

# RETROMOTIVE

VOLUME SEVEN



LP400 COUNTACH



# RETROMOTIVE

VII

## **PUBLISHER**

Nathan Duff

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Nathan Duff

Isamu Sawa

Shaun Maluga

James Ball

James Cause

## **COPY EDITOR**

Dr John Wright

## **WORDS**

Nathan Duff

Bruce McMahon

Isamu Sawa

Shaun Maluga

Dr John Wright

Vincent De Rossi

James Nicholls

James Ball

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

Julie, Jimi, Jesse & Johnathan

## **ART DIRECTION & DESIGN**

Nathan Duff

## **CONTACT**

[contact@retromotive.co](mailto:contact@retromotive.co)

PO Box 3403 Victoria Point West QLD, 4165

## **SOCIAL**

[www.facebook.com/retromotive](https://www.facebook.com/retromotive)

[www.instagram.com/retromotive](https://www.instagram.com/retromotive)

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Photo: © Shaun Maluga

## IT ALL STARTED WHEN...



### 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/fujiilmxepro2](https://www.instagram.com/fujiilmxepro2)*

Lane's passion for cars was instilled when she was growing up in the car-centric city of Los Angeles. As a child, she would drive her toy Barbie Jeep Wrangler up and down her driveway until the wheels literally fell off.

The first real car Lane drove was her mum's BMW 330Ci when she was in sixth grade.

'I didn't grow up thinking of us as a "car family", but now looking back we did have a lot of BMWs... California loves BMWs, and so did my parents!' Her dad also owned a '69 Porsche 911S in which she got driven to school on special occasions.

Growing up in LA perhaps you could be forgiven for thinking your family owning BMWs and Porsches was normal. But regardless of whether it was the influence of the city's relationship with the automobile or her parents, Lane was acutely interested in the cars around her.

At the age of 13, driving with her mum down Sunset Boulevard, Lane spotted a Taiga Green BMW 2002Tii and asked her mother what it was. The 2002tii immediately became her dream car. 'I love the hard, square lines and the circle-shaped lights. It's how you'd expect a child to draw a car.' In 2014 she bought a 1967 BMW 1600 that was in pieces. It proved to be a bit too much of a project for her first classic car and then she came across a 1971 BMW 2002 on Craigslist that was perfect for her. It was the beige Nevada colour she desired and the interior details were exactly what she dreamed of achieving in hers. It also had some tasteful performance modifications such as the E21 five-speed gearbox and Ireland Engineering Suspension components, so she jumped on it.

Speaking to Lane you can tell she has a distinct vision for the look and performance she wants from her car. Lane added yellow tinted headlights and gold 1980s BBS Mahles that contrasted nicely with the beige paint. Vintage Hella foglamps feel right at home flanking the iconic kidney grille. Lane also added a bigger 38/38 Weber, 292 cam and 3.9 LSD to make the car more responsive and

drivable.

Sitting in this BMW, you get that sense of a perfect balance between refinement and race car feel. There is something raw and utilitarian about it but the small details in the German engineering still convey a level of sophistication, class and comfort.

Lane attended the University of Vintage Auto Racing Association High Performance Driving School a few months after purchasing the 2002 to improve her driving skills. 'It was the first time I really saw what the 2002 is capable of. I got to be around so many 02 experts, encouraging me to drive as hard as I can with no fear.' It was a rainy weekend and doing donuts in the rain is one of her fondest memories with the car.

In regards to the driving experience Lane says it's pure freedom. 'Something about knowing it can break down at any moment, or one wrong crack in the road can throw off my steering, makes driving it a thrill even when I'm barely going anywhere.'

Not content with just one classic car, Lane searched for a classic truck to add to her stable and came across a solid '67 FJ40 on Craigslist. She fell in love with FJs in middle school when another student got picked up in the carpool line in a white '89 FJ60. The FJ40 she found on Craiglist needed a tonne of work and, fearing she was a little out of her depth, Lane enlisted the help of her friend Jeff Stockwell to get the FJ back on the road. Ultimately Lane conceded that the FJ needed much more work than she was capable of at the time, so she sold it to Jeff and they finished it off together. 'It was pretty special to get to tear down that simple engine, and I learned a lot.'

Lane still wants to own an old truck one day and perhaps a 911 to follow in her dad's footsteps (his has been promised to her sister). When asked about the highlights of owning a classic vehicle, Lane says it is the 'joy it brings to people I pass on the street when they see me driving it. Like they get to go back in time for a second.'



Photo: ©Isamu Sawa





### 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*

When it comes to vintage Heuer Autavia chronographs from the late '60s and early '70s, none are more sought-after than the white-dialled Ref 1163T – affectionately known amongst collectors as the 'Siffert'.

The original Heuer Autavia, launched in 1933, was designed as a dashboard timer for automotive racing and flying – the name derived from an amalgam of two words, Auto and Aviation. The Autavia wristwatch then followed in 1962, designed as the ultimate racing chronograph, which became an instant classic for CEO Jack Heuer and the brand.

In 1969, Heuer launched the first automatic chronograph movement in the world: the Calibre 11, and the Autavia 1163 collection was born.

There were numerous designs of the Autavia, with different coloured dials, hands and bezel combinations. The Siffert was recognisable from its white dial, black sub-dials, central blue hand and subtle hints of blue throughout.

Born in Fribourg, Switzerland in 1936, Joseph 'Jo' Siffert was a champion racer for Lotus and Porsche in the '60s and '70s. After joining Formula One in 1962 (the same year the Autavia wristwatch was launched) he won the 1968 British Grand Prix.

As a Heuer enthusiast, Siffert played an integral role in the success of the brand as the first brand ambassador appointed by Jack Heuer. Under the sponsorship deal worth CHF 25,000 per year, Siffert wore Heuer logos on his race suit and an Autavia chronograph on his wrist. Under the agreement, the company also allowed Siffert to buy its watches at wholesale prices so he could resell them.

In his autobiography, *The Times of my Life*, Jack Heuer says; 'We were very supportive of that trading activity because he put it exactly in the right hands of those in his world,' promoting the Heuer brand to other drivers on the grid.

Unfortunately, Siffert died in late 1971, crashing during the World Championship Victory Race at Brands Hatch in England.

After his death, collectors nicknamed the white dial Autavia model after the legendary driver – the late driver's own Siffert Autavia sold at the Bonham's Haslinger Auction in 2010 for \$US46,800.

Joey Spinazzola, co-manager of Watchtime in Melbourne, a business specialising in buying and selling high-end vintage and modern watches founded by his father, recently acquired a 1163T Siffert Mk VI (pictured) from its original owner.

He says, 'The owner's son had it in his possession for some time. His father was an avid watch lover and a big car racing fan.'

The watch has already sold. 'As these watches are scarce these days, they are sought-after, especially one-owner pieces,' says Joey. 'Most of the watches we acquire are from the original owners or family. It's important, as the integrity of the timepieces is what brings maximum value.'

Because the racers were wearing Autavias back in the day, there is a genuine connection to racing that resonates with collectors and enthusiasts.

Comedian Jerry Seinfeld – a car enthusiast himself and collector of vintage watches – also has a Siffert Autavia in his collection. Seinfeld's love of Porsche (the brand Siffert drove for) is well-documented – the man even owns Steve McQueen's Porsche 917 from the legendary 1971 film *Le Mans*.

Joey says, 'Coming from a car enthusiast family myself, I have followed in the footsteps and gained a passion for cars and watches. I have even adopted the middle name Ayrton for obvious reasons.'

'But the connection between the love of motorsport and watches was quite a coincidence,' he says.

'My father, Lewis, wanted a Rolex Submariner to celebrate his engagement to my mother in the '90s. After months of searching, he found one for sale secondhand in the local Trading Post. 'Then during a flight interstate, a passenger offered him more money than what he paid for it. This sparked an idea, and by 1992 he had opened a shop in Little Collins Street. After nearly 30 years we are Australia's largest dealers in secondhand watches.' Just like Jo Siffert, Lewis Spinazzola inadvertently discovered a business opportunity and started supplying timepieces to collectors and enthusiasts. Joey concludes, 'Vintage watches have class and character. They are harder to obtain, making them extremely desirable. Anyone can go and buy a new watch – vintage is something a little more specialised, and that's we do.'



*Photo: Supplied*



### BRUCE MCMAHON

*Bruce McMahon's first car was a 1949 Riley Roadster before Volkswagens, a Porsche 911, Range Rovers, Fiats, Alfas, utes and more.*

*Some time as a motoring writer saw him ride with the likes of Alan Jones and Dick Johnson on race tracks; a ride with Les Siviour through the scrub was hard to beat.*

Les Siviour was 15 times an Australian off-road class champion. Outright champ in 1987. A dirt-spewing, bump-jumping daredevil in bog standard Nissan Patrols.

He'd grown up on a farm outside Griffith in New South Wales, started driving a Model A Ford ute when he was six then moved to an ex-army Willys Jeep, left-hand-drive. And still recalls the time the fun began:

*I was watering a paddock up there, it was a hard paddock of paspalum, and there was water over the track and I turned sideways and did a great big slide across the paddock and thought 'geez that was good fun'. It was just accidental but it was good, that's where I got started. It was the fun of it having it go sideways and controlling it.*

When he turned 17 Les bought a Mini-Minor and then, in 1969, a Cooper S. 'Drove the ring out of that for a few years.' Then followed a series of fast Holdens. In 1983, when a mate was getting into off-road racing, Les headed north to Kempsey in his wife's shopping car – a short-wheelbase Patrol – and took the Nissan on a recce the day before the race.

'I took the Patrol around with six people – two sat right in the back – and went that quick they said "why don't you race that thing, you're bloody fast in it."

The next race was down in Waikerie (South Australia), so I put a roll bar in the wife's car, drove it down, took the seats out – there was no standard class then so they put me in the modified class. We missed out on first place by four seconds – and that's because we'd stopped, there was a bloke bogged and we stopped to tell some people to go pull that bloke out, he's bogged, poor bugger.

'We drove into the pits and 300 people climbed all over the car, they were under it and over it and around it and I said "mate, it's just a stock standard Patrol".'

Then it was off to Goondiwindi, six hours north. Les hooked a caravan on the back of the Patrol. 'Won the race by a mile and then towed it home again. They started saying "you've got to stop doing this, you're making the rest of us look pretty silly".

'I rang Nissan up, said I've been racing a Patrol, they said "we've heard about you, righto, what do you want?" Nothing at the moment, but if I want some parts, can I get some parts?'

Les Siviour went from that conversation to being fully sponsored by Nissan for 20 years. He rang Bridgestone,

told them he'd been racing on their tyres; they too had heard about the Griffith rice farmer and supplied him race rubber for 20 years.

'That stopped in 2002 when they said "we've won everything we can win, you've beaten everyone there is to beat, so we'll give you a 350Z as a gold watch and you can retire".' Les laughs. Now semi-retired from farming and driving he's only done 30,000km in his Zed, does most his driving in a Nissan Navara ute with all the mod cons.

Back in the day he was a valuable front man – and ersatz test driver – for Nissan when it came to promotions plus dealer and press launches for the four-wheel-drive Patrols.

'If I couldn't break a Patrol, nobody could break a Patrol.'

He remembers a launch up in North Queensland's Port Douglas one time with 30 something vehicles, cars and a clutch of dealers. 'I was going in and around them around the track and they said "go and find yourself a track somewhere else, you're frightening everyone".'

'So I went over and found this bloody road going up this bloody mountain in the forest and there was weeds hanging down and great big trees – about two metres through them – and this track just went up the hill. It went up for about a kilometre and a half and then just stopped.' This became Les's playpen, up and back down the hill, flat out; though he admits it was pretty dangerous with big drop-offs and those big buggers of trees.

Anyway, Nissan Australia's then boss, Leon Daphne, came over and said he'd like to introduce Les to the blokes who designed and built the Patrol in Japan.

'I said "great, well jump in and I'll show you what it can do". Well I took it up this hill flat out and at the top the old bloke in the back tapped me on the shoulder. He said "Les, in Japan on road like this we drive very, very slow. Going back down you drive very, very slow".'

'I said "yeah, mate", went flat out all the way to the bottom. When I got to the bottom, the back two doors flew open, two blokes flew out, and this young bloke in the front, he's hanging on to the hand grip with his left hand and I said, "do you wish to go again?". He said "no, no...my hand will not undo." He couldn't let go of the grip.....'

R

# LAMBORGHINI

## LP400 COUNTACH

★ WORDS **VINCENT DE ROSSI**

★ PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**

The Countach is the House of the Raging Bull's masterpiece from the pen and genius of the great design master Marcello Gandini. This fascinating, unconventional car with its outstanding performance represents the quintessence of Lamborghini legend. The Countach is everything a supercar should be: otherworldly, impractical, inaccessible and prime bedroom-wall poster material.

But what of the name, Countach? In August 2018 Gandini said:

*When we made cars for the car shows, we would always work late into the night and we were all tired, so we would joke around to keep our morale up. There was this fabricator*

*working with us who made the locks. He was two metres tall and had enormous hands. He spoke only in a Piedmontese dialect and lacked proper Italian. Piedmontese is different from Italian and sounds more like French. One of his most frequent exclamations was 'Countach' which literally means plague, contagion, but is used more to express amazement or even admiration, like 'my goodness' or simply 'wow!' He had this relentless habit of saying that word, so I said jokingly that we should call it Countach just as a joke. Nearby was Bob Wallace, who assembled the mechanicals – we always made the cars operational; at that time, you could drive the car into the shows,*

R





UNCLUTTERED, LACKING FLARED GUARDS,  
WIDE WHEELS AND WING: JUST PURE LINES



*which was marvellous. So, jokingly I asked Bob Wallace how it sounded to his Anglo-Saxon ear. He said the name Countach out loud in his own accent which to me sounded strange, but he liked it and it worked. Another of my co-workers, a young man who heard it enthusiastically said, 'yes, let's call it that'. We immediately came up with the inscription and stuck it to the car. That is how the name was coined. This is the only true story behind this word.*

Gandini went on to say that he wanted people to be astonished when they first laid eyes on the car. Little wonder then, that Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A kept the Countach name.

Lamborghini aficionados around the world agree that the LP400 is the purest of all Countachs – uncluttered, lacking flared guards, wide wheels and wing: just pure lines. It's also the lightest of all, while being a real driver's car that doesn't suffer fools. You need to be wary because the tyres are skinny by today's standards, which contributes to this model's low drag coefficient (lowest of all of Countachs).

So how about this Australian-delivered 1977 LP400? Back in the day, Lambos were sold by prestige car dealer Brents in the south-eastern Melbourne suburb of Oakleigh. Only 150 LP400s were produced, seven of which made their way to Australia. This is the only example to emerge from the factory in Oro Sahara. Lamborghini importer Tony De Fina who used this car as his daily driver relished its unique livery. Later the car went to Sydney where the flamboyant Dr Geoffrey Edelsten purchased it.

Edelsten sold it to another enthusiast in NSW who had the Lamborghini repainted red (as you did in those days!). Next it returned south and was eventually traded back to Brents, thence to New South Wales again. This custodian had Lolita Automobiles – NSW Lamborghini agent at that time – convert the car to 'S' specifications.

The LP400 stayed this way for several years before being bought in the early 2000s at auction by an enthusiast who was well aware of its provenance. He wasted no time restoring it back to the original mechanical specification and colour.

### **THIS FASCINATING, UNCONVENTIONAL CAR WITH ITS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE REPRESENTS THE QUINTESSENCE OF LAMBORGHINI LEGEND**

That owner and the man who now owns it know each other well. 'We often call one another and talk for hours about everything Lamborghini,' says the current owner.

*I knew about his LP400 and its history as it was owned by a friend of my brother's when he was a kid growing up in Melbourne in the 1980s. I remember seeing this Lamborghini parked on my parents' driveway at home. It was an amazing car to see back in those days and left such an impression on me that I always ended our phone conversation saying if you ever want to sell your LP400 please give me first refusal.*

The phone calls continued between the two friends with the LP400's restoration being the main topic of conversation. One







THE COUNTACH IS EVERYTHING A SUPERCAR SHOULD BE: OTHERWORLDLY, IMPRACTICAL, INACCESSIBLE AND PRIME BEDROOM-WALL POSTER MATERIAL



day the owner revealed that due to other commitments his enthusiasm to complete the restoration was starting to wane and he was actually considering selling it. In the full knowledge that a monumental task of restoration lay ahead of him, the current owner pounced on the car.

