan from 1979. You say Volvo (usually prefaced with “Bloody” in Australia) and people think boxy, slow, safe or all of the above. The 242 GT was an effort to skew public perception of what a Volvo could be. The old advertisements touted it as an affordable, reliable and responsive sports car. With slogans like ‘Top of the line performance car with a bottom line edge’ and ‘If it had wings, it’d fly’.

While the performance stats of the 242 GT may not match those of the Aussie muscle cars of the same era, it was never designed to compete on that level. However, the power assisted steering and MacPherson strut front end gave it surprisingly responsive handling.

Clayton discovered this driving Wayne’s newly-acquired 242 GT back from Mount Tamborine through the undulating twists and turns of the mountain road. “I was actually a little bit surprised at how well it drove,” he reveals. By the time Wayne reached the bottom of the mountain, he had a new appreciation for the seductive Swede.

They affectionately referred to their newly acquired 242 GT as ‘Bjorn’.

Shortly after, the idea for a restoration project germinated while sourcing mirrors for Wayne’s GT. During the search, Clayton came across a pair of 242 GTs for sale and floated the idea with Rod. “I was already aware of the GT – I always thought they were an interesting looking car because of the stripes,” says Rod.

“I always knew Rod and I would build a car together,” Wayne added. “We thought it was going to be a Torana, Kingswood or Brougham – something like that. Never thought it would be a bloody Volvo.”

“That’s when the madness started,” laughs Clayton.





*“MY MATES STILL GIVE ME A HARD TIME
ABOUT OWNING A VOLVO...
UNTIL THEY GET IN IT.
VOLVOS ARE THE
BEST KEPT
SECRET.”*







Two more Volvos had been added to the family. One was only good for parts and was christened 'Agnetha', but the other was tidy and complete, and now known as 'Benny'. Mamma Mia!

The 242 GT was only produced for three years and about 600 examples were imported. It was the first sports car offering since the P1800 and came with an increased 2.3-litre version of the B23E found in the 244. This particular one is automatic, but most of the other GTs were four-speed manuals. A front spoiler and 15-inch alloys were added to enhance the sporty feel of the car. Cosmetic changes included black and orange 'Speed Stripes' applied to the silver body work that wrapped over the boot of the car.

The interior scored additional treatment with the orange striping continuing across the dash, door panels and the plush corduroy seats. An all-black interior and a smaller GT-badged steering wheel rounded out the cabin.

There were only a few minor cosmetic differences during its production. While the 1979 model had a space-saver spare and a bib-style front spoiler, the 1980 models had a

splitter-style spoiler, full-sized spare and redesigned side mirrors.

"We never intend to do a ground up restoration – it just turned out that way," Rod says. "When we started, we just pulled one thing off, then another. Before we knew it, it was just a bare shell. There wasn't another bolt left on it you could undo."

One of the unique challenges was the mix of bolts sizes underneath. Sweden went metric in 1974. Volvo had a stock pile of AF bolts they needed to use up before moving on to metric and it wasn't until the early 90s that Volvo ran out of AF bolts. Clayton would need to equip himself with metric, imperial and Whitworth sockets and spanners every time he got under the car. "It drove me bloody mad!" says Clayton.

"People say Volvos are heavy, but that shell – four people could pick it up comfortably," explains Rod. "It's the doors that have the weight. It easily takes two people to carry the doors. When you see it stripped down to a shell like that, you realise the way it's put together; it's like it has a roll cage built into it."



*"I ALWAYS KNEW ROD AND I WOULD
BUILD A CAR TOGETHER. NEVER
THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A BLOODY VOLVO."*



“We farmed out what we had to but took a lot of pride in what we could do ourselves,” Clayton adds. “Between us, what one couldn’t do the other could.”

The engine underwent a full mechanical rebuild by the “Norse God of Volvo”, Peer Skaarup, at GLT car centre Capalaba. The gearbox has had only minor adjustments.

The brothers had a few minor issues hampering completion of the GT. “After getting the car back from the painters, we noticed after a few months that the boot was a different colour,” says Rod.

“The rear beaver tail had to be re-built as well, but it wasn’t done correctly resulting in the tail lights no longer fitting,” says Clayton. “It set us back a fair bit, we got it fixed again, but we still weren’t happy.”

As fate would have it, a trip to a local car show was the solution to both of these issues. “We had just arrived for the show when ‘splat’ on the ground beside me, a bloody hail stone the size of a golf ball,” Rod recalls. “There was mass panic and we all scattered. I got stuck in the thick of it before I could get to cover, but the damage was already done. We had it repaired under insurance and paid a little extra to re-do the rear beaver tail panel and thankfully was done correctly this time.”

The restoration took four years of Sunday afternoons and a fair share of cash. “Do you want the true figure?” grins Clayton. “Or the figure I tell my wife? There are probably things we could have done more easily and spent less money, but it was a good way of finding things out. We just had a bloody ball doing this thing. It’s always good to have someone like your big brother that you know and get along with so well to do something like this.”

At one stage they had four 242 GTs. The ‘full Abba’, as they refer to it. “Anni-Fred” had been purchased for \$300 from the spare lot beside their sister’s house. “The guy mowed the lawn one day and there it was – it had been there all that time,” laughs Rod.

Clayton’s first experience in the GT hasn’t been diminished with time and he is gently reminded of it whenever he takes their freshly restored GT out for a drive “I took the long way home from the Volvo nationals at Warwick just after we had finished the restoration. Coming down through Cunningham’s Gap, I could hear the engine note echoing off through the valleys and hills and it handled the twisty road beautifully. I just thought, this is how to live; me and my Volvo.”








NISSAN FIGARO

WHAT DOES A PROLIFIC CAR COLLECTOR WITH A PENCHANT FOR US MUSCLE CARS PICK FOR HIS DAILY DRIVER? WHY, A 75 HORSEPOWER ITALIAN-INSPIRED JAPANESE TWO-SEATER, OF COURSE...

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**



GEORGE Kabot may just be the envy of every car enthusiast in Australia. Not only has he owned over 400 cars in the last 38 years (including some very desirable classics), people actually pay him to drop shipping containers onto Toyota Camrys. So it's easy to see why George has a perpetual smile on his face... and why he's chosen a car that makes others around him smile, too.

"My dad owned a taxi cab company, so my first car was an ex-cab," says the movie industry graphic designer, who was born and raised in Wollongong, NSW. "It was a 1971 HQ that had about a million miles on the clock."

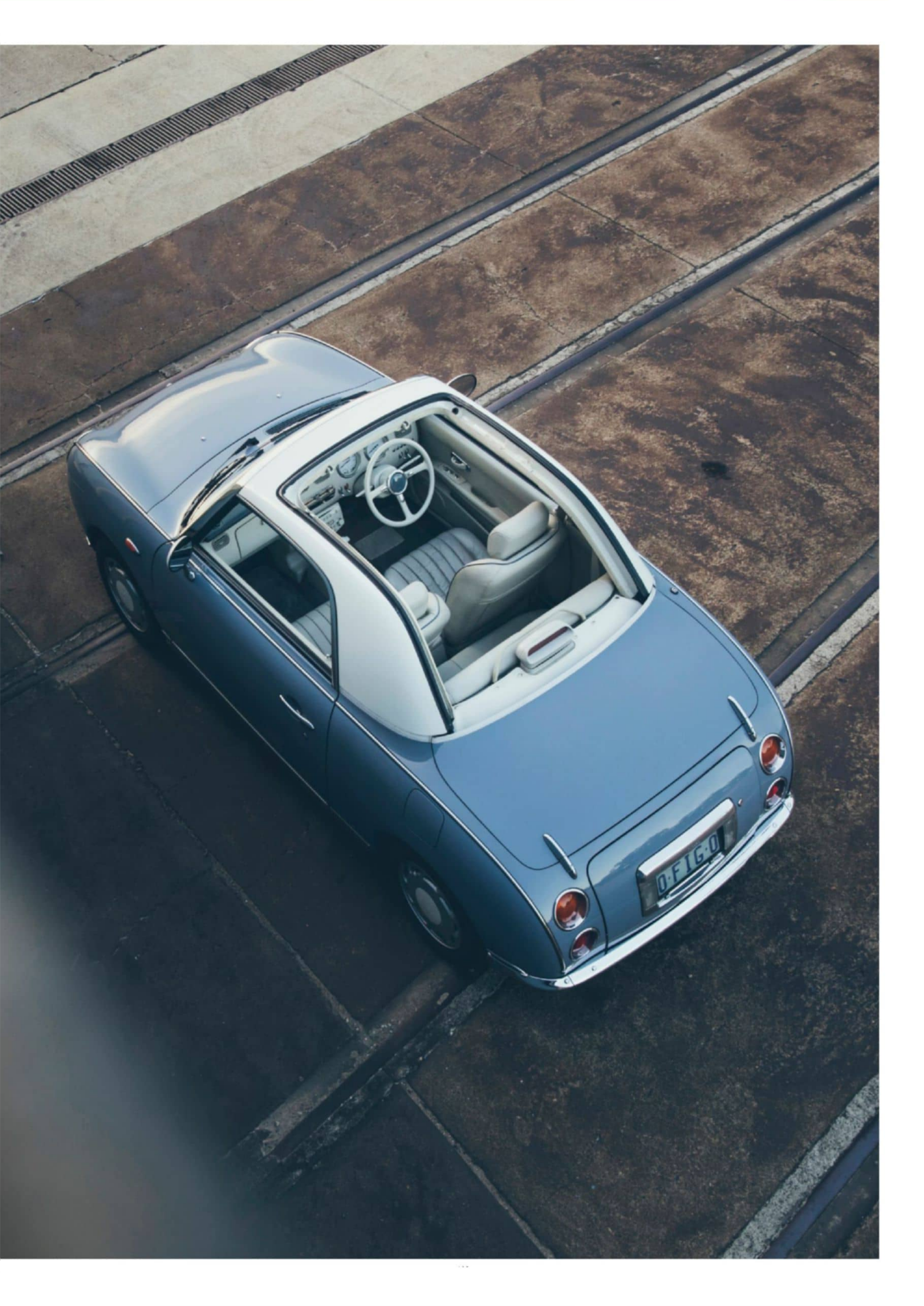
"My second car was a completely raceworthy HX which, considering it had 400 horsepower and I was on my Ps, was a little crazy. I had my one and only accident in that car and that was the last accident I have ever had. I've never even had a speeding ticket in the 38 years I've been driving."