*For me the timing was perfect, I had sold my QV and then a short time later got an offer I couldn't refuse on my 5000S. Having owned two Countachs, I was very knowledgeable and experienced at maintaining them, so restoring a LP400 didn't daunt me. It is the model I've always desired.*

When taking a Countach apart there is no turning back, as the owner explains:

*You either go all the way or don't bother touching it, unless a component crucially needs to be replaced or repaired. Because the moment you lay your hands on a car of this type you can easily disrupt all its original mounting points. With hand-made machines there's a good chance nothing will go back into its original position without some form of persuading or modifying, which is what they did back at the factory – it's like starting from scratch again.*

The LP400 was stripped of all its mechanical components. Any component that didn't match factory specification was rebuilt so it did.

As for the 3.9-litre V12 engine, it was running on only ten of its twelve cylinders. An engine rebuild on a Countach is not for the faint-hearted and is a huge and expensive process.

'I like being hands on with my cars,' says the owner.

*I've been around cars long enough to know that sometimes you need to seek professional help. There were various body parts*

*underneath the aluminium skin that needed to be carefully refabricated as well as a few delicate mechanical components, so I appointed Joe Sasso from Modena Autosport to look after the mechanical side with Glen Cossar from Xtreme Industries to undertake the remaining bodywork. I worked closely with them on a stage-by-stage basis while the car was being reassembled.*

## LAMBORGHINI AFICIONADOS AROUND THE WORLD AGREE THAT THE LP400 IS THE PUREST OF ALL COUNTACHS

*Refurbishing the interior wasn't exactly a walk in the park either but was probably one of the most difficult tasks I performed on the car because it's so awkward and tight to work inside. The layout is cramped and unless you're a contortionist, you're in for a back-breaking session. The interior was removed. I stripped the seats back to bare frames then after a close inspection of all the black leather trim, I realised there was negligible wear. After the right leather treatment, it now looks brand new. The tan carpet I sourced from a specialist supplier in its original style as well as the suede-type material that covers the dash. The gauges have also been recalibrated. It took six years to complete the restoration but I can honestly say that the finished product has been well worth the wait and effort, not to mention several headaches.*

In my opinion the Lamborghini LP400 Countach has stood the test of time in both design and performance. It's the ultimate supercar, the most recognisable one of all time. Why? Because it's preposterous. 'Countach!' indeed.





IT'S THE ULTIMATE SUPERCAR,  
THE MOST RECOGNISABLE ONE OF ALL TIME





AUTOMOTIVE ARTIST

# WEDGED WONDERS

1968-1979

★ WORDS **NATHAN DUFF + JAMES BALL**

★ IMAGES **DOCUBYTE**

Love triangles? Wedged Wonders unites a collection of era-defining concept cars from the famous carrozzeria, the Italian car body design houses synonymous with avant-garde vehicle styling.

In the late 1960s, these carrozzeria, such as Bertone, Pininfarina and Italdesign, would go head to head during a period of outlandish one-upmanship that would see a trend for straight lines conquering the curve.

The concept car or prototype is the definition of automotive artistry, a symbol of the direction

and reputation of its creator. These show cars display new experiments in design, thinking and manufacturing, though they are often never mass-produced, remaining as one-offs, ultimately defined by their rarity.

In a nation famed for its celebration of the aesthetic, the outlandish designs from the carrozzeria at the end of the 1960s and throughout the '70s would define what became known as the Wedge era, where trapezoids and triangles were king, and cars would look like spaceships.

From the legendary Lancia Stratos Zero (1970)







ALFA ROMEO CARABO / MARCELLO GANDINI / BERTONE / 1968

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*The wedge that started it all. While other vehicles preceding the Carabo had been hinting at the shape of things to come, the debut of the Carabo in 1968 heralded the arrival of true geometric wedge design. Based on the Alfa 33 chassis, Gandini's design under Bertone stunned the Turin motor show, heralding the birth of the wedge era.*



AUTOBIANCHI RUNABOUT / MARCELLO GANDINI / BERTONE / 1969

*An open top, two-seater designed by Gandini, the 1969 Runabout was a fully functioning prototype, originally conceived as an amphibious vehicle, which was represented by its doorless, boating design cues. Its engine however was too heavy for buoyancy and the two-seater would eventually remain a land-based concept.*





ALFA ROMEO 33/2 COUPE SPECIALE / LEONARDO FIORAVANTI / PININFARINA / 1969

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*Despite the geometric trend arriving a year earlier, the Pininfarina coupe is notable for its evident mix of flowing curves and literally cutting-edge linear slices throughout the form. Rejected by Ferrari who the car was originally designed for (Enzo regarded the form as that of a 'pill that goes up your bottom' so the story goes) would see Alfa gladly accept the project.*

to the lesser-known Jaguar Ascot (1977), Wedged Wonders documents many highlights from the period. Vehicles are presented in chronological order and the aesthetic principles of the era can be seen in the process of transformation: from the stylishly slanted and ground-breaking Alfa Romeo Carabo (1968), through the purposely science-fiction Alfa Romeo Navajo (1976), to the angular, almost boxy, Volvo Tundra (1979), the shapes evolve with the decades.

The curves of the '60s were in the past, the triangles of the '70s would have their day, and the square of the '80s was coming.

The series is the brainchild of James Ball, working under the pseudonym 'Docubyte'. The body of work presented as Docubyte aims to bring vintage technology alive.

James started in the creative industry in the early 2000s doing architectural and product visualising and is currently an

**A PERIOD OF OUTLANDISH ONE-UPMANSHIP  
THAT WOULD SEE A TREND FOR STRAIGHT  
LINES CONQUERING THE CURVE**

art director in a production company working on various advertising campaigns. He confesses that the company he keeps 'are all petrolheads'.

'When I first started the Wedge series, I had them flying through the air, going into space – I wasn't really taking it too seriously.'

'My wife asked me why I was taking the piss out of the designs. "You love them, don't you? Then celebrate what it is – take a step back and stop trying to be an art wanker about it."'

In order to make the series work, James had to give it some framework and more of a narrative. 'I'm interested in the evolution of the style which you can see in the series. They start off very pointy and become more boxy as they proceed.'

James took the time to travel to each car to photograph them for the series. The first car shot



FERRARI 512S MODULO / PAOLO MARTIN / PININFARINA / 1970

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*As outlandish designs go, the Modulo represented the most extreme thinking on behalf of Paolo Martin at Pininfarina. With its barely visible wheels, lack of doors (entry came via a removable canopy) and spherical based internal controls, it's almost fifty-year-old design still looks like the future.*



ALFA ROMEO CUNEO / PAOLO MARTIN / PININFARINA / 1971

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*Another 33 chassis experiment, this time from Pininfarina, saw an update to an earlier curvier design from 1968, the p33 Roadster. Revealed at the Brussels Motor Show in 1971, with dramatic namesake styling cues, Cuneo literally translates as 'wedge'.*





LANCIA STRATOS ZERO / MARCELLO GANDINI / BERTONE / 1970

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*Possibly the most iconic concept car of all time. The other-worldly Stratos concept began life as an experiment to see just how low to the ground a vehicle could be created. Stunning the Turin Motor Show in 1970, this wedged wonder would ultimately sit just 33 inches high.*



ALFA ROMEO CAIMANO / GIORGETTO GIUGIARO / ITALDESIGN / 1971

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*Presented to the world at the Turin Motor Show, the Italdesign Caimano from Giorgetto Giugiaro was a dramatic glass and trapezoidal styling exercise based on its 'Alfasud' chassis pairing. While the Alfasud was a small and practical family car from the time, the space-age geometry of the Caimano was anything but.*





was taken while on honeymoon in Italy – yes, he is still married.

Some of the concept cars have been lovingly maintained but unfortunately some cars have not fared as well since leaving Bertone...

Up until the late '90s, Bertone played an integral role for car companies by producing niche models that manufacturers didn't have the capacity to produce themselves. This, along with their design studio, kept a steady revenue stream coming in from the automotive industry. The design house produced 21,000 cars in 1997 with continuing contracts until 2003 for bespoke convertibles. However, when these contracts ended new work became harder to secure.

**WHERE TRAPEZOIDS AND TRIANGLES  
WERE KING, AND CARS WOULD  
LOOK LIKE SPACESHIPS**

Manufacturers had begun to expand in-house design teams and centralised their operations. The need for specialised coach-building was dwindling fast. With shrinking demand for their artisan workforce, Bertone put many of their workers on temporary leave.

Ten short years later and Bertone was experiencing serious financial difficulty. Several of the more important concepts and prototypes created by the company were put up for auction to pay outstanding debts.

In 2013 six one-of-a-kind prototypes were auctioned by R.M. Sotheby's. The 1978 Lancia Sibilo, the 1980 Lamborghini Athon, the 1974 Lamborghini Bravo, the 1963 Chevrolet Testudo, the 1967 Lamborghini Marzal, and the 1970 Lancia Stratos HF Zero all went under the gavel, selling for a combined total of US\$5,300,000.

Nuccio Bertone's widow, Ermelinda 'Lilli' Bertone, purchased the 84 remaining cars for \$3,400,000 and put them on display at the Stile



CITROEN CAMARGUE / MARCELLO GANDINI / BERTONE / 1972

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*Based on the Citroen GS chassis the Camargue debuted at the 1972 Geneva Motor Show. Named after a tourist region in the south of France, the Gandini penned design was characterised by crisp clean lines, a yellow tinted hatch and a clamshell hood.*



NSU TRAPEZE / MARCELLO GANDINI / BERTONE / 1973

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*A lesser known marque before its acquisition by Volkswagen, NSU put Bertone to task with this concept, notable for its rotary engine design which created a trapezoid offset in the interior seating configuration, hence the name. A huge wraparound screen - akin to that of Gandini's earlier Stratos complemented the design.*

Bertone headquarter in Caprie.

The Italian government declared the Bertone collection to be a National Treasure and in June 2015 when the modern Stile Bertone buildings, including the new museum, were put for sale with the 79 remaining cars, there was an added stipulation for the buyer.

The collection had to be sold as a whole and could not be split up or moved out of Italy. But it appears that perhaps this stipulation was a little lax in execution.

‘The Alfa Romeo museum outside Milan is wonderfully curated and probably the most amazing car museum I’ve ever been to. There’s space for the cars to breathe, they’re not behind glass panels or barriers – the light is great and they’re beautifully maintained.’

**THE CONCEPT** ‘Other museums were old and  
**CAR OR PROTOTYPE** dusty. It was heartbreaking to  
**IS THE DEFINITION OF** go in there and find these one  
**AUTOMOTIVE ARTISTRY** of a kind ’70s era-defining,  
trendsetting, unbelievable

pointy-designed things sitting there gathering dust, covered in crap and shoved into the corner. How can they let this happen? The Volvo Tundra is just rotting away in a museum. The Jaguar Ascot is stuck in a dark corner slowly deteriorating.’

All the images in the series were photographed on location in the museums by James. No special accommodation or privilege was offered. The process of digital retouching was used to bring them back to their glorious showroom condition.

‘If I was to show you what I had to work with for the Volvo Tundra or the Jaguar Ascot you’d be like, is this even worth bothering with?’ But as long as the detail is there and the edges were defined, James had a basis to work with.

The retouching process for each image was long and labor-intensive. ‘Weekends, nights, days off –



FERRARI RAINBOW / MARCELLO GANDINI / BERTONE / 1976

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*With its 90-degree lines and sharpest of angles, the Ferrari Rainbow was a further stylistic departure for the famed company who were very much aligned with Pininfarina at the time. The Rainbow would be the most angular of all Ferrari's design experiments and would ultimately never see production.*



ALFA ROMEO NAVAJO / MARCELLO GANDINI / BERTONE / 1976

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*Arguably the wildest concept car from the series, the 1976 Navajo was truly a creation of science-fiction. Gandini purposely intended to reference the space-age drama prevalent at the time, though not entirely a styling exercise, the Navajo would sport glassfibre seats and groundbreaking downforce technology whereby the front and rear wings would adjust automatically at different speeds.*



JAGUAR ASCOT / BERTONE / MARCELLO GANDINI / 1977

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*The acutely geometric Ascot was based on the XJS Chassis, with styling cues borrowed from the Ferrari Rainbow, completed a year earlier. Its lines however were too radical for the somewhat traditionalist UK-based company and the Ascot would remain as another Gandini one-off.*

retouching, retouching, retouching.’

For the particularly poorly maintained cars, it wasn’t unusual for an image to take up to three weeks to complete.

‘Sometimes you have to re-brush or re-create a panel when necessary. In dark places there aren’t any shadows and shadows help define the body lines when lighting a car. I had to re-create some of that by using proxy 3D models which helped me see how the light and shadow fell.’

‘The interiors were particularly tricky. If the glass was reflecting too much I had to cut it out and replace the interiors, but you can’t always get to them.’

This meant multiple angles and exposures to capture all the elements that may be needed later to put the car back together digitally.

## THE CURVES OF THE '60S WERE IN THE PAST

‘I went from eight images to 30 but it was hard to know when to stop or how many angles to do for each one. Something like the Carabo looks amazing from every

angle.’

‘Ideally I’d love to do the whole lot if I could find them and get access. Researching and hunting them down is a part of the project I’ve really enjoyed.’

‘I have no idea who to contact or where to start but I’d love to track down the Lamborghini Bravo and the Maserati Boomerang and add them to the series.’

‘I think these cars are works of art but I don’t know – I wouldn’t say I’m a fraud – but when you’re at a club and someone says. “Wow that DJ is amazing!” Well, no, the music he is playing was made by someone else. I kind of feel like that. I didn’t make these cars beautiful, the designers did – I’m just creating an environment where they can be appreciated for what they are.’





VOLVO TUNDRA / BERTONE / 1979

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*Supposedly told to 'do something delicious', Bertone penned the Tundra based on the existing Volvo 343 chassis. Ultimately deemed too futuristic for the Swedish auto-maker, the design saw life in a reworking that would eventually become the Citroen BX.*



FIAT

124 SPIDER

★ WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**

Growing up in the inner-city western Sydney suburb of Stanmore, Michael Polito caught some advice early on from a local car collector that stuck with him his entire life. ‘I must have been about seven at the time,’ he recalls. ‘My older brothers were all into cars and knew about a warehouse not too far from our place that was full of old cars.’ Michael and his older brother Rick tried their luck and knocked on the door. ‘We asked if we could have a look at his cars and he was so accommodating.’

The warehouse was full of cars draped with dust covers. Under them lived old Lotus racers, open-wheelers and various other exotica, but tucked away in the corner was a beautiful red Ferrari Dino that just drew Michael in. ‘What a car!’

‘This is what I want when I got older I tell him. A collection of cars like this. “Just start with one mate,” he responded, “but think about a 124 Spider. Pininfarina designed it and it even shares some cosmetic parts and characteristics with the Dino. Ex-Ferrari









I ACTUALLY LOVE HUNTING DOWN THE PARTS  
- THAT'S THE FUN PART FOR ME



engineer Aurelio Lampredi developed the engine for the Dino as well as the 124. It's a very underrated yet affordable Italian-designed car." That was my first introduction to Italian sports cars.'

'Not too long after that visit, I remember driving past the Frank Crott Alfa dealership in Petersham. There was a beautiful red 124 Spider on display and I thought. "I've just got to have that."

### IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY PEOPLE GIVE UP. IT'S A MARATHON AND YOU NEED TO KEEP THE END GOAL IN MIND

Later, Michael was ready to buy his first car and had found an immaculate silver Lancia Beta coupe. He sought advice from his twin brother, a mechanic, about the Lancia. 'What do you want with an Italian car? They're crap. Get a Holden or something.' Michael gave him a grand and said – 'you're the mechanic, get me something good.'

Michael's brother came back with a Mazda RX-4. 'I went crazy on that car! I must have spent close to \$35K, but it was an absolute rocket!'

Michael then went through a few Aussie cars before finishing up with a Pro-Street 7.3-litre big-block HQ Monaro. 'I took it to the nth degree but in hindsight, I should have restored it back to original and it would have been worth a whole lot more.'

Wedding bells chimed and Michael said hello to married life and goodbye to the Monaro. 'Honestly, it sat in the shed for

four years. It was a show car but way too powerful for the street. It was dangerous, you'd touch the accelerator and it would start floating.'

'I still wanted an Italian car, though and told my wife about the 124 Spider.'

Michael found a reasonable 1982 124 Spider, but it had some gearbox issues that he wanted checked over before buying. 'I enquired with an Alfa mechanic regarding replacing the gearbox to check over and it turned out that he had a 124 Spider for sale.'

A customer had brought the car in for repairs a few years back but never returned to pick up the car or pay his bill.

'I went out the back of the workshop and started pulling covers off cars and eventually found the black Spider. The chrome bars indicated it was indeed an early one, but it had a flat hood and they only came out between 1966 and 1969.' (From 1970 onwards it had a double hump bonnet).

It was complete, but in pieces and showing signs of rust. 'He wanted \$15K for it. I wasn't giving him \$15K for that car. So I just paid what the customer had owed on it, which was \$4K.'

Michael was keen to customise the little Fiat with a two-litre turbo engine, double hump bonnet and some big wheels until he saw the VIN number (645) and surmised it must have been a very early example. He decided to dig a little deeper.

Michael was able to confirm that his Spider is in fact the first original black (Nero) Spider released from the Fiat factory in February

1967 (Build Number 124AS0000645) and one of only two released in the 1966-67 timeframe.

Given its history and providence, Michael changed strategy and decided to restore the Fiat back to how it was when it rolled out of the factory.

The restoration began in 2003 but it was somewhat of a false start for the Fiat. The car had sat in a panel shop for four years and only had a minor hole in the floor 'fixed'.

Michael then enlisted Adrian from Impact Panel Works in Moorooka, Brisbane, who worked on the body for more than four years. The goal for the exterior was perfection. It had to be, as the car was going to be painted in its original Nero, a colour known not to forgive the scantest imperfections.

The front-end was completely stripped back to the firewall which also included replacing shock towers, inner skirts and fenders. 'It took me three years to find two new old stock front guards. I'm pedantic about these things,' he admits. 'But that's just me. I didn't want to use aftermarket stuff and I didn't want to repair – I only wanted brand new.'

It's a part of the restoration process Michael loves. 'The thrill of the chase.'

'I found the wheels in America and the steering wheel under a villa in Milan. I actually love hunting down the parts – that's the fun part for me.'

The original 1438cc engine had been replaced by a 1608cc unit. That engine was removed and replaced with an original (period-correct) 1438cc engine, which

was completely torn down and rebuilt to factory. Every nut, bolt, and component had been removed and then was repaired or replaced.

Michael even had it converted back to the original left-hand-drive. 'People thought I was nuts doing that. I wanted the car to be exactly how it was delivered from the factory'

But he was taking advice from a good friend, one of Australia's leading car restorers – Brian Tanti. 'Australia is a limited market, but if it was converted back to be an original left-hand-drive, the car would be more desirable from an international standpoint.' This is if Michael should ever decide to sell this Fiat, which seems unlikely.

## 14 YEARS IS A HELL OF A LONG TIME AND THERE WERE TIMES WHEN HE WANTED TO THROW IN THE TOWEL

'I just don't think I'll ever part with it. I've told my son it's going to be his and I have a daughter who wants me to do another one for her now too.'

But 14 years is a hell of a long time and there were times when he wanted to throw in the towel. 'It was definitely a journey that's for sure. Even when it's done it not done. I'm still buying spare and rare parts,' Michael says.

'My father taught me when you start something, always finish it. It's easy to see why people give up. It's a marathon and you need to keep the end goal in mind. I came very close to selling it a couple of times, but if you don't finish, it's all been for nothing.'





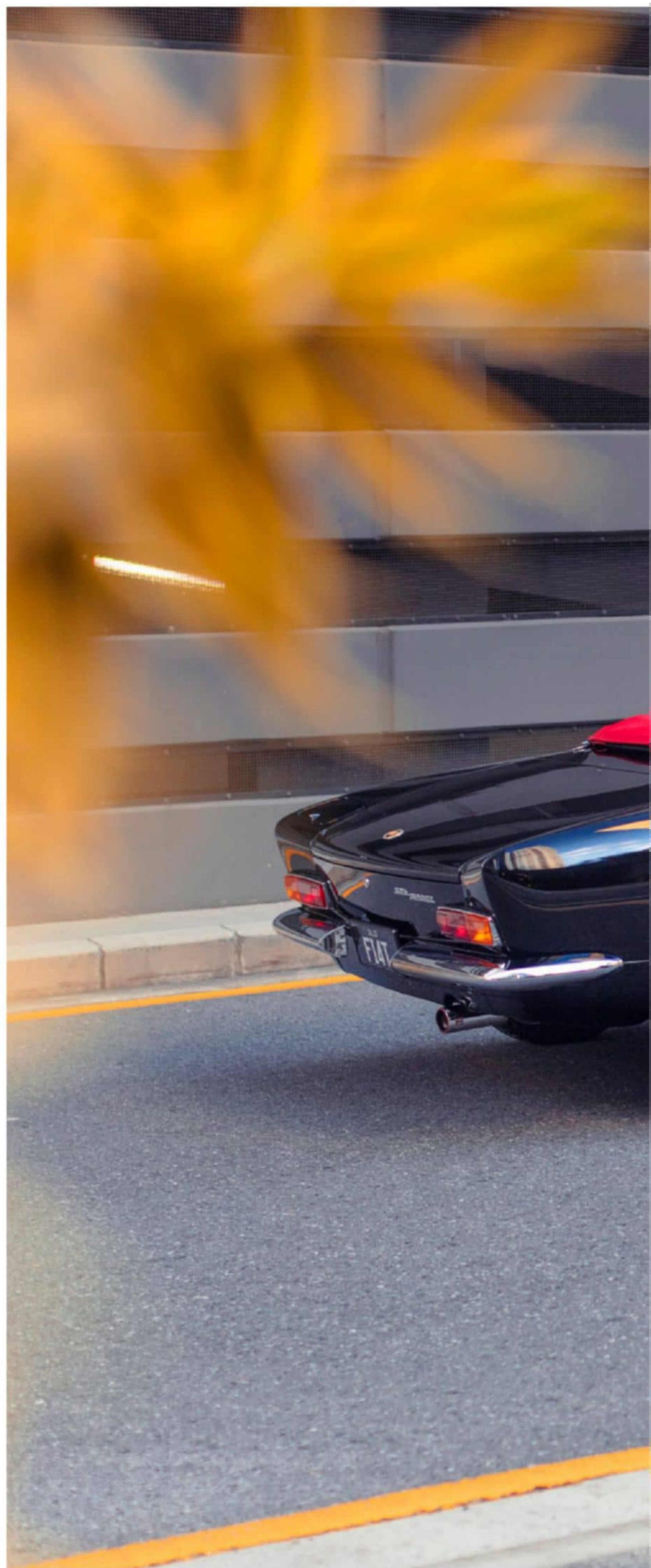
It's a labour of love.'

That's not to say his wife wasn't pleased to see the end of the build after 14 years! Michael debuted the 124 Spider at Auto Italia in 2017 and won best in class. He took it back the following year, took out best in class again and best in show against Lamborghinis, Ferraris, Maseratis and Alfa Romeos. A stellar effort for the pint-sized Spider.

'Now I just enjoy it. I still take it shows but I love driving it. It's got the odd stone chip here and there but it belongs on the road. If you don't use these old cars they deteriorate very quickly.'

Michael took the time to get in touch with Matt Carrol, the man who inspired him all those years ago.

'Turns out his daughter lives in that same converted warehouse that I visited when I was seven. I got in touch with him when the restoration was completed and I let him know that I didn't forget his advice and sent him some images of the car. He was blown away.'













ROAD TRIP

## SCOUT 800A

# TRANS-AMERICA ROAD TRIP

★ WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **SHAUN MALUGA**

The idea of the ‘Great American Road Trip’ is heavily ingrained in the psyche of many people around the world. Referenced and romanticised in pop culture from film to TV and music, the road trip embodies ideas of freedom, discovery, exploration and escape from the monotony of day to day life.

When we were faced with a cross-country American move, the key advice we received was to avoid flying with our dog Harvey due to the stress this would put him under. What better excuse to get out and see the country; and having a fondness for classic cars, why not do it in the ultimately romanticised way – hitting the road

with your dog in a vintage 4x4.

We had a year in LA and knew we would be driving back to New York City. It was the perfect time to build a car and plan the trip, given the extra space LA afforded and the resources of a city infatuated with the automobile.

My family has always been around vintage 4x4’s. My grandparents have owned Land Rovers for as long as I can remember. Working a small farm in rural Queensland with little income, they needed reliable vehicles that were easy to work on and cheap to come by. In the ’90s you could commonly find Land Rovers in good condition for under \$1000. Their yard was littered with



THE ROAD TRIP EMBODIES IDEAS OF FREEDOM,  
DISCOVERY, EXPLORATION AND ESCAPE FROM  
THE MONOTONY OF DAY TO DAY LIFE







Land Rover chassis and a large shed housed many parts picked up at swap meets and stripped from other vehicles. This meant that my parents also often had an old Land Rover of some description, usually some bargain found in my Grandparents' travels deemed superfluous to their needs but too good a deal to pass up.

Growing up we also spent a bit of time on a small island just off the coast of Gladstone, Queensland, where Land Rovers were commonly used as 'island buses', not requiring any sort of licence or registration. They made the perfect island vehicle for their reliability, simplicity and affordability but also because they had aluminium panels that

**THE IDEA OF THE 'GREAT AMERICAN  
ROAD TRIP' IS HEAVILY INGRAINED  
IN THE PSYCHE OF MANY PEOPLE**

could withstand the salt air. My first time driving a car was on the island in a family friend's 1976 Series

III Hard Top Land Rover at the age of 13.

Fast forward a few years to when I got my licence and I was car-less. My dad had a 1969 Series IIa short-wheelbase Land Rover that was mostly used for towing trailers. It was otherwise surplus to requirements, and so became my regular drive. At the time I was embarrassed by it: the industrial look and utilitarian nature was not endearing to a 17-year-old. I would never have dreamt that one day people would be lusting after these vehicles.

Old Land Rovers were large and cumbersome, slow and difficult to drive. There was no synchromesh on first, second or reverse gears. You had to double the clutch and match the revs for a smooth shift, which ultimately meant there was a lot of embarrassing grinding of gears at traffic



lights. Being six-foot-four and weighing 70kg at best, I would literally have friends in the passenger seat helping me turn the oversized, unassisted steering wheel. We did have some fun in it though, occasionally taking it 'offroading' even though we had no idea that we had to put the vehicle into four-wheel-drive manually. I like to think it made me a better driver but maybe that is just positive thinking.

After a recent move to Los Angeles, I was still itching to work on an old car. The embarrassment of owning a big old boxy 4x4 had faded and in its place was the desire to recapture those nostalgic ideas of freedom and adventure. It was the combination of seeing the restoration of an International

Harvester Scout

800a on the TV

show Wheeler

Dealers and seeing

the high-end Scout

**I WOULD NEVER HAVE DREAMT THAT ONE  
DAY PEOPLE WOULD BE LUSTING  
AFTER THESE VEHICLES**

builds of the New Legend 4x4 company on social media that really sold me on the idea of a Scout. I had never even heard of the American-made Scout previously. It was like a Land Rover but with softer edges and slightly more design to the body panels and overall shape. It had the spirit of the coveted Ford Bronco, without today's inflated prices.

Like most classic car stories in America, I found my Scout on Craigslist. A very original, genuine one-owner 1970 International Harvester Scout 800a in excellent condition for its age. It had a 304 V8 and perfectly patinated gold metallic paint. The only rust was a couple of two-centimetre holes in the rear floor; everything else was superficial which is hard to come by on a 50-year-old truck.

The IH engines are notoriously robust. This Scout was last registered and presumably driven in 2001, but 18 years later with new fluids, filters, spark plugs and some Marvel Mystery Oil, it fired right up. The carburettor was spitting a lot of fuel directly down the throat but the compression on the cylinders was acceptable, so we decided not to do a full engine rebuild.

Given this truck was going to cover some miles, I wanted to replace most ancillary parts and improve any shortcomings with the primitive technology and design of a 50-year-old steel box on wheels.

Trying to keep the project affordable meant doing most of the work myself. I would not describe myself as mechanically minded but I did have a bit of experience performing

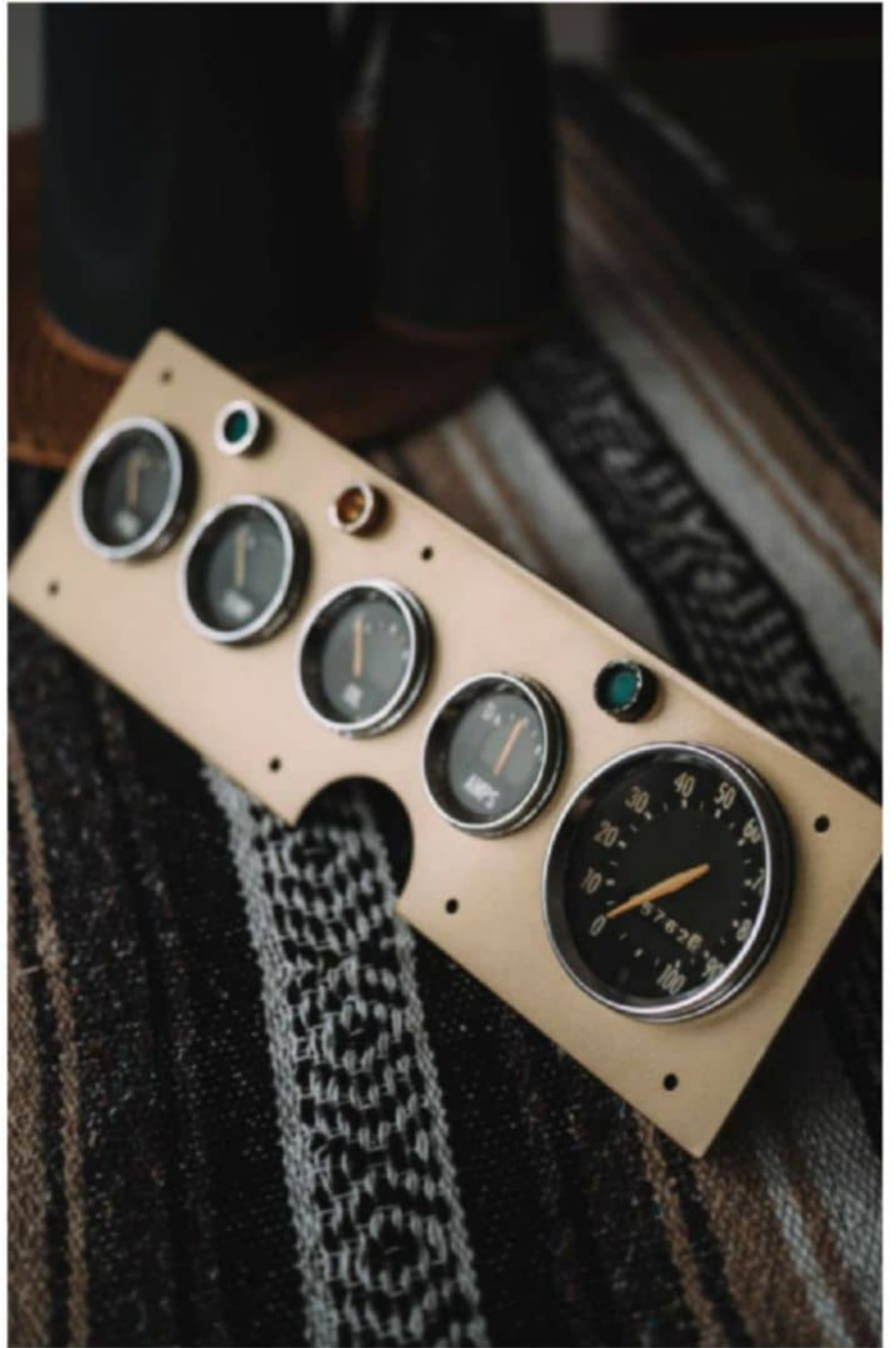
maintenance on and upgrades to my beloved 240Z back in Australia.