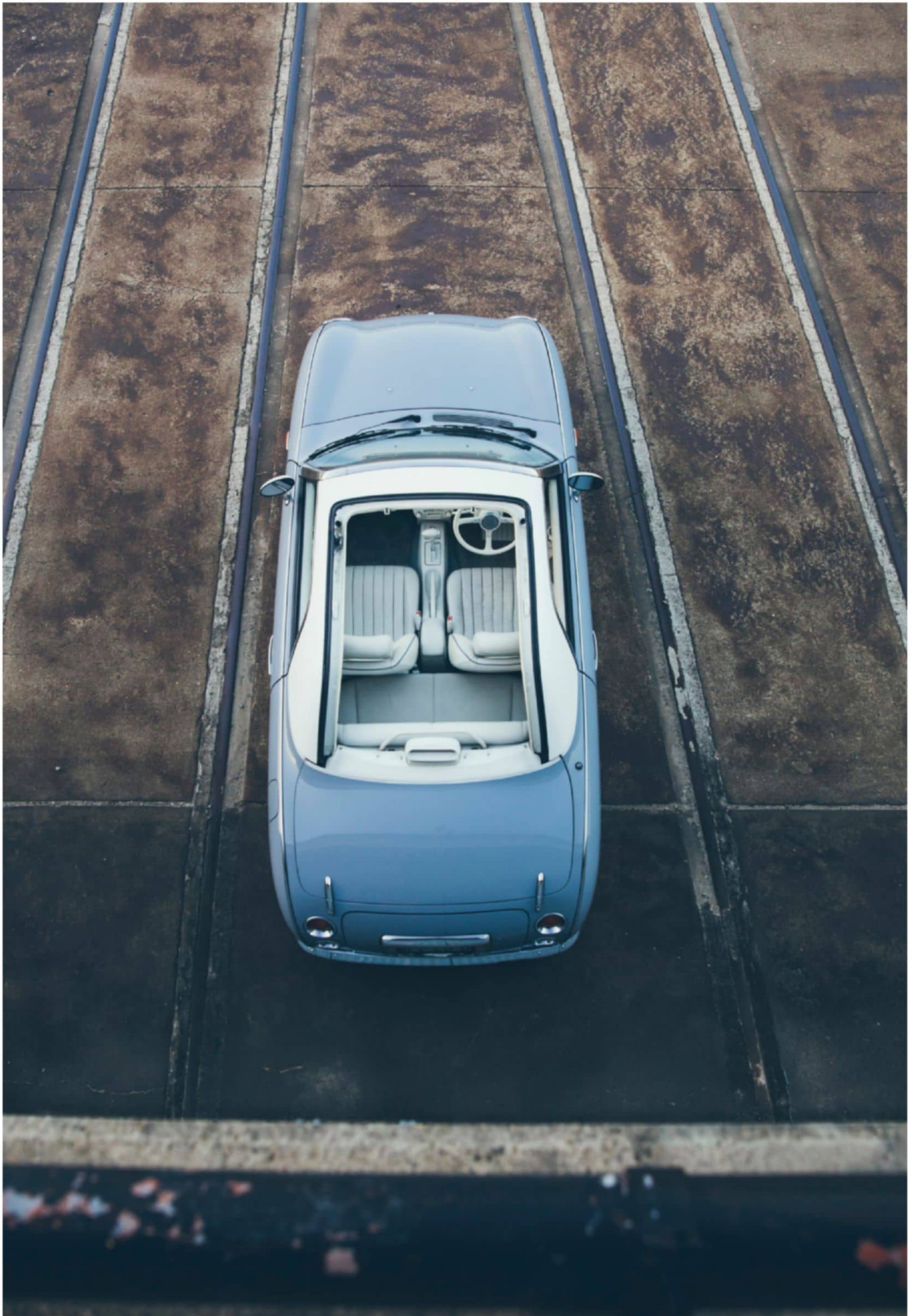
George's favorite car from his early years cruising around the coastal strip of Wollongong was a 1967 Mustang convertible GT, which inspired a passion for US muscle.

"Driving that car as an 18-year-old in 1979 was just incredible," he reminisces. As much as George loved his cars, though, he found he quickly became bored with them. "I wanted to try something new all the time," George recalls, "so when I moved to the United States in 1984, I pretty much bought every single car I ever dreamt about. I just kept buying and selling, buying and selling."

George arrived in the US as a fresh-faced 21-year-old on what was supposed to be a short trip to see some friends, but which turned into a three-year sojourn. "I ended up loving it so much I stayed in San Diego and emigrated there permanently," he relates. "The first car I bought in the states was a 1970 Pontiac Firebird, and it went from there. Corvettes... a C3, C4, and C5. Heaps of Mustangs and Camaros. A 308 GTB Ferrari, Ferrari Dino and a Porsche 930..."

George moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, close to the renowned Kruse International Auction house in Auburn; manna from heaven for a car nut. "There would be 10,000 cars at those auctions," he laughs. "You could get almost





anything you could imagine... it was just amazing. Running a mini version of that in Australia would be my dream.” Interestingly, the first ever documented \$1 million sale for a car at auction came from Kruse, for a 1934 Duesenberg Model SJ La Grande.

The time in the US was good to George, who got married, started a family and built a successful career. After 23 years and getting hit by two successive hurricanes in Florida, though, George decided it was time to come home to sunny skies and sandy beaches... and more cars.

George started a graphics company in the US and ended up doing TV commercials for Audi and other car companies, which then led to him to the film industry. Given his love of cars, gravitating towards the automotive side of film production was a logical transition for George.

“I’m kind of unique in the industry,” he says. “Being a graphic designer, I do a lot of the graphics and props for movies sets. I have a dealer’s license too, so I source the cars, customize them and destroy them.

“I also do action vehicle direction. I have driven a lot of the cars in the films, too, because a lot of the actors can’t drive - it’s been a blast. When we did San Andreas on the Gold Coast, we killed about 80 cars for that.” The smile is yet to leave Georges face.

As part of his job, George frequents Gray’s online auctions to source vehicles for films. “I buy the cars cheap and if we need to kill them, it’s no big deal,” he shrugs.

Since arriving home, George had been keeping an eye out for something a little different. “Whenever you buy older cars and they don’t have air conditioning and they are not very comfortable to drive in the Queensland summer,” he said. “I really wanted a car that had all the modern conveniences, but looked like an older car.”

He discovered a Nissan Figaro for sale while trawling

through the auction site looking for set vehicles. “I don’t think these guys knew what it was. It was exactly what I had in mind and I loved the look of it,” he says. “I had a little battle with another bloke, but I won it for half of what it should’ve been.”

The Figaro debuted at the 1989 Tokyo motor show and get its name from the title character in the play *The Marriage of Figaro*. Nissan had originally planned to produce just 8000 units, but it had vastly underestimated the little car’s potential and ended up with over 200,000 orders. The company implemented a lottery system and increased production to 20,000 units, finishing up with 20,073 units built.

Based on the Micra platform, the Figaro was produced at Aichi Machine Industry, which Nissan referred to as the Pike Factory. Other notable examples to roll out from the Pike factory included the S-Cargo, Pao and BE-1. Today, it produces other quirky vehicles for Nissan family such as the Juke and Cube.

The Figaro came with a laundry list of optional extras, but was only available in four colours, each representing one of the four seasons. These included Lapis Grey (Winter), Emerald Green (Spring), Pale Aqua (Summer) and Topaz Mist (Autumn).

Power came via 1.0-litre turbocharged engine that produced just 75bhp. The performance was never going to blow you hair back; you needed to put the roof down for that. Stylistically, it’s hard to pin down exactly where designer Naoki Sakaiv drew his influence from when designing the Figaro. It appears to be a mishmash of design cues from early 1950s and ’60s French and Italian cars such as the Citroen 2CV, Renault 4 and the Fiat 500. A hint of caricature and cutesie Hello Kitty vibe blends surprisingly well.

“I get stopped at the traffic lights, people wind their windows down and yell at me ‘What is that? That is so cool!’” laughs George.

As we close in on the Figaro’s 28th birthday, the retro-





CAUTION
FIRE DOOR
DO NOT BLOCK





inspired car is, ironically, now retro. It's like one of those confusing time travel movies; once you suspend logic, it all makes a little more sense. Ironically, the sales slogan for the Figaro was 'Back to the Future'. It could be argued that Biff Tannen may have had further cause to taunt McFly had he strapped a flux capacitor to the boot of a Figaro.

The largest cluster of Figaros outside of Japan is in the UK, thanks largely to noted musician and car aficionado Eric Clapton, who saw the car while on tour in Japan. He arranged to have a couple shipped back to the UK, and demand soared when Clapton was spotted around town in the unusual Nissan. In fact, 4500 units were shipped there to capitalise on its popularity.

Enamored with his new wheels and a determination to see his own country, George and his wife partook in the Aussie tradition of a road trip. "It's not going to just sit in Brisbane," he says. "It's going to go and see the countryside."

To make the trip a little more comfortable, George changed the shocks, did a tune-up and swapped out the original wheels. "The 12-inch polo wheels they come with are just too small," he says. Instead of putting on a set of modern wheels, though, George poked around the internet and found some period Nissan wheels from the 1980s. "They made a tremendous difference on the freeway - they dropped the revs and improved the ride," he reports. "These cars are really built for the city and they are geared that way, too. It revs at 4000rpm at 110km/h, but you can't even hear it. I even managed to sneak it up to 140km/h on the open road." Part of the plan on the trip was to try and meet up with some fellow Figaro owners. There are around 35 dotted around the country, so are still an unusual site on the road. "I drove 5,300km and I didn't see another one. I don't think too many of them have done trips like that," he says.

"Everywhere we went, people gave us the thumbs up and really enjoyed the car. There is something about the car that puts a smile on people's faces."

George's easygoing nature and youthful enthusiasm about life, cars and everything in-between is a perfect match for





the tiny yet practical Figaro.

“It’s why I love this car; it doesn’t create envy,” he explains. “It’s not a brand-new Lamborghini or Ferrari... it’s a car that anybody could own. I don’t know how many times I have heard people say ‘oh my god it’s so cute, I want one’! My wife just laughs her head off.”

It may well be the antidote to the road rage contagion seeping into everyday motoring life. It’s hard to get worked up about something that looks so cute. It’s like trying to get angry at puppy.

Although George loves the Figaro, his incessant creative nature is starting to ebb into conversations about the future

*PEOPLE WIND THEIR WINDOWS DOWN AND YELL AT ME
‘WHAT IS THAT? THAT IS SO COOL!’*



of his Figaro.