Like many today, I get by with youtube and

trawling old automotive forums, usually followed by a phone call to Dad. As a result, everything seems to take three times longer than it should, with every hour of work requiring three hours of Googling. My parents flew over from Australia for a month to help and we did all the work within the tandem car space of our LA apartment building's communal carpark.

Mechanical systems like the vacuum wipers, manual steering and brakes were upgraded with powered versions to improve performance and driveability. Small safety measures such as a rollbar, three-point seatbelts and brighter halogen headlights were added for peace of mind. A

**THE DESIRE TO RECAPTURE THOSE  
NOSTALGIC IDEAS OF FREEDOM  
AND ADVENTURE**



rooftop tent would add to that spirit of adventure and enable us to see parts of America we might otherwise miss.

Being the middle of winter, we won't be taking the quintessential Route 66 across but rather keeping south to stay warm as long as possible. America is similar in width to Australia but with the larger population, less remote. American people really seem to be defined by where they come from. The people, culture and accents can vary greatly from state to state and town to town. The landscape can transition from mountainous pine forests to arid rocky deserts and the difference can sometimes feel as abrupt as visiting another country.

At this point, our route is not set in stone. Some key stops include the booming start up city of Austin,

Texas – the 'Happiest City in America' – and 'Heart of Cajun and Creole Country', Lafayette, Louisiana.

**I GET BY WITH YOUTUBE AND TRAWLING OLD AUTOMOTIVE FORUMS, USUALLY FOLLOWED BY A PHONE CALL TO DAD**

Followed by the architecturally, culturally and musically rich New Orleans and the old-world charm of Savannah, Georgia. But with the only end goal of reaching New York City sometime over the period of two months, we will be free to explore and pursue the recommendations from the people we encounter. The real joy will no doubt be the unexpected, smaller places and landscapes we come across along the way.

Stay tuned to Retromotive for an update on the trip. If you have any suggestions on must see places, events or attractions, please get in contact or follow along live on Instagram, @fujifilmxpro2.







# SHELBY

GT500 SE

★ WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**

Arguably the most famous Mustang to grace the silver screen was piloted by the great Steve McQueen in the 1968 film, Bullitt. It's unlikely that another Mustang will come close to knocking that green '68 Fastback off its perch, particularly now the car has resurfaced and is due to go under the hammer in 2020, without reserve.

Running a close second though is Eleanor, the fabled 1967 Fastback Mustang brought

to life by the 2000 action movie Gone in 60 Seconds, starring Nicolas Cage.

As far as desirability and star power goes, Eleanor became an instant success and spawned a number of replicas and recreations. Interestingly, before the 2000 movie, the Shelby GT500 was never referred to as Eleanor.

The 2000 movie is in fact a re-boot of the 1974 film of the same name. Its claim





to fame was wrecking 93 cars during a 40-minute car chase sequence. A '71 Ford Mustang Mach One Sportsroof was used as the main car in the original film. At the time, Mustangs were among the most desirable American muscle cars and this one was the unquestioned star of the movie. The problem the producers faced for the 2000 version was they needed to retain the original spirit of the film and make Eleanor more desirable than her contemporary European and Italian co-stars.

The Ford GT40 was considered for the lead role but was soon abandoned due to the nature of the stunts required for the film.

It would have been impractical for those. Elenore, however does pay homage to the GT-40 by wearing the same boots.

Though not an original Shelby, the Eleanor Mustang was based on a 1967 Mustang fastback and was built by Cinema Vehicle Services with the help of legendary coachbuilder Chip Foose.

Foose produced a clay model from the production designs of Steve Stanford. The final version retained the key the features that give Eleanor her unique look: central-mounted driving lights, pumped fender flares, bulgy bonnet and those cool

concealed side pipes.

Depending on which part of the internet you delve into – either 11 or 12 cars were built for the film. Three fully functional vehicles and nine shells.

Foose reported that all cars were lined up ready to go but if any one of them sustained damage during an action sequence, they would have to replicate the damage on the remaining cars for continuity in the film.

### **ELEANOR BECAME AN INSTANT SUCCESS AND SPAWNED A NUMBER OF REPLICAS AND RE-CREATIONS.**

The movie was a hit and so was Eleanor. She created desire for the motoring public and Shelby was no fool when it came to fulfilling the desires of those with money to spend on fast shiny things.

This is where it all gets a little murky. Eleanor is a registered trademark owned by co-producer of the 2000 movie Denice Shakarian Halicki, not Carroll Shelby. Want to get a little more Hollywood? Denice Shakarian Halicki was the wife of H.B. Halicki, the writer and director the original 1974 film.

In 2001 Shelby partnered with Unique







Performance, granting it a licence to build continuation GT500 Super Snakes in the style of the original '67. Coincidentally, looking very similar to the Eleanor version. Initially there was to be 400 Super Snakes in total, 100 supercharged and 300 naturally aspirated.

There is only one genuine 1967 GT500 Super Snake and it has twice been the most expensive Mustang to be sold. Most recently for US\$2.2 million. Running a distant third is an Eleanor Mustang driven by Nicolas Cage in the film which went for US\$1 Million.

The original Super Snake was built to showcase Goodyear's new Thunderbolt tyres, a new budget tyre aimed for use on high power muscle cars.

Media outlets were invited along to observe how this tyre handled the punishment doled out by the Super Snake. To make things really interesting, Shelby fitted a 427 racing engine from a Ford GT40 – built specifically for that car.

Carroll Shelby himself piloted the Super Snake reaching speeds of 274km/h (170mph) around Goodyear's oval test track.

Shelby had intended produce another 50 of the 427-powered Super Snakes for sale to the public, but with a price tag of nearly

US\$8000 at the time (over twice the price of a normal GT500), these proved too expensive.

Not too far into the current production of Super Snakes, things started to go bad fast for Shelby and Eleanor (life imitating art, no doubt). Unique Performance went broke with many of the Super Snakes incomplete.

### **BEFORE THE 2000 MOVIE, THE SHELBY GT500 WAS NEVER REFERRED TO AS ELEANOR.**

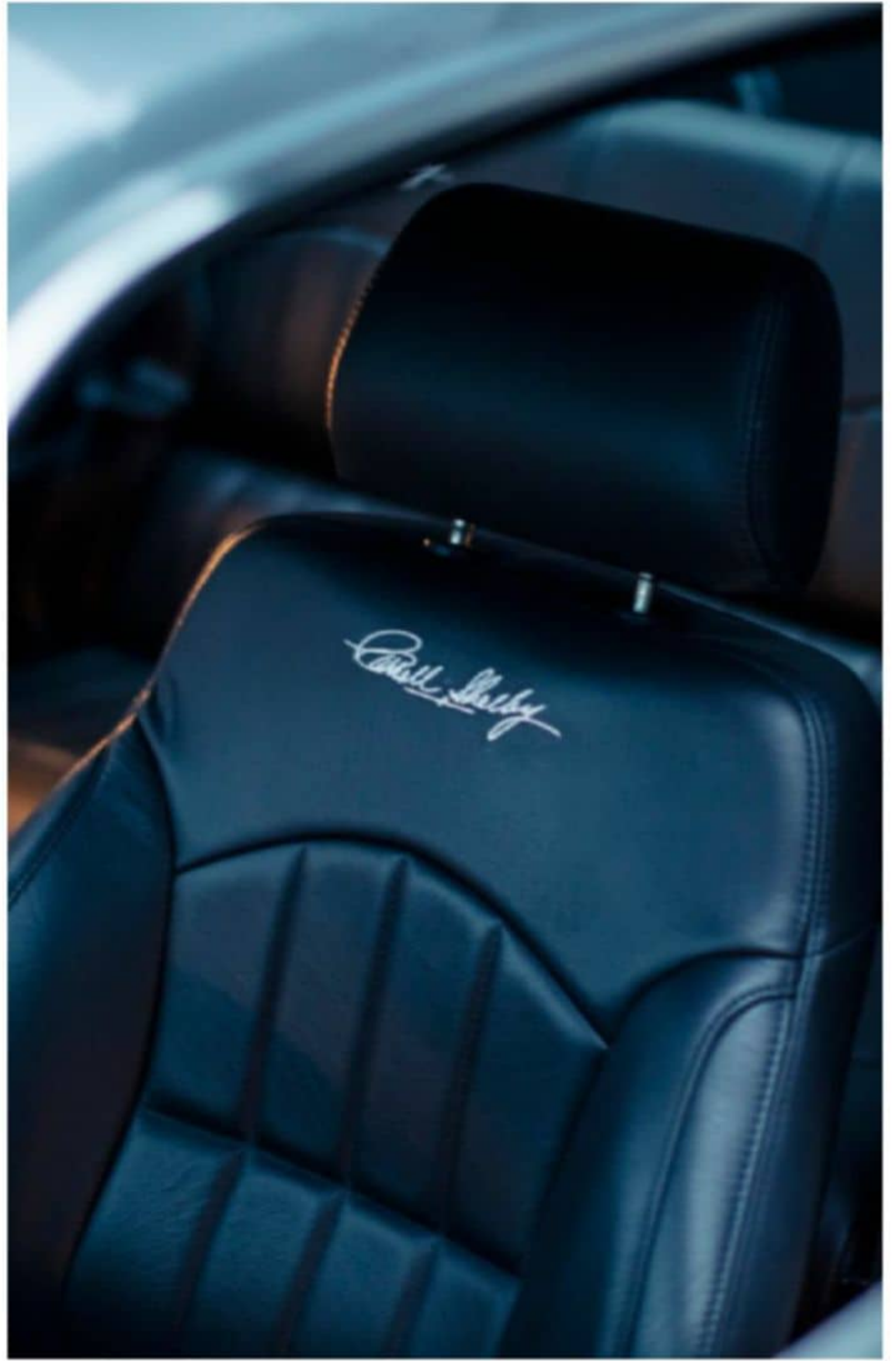
The remaining licences were offered to authorised Shelby repairers but they were soon tied up in a legal stoush resulting in only 43 being completed and listed on the Shelby Unified Registry.

Once the dust had settled, Classic Recreations was the sole licensee for Halicki Films. However, the production of replica Eleanors was discontinued in October 2009 after Classic Recreations entered into a licensing agreement with Carroll Shelby to produce a new Shelby GT500CR – a continuation of his original Super Snake.

Two of those original licences found their way to Queensland Muscle Car in Noosa.

The resulting vehicles from that company are thought to be the only two right-hand-drive samples in existence







UNDER THAT BONNET BULGE YOU'LL FIND A 427  
SHELBY ALLOY BIG BLOCK STROKED  
BY SHELBY TO 483





The GT500 SE pictured here is the second one to be built in Australia and started life as a 1967 big block four-speed.

Under that bonnet bulge you'll find a 427 Shelby alloy big block stroked by Shelby to 483 – just a smidge under eight litres and spiced up with a Vortech supercharger. Additional modifications include: coil-over suspension, disc brakes, a Tremec T5 gearbox and a Torsen differential.

**THERE IS ONLY ONE GENUINE 1967 GT500  
SUPER SNAKE AND IT HAS TWICE  
BEEN THE MOST EXPENSIVE  
MUSTANG TO BE SOLD**

If you stand close enough when it turns over, you may need to get your fillings replaced. It's rated at 790bhp at the flywheel with a massive 1000Nm of torque.

Ironically, for Eleanor's current owner Dave Farrer, the desirability for the car didn't come from the movie. Even though he has been a devoted Ford man his whole life, Dave had never once owned a Mustang. 'We were really into the Australian Fords,' explains Dave. 'We had 34 at the peak of our collection but we moved them on and decided to get into other things.'

Having a slew of connections with other

Ford collectors, Dave volunteered to help his friend and previous owner of the Eleanor Mustang to find a new home.

Dave started working through his contact list, talking about the car and singing its virtues. During that process, Dave did what any man would do in the same situation – he listened to his wife.

'She could tell how passionate I was about the car when I was talking to people about it so she said. "You obviously love the car, why don't you buy it?"'

Dave and his wife went over to check out the car, had some beer and pizza with owner and returned home with Eleanor.

'When people see it out they are in awe of it. They know what it is, but at the same time don't really know what it is.'

The other right hand drive GT500 SE also recently found a new home. It's currently owned by Cowboys football legend and all round top bloke, Johnathon Thurston. A present to himself after retiring from the Cowboys in 2018.

Eleanor has been part of the family now for 18 months and for Dave one ridiculously gorgeous Mustang just wasn't enough. Dave and his wife have just ordered one of the 500 limited release 522kw R-Spec supercharged Mustangs, with a request for number two off the line.





# HOLDEN HG

## A FATHER'S LEGACY

★ WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**

A green HG Holden circles an old factory at walking pace, idling momentarily here and there before moving on. It completes three or four circuits before it pulls up beside me.

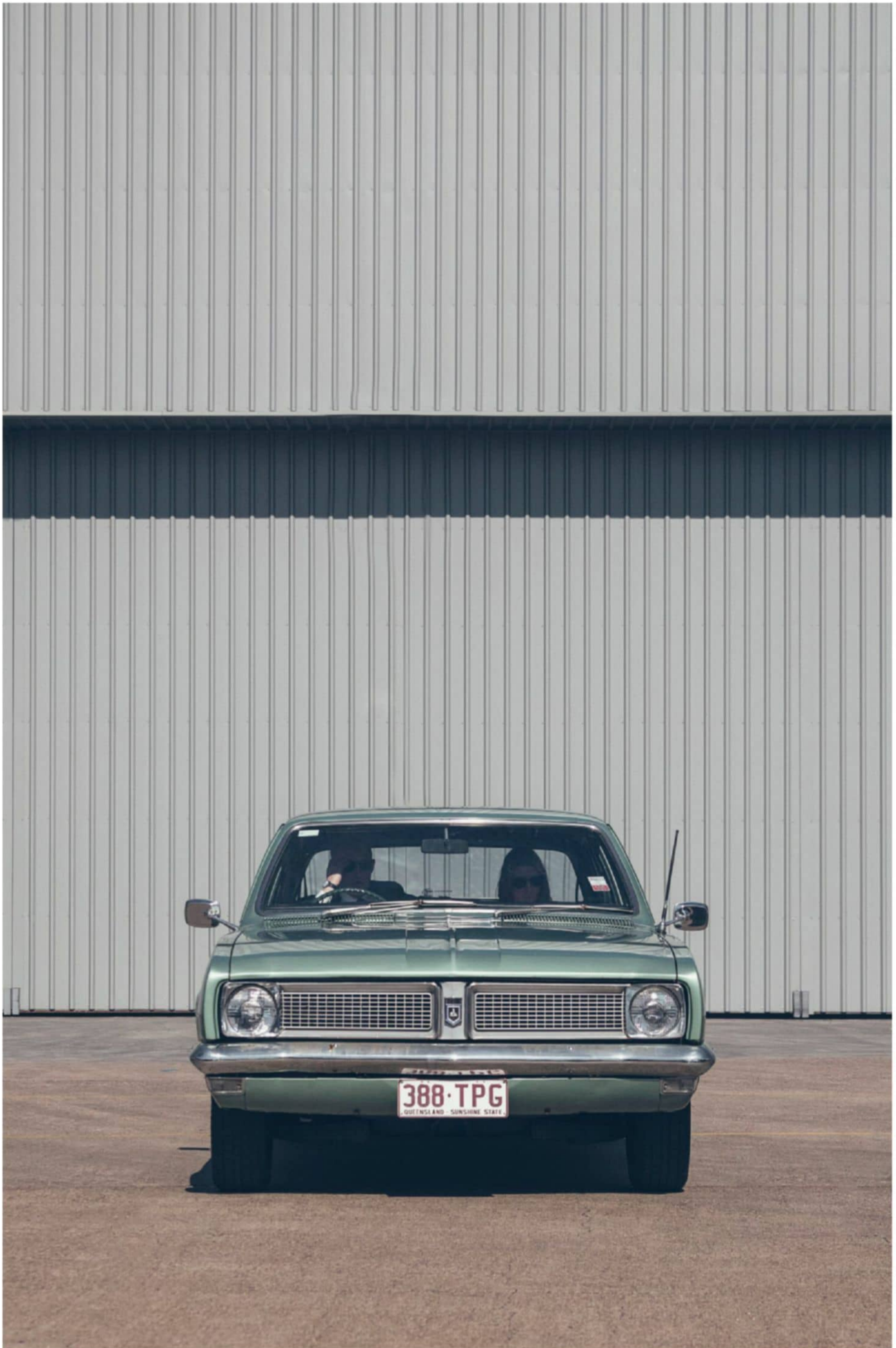
The occupants have stopped to check out an HD Holden I'm shooting for Street Machine magazine. I'm at the old General Motors manufacturing plant in Acacia Ridge, Queensland. The first car the factory ever produced was the HD Holden, hence the location.

'My father worked here for many years,' says Joe

as we chat. 'It's a very important part of my life.'

'I've bought all of my kids out here to show them where their grandfather worked for so many years of his life.' He introduces his partner Justine. 'She hasn't driven the HG before, so I thought this would be the perfect place for it.'

We catch up again about six months later outside the old General Motors administration building adjacent to the main factory. It has a well-worn art deco facade and is surrounded by a temporary chain-link fence. Marked for demolition – no





doubt a cold concrete pre-fab monstrosity will take its place and another part of Australians manufacturing history will be gone.

Joe regularly brings the HG out for a drive around the factory. As he will soon mention, he is a sentimental person and this car and place are of particular importance to him.

‘My father and mother worked in the bank up until World War Two. He volunteered for the armed forces and suffered an injury during the war as an active serviceman.’

### THIS CAR IS A PART OF ME - AN EXTENSION OF MYSELF

Civilians who stayed at home to continue working naturally progressed through the company structures, making it difficult for returning veterans to pick up where they left off. The bank only had regional positions available and could only offer Joe’s father a job in Hughenden approximately 1500km north-west of Brisbane.

Wanting to stay in Brisbane, Doug Briggs found work with General Motors on Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley. At the time, General Motors produced Chevrolet trucks, Vauxhall sedans and Bedford trucks.

While working there, Doug went to night school to study mathematics and accounting. He

excelled, winning the University of Queensland (UQ) accounting and mathematics award. However, in those days, the prize could only be awarded to a full-time student.

Doug began working in the accounting department at General Motors and was appointed Financial Controller in 1969.

During that time, General Motors had outgrown its small facility in the city and begun construction of the Acacia Ridge plant which commenced operation on 19 January 1965.

Sadly, shortly after Doug was appointed Financial Controller he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma and was given 12 to 18 months to live.

‘I spent a lot of time with my Dad out here. I’d come here during the week and we’d go onto the factory floor.’

‘Inside this complex was an amazing sight for a young boy, particularly when the place was humming. It was a fantastic living organism in those days – the synchronicity of people and machines working together to make something beautiful just stuck with me.’

Joe remembers him as a kind man who never raised his voice or lost his temper with him. A man who was tough but fair – an attribute that endeared him to the people at the Acacia Ridge plant and garnered respect from his peers.

‘Dad took long service leave towards the end and we spent a lot of time together at home.’

Joe also has fond memories of Saturdays spent on Qantas hill at Surfers Paradise International





IT WAS A FANTASTIC LIVING ORGANISM IN THOSE  
DAYS - THE SYNCHRONICITY OF PEOPLE AND  
MACHINES WORKING TOGETHER



Raceway watching his father's favourite driver Norm Beechey at full noise in the HK Monaro. 'I friggin' loved going there.'

Doug Briggs died aged 51 on 30 November 1970 when Joe was only six.

'When my father died the company very generously gave my mother a new vehicle at very little cost. Initially, it was a Torana, but the four-cylinder engine wasn't powerful enough for her. So they upgraded her to a six-cylinder HG Holden in May 1971. It was a Wednesday car. Wednesday cars are the best cars.'

Joe explains. 'At the time of manufacture, construction of the vehicles was only semi-automated, so on Monday when the workers arrived they were perhaps suffering from a bit of Monday-itis. By Wednesday, they were into the swing of the working week.' We all know how we feel on Friday...

The HG Holden served their family until Joe was around 18 years old. 'Being a war widow with no dough, Mum was keen not to suffer financially. Mum sold me the HG and at the time I didn't realise she had been given the vehicle.' Joe didn't get the same deal as his Mum. 'I still paid her market price for it!'

After Joe finished studying law at UQ, he took a year off and travelled around Australia in the HG. He picked up odd jobs along the way – labourer, trade assistant and finished up working in the mines around the Pilbara, a remote part of Western Australia.

It was a hard slog for the HG and travelling conditions in remote areas weren't always conducive to a smooth ride in a four-door family sedan. Joe recalls a particularly challenging section of road in remote Western Australia. 'I had to drive north along the Gibb River road to work my way back home from the Pilbara. The road is all dirt and would have to be at least 600km long, half of which is some of the worst corrugations I've ever seen. Driving on that road literally shook the car apart.'

### **INSIDE THIS COMPLEX WAS AN AMAZING SIGHT FOR A YOUNG BOY, PARTICULARLY WHEN THE PLACE WAS HUMMING**

His journey back east acquired unintended momentum when a police manhunt was launched for a killer in the area murdering people camped out near rivers. As the HG also served as his bed for the night while travelling in those remote areas, this made Joe particularly nervous. Coming back through the Northern Territory there were a number of road blocks in the search for Joseph Schwab who would later be known as the Kimberley Killer.

At one road block in a small town about 100km north of Three Ways in the Northern Territory, not too far from the Queensland border, there was a little confusion and some questionable tactics employed to obtain information.



A few days later Joe was home and with the Fitzgerald Enquiry in full swing and a 'chip on my shoulder', Joe took up a position in the public defender's office and has been there ever since.

The HG was rolled on a dirt road in Western Australia when ambition outweighed ability and held it together long enough to get Joe home safely without being murdered whilst circumnavigating Australia. 'The more that car saves me the more entrenched it becomes in my life,' he says.

Joe would return the favour in 1994. 'The car was technically written off.' A head-on collision with a delivery driver (not Joe's fault) caused serious damage to the front-end. 'No-one would repair it – no-one was interested. Too old, not worth the effort, they said.'

'I'd been everywhere and the last place I tried put me on to another bloke by the name of John Stubbs at Sprayland.'

Joe went there, prepared to pay anything to get the car fixed. 'I introduced myself to John and he said, "I know you. I worked with your father at Acacia Ridge."'

John was in charge of the panel shop there and he remembered Joe from the days when he would visit his father there.

'John would have been 70 or 75 at the time. The

job took about nine months but I didn't care. The car is now in beautiful working order.'

It's been back on the road for about five years now and once every few weeks Joe will drive it to work. 'I don't want to risk it getting damaged now. I like to come out here with the car and remember my father.'

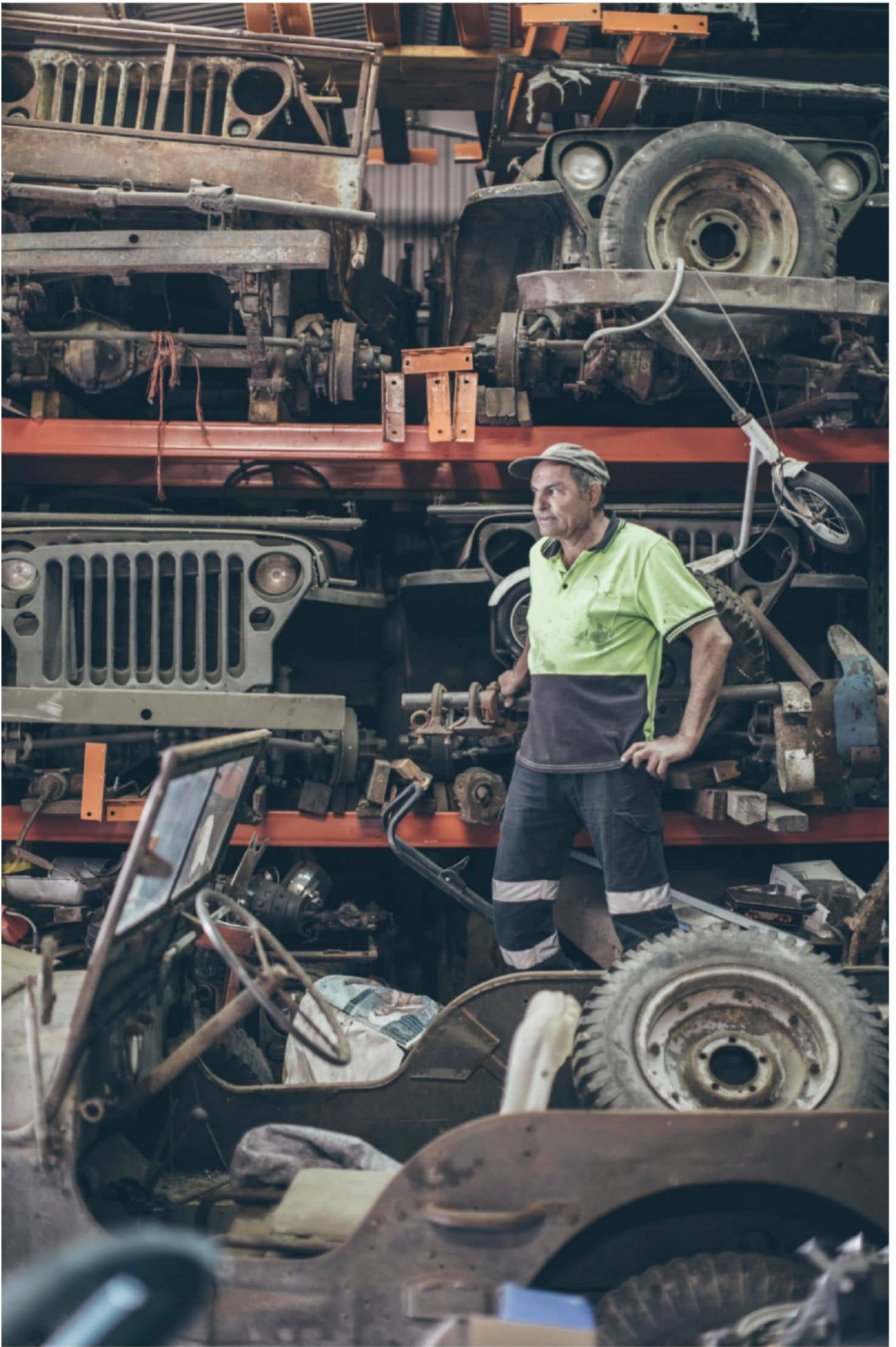
'This car is a part of me – an extension of myself.' 'Justine was also born in 1971. Two 1971 models – how lucky am I?'

To restore the HG now would be to change it into something it isn't and that's not what this car is about for Joe.

### **THE MORE THAT CAR SAVES ME THE MORE ENTRENCHED IT BECOMES IN MY LIFE**

'Even though my kids love this car, I don't know if there is the same connection there for them as there is for me. It's very personal. That's why the car has been largely been left alone, with all the little dents and imperfections.' They're all part of the memories for Joe.

'I never intended to keep the car my whole life. It was just a car – Mum's old car. It's actually the only car I have ever owned and will always be with me as long as I'm here.'







# WWII JEEPS

PETER CONSTANTINOU

★ WORDS **BRUCE MCMAHON**

★ IMAGES **NATHAN DUFF**

Peter Constantinou has a squadron of original Jeeps, racked and stacked in an overflowing shed of vehicles and parts and bits and pieces and lawnmowers and stuff.

He's just a collector, he says. And been that way since childhood days discovering old wartime materials in Papua New Guinea then buying his first Jeep as a teenager.

Today Peter has 24 complete original Willys and Ford Jeeps plus enough deconstructed pieces tucked away for another 15. Or maybe more, says the signboard specialist. Maybe 20?

Then there's a rare amphibious model tucked

into a corner and, up in a second shed, a very rare cut-away Jeep, body and all internals cut open so that mechanics could better understand the workings of these 1940s machines. That may be one of only two left in the world.

'Every single one of them is a World War II Jeep. And I've basically got everything and anything to restore them.' Peter grabs out a packet of sump plugs. 'All these parts I've got – 99.9 per cent of the parts in here, in this shed – are all genuine. Not reproduction.'

There was little reproduction about these first Jeeps, the go-anywhere vehicle developed for



American military forces in 1941. These later became CJs (Civilian Jeeps) and spawned imitators from England to Japan but today remain the oldest name of all mass-produced four-wheel-drives.

The first Jeep was an amalgam of design and engineering from the Bantam, Willys-Overland and Ford motor companies plus extensive testing by defence forces. It morphed into an open-topped, 3.36 metre-long, 1060 kilogram, four-wheel-drive machine powered by a 45kW, 2.2-litre four-cylinder delivering drive through a three speed-transmission and two-speed transfer case.

**PETER, NOW 58, BEGAN GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT COLLECTING THE ICONIC MACHINES WHEN IN HIS 30S**

Peter recalls seeing his first wartime Jeeps in the bush as a kid. ‘We’d go out behind the

old airport at Port Moresby and collect bullets, parts of guns and bits and pieces of Jeeps and aeroplanes. We moved to Brisbane and when I was 15 I saw one sitting in a showroom unrestored and thought “I want one of these”. Bought it, took it home and had it stripped down to nothing that same afternoon.’

Helped out by his father, that Jeep became his first restoration project. That was also his first road vehicle, used for day-to-day transport, Fraser Island trips and bush camping. Peter, now 58, began getting serious about collecting the iconic machines when in his 30s.

Most of today’s line-up came from Central Queensland, some from north-western New South Wales and most from farms, and were once used for work and recreation.

‘See that one,’ he says, pointing at another vehicle crammed in beside his mates, ‘it used to be used for pig shooting, and is absolutely original. The guy who owned it used to go pig shooting, kangaroo shooting with it. But the body’s really nice and straight because he had these big carrier





A SQUADRON OF ORIGINAL JEEPS, RACKED AND  
STACKED IN AN OVERFLOWING SHED OF  
VEHICLES AND PARTS

bars to hang the animals from and that protected the body.

‘See that one there, it’s got a different grille on it? That’s a prototype made in 1941. I did have a couple of other prototypes, Ford GPs, I had two of them and one of them was the fifth off the production line but due to financial difficulties I had to sell it.’ Peter’s regretted selling some Jeeps – and his XA Falcon GT and a Walkinshaw Commodore – through the years but he’s now hoping to get about restoring a couple of these drab olive Jeeps for the road. He’s talking about building a rotisserie jig to best spin bodies around and a chassis straightening table; some had a hard life in the bush.