“I’d love to get another one and make it like a NISMO car,” he admits. “Put in a souped-up motor, do the suspension, drop in a five- or six-speed. I saw a Nissan motor advertised with the CEO holding the motor in his hands. It’s so light and that small and it is about 400+ horsepower. I would just love to put something like that in there.”

George is referring to Nissan’s DIG-T R, which is a three-cylinder 1.5-litre engine that weighs an astonishing 40Kg and produces 400bhp. Power to weight is rated at 10bhp for every kilo - that’s F1 territory. Holy Figaro!

George will buck the trend of trying and flipping with the Figaro, as hard as that is for this avid enthusiast.

“It’s not the end of the road, but you know what, I have driven all the others,” he muses. “I’m still a Porsche fanatic, so there will be another Porsche in the future, but for right now, this is the perfect car for me. I would never sell this.”







FORD

COBRA



WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**



PAUL and Kerri Buckendahl don't have a shed full of old muscle cars, they only have one.

It doesn't spend its time in a hermetically sealed vacuum bag or humidity controlled room. It's let out every weekend the sun is shining. It's taken to the beach, the hills and wherever the hell they feel like going, and they are loving every minute of it. Their dream car is a 1978 Ford XC Cobra Hardtop. Number 361 to be exact, factory fitted auto and a 302 V8. Most Ford people will be familiar with the Cobra, but for those who aren't, here's the short version.

40 years ago, sales were down to a trickle for the unloved Falcon Hardtop. The new-shape XD was imminent and production was being wound down as dealers were working hard to move the remainder of their stock. A team assembled at Ford HQ in Broadmeadows including Henry Ford's Great Grandson, Edsel Ford II. The Plan was to come up with a way to move the remaining 400 body kits. There was a suggestion to go all black for a "Playboy" model complete with bunny

decals, but was quickly shot down as it would be sending the wrong message as a family focused company. Edsel Ford suggested 'Cobra', and although it was met with some resistance, having the last name "Ford" seemed to be enough to get his vision into production.

All 400 Cobras were based on the Falcon 500 GS Hardtop. The first 200 cars were fitted with Ford's legendary 5.8-litre (351ci) V8. Also within the first batch, there were thirty 'Bathurst' versions, usually referred to as 'Option 19', which was specifically for race homologation. The second lot of 200 featured the 4.9-litre (302ci) V8... all except car 351, which naturally boasted the 351 V8. There are a few other promo cars with the "Cobra" treatment as well, but they've all disappeared, including a short-wheelbase F100 pick-up, Transit van and a quartet of XC utes. Meanwhile, the Hardtops were divvied up between the premium dealers and all 400 sold out in no time, proving to be an unexpectedly big hit.

The Cobra's styling is unmistakably American



in influence, with an unequivocal boldness and brashness that harks back to Ford's heady racing days of the 1960s. Yet, conversely, the signature blue stripes represent some of the most recognisable aesthetics of the 70s Australian muscle car era. The bodies are actually painted 'Bold Blue' first, with the 'Snow White' added second to create the stripes. Front and rear spoilers and the iconic 'Cobra' decals add pure volume to an already vocal automotive statement.

"Even if you're not a Ford person, everyone knows the Cobra," Paul says.

"I just love the way it looks," Kerri adds. "It's so much fun jumping in that car, driving down the coast and seeing little kids smile at you and say 'look at the race car!' I used to do the exact same thing when I would see them driving around as a kid."

Kerri grew up in the quintessential Australian household, since the family driveway was peppered with various Fords and Holdens; but the Cobra struck a chord with her that has rung through into adulthood.

"It was when I started hanging around with Paul, that's when I really started getting into the Hardtops," she reveals. "I went to visit him in New Zealand and at the time he took me around in his V8 XA Hardtop."

Paul chimes in. "It was my first Muscle car," he said. "Back in the 80s, you didn't see too many young blokes running around in V8s."

"Every guy that was in his 20s who had moved over from NZ bought a V8 when they got to Australia, it was the first thing they did," laughs Kerri.

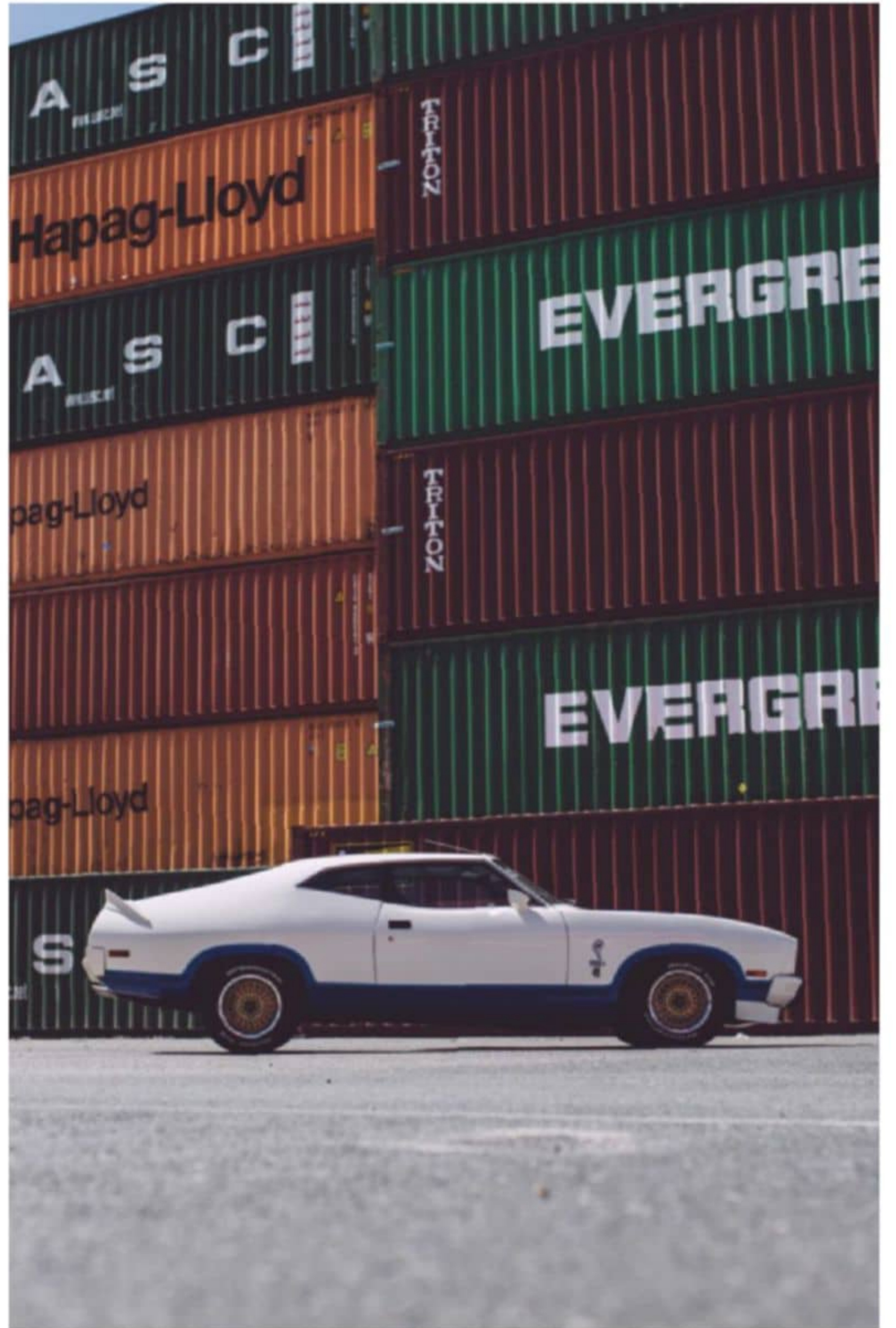
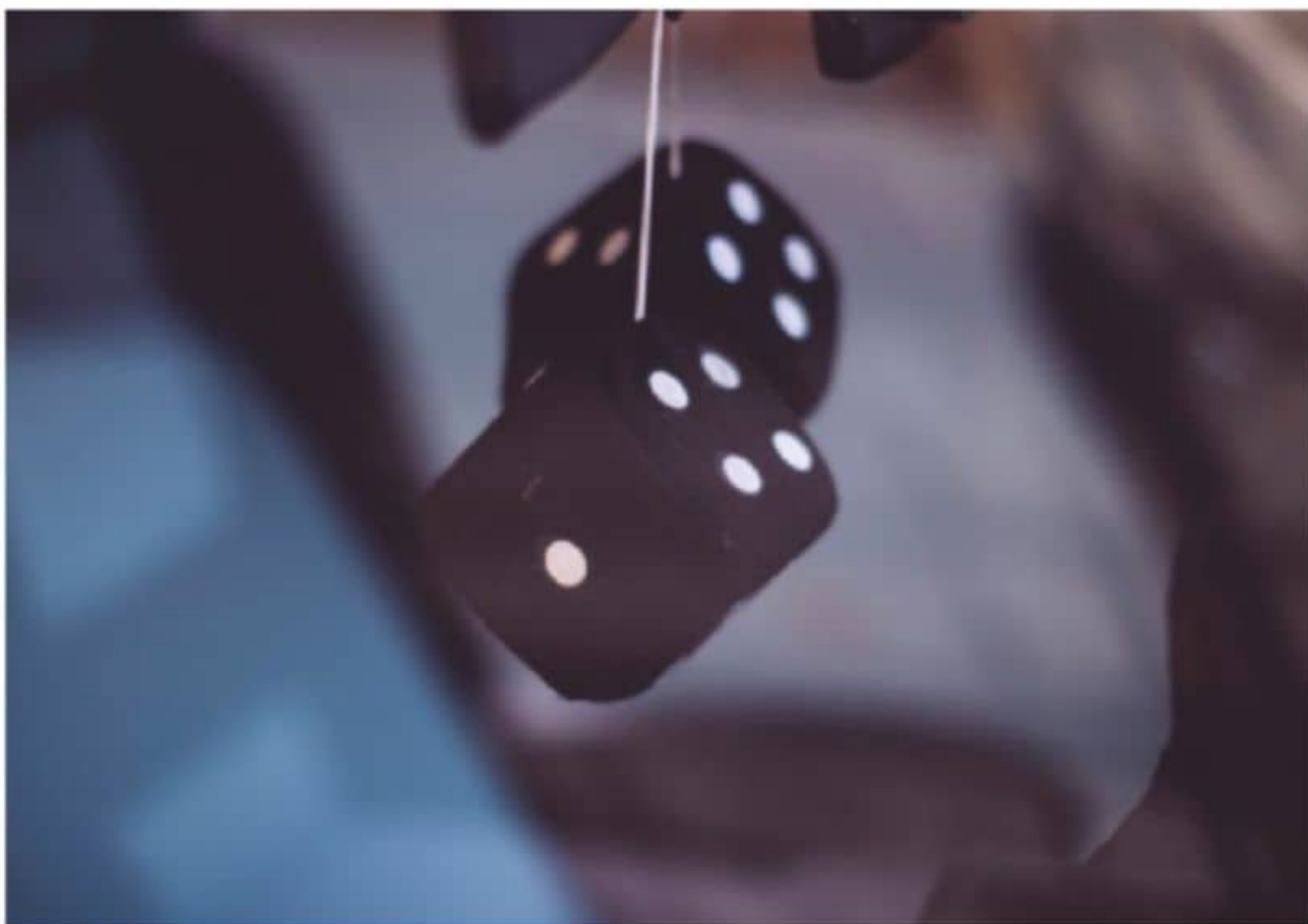
"I came across to Australia in 1988. My parents held onto the Hardtop for a while, but when they

realised I wasn't coming home, they sold it on me. That was 30 years ago, but I still love that car."