‘About 20 years ago, when I had a business and was making money, my goal was to have 50 unrestored Jeeps. I never used to buy restored stuff and I’m pleased because some of the good clean unrestored

Jeeps are worth \$20,000 complete. You go out there everyone’s got

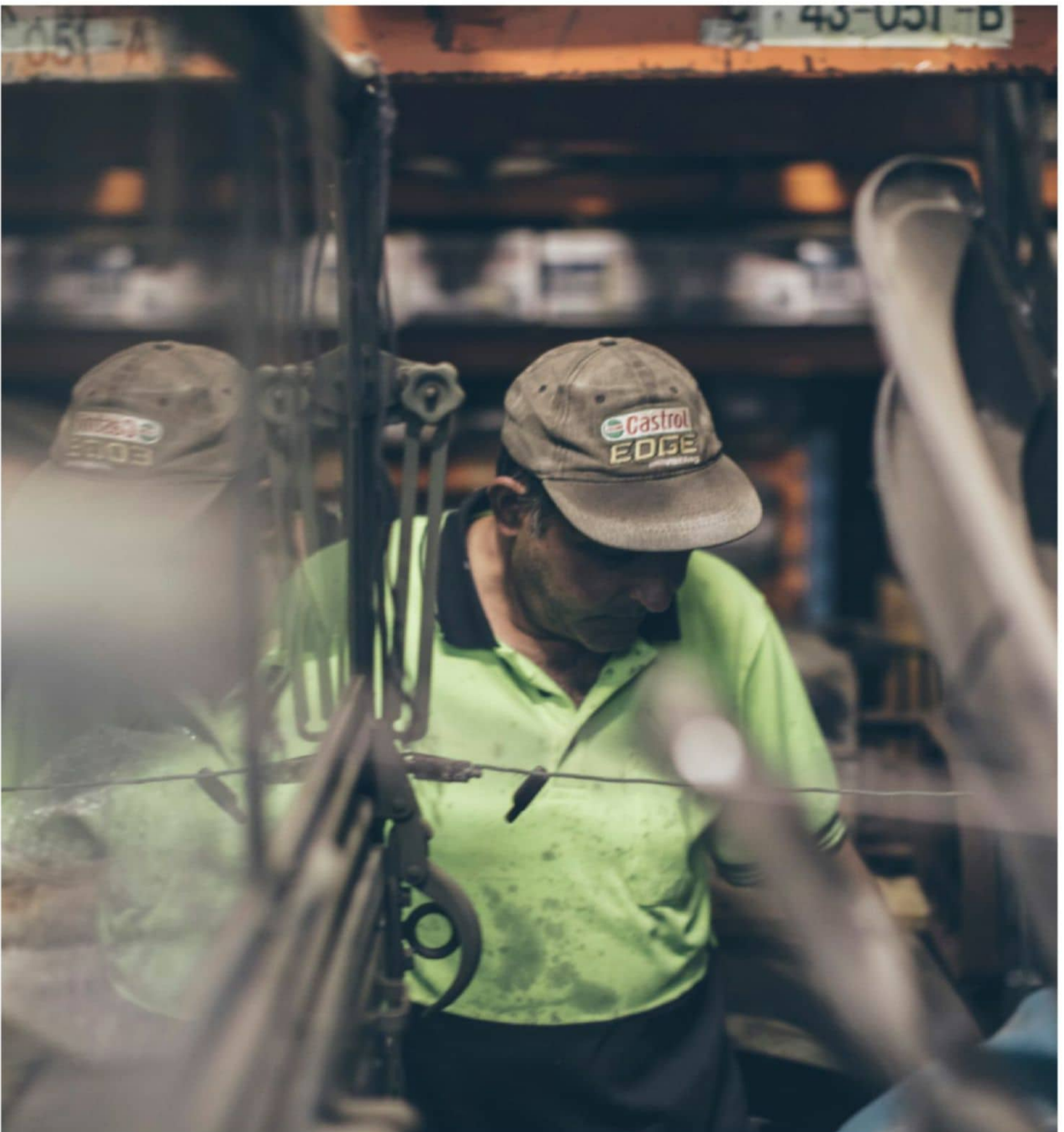
### THE GO-ANYWHERE VEHICLE DEVELOPED FOR AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES IN 1941

restored Jeeps; who’s got unrestored Jeeps?’

Peter reckons this is the biggest private collection of wartime Jeeps and bits in the southern hemisphere, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. ‘Have a look on eBay, 90 per cent of the stuff is reproduction. One original bolt sells for like \$30 US. Anything original is worth big money. A wheel is \$US 500.’

There are tonnes of precious Jeeps and those rare spares – alongside a World War II Dodge weapons carrier and other automotive treasures – tucked away in this shed north-west of Brisbane. So aside from finding the dollars for sandblasting and paint, Peter has most everything at his fingertips for a fleet of road-going original Jeeps.

And yet... on this fine Saturday morning Peter and old mate Max are heading to the coast...there are some old Jeep parts Peter wants to check out.











ICONIC

# ALPINE

## A110

★ PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**

★ WORDS **NATHAN DUFF + DR JOHN WRIGHT**

The small French marque created a legend in a time when others failed and faded away into obscurity. The Alpine A110, produced from 1961 to 1977, is a vehicle universally adored by car enthusiasts. It's light, powerful, agile and is simultaneously beautiful and aggressive.

To see Alpine in perspective, consider the highly acclaimed new A110, which is a most evocative tribute. This beauty looks tiny and delicate – until you park it beside the earlier car. It's not unlike comparing any

of the BMW MINI's with the Issigonis original; almost no new small car is small in the way of that Mini or, say, an NSU Prinz, or before them the Renault 4CV.

The 2018 A110 is astonishingly light for a new millennium vehicle, weighing just 1080kg, which means its apparently modest peak output of 185kW goes a long way. But there was a time when sports cars often weighed little more than half this. Go back to 1957 and the first production Alpine, the A106, would have barely made it to 600kg





wring wet and with a full tank of essence. The very fact that the 2018 Alpine bears the A110 name suggests how cherished the earlier car is, how celebrated its three-number signifier; one thinks '911', and Porsche – Alpine may never rival the Zuffenhausen marque but some journalists who have driven the latest Cayman and the new A110, prefer the latter: they talk of purity.

The first-gen Alpine A110 was the third and most successful iteration of the lightweight French sports car produced by Société des Automobiles Alpine. The company was eventually absorbed by Renault but it has had a long association with the Régie going back before World War One.

Jean Redelé's father, Emile, worked as a mechanic for Renault factory Grand Prix driver Ferenc Szisz who was noted for winning the Grand Prix de la Sarthe in 1906 at Le Mans.

After the war, Louis Renault asked Emile to open a Renault dealership in Dieppe, a small French town on the coast of the English Channel.

Jean Redelé, who was born in 1922, completed his business and economics degree in Paris during World War Two. This degree included work experience at Renault. Jean produced a report on some of Renault's work practices that caught the attention of CEO Pierre Dreyfus.

Asked to put his ideas to work, Redelé was appointed Renault's official dealer in Dieppe and, at 24, was the youngest Renault dealer in France. But he had a much deeper interest in cars than simply selling them.

Jean Redelé chose the then new Renault 4CV for his start in motorsport. The 4CV, conceived by Louis Renault and modelled to some extent on the Volkswagen (which made its public debut at the 1938 Berlin Motor Show), this tiny rear-engined car had a 750cc engine; it was sold in Australia as the Renault 750.

Redelè won the Rallye de Dieppe after having competed in just one previous race. The Renault bosses were so delighted they supplied him with a special racing edition for an assault on the 1951 Rallye Monte Carlo, where he came fourth in his class. His results improved during the season and he won the Tour de Belgique.

### **IT'S LIGHT, POWERFUL, AGILE AND IS SIMULTANEOUSLY BEAUTIFUL AND AGGRESSIVE**

But very fast is never fast enough. Redelé decided that the 4CV needed to lose weight and acquire superior aerodynamics. He commissioned no less a luminary than Giovanni Michelotti to build him this lighter, sleeker body to clothe 4CV mechanicals. Michelotti would subsequently be recognised as one of the twentieth century's greatest sports car designers.

Long before Michelotti completed this brief, Redelé had won his class in the 1952 Mille Miglia and almost repeated this result at Le Mans, which would have been a sensational double.

With his reputation already high, the young racer unsurprisingly chose competing over selling. He also saw the potential





in developing his modified cars to meet the consequent customer demand. In 1953 Redelé built his first rally-focused machines, using a lightweight body on a 4CV chassis. These two-door hardtops bore some resemblance to the Porsche 356. About the same time a small French company Chappe et Gessalin had begun experimenting with fibreglass. It produced lightweight bodies for sports and racing cars for a handful of fabricators and manufacturers. They were innovative at the time, using techniques and materials sourced from the United States.

As a design exercise for himself, Jean Gessalin drew a small coupe based on a Renault 4CV and after completing his

### THE SMALL FRENCH MARQUE CREATED A LEGEND IN A TIME WHEN OTHERS FAILED AND FADED AWAY INTO OBSCURITY

military service he discovered that his family had turned his design sketches into a car.

Jean Redelé's father-in-law saw the car and bought it to his attention. Jean then ordered 25 units which were to be sold as the Alpine A106. Alpine went on to become one of Chappe et Gessalin's biggest customers.

Jean Redelé's previous success racing his 4CV in the French Alps inspired the name for his new automotive company. The Alpine marque was officially created in 1954 – a nod to his first victory in the 1954 Coupe des Alpes.

'The most fun I ever had behind the wheel

was driving through the Alps in my 4CV,' he said. 'It was essential to me that my customers should experience this same level of enjoyment in the car I wanted to build.'

Also acknowledging his French heritage, the first three A106 models ('A' for Alpine and '106' in reference to the 1062 4CV on which the mechanicals was based) were painted blue, white and red (the tri-colours of the French flag), respectively.

In October 1957, the A110 made its public debut at the Paris Salon. So did Michelotti's version, which was a cabriolet. A closed coupe version followed and this became the Alpine A108.

Chappe et Gessalin continued to manufacture the A106 coupé as well as Michelotti's cabriolet.

The chassis was a central tubular backbone weighing around 45kg, an approach most famously used by Colin Chapman for the Lotus Elan. The concept had been around since the early 1900s, being first used on the 1904 eight-horsepower English Rover and then the French Simplicia automobile in 1909.

By this time, Chappe et Gessalin was responsible only for doing the bodywork. Final assembly was done at the newly established Alpine works in Dieppe.

After 251 units were produced, the A106 was succeeded by the Dauphine-based A108. This was a convertible initially, then later a hardtop. Amazingly, the A108 was offered in four models with a choice of six engines. The preferred variant for sporting use – the Alpine's *raison d'être* – was the Berlinette A108 Tour de France

with a 998cc Dauphine engine. It gave 70 horsepower and drove through a five-speed gearbox (still relatively rare at any level in the very early 1960s).

The A110 of 1962 represented a major step forward. None of the half dozen engines offered in the A108 could match the unit fitted to the brilliant new machine. This latest Alpine had similar looks to its predecessor, but beneath that ground-hugging bodywork lay a true secret weapon – the cross-flow, five-bearing engine from the R8 Gordini. The radiator was moved to the rear of the car. The R8's superlative four-wheel disc brakes – again, quite the advanced thing in 1962! – became another critical weapon in the A110's formidable armoury.

There was, however, a little issue of reliability – or, sadly, the lack of it. Having displayed immense promise in international rallying, the A110s were frequently sidelined by the failure of standard Renault parts and some team errors as the Alpine team worked to establish itself on this high plateau of motorsport.

In 1967 the 1470cc Renault 16 engine gave the A110 the capacity it needed to be fully competitive, but this unit was yet to be homologated and Alpine drivers tackling international events had to stick with the 1300cc unit that had the requisite stamps on the paperwork.

Towards the end of 1968, the 1565cc 16TS engine equipped with twin Webers was ready, but once again homologation entailed a delay. This version of the A110 did well in French events but did not appear

on the international scene until 1970, where, unfortunately, it did not achieve the expected successes.

It was the 1.3-litre A110 that claimed third outright in the 1970 Rallye Monte Carlo when the 1.6-litre cars failed.

One failure was not the car's fault: in 1968 Gérard Larrousse and Marcel Callewaert were heading for outright victory in the 1968 Monte, when spectators shovelled snow onto one of the stages. The damage incurred when they left the road putting them out of the event.

Due to the popularity and accessibility of relatively mass-produced Renault parts, the Alpine A110 was also built under licence in other countries as well. In Brazil it was known as the Interlagos and a young

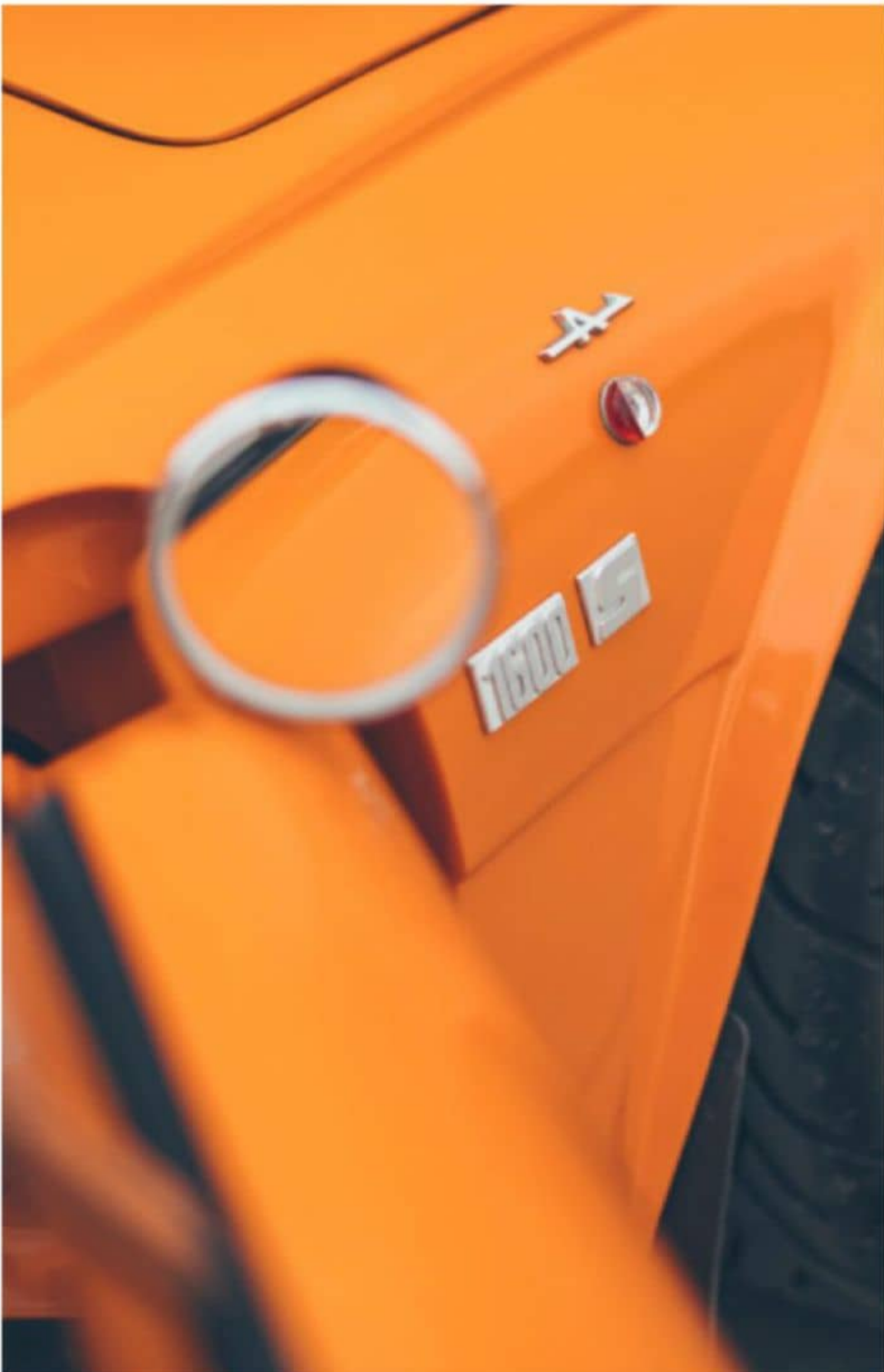
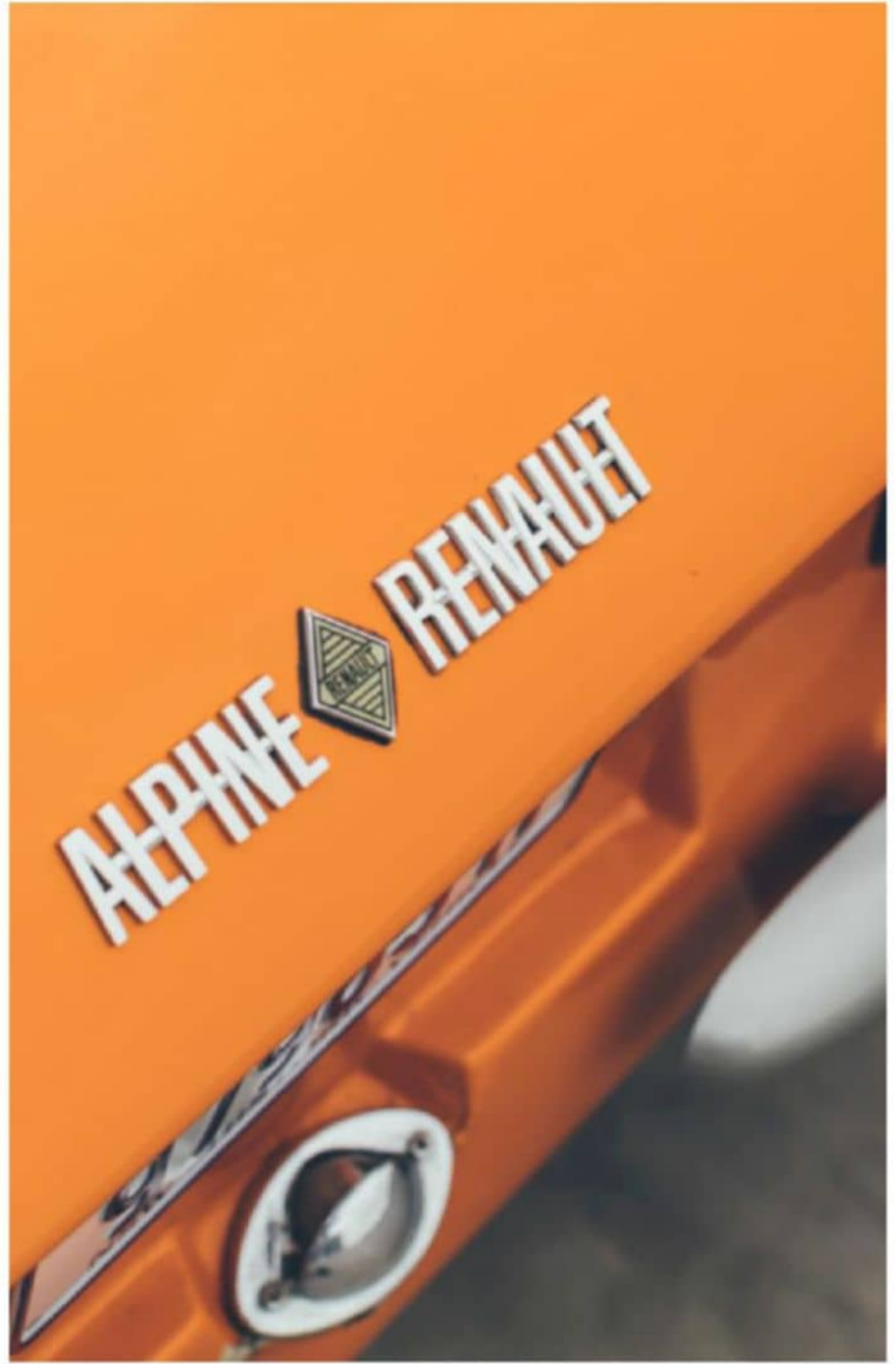
### **HAVING DISPLAYED IMMENSE PROMISE IN INTERNATIONAL RALLYING, THE A110S WERE FREQUENTLY SIDELINED**

driver named Emerson Fittipaldi drove one in a handful of races. In Mexico it was known as the Dinalpin and in Bulgaria, the Bulgaralpin. Total production worldwide was approximately 10,000.


Alpine's principles were simple: innovative lightweight cars with simple but competitive mechanicals underneath. Power to weight was key. It is difficult to comprehend today just how low the outright power was in the 1950s. The A106's 747cc engine was offered in three stages of tune – 21 brake horsepower, 30 and 43!

In some respects, Alpine became to Renault in the early postwar decades what Abarth









IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO ME THAT MY CUSTOMERS  
SHOULD EXPERIENCE THIS SAME LEVEL OF  
ENJOYMENT IN THE CAR I  
WANTED TO BUILD



already was to Fiat. Renault, of course, also had Amédée Gordini on its payroll, his role to create red-hot (actually, quite often French-Blue-hot) sporting versions of its mainstream sedans, beginning with the Dauphine (which took first and second in class in the 1961 Armstrong 500, where no outright winner was officially recognised – so, Renaults could be said to have finished first and second in the race!)

The A110 achieved fame early on the world rally stage, but the major triumphs did not come until later. Third in 1970 was succeeded by outright victory the following year in the hands of Swedish driver Ove Andersson.

In 1973 the A110 would go on to cement its place in history by becoming the first winner of the newly established World Rally Championship. But the following year brought the fuel crisis which led to many events early in the year being cancelled. When competition resumed, Lancia was ready to pounce with its Stratos, a car that might never have been created had it not been for the template set by Alpine.

The Lancia was a purpose-built, lightweight, rear-engine rally monster created with the sole purpose of winning. It rang the death knell for the Alpine which had reached the end of its development by this time. The Stratos, went on to dominate for the next three years and defined a new era of rally cars.

Nevertheless, Redelè and his team persisted.

The last A110 emerged from the factory in July 1977.

In 1971 the A310 had appeared but was always intended more as a Porsche-type road car than a weapon for rallying. Essentially, it was too heavy for its pushrod 16TS engine. Ironically, the A310 in rally guise weighed 840kg, while the first of the A110s with a 1.0-litre Dauphine engine was a featherweight 565kg – a salutary lesson!

As for the Stratos, its rear-engine/ rear-drive configuration gave it the edge over front-engined cars until the Audi Quattro changed everything.

### THE LAST A110 EMERGED FROM THE FACTORY IN JULY 1977

Interestingly, one of the main Quattro drivers, Michèle Mouton nominated the A110 as her favourite rally car:

*Although I had my best results driving Audis, the car with the most emotion for me has to be the Alpine A110. The Alpine really matched my driving style and to be quick with it you had to be very smooth. It was very easy going and a lot of fun to drive. Above all else, the Alpine was my first competition car and for that reason alone it will always be a special car for me.*

As for Renault, by 1974 – perhaps spurred on by the redoubtable Redelè – management was already looking to a future in Formula One.

# JAGUAR

## XK120 LM

★ WORDS JAMES NICHOLLS

★ PHOTOGRAPHY [WWW.JAMECAUSE.COM](http://WWW.JAMECAUSE.COM)









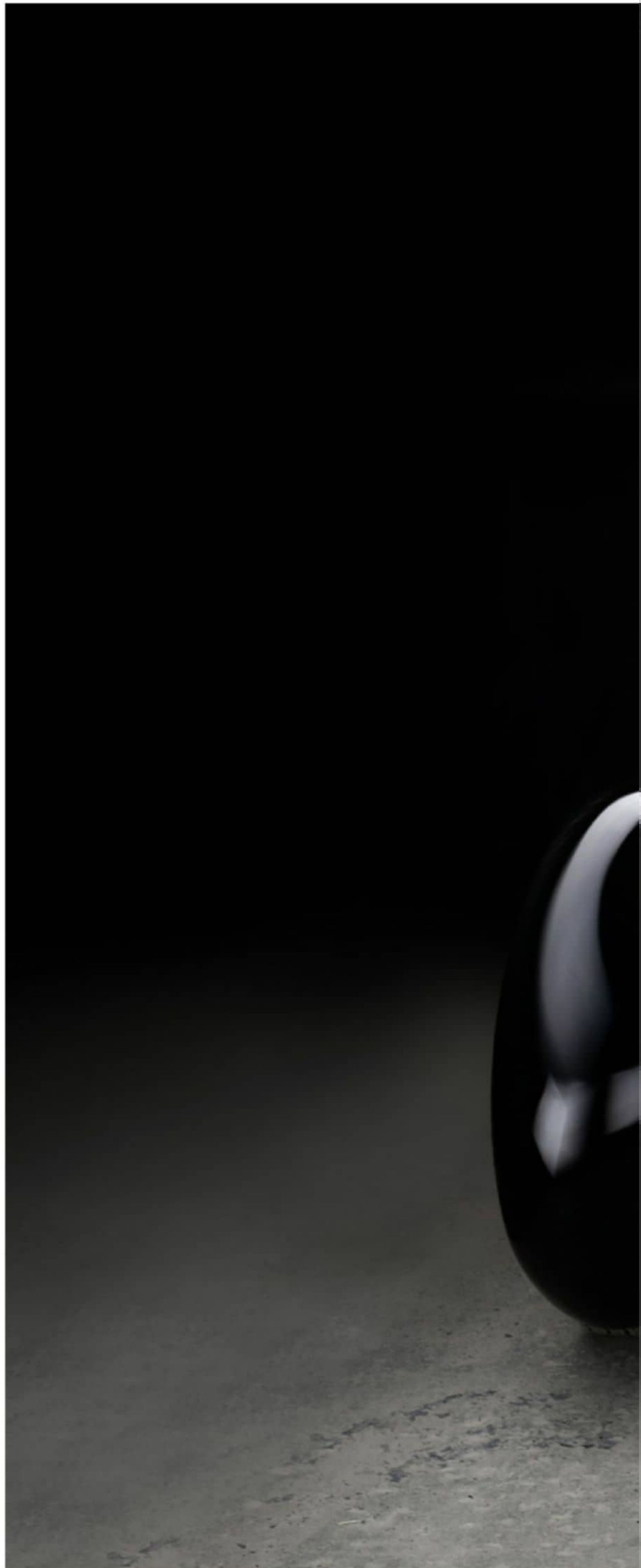


The XK120 was the car that started Jaguar's astonishing relationship with the legendary Le Mans 24-Hour endurance race, and is an integral part of the company's marvellous postwar heritage. Jaguar won at Le Mans with the XK120-derived C-Type and D-Type in 1951, 1953, 1955, 1956, and 1957 (when D-Types finished in first, second, third, fourth and sixth positions, with Stuart Lewis-Evans and Martino Severi breaking the Jaguar hegemony in the Ferrari 315S)!

Jaguar launched the XK120 at the London Motor Show at Earls Court in 1948 in open two-seater format and with an aluminium body, basically as a concept to showcase the wonderful new six-cylinder XK engine with its all-alloy crossflow Weslake cylinder head and twin (1 ¾ inch) SU carburettors. The vehicle proved an instantaneous sensation with its voluptuous classical curves and after the manufacture of just a couple of hundred of alloy-bodied cars, production demands meant that the XK120 was then built with a pressed-steel body.

It is not an apocryphal story that the XK was given the designation 120 because it was capable of over 120 miles per hour, making it the world's fastest production car at the time. This had been firmly established on 30 May 1949, when Ron 'Soapy' Sutton, in a great piece of public relations, drove an XK120 at over 130 mph on a closed section of the new Ostend-Jabbeke motorway in Belgium.

The Jaguar XK120 was a car that captured the hearts and minds of so many, including the 'King of Hollywood', legendary actor Clark Gable, who took delivery of the first car to arrive in the USA in 1949, stating that he, 'wanted it like a child wants candy'. He also took possession of yet another (registration MDU 420), this time in steel, when filming in Cornwall in 1952. He then set off in the car with his girlfriend of the time, Suzanne Dadolle, tall and willowy and a model for fashion house Schiaparelli. He and the 26-year-old, ice-cool blonde drove from Paris to Switzerland, then onto the Villa d'Este hotel on Lake Como and finally to Rome after plenty of rest and relaxation. The XK120 is also a car that captured the heart and mind of Justin 'Jockey' Hills, a custom car builder based in Taree in country New South Wales in Australia. In 2013 Justin won the World's Most Beautiful Custom at the Grand National Roadster Show Sacramento Autorama, with his unique take on a 1968 Dodge Phoenix two-door hardtop, whilst his art deco period grand routier-inspired 1949 Buick was a winner at SEMA in Las Vegas. For the uninitiated, not quite au fait with the hot rod and custom car world, this is akin to winning Miss Universe and England bringing the World Cup home. For an overseas creator to win in America's backyard was virtually unheard of.





But ex-jockey ('I could have been good, but I don't really like horses') Justin is not, to use his own words, just, 'a greasy rockabilly', and the builder of leadsleds a-la George Barris or Von Dutch. Back in the UK in the 1990s, and before the Kustom world obligatory tattoos, he had worked on restoring such respectable and reputable marques as Aston Martin and Lagonda.

He is one seriously talented designer and appreciative of any car with style. On a visit to Atlanta, Georgia, he came across a car that he much admired and took it back to Australia with him. This example had started life as a 1953 California-delivered black XK120 fixed head coupe. By the 1960s it was now owned by a street racer who had modified it for speed and reduced its ride height, lowering its centre of gravity – during a time-trial in that period from Reno to Sparks, some four miles east in Nevada, it had been recorded at 162 mph!

The previous rogue racing life of this Jaguar, coupled with the fact that it had been sitting neglected for many years in the humid Georgian climate, made the car a perfect donor for the project Justin had in mind. Its originality had already been compromised, so to further compromise it would not affect its innate integrity. Justin would build his own custom coach-worked XK120 Le Mans-style car but keep it within the bounds of reality, as if the final product had been posthumously created by Sir William Lyons himself.

As Julian told me, 'The roof was chopped by visual and design requirements, not just measurements. I did this over a Christmas break, so that I had no interruptions or anybody giving me unwanted options or advice on how to do it. I really like to work on important design decisions with no-one else around. First, I removed two

inches, and then kept cutting out a little more until it was exactly how I wanted it to look. As the windshield posts were aligned to the new height this moved the roof forward by about 3 ½ inches which gave me two options, either cut through the centre of the roof from one side to the other and fill in the gap, or the easier option to let the roof go forward and make a longer panel between boot lid and roof. I knew immediately that it had to be the harder way as it would keep the car visually balanced and not looking like it had all moved forward.

'I also cut and rolled the front wings to give the car the slightly coach-built Bugatti look that I was after, and the rear wings were welded to the body and leaded with custom-made skirts.

### **I THINK WHAT JUSTIN HAS DONE IS NOT ONLY BEAUTIFUL BUT EMPHASISES THE VERY EPITOME OF JAGUAR**

'I de-stroked the engine a little, and this with its custom-made pistons and rods coupled with a Rob Beere racing flywheel with offset starter and a 7 ¼ inch twin-plate Tilton clutch has reduced the rotation weight by approximately 50%. It now revs with ease to 8200 rpm and is punching out 460 bhp in its current tune.'

Like the rest of the car the Jaguar V12 engine and its related componentry were carefully evaluated to achieve a symmetry of form and function. A perfect example of this is the fuel-injection system and its operating principle. Although relatively modern in terms of technology and engineering its design inspiration can be traced directly back to Jaguar's first foray into racing injection systems, the hallowed 'Lucas timed injection'. Although such components exist today to build a faithful reproduction system from new old stock items, Justin's extensive research indicated





THE XK120 WAS THE CAR THAT STARTED JAGUAR'S  
ASTONISHING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE  
LEGENDARY LE MANS 24-HOUR  
ENDURANCE RACE







that aesthetically and period correct form could be matched with 21st-century function to endow the XK120-LM with full multi-point EFI, closed loop and full data capabilities. All this combining to birth a modern bespoke engine management package whilst keeping the heart of the Jaguar true to its past and recognising the important part that Lucas fuel-injection has played in the success of the company's early motor racing.

Until now the XK finished in its original black, and with its stunning interior has been known of – let alone sighted by – very few indeed. One of those few, however, is the recently retired Director of Design for Jaguar, Ian Callum, who has been most enthusiastic and supportive of the project. Callum, with whom I chatted about the car at the Heveningham Hall Concours d'Elegance, clearly

**THE XK WAS CAPABLE OF OVER 120 MILES PER HOUR, MAKING IT THE WORLD'S FASTEST PRODUCTION CAR AT THE TIME..**

appreciated exactly what Justin has set out to do and the quality of his craftsmanship and skills in bringing it to its glorious fruition, 'I think what Justin has done is not only beautiful but emphasises the very epitome of Jaguar. Lower and sleeker and with just the right amount of drama and amazing stance. The mechanical installation of the magical Jaguar V12 just adds to the magnificent beauty of this car. Sir William Lyons would have approved, I am sure.'

Not only Ian Callum has raved about this astonishing vehicle. David Brabham, son of three time World F1 Champion Sir Jack Brabham and himself winner at Le Mans and responsible for the exciting Brabham BT62 is an advocate having seen the car at its world premiere in March 2019

at the Sydney Harbour Concours d'Elegance where it picked up the Special Award from the Committee, whilst Callum's replacement at Jaguar as Design Director, Julian Thompson was similarly enthusiastic, receiving a positive response from the owner at this request, "Can we put it in our Design Studio?!! We have just moved into a fantastic new facility. I would love to have it on display, my team would find it truly inspiring."

Now have many others been truly inspired, the car having won its class at The Quail, A Motorsport Gathering; then receiving the Spirit Award from the Honorary Judges team led by Derek Bell MBE and including Louis de Fabribeckers, Head of Design at Touring Superleggera, at the Salon Privé Concours at Blenheim Palace. Next stop is the prestigious Zoute Concours in Belgium and then on to the The Historic Motoring Awards in London where in the Bespoke Car of the Year Category it is up against the Aston Martin DB4GT Zagato Continuation (Aston Martin), Ecosse LM69 (Ecurie Ecosse), Jaguar E-type special edition (E-type UK), and the Lancia Aurelia Outlaw (Thornley Kelham).