Paul and Kerri had worked hard, built a business and taken all that life had thrown at them. It was time to take a step back and find a way to really enjoy what they had worked for. Kerri had always kept an eye on Hardtop prices, and their growing value spurred them into action. "If we don't do it now, then we'll never be able to have one," Kerri says.

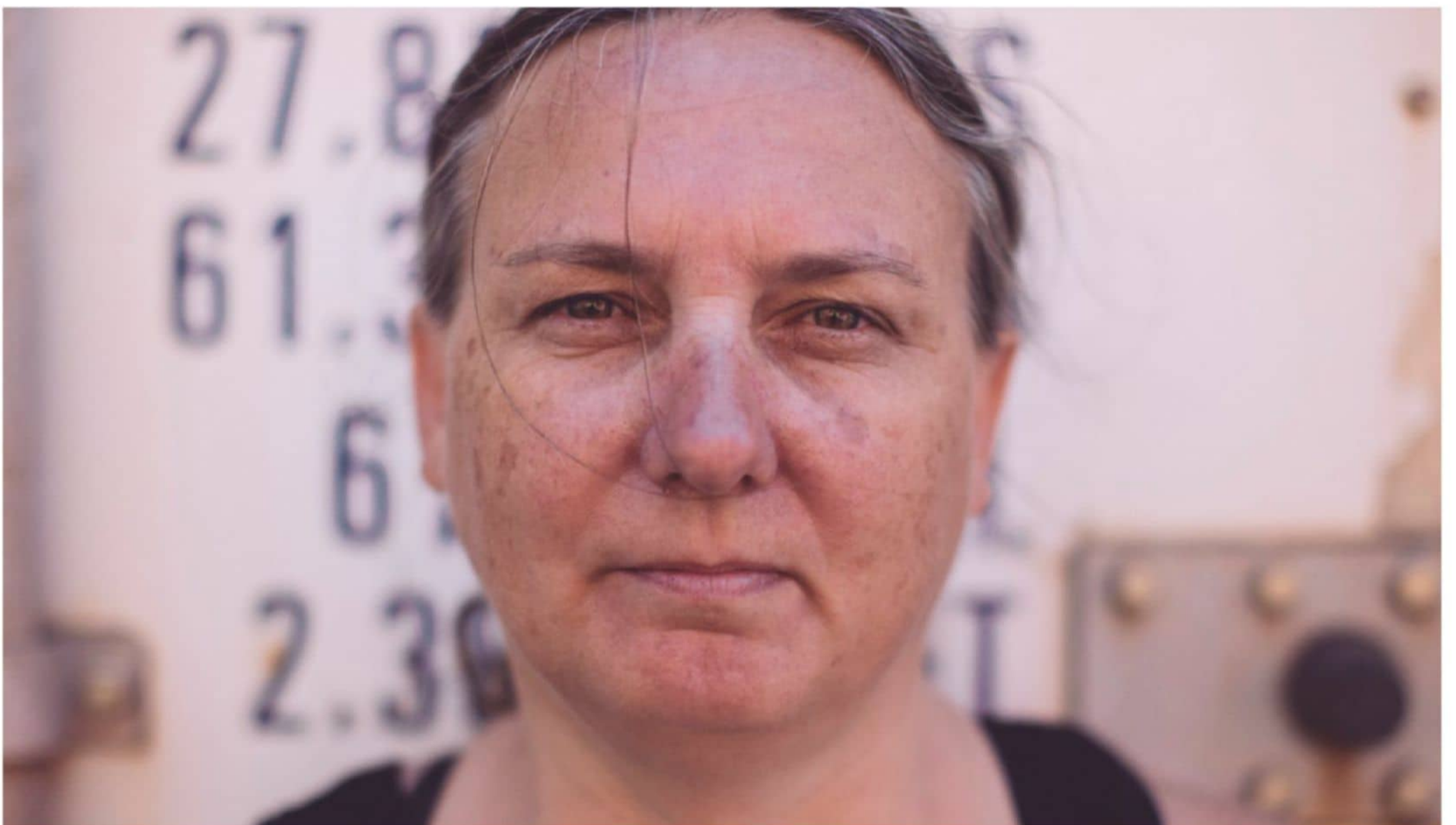
Interest in early-model Falcon Hardtops of all series has surged in recent years, and are even approaching the same stratospheric values enjoyed by the original Holden Monaros and Falcon GTs in recent times. Stand-alone specials like the John Goss, Horn, Allan Moffat and Superbird are highly sort after nowadays, but none more so than the Cobra. Recent auctions have had genuine examples fetching up to \$200K. Not bad for cars designed to move the last bits and pieces out of the Ford factory that retailed from \$9405 back in 1978. The couple spent countless hours trawling eBay and automotive websites looking for the perfect Hardtop. "We even looked on sites based in New Zealand and South Africa," Kerri says. "We thought a Cobra would be out of our range at the time, so we were looking at XA Hardtops as well." They came across a Cobra for sale in Tamworth. "We looked at a Cobra and an XA on the same day, they were the same money, but the XA had about \$30K worth of work done on the engine," Kerri explains. An offer was made on the Cobra and after an agonising two week wait, the Ford was heading to its new home.

"The seller delivered it to our door," Kerri says. "Up until the point he rolled it into our back yard,





*THE COBRA IS A SHARED PASSION FOR PAUL AND
KERRI, AND REUNITES THEM WITH A MORE
YOUTHFUL VERSION OF THEMSELVES*







DMU
7274
261



HDMU 4727800

MSCU 59948010

BSIU 4040010

凯航

CLHU 4773357

FSCU 4728248

DTSU 44408841

MSCU 59678

HLBU 1274551

DTSU 44470840

TTNU 416865 0
4261

MAX GROSS 40000 KG
TARE 1400 KG
PAYLOAD 38600 KG
CUB. CAP. 117.1 CBM

TRITION



I still just didn't believe it was ours. The first thing I did after he left was to pop the hood and look at the plate stamped No.361."

The car had been sitting for about five years and only needed a new battery to start life on the road again. They worked on it together and have had a few minor repairs to do here and there. "It did have an auto, but when it let go, we put in a four-speed single rail, which is what originally came out with the manual spec versions," Paul says. "When we were looking to buy one back in 2015, the manuals were so much more expensive and were already out of our price range."

"It sucked as an auto," laughs Kerri. "It was just boring. It was like two different cars; the manual just woke the motor up."

Paul echoes the sentiment. "Now It drives better than most new cars that we have owned," he says. "The only other thing we have changed are the wheels. The standard rears are a little skinny, plus we use the car so much and the original wheels are very expensive, so we wanted to put them into storage to preserve them."

Kerri pours over the car as if it were one of her children and although she probably has a thousand photos of it already, she still shoots away in tandem with me as we reposition the car for the shoot. I catch her glancing at it as we chat and I realise she may love this car just a little more than Paul does.

"I just love the styling, it looks great from every angle. I still can't believe it's ours!"

Kerri has found her automotive soul mate. "It's usually a bit of fight when we go out for a drive because we both want to drive it."

The Cobra is a shared passion for Paul and Kerri, and reunites them with a more youthful version of themselves cruising around New Zealand in Paul's XA in the early days of the relationship. It means more than money to them and the value it brings to their life can't be measured. "I'll sell the house before I sell this car," Kerri claims. "Even if someone offered us \$200K for it, I wouldn't take it."

"We'll get buried in it." Adds Paul

All the money in the world won't make you happy, but just enough to buy your dream car might!









DE TOMASO

MANGUSTA

THIS INCREDIBLE MANGUSTA WAS ONCE OWNED BY THE SON OF ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS SINGERS WHO EVER LIVED - AND THEREIN LAYS THE MYSTERY OF ITS PROVIDENCE

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**



The Mangusta may well be the most beautiful Italian sports car you've never heard of. Born from the mind of one of the truly great automotive imaginers of our time, Giorgetto Giugiaro - who was personally responsible for automotive masterpieces that include the BMW M1, the Maserati Ghibli, the Lotus Esprit and even the DeLorean - the Mangusta may well be his greatest, yet most unsung, achievement.

In 1965, Giugiaro had left Bertone, and was working as Head of Design

at Ghia. His design for the Mangusta was originally intended for an Iso, but the company's owner, Renzo Rivolta, rejected it. The cost associated with developing a mid-engine chassis is said to have put the successful post-war entrepreneur off.

The chassis for the Mangusta, meanwhile, had been developed for the ill-fated Shelby/De Tomaso 70P project of 1964-65. Initially known as the Sport 5000 Group 9, Shelby backed out of the collaboration, instead turning his attention to

Ford's ailing GT40 project, which went on to dominate the Le Mans 24 Hour and other racing events around the globe.

De Tomaso decided to push on, producing the Ghia 5000 from the wreckage of the collaboration. Giugiaro's rejected design was then coupled with the De Tomaso chassis, and the Mangusta was born.

It debuted as the Ghia Mangusta - along with the Maserati Ghibli - at the Turin Motor Show in 1966, and it was so well received, orders started to



pour in immediately.

De Tomaso obviously harboured ill feelings towards Carol Shelby for dissolving their partnership; Mangusta translates to mongoose, the only natural predator of the cobra.

The Mangusta bodies were supplied by Ghia, which De Tomaso acquired from Rafael Trujillo, the same-named son of the dictator of the Dominican Republic. Even the story behind the acquisition is fascinating; Trujillo was incarcerated for alleged

murder, and needed money for bail.

With the help of his brother in-law, De Tomaso posted \$650,000 and purchased the company from Trujillo.

Assembly of all 401 Mangustas was completed at De Tomaso Automobili in Modena. Easily the most distinctive feature of the Mangusta is the centre-hinged gullwing rear windows. Functionally, it was designed to allow access to storage and easier engine maintenance. Practicality, thankfully, isn't a concern when

creating art.

Its low-slung stance and corpulent posterior shares design cues with the original GT40 concept, but the Mangusta easily trumps the more utilitarian GT40 in elegance and sophistication from every angle. Where the GT40 radiated raw brutality, the Mangusta exuded pure class.

Racecar DNA underpins the Mangusta's sophisticated appearance, though; the fully adjustable suspension, drivetrain and running





*THE MANGUSTA EASILY TRUMPS THE
MORE UTILITARIAN GT40 IN ELEGANCE
AND SOPHISTICATION FROM EVERY ANGLE*







gear are very similar to that of the race-bred GT40. Interestingly, the Mangusta was the first production car to use different sized tyres on the front and rear, which was another cue from the race cars of the time.

The Ford HiPo 289cu V8, which powered the Shelby Cobra and GT40, was also fitted to the initial batch of Mangustas, but later versions bound for the North American market used the slightly less potent 302 version. Both versions utilised the GT40's ZF gearbox.

The Mangusta had to comply with local design laws in America in 1970, after a neat side step in 1969 thanks to the low volume exemption rule. Around 50 examples were made to comply featuring pop-up headlights and toggle switches on the dash.

By today's standards, the cabin is cramped, while the pedal and steering alignment are a little off kilter thanks the bulbous bellhousing and front wheel arch positioning. As beautiful as it is to look at, it's not a comfortable place to be if you're over six feet tall.

Slouching as low as I can in the seat, my head is almost at a right angle and hard against the cabin roof, and my forward vision diminished by the top of the low inward sloping windscreen.

I had been puzzled when speaking with the previous two owners to hear that neither of them had driven the car for more than 200 metres, but it makes perfect sense once you sit in it.

There were a number of prototypes and few notable one off Mangustas, including a factory-produced red and white Spyder, as well as a Chevy-powered Mangusta made to order for Bill Mitchell, the then-Vice President of Design for General Motors.

That neatly brings us to the Martin Mangusta featured here, which is thought to be another of those one-off prototypes. The Martin Mangusta came to Australia by pure chance. South Australian collector Peter Bell was interested in purchasing a Maserati and received a photo of one he was considering. In the background of the photo, he noticed two Mangustas.

“I asked about purchasing a Mangusta, but the seller would only sell them as a lot of three including the Maserati,” says Peter. “So I bought two Mangustas and a Maserati 3500 GT.”

As it turns out, one of the Mangustas was previously owned by Ricci Martin, son of one of America’s most beloved 1950s icons, Dean Martin.

The car had resided with American Steve Schuler for about twenty years since he acquired it sometime in the 1980s, just after an accident had taken it off the road.

It’s believed that Dean Paul – or Dino – Martin, Ricci’s older brother, had crashed the car, resulting in significant damage to the front end. Dino had a history of totalling cars, and had also written off Ricci’s first car, a De Tomaso Vallelunga.

Schuler had gone to school with the Martin boys and he had seen the car when it was new – they were all boy racers kicking around together at the time.

Apparently, Dino had purchased new panels for the Mangusta, but it was never repaired; Dino, a keen aviator and National Air Guard pilot, was killed after crashing his F4 fighter in 1987.

Peter received the car with all the brand-new panels, and took it back to bare metal for a meticulous restoration. It took seven years, including some extensive research, to put the Mangusta back exactly to factory specifications.

Interestingly, during the restoration, a pocket knife belonging to Ricci Martin was found behind one of the seats.

The black Mangusta that came with that package, meanwhile, was totally unmolested, and was an excellent source for Peter to use as a template for the Martin Mangusta.

“I wanted to get it absolutely factory correct. I had five Mangustas at one stage just to make sure I could get every last piece I needed for it,” explains Peter.

Ricci contacted Peter through a Mangusta forum during the restoration process, and was keen to speak with him about buying the car if Peter ever decided to sell it.

There was some initial email correspondence, but unfortunately Ricci passed away in 2016, before he and Peter had a chance to speak over the phone.

“I had always intended to keep as part of the collection, but unless I can use the car, it just sits there,” explains Peter. “I couldn’t get in it to drive it, so I did eventually move it on.”

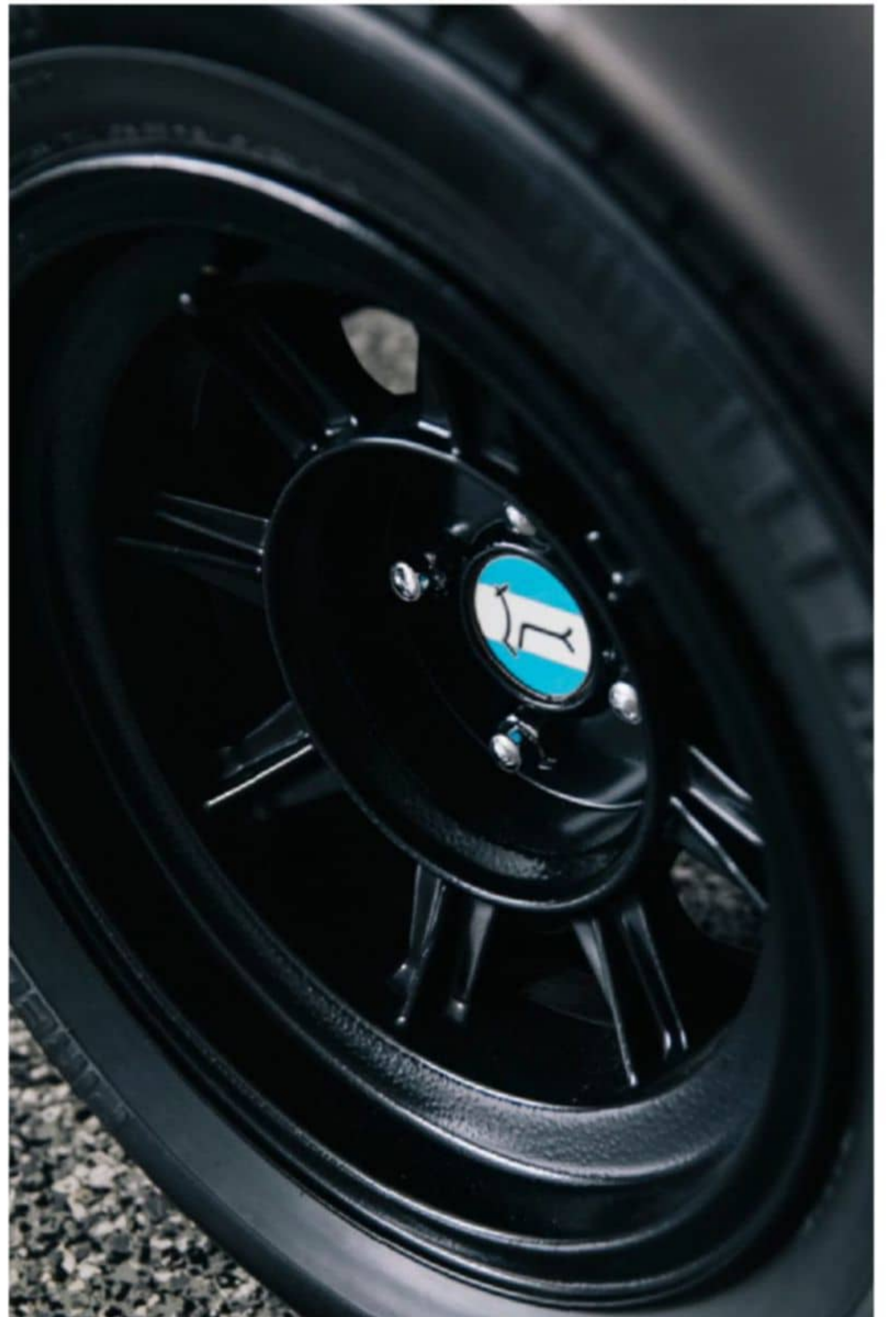
Custom features of the gold bronze metallic Mangusta include a targa top with removable panels, a beautiful custom burl wood dash, Ferrari Dino bucket seats, as well as custom trim in a bespoke colour. Even the ashtray and eight-track equipped radio aren’t standard.

The semi-flat black 11-inch rear wheels with 285x50/15 tyres are the largest factory fitted wheels on any Mangusta. Interestingly, the tyre size listed on the Ghia studio Prototype drawing were 255x70/15 and the production cars came with 225x70/15s.

Custom work on the Mangusta is said to have been carried out by famed coach builder Fantuzzi, which makes sense, as the company had an affiliation with De Tomaso and Ferrari (cue the Dino bucket seats). This can’t be verified, though, and was contradicted by Ricci himself in a forum post, declaring the work was carried out over a three year period at Coach Craft, which is based in California.

In fact, there appears to be a number of conflicting accounts surrounding the providence of the Martin Mangusta that stem from Ricci himself. Unfortunately, a number of statements he made whilst searching for the car can’t be substantiated.

According to Ricci’s biography *That’s Amore*, Dino had crashed his De Tomaso Vallelunga, and the boys’ mother ordered a replacement for him direct









from Milan. He states in the book he later sold that when he came into possession of the Mangusta.

Ricci again contradicts this on a post on the Ferrari Chat forum, stating 'Just to set the record straight... my brother Dino did total my Vallenga, and my mom did find one in Milan that was shipped to us in the US. Dino did NOT crash my Mangusta.'

It is widely accepted that his mother, Jeanne Biegger, ordered the car direct from the De Tomaso factory in Italy,

but history shows it was ordered for Dino and not Ricci. Prior to Ricci's search, it was often referred to as the 'Dean Martin Jnr' car

Some of the Martin Mangusta story, though, came to life via the offspring of another American cultural icon. Chad McQueen – son of legendary actor and racer Steve McQueen – was a guest speaker at Motorclassica's 2016 event in Melbourne, where the restored Martin Mangusta was on display.