Coachbuilders of the past have had their own, or their customers' own, take on the XK120. These include chassis number 679678, the 1952 XK120 Ghia Supersonic by designer Giovanni Savonuzzi for Monsieur Malpelli, fitted with a cylinder head tuned by Virgilio Conrero taking three twin-barrel Weber carburettors, and the 1954 XK120 SE by Pininfarina. This car, restored in 2017, is Pininfarina's take on the Jaguar XK120 for Max Hoffman, the Austrian-born dealer in New York. Whilst not a period re-interpretation of the XK120 dhc shape, surely Justin Hills' superb creation is every bit as exciting and stunning-looking as these rare beasts.



FORD

ECONOLINE

✦ WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY **NATHAN DUFF**

Once a Ford man, always a Ford man. A thirty-year hiatus from the madness of automotive collection and restoration did nothing to dampen Michael Uri's allegiance to the Blue Oval. With a garage full of meticulously maintained American muscle, it's the big brute dominating the driveway that brings me out today.

'It's been Fords my whole life. Well, I did have a Valiant and a Holden before I seen the light.'

It's one of those ubiquitous vehicles that transcends allegiance though. My inner bogan exhaled a very drawn out 'coool' when I first spotted Michael's Econoline at a local car show.

It would be hard to think of another vehicle that has undergone such a transformation in functionality and desirability over the decades.

A sports car has always been a sports car, but a van has been so many things for so many people.







**IT'S ONE OF THOSE UBIQUITOUS  
VEHICLES THAT TRANSCENDS  
ALLEGIANCE**

What started in the early '60s as a functional vehicle quickly morphed into the ultimate form of self-expression and freedom. By the time the '80s kicked into gear, vans began their transformation into the minivan. Good for hauling those kids you made in the '70s. The death knell came via the colloquialism 'Soccer Mum'. Suddenly vans weren't cool anymore and they were only used for delivering stuff and kids...

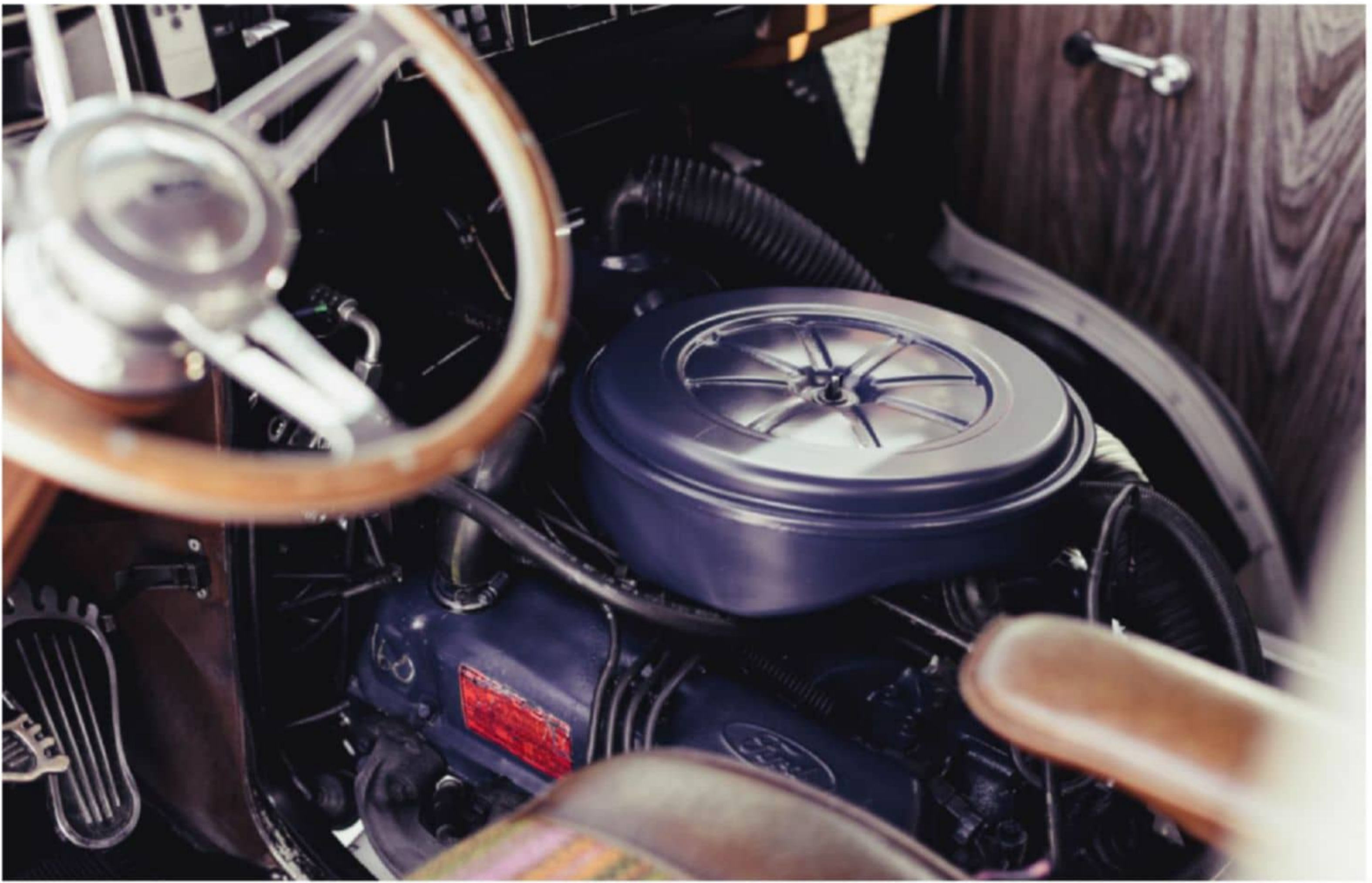
The E-Series nameplate ran from 1960 through to 2014 and has only been outlasted by the F-Series. The F-Series sells at a ridiculous rate of one every 30 seconds in the US and given the Americans' unquenchable thirst for big-ass trucks, it'll no doubt survive longer than the fallout from Chernobyl.

The E-Series was replaced by the UK-developed Transit Van in 2014. It had been available nearly everywhere in the world except for America since the early '60s but now with a production facility in North America, Transit is the best-selling van of any type in the States.

But before world domination, the Econoline began life in 1957 as a design sketch and was intended to be a replacement for the F-Series panel van. The model range consisted of a cargo van, pickup truck and a passenger van. It debuted on 21 September 1960 and went on sale in 1961.

That first series was based on the compact Ford Falcon and didn't revolutionise motoring in any way, but it was a cool looking thing and was quickly adopted by farmers, delivery drivers and tradesman alike as a reliable workhorse.

The first E-Series is easily identifiable by its flat nose and dual round headlights. The engine is









WHAT STARTED IN THE EARLY '60S  
AS A FUNCTIONAL VEHICLE QUICKLY  
MORPHED INTO THE ULTIMATE FORM  
OF SELF-EXPRESSION

mid-mounted, between and behind the front seats. This configuration facilitated a shorter 90-inch wheelbase but consequently the layout didn't allow for the use of a V8 engine.

The 1968 Ford E-Series, however did revolutionise the van somewhat. Ford moved the engine nearly all the way to the front under a shorter bonnet which also allowed the option of a factory 302 V8 engine. The hump between the seats is not so subtle. It reminds me of how my kids clean their rooms. Just make a big pile in the middle and cover it with something. That big lump isn't exactly in the middle of the van either – it's slightly offset to the right and so flows the rest of the drivetrain all the way back to the diff. That's why you're very unlikely to see any left-hand-drive conversions.

GM and Chrysler soon followed suit and relocated the engine towards the front of the van. Over time the bonnet grew like Pinocchio's nose and Ford started to borrow components from the larger F-Series range rather than the compact Falcon passenger cars, delivering a more robust package. The Econoline was never delivered to Australia and with the near impossibility of left-hand-drive conversion they could never compete with our own van culture perpetuated by the Holden Sandman and Falcon Sundowner.

'I remember my mate's Dad owning one back in the day,' recalls Michael. 'He had to drive to Darwin every year to register it because of the rules with left-hand-drives.'

Michael sold Fords for thirty-five years but spent his spare time on the ocean rather than in the garage.

'Boats.' He smirks. 'Break Open Another



SUDDENLY VANS WEREN'T COOL  
ANYMORE AND WERE ONLY  
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STUFF AND KIDS...

Thousand. That's why I don't mind these big ol' V8s. Filling up a boat for the weekend makes your eyes water and your pockets empty.'

They say the only happy days of boat ownership are the day you buy it and the day you sell it.

A joint purchase of a hot rod with a friend broke the sea sirens' spell and Michael was back behind the wheel of a classic Ford.

He spotted an Econoline at a car show back in about 2009 and after five years of wading through a little bit of dross came up with the one pictured here.

'There are a few out there but they haven't been looked after well. The days of nut and bolt restorations are behind me now.'

'I did a few little touch ups here and there, but it largely presents the way it did the '70s.'

The van had been customized by Contempo Campers Inc., a company which appears to have gone out of business in the late '80s. From the information available. their conversions were aimed more at families with slogans like 'Multi-purpose van for the contemporary American family'.

Inside is more functional than it is disco: additional bench seating, a small dining table, wood veneer cupboards, storage space and a fridge. The plush carpet is super cool and period correct. If I had a choice between a Jayco and the Econoline, there'd be no contest.

Michael fills his days out in the garage tinkering with his superannuation and pledging allegiance to the Blue Oval.

He loves his Fords but. 'Eventually they'll all go, but I'm going to enjoy them while I've got them.'





RESTOMOD

# THE FJ COMPANY

✦ WORDS NATHAN DUFF

There's something to be said for the impressions that our family, culture and environment make on us from an early age. I often wonder what it is we are doing as a family now that will influence my kids' nostalgia when they hit their forties. For

me, it's always been music – cars came later in life. The cars our parents drove or the bomb we helped fix and keep on the road. The aunties or uncles we rode around with on holidays and weekends because Mum and Dad were a drag, would only

play country music on the wireless...

Nostalgia for the vehicles of our childhood – even though they were rough, hot, uncomfortable and never had enough room in the back –

triggers us when we reach a certain point in our life. Call it a mid-life crisis or a realisation of your own mortality – but something feeds an urge to remember our past and perhaps relive happier days.

The geography of Columbia comprises rugged terrain and the road network outside the city limits is largely under-developed. The large farming and agricultural element dictates a reliable, utilitarian vehicle; if you want to get to where you are going, that usually entails a LandCruiser.

The first Toyotas landed in Colombia through various importers in 1959. It wasn't until 1967 that Toyota took over the official distribution which saw a significant increase in the brand throughout the country.

The popularity of the LandCruiser in South America and in Columbia cannot be understated. The world record for the largest gathering of Toyotas was held by Columbia with a final count of 742, of which Cruisers were



a large contingent.

Nelson Calle has many fond memories of his childhood growing up in Columbia. Spending hours travelling in the back seat of his grandfather's FJ40 Cruiser had a profound impact on the later years of his life.

'It was by far the car of choice, not only for families, but for private and state-run companies too. It would have been almost impossible to be living in Columbia during the '70s and '80s and not have direct contact with Land Cruisers in some form.'

Nelson's grandfather (also Nelson) had two – a 1968 sky blue FJ40 and a 1982 mid-blue FJ40. Endless hours of his childhood were spent travelling in the back seat on weekend trips with his brother Juan and sister Ana.

'When my grandfather passed, I worked together with my cousin and my brother Juan to restore his beloved 1982 FJ40 to its former glory.' Nelson's brother Juan still owns that truck and it's clocked up in excess of a million kilometres.

The three young men all grew up working on cars, but they had day jobs in finance, real estate and running an internet company. They soon caught the bug and set about restoring their next LandCruiser.

This was a John Deere green FJ40. 'After we had finished, we decided the best way to get it out there was through the auctions. There was just nothing like it around at the time – not to the level we had taken the restoration.'

Nelson and Juan were helped out by RK Motors in Charlotte for the first round of auctions. 'They were fantastic and really helped us through the whole process.' RK Motors predominately dealt with classic American muscle so the John Deere green FJ40 stood out like the proverbial elephant in the room.

The FJ40's hammer price was US\$60K which was unheard of at the time.

'That was really the beginning of it all for us.' Over the next three years they moved to Bonhams auctions and saw increasing prices for their builds – up to US\$125K. 'Bonhams were instrumental in getting our cars in front

of the right people.'

There certainly seems to be a massive movement with vintage 4x4s these days – Nelson believes it is running in parallel with our ever-growing consumption of the modern SUV.

'There is such high demand because its iconic and it's a usable classic. Sports cars in particular are getting harder and harder to use for their intended purpose. Unless it's a track day or a sanctioned event, they are very hard to enjoy legally.'

'A restored SUV like the FJ makes a great weekend car for the family and the nostalgic connection can't be underplayed. I have seen people's knees shake when they see these restored trucks up close: the connection comes as soon as they see them on the sales floor.'

'I recently came across the photos from that first restoration.' Nelson pauses. 'We have come a long way in the last six years and have learned a lot of lessons. Some the easy way and others, well...'

While Nelson and Juan began by restoring the FJs as close as possible to how they were when they left the factory, their core business soon started moving towards the higher end of the market.

Nelson is a purist at heart and he initially described his younger brother's ideas as 'nuts' when he wanted to modernise the restorations they were producing. However, his insistence for them to explore the high-end resto-mod market has given them a distinctive niche.

'The goal isn't creating something wild or unexpected, but reviving a vehicle our customers love. People want modern day conveniences and reliability wrapped in a classic skin.'

'We always lead the design process with a simple philosophy: stay faithful to the original classic Land Cruiser, and update it to modern use and comfort.'

All of the company's creations, from turn-key vehicles to contracted customer jobs, go through the same body-off restoration process at a 75,000-square-foot production facility in Bogotá, Colombia.









‘The raw materials we use are better and stronger than on the original. We only use galvanised steel for panel repairs and replacements, which is a much better grade than was used in the manufacturing process.’

Next, the chassis is put on a jig where it’s inspected carefully and re-aligned to factory specs. This is possibly the single most important part of their process. That’s because after decades of hard work, these vehicles tend to have deviations in their structural integrity. For their new lifetime – with greater horsepower and higher speeds – even the smallest deviation will cause the vehicle to vibrate or behave strangely under certain conditions.

Next comes galvanisation to prevent corrosion and powder-coated. As of 2019, a typical restoration involves using 40 per cent of the original body panels and 60 per cent new fabricated pieces in galvanised steel.

Beneath the metal of their signature G40 series, you’ll find a powertrain that even the purists will appreciate. A factory-fresh 4.0L V6 Toyota iGRE-FE engine paired to a Toyota five-speed manual transmission, finished with a custom stainless steel exhaust.

‘Getting new parts from Toyota is a nightmare and it’s something we constantly struggle with. If we were rebuilding a Bronco it’d be no problem. We could order a crate engine from Ford and have it here the next day.’

Underpinning the authentic FJ43 body and chassis are front coil suspension, KING shocks, ABS, traction and stability control plus front and rear differential lockers.

Each G40 features signature bumpers, square grille, LED headlights, Baja design bumper, integrated foglights, sixteen-inch Evo Corse wheels and Signature CNC-machined mirrors.

The cabin refinement equates to new SUVs with Recaro seats, premium entertainment system (including Apple CarPlay, Signature centre console and Signature CNC-machined accessories.

‘Next, we hope to develop the rear suspension further, dispensing with leaf springs. The G40 uses a FJ70 live rear axle but we would like to move to coil-over.’

I catch up with Nelson after the dust has settled on Monterey Car Week 2019. He has been driving their latest G40 around town. ‘I’ve been driving it around Monterey for the last 10 days straight and it actually feels like a new car.’

‘Although we created the company in 2010, I feel it was truly born during those great weekend trips in the back of my grandfather’s FJ40. Now, we are having a great trip aboard The FJ Company. For Juan and myself, there is no better way to honour our grandfather’s legacy than by building some of the world’s best-restored Toyota FJ LandCruisers.’



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