He mentioned to Mark Jansen, owner

of car reseller Old Timer Australia in Queensland, that he knew the car from his days hanging out with the Martin boys, and had in fact driven it on occasion. He confirmed it was in its current form, complete with targa top. Unfortunately, he did not tell Mark who was its actual owner.

The chassis numbers are not necessarily sequential, either – the title deed for the Mangusta states it's a 1969, but the history books say it's a 1967. This adds to mystery of this Mangusta, and gives further weight



to the theory that it was an original prototype.

The Martin car now resides with John Deary in Brisbane. It's in good company with John's stunning Cherry Red Pantera and his Mangusta Prototype that is currently under restoration.

"I have always loved the De Tomasos. They have great performance and Italian styling, with none of the maintenance costs," says John.

Sadly, due to an underdeveloped chassis and a propensity for rust,

only an estimated 200 of the 401 Mangustas built remain.

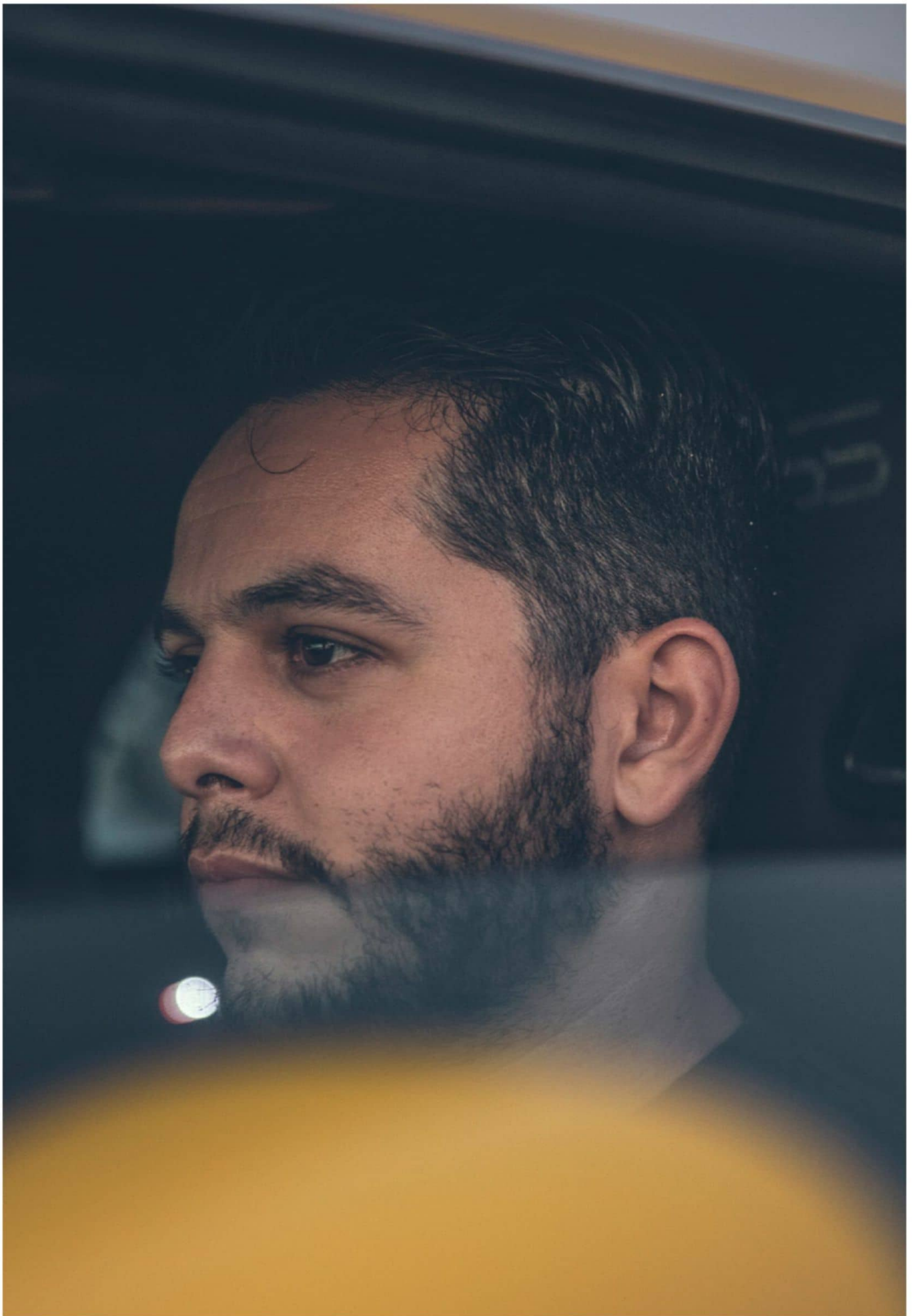
The chassis had a tendency to flex under the sheer power of the V8 motor and the steering (lifted from a Renault 5) was also said to be somewhat unresponsive. It was often a hard beast to handle under power and could understeer or oversteer depending on its mood, resulting in a lot of inexperienced drivers writing them off.

The value of the Mangusta, however, is climbing steadily, and

it's somewhat of a late bloomer, considering its design heritage and rarity.

It's also started to seep into pop culture with appearances in the 2003 Quentin Tarantino movie *Kill Bill* and the video clip for Kylie Minogue's song, *Can't Get You Out of My Head*.

While an accurate account of its lineage is elusive for this particular Mangusta, it takes nothing away from what the car is today; a work of art plucked from the mind of genius.





CRISTIAN

CROSS



WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**



CHALLENGES in work life are common place. The photocopier jams, someone always eats the last Monte Carlo and the Help Desk is anything but helpful. For automotive artist Cristian Cross, his challenge is daily and unrelenting. He is colour blind, but still manages to turn out spectacular photo realistic drawings day in day out.

“Getting colours right has been an absolute nightmare for me,” Cristian reveals. As a child, Cristian noticed a red/green deficiency. Since then, it has been progressively getting worse.

“I can’t tell the difference between purple, blue or pink. It all looks like a faded blue to me. Greens, oranges, reds – same sort of thing.

“It’s taken me years to get the courage to start using colours I was scared of using. Before, if a car was green, I would just use the one colour and shade differently for the gradients, but now I’m more confident blending other colours for the gradients. I think it has really brought my drawings from pretty good to where they are now.

“I’ve made some mistakes though!”

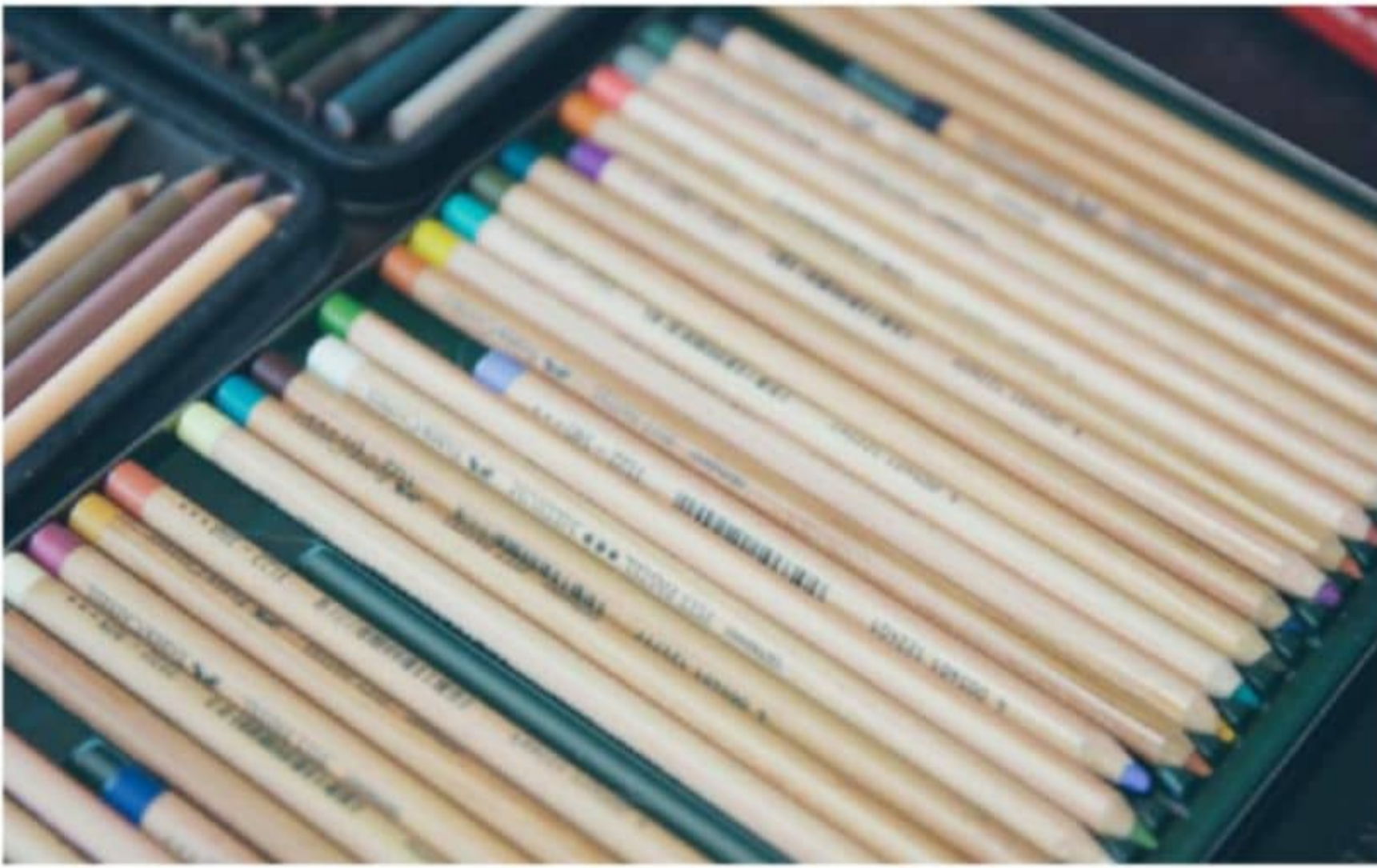
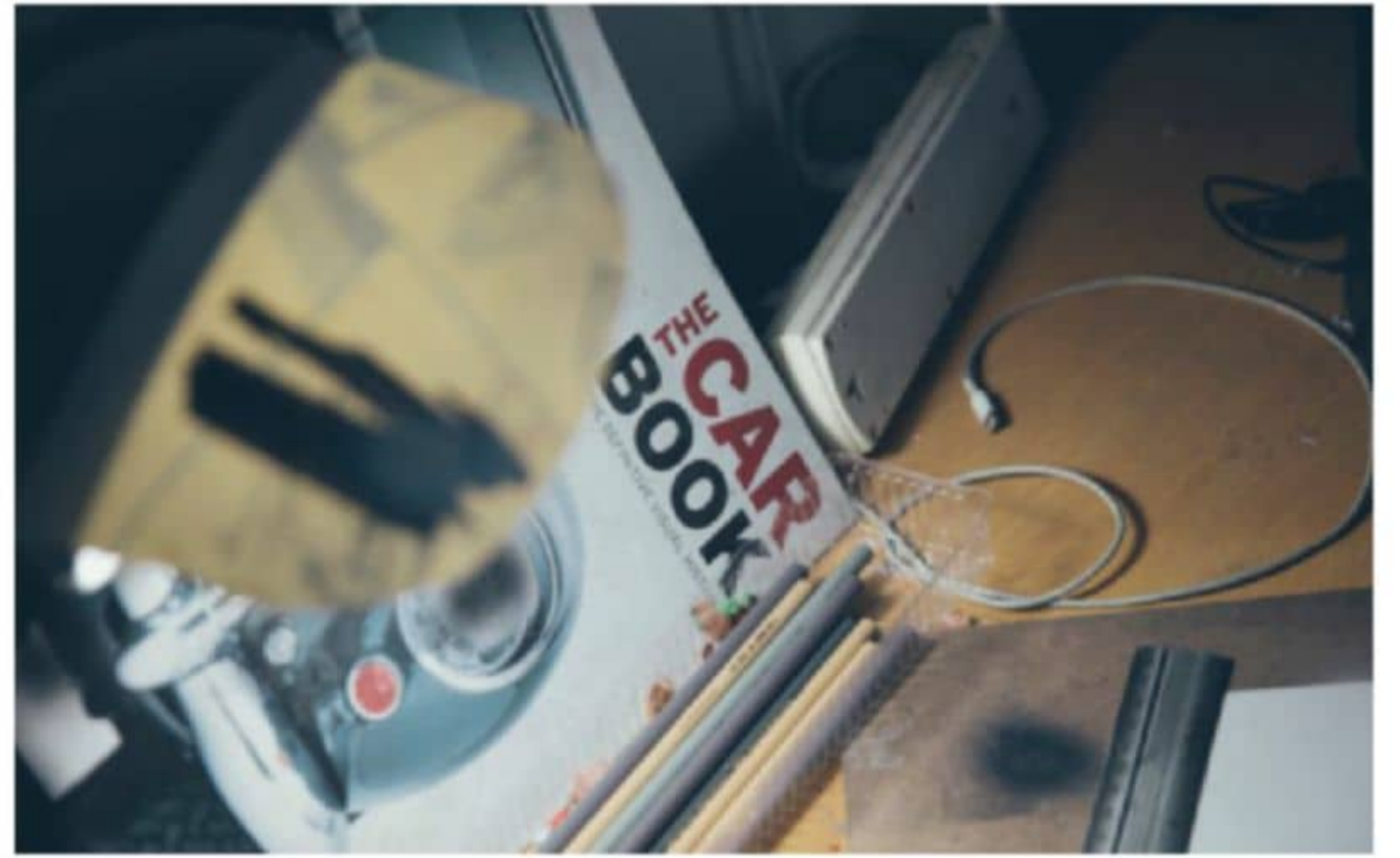
Cristian laughs. The most memorable was when he had

the opportunity to draw a SEMA build a few years ago. “It was a beautiful blue ‘67 Mustang and I was so excited.” Cristian poured over the drawing all day and proudly presented it to his partner when she arrived home, only to be confronted with a confused “It’s pink?”.

“Now my fiancé picks the colours for me. Once I have the basic colour, I use a ‘Prisma’ colour matching program in Photoshop. All the pencils have the colour Prisma code written on them, so it makes it a lot easier.”

Shelby the German Shepherd stirs and makes herself comfortable in her well-worn bed beside Cristian’s desk. His studio is filled with his art and keepsakes from significant milestones in his life. It is a small but inspired studio. “This is the sign you’ve been waiting for” is Nicko’d in bold black capital letters on his roof. He smirks when I look up at it. Mellow blues tunes meander from the speakers as the talk shifts to what got him to this point.

“Cars have simply been an obsession for me. Anyone who knows me from primary school or high school will tell you that all I did was draw cars. Pull out any of my Maths or English books and you’ll see cars drawn all over them,



every square inch, on my table on my bag – I just couldn't stop.”

It's hard for Cristian to pin point where it became an obsession, but the influence of Chip Foose on Cristian's life cannot be overstated. He recounts any story involving Foose with absolute reverence.

“The drawing side of things kicked off the first time I'd seen Chip Foose on Overhauling. I was just a kid in primary school at that stage, but here was this guy who was a king in the automotive world – had his own shop, his own TV show and he drew cars. Man, I wanted to be just like him.”

Years later, Cristian got the opportunity to meet his childhood hero when he flew to the States with his Dad to pick up his first car... a '67 Mustang. “That car was huge for me.” They made a special stop at Chip's workshop. “I got Foose to sign my arm and then I got it tattooed. I went back to show him. Yeah, a bit stalkerish, but he was so cool about it. He took me aside for two hours and we just talked – he has been a massive inspiration.”

Back home, after completing an arts degree, the challenge was trying to find work that paid decent money as an artist. “All my mates had good jobs and were making

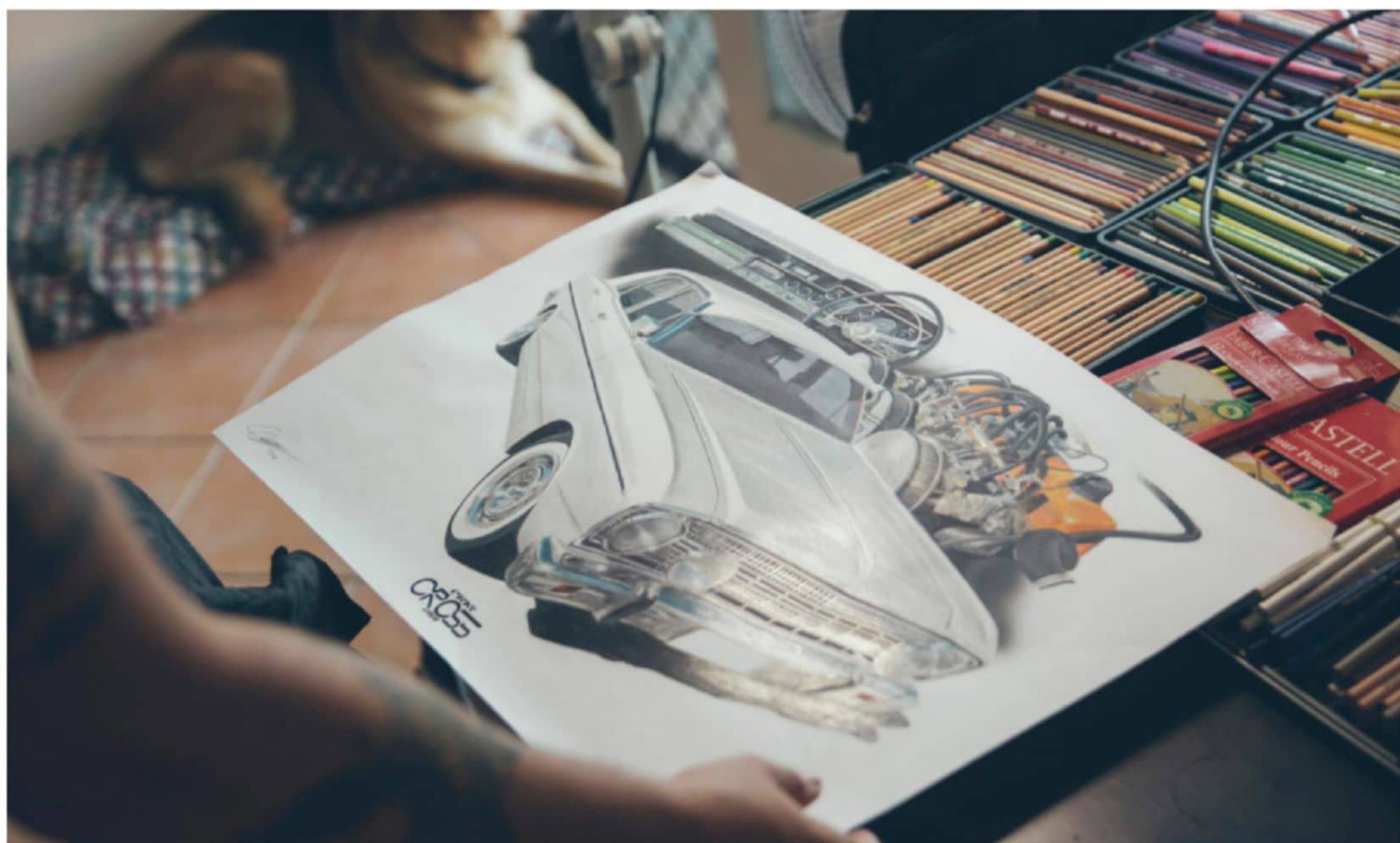
good money, but not me – I wanted to do what I loved, but it didn't pay the bills. I had a job lined up in that area, but I just felt it was too hard at the time. I ended up doing something completely different”. The allure of money and stability took Cristian to a position in financial planning for five years.

“It wasn't until I got that job as a financial planner that I realised how much I didn't want it. I felt like shit doing a job I just didn't like. So, I pushed this as hard as I could to drag myself out of it. I would come home at five and then draw until midnight. I was drawing Saturday, Sunday and every single night after work. I'd have felt like a failure if I was still working at the bank at 40.”

People responded to what Cristian was doing. It was validation of his commitment to his artistry and further spurred him on. Acknowledgment that he was doing the right thing.

He pulled the plug on financial planning in 2016 to become a full-time artist. “I would have been lying to myself if I didn't do it.” He has completed 363 individual drawings since and every single one is unique. “Even if I have done 20 HSV Commodores. Every single one is different.”

It's been a challenging time to establish himself as an







artist, but it's paying off. "I don't get up mornings anymore and think God I hate this. I get up pumped! I'm drawing a GTO today or Ferrari or a Falcon – whatever it is – it's awesome."

He works exclusively from photos supplied by clients. The details recreated just from pencils are photo realistic. The gradients, reflections and lines are rendered with an almost CGI quality. The underlying passion for cars is evident in his work.

"People putting cars together contact me. 'I'm getting these wheels, this is the stance, this is the body kit and I want it painted this colour.' They want to know what it's going to look like. It's a part of the job that really excites me. It makes me feel like part of the build."

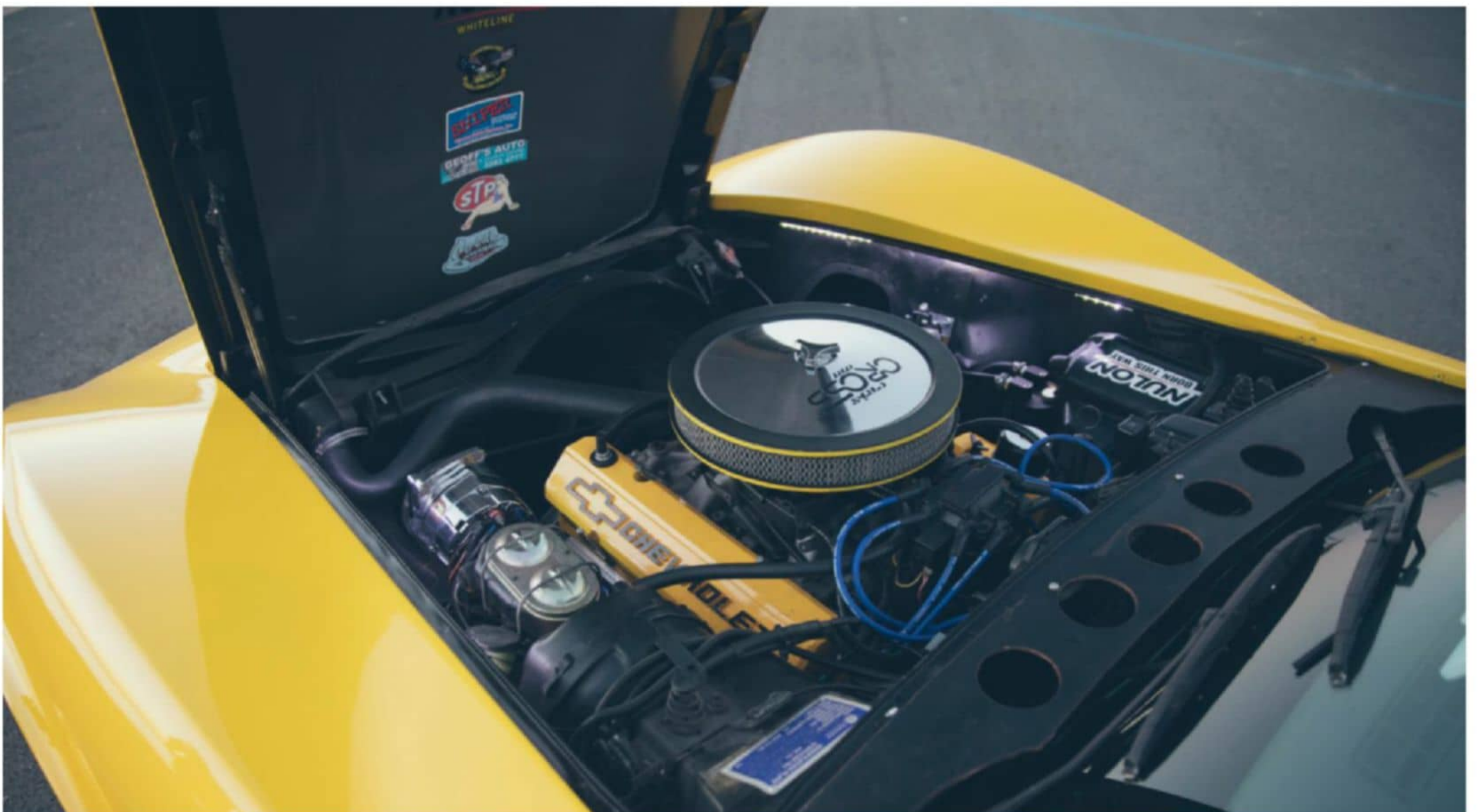
Cristian loves classic American muscle cars. "Dad always had Corvettes. He's probably had 10 Corvettes,

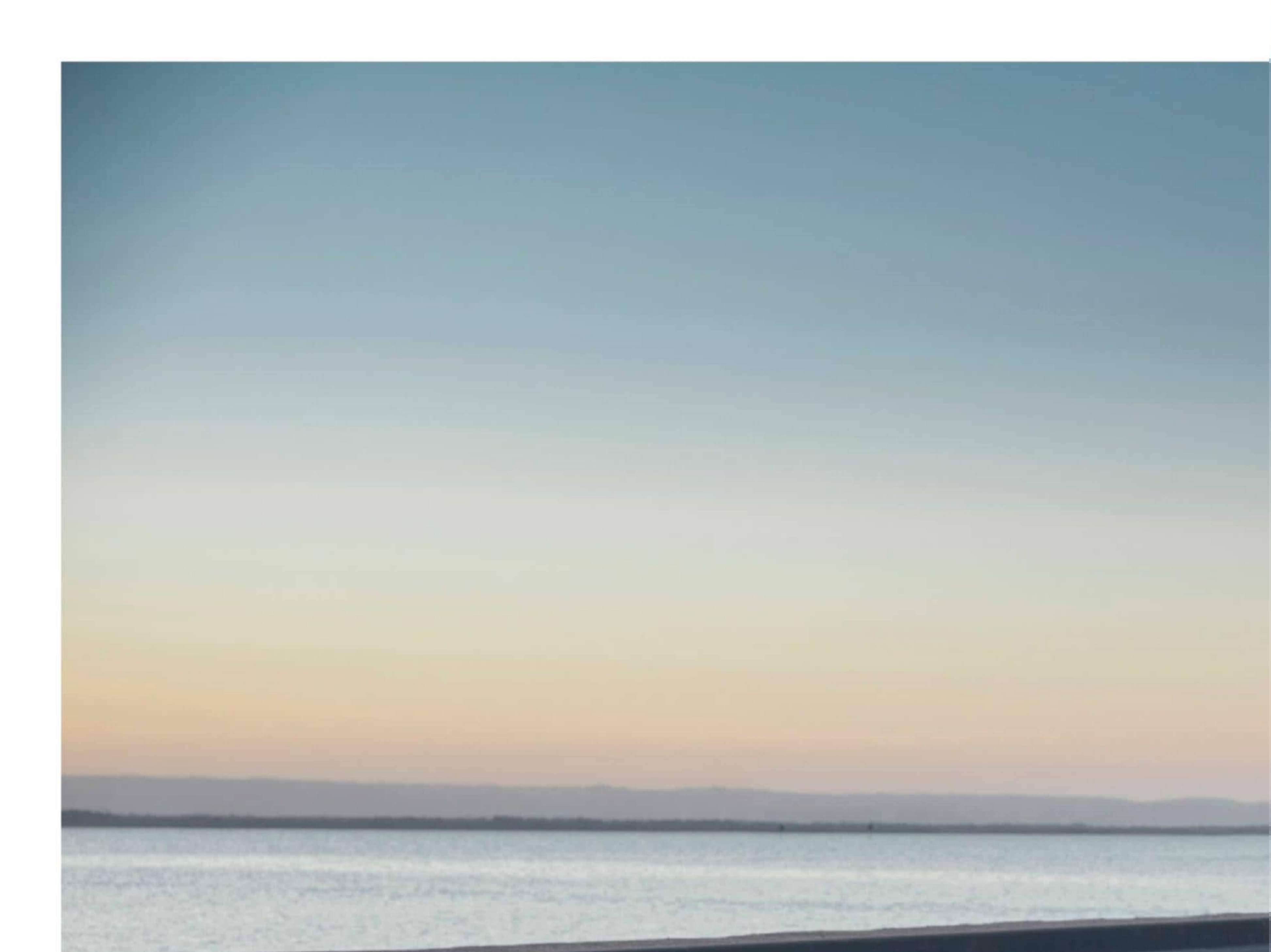
there were Mustangs and Camaros as well. He used to go to the States and bring them back, so there was generally something new in the driveway every three months.

"Those cars were my interpretation of his success. So, when I had the opportunity to have my own Corvette, I didn't hesitate." Cristian sold his '64½ Mustang in order to own his dream car.

"That Mustang was such a good car, but such a piece of shit." He laughs. "It was the first car I put my hands on. I never got a chance to build a car as a kid. So, I took the motor, gearbox and suspension out, just to re-do it. It didn't need re-doing, I just wanted to mess with cars. It was a disaster, I didn't know what went with what. It just didn't work. But the day I traded it on the Corvette, it was running perfectly."

Cristian's yellow 1978 C3 Corvette was a blank canvas





and one that needed to reflect who Cristian was as an artist and a lover of classic American muscle. “It was a 100 per cent stock middle-age midlife-crisis car when I got it. I was scared of touching it because it was so nice. But once the engine blew, I thought stuff it, I can do what I want now. I wanted to channel my creativity into my own car.”

The stock 350 cubic inch Chev V8 was taken out and a 383ci Stroker with a Scat bottom end, forged pistons, Edelbrock alloy heads and Hooker headers were dropped in. A T350 gearbox with a 3500rpm stall converter replaced the standard gearbox. Cosmetically, it now boasts bigger wheels and some gratuitous advertisement for his business. And “FOO23” plates, which are a nod to Cristian’s idol.

“Now, that car is me. I always relate a car to a person. The car you drive says a lot about yourself.”

The Corvette thunders to life, and I fold myself into an origami arrangement to fit into the passenger seat,

as we set out in search of afternoon light. It’s hard to hear over the exhaust boom violently thrust out of the four-inch side pipes. “It shoots flames!” Cristian says, as we rumble out of his street. It’s loud, physically and aesthetically, but you can’t help but smile when he plants his foot and the cabin is filled with the primal roar of the V8.

It’s admirable to be bold, step outside the norm. People get caught up in creating or restoring cars that will make other people happy. The joy can be snuffed out of an otherwise cathartic experience.

“Every time I drive in it, it’s an immersive experience, it’s just me and the car. It really relaxes me, all I’m doing is driving. If I’m having a shit day, it just muffles everything else.

“You feel like a king when you drive the car you love. Whether it’s a VN Commodore with a horrible bonnet scoop or bright pink flames. It may not be the cleanest, sharpest or fastest. But it’s mine.”





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