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XI



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VOLUME 11

14

DB4 GT ZAGATO

26

LANCIA BT20 GT OUTLAW

38

PAUL HALSTEAD - TOY MAKER

46

BMW E9 RESTOMOD

56

FORD RANCHERO

66

THEISS BROS LANDCRUSIER

78

OPEL GT

90

MARCELLO GANDINI

100

CONCOURS SPORTSCAR
RESTORATIONS

122

BLUEBIRD - PROTEUS CN7

136

GIOCATTOLO COMPETIZIOPNE

148

BORGWARD ISABELLA





124

PONTIAC VIVANT







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FRONT END

NATHAN DUFF

The world of on-line car auctions has long been a curiosity for me. Sure it's not a new thing and sites like B.A.T have carved such a niche that they've become part of the vernacular.

But you're talking to someone who agonises over spending a couple bucks on an ebay auction, just in case the item turns out to be a little bit shit.

I had been looking around for a daily classic while the Land Rover slowly comes back together. Was I being a little ambitious when I first started taking the Landy apart? – hell yeah, but who isn't really ... The goal now is just getting her on the road and then worrying about the thousands of details that only I'll notice.

So, in order to sell the concept of yet another car to my wife – it had to be a 'company car' for the magazine. Something that represented what the magazine is about – it should also probably be reliable enough not to break down every other week and get me to the occasional cars and coffee event. Oh, and it had to be pretty cheap too ...

Like most other people who love classics – the cars I dream about owning cost more than my house, so I had to realign my expectations with reality (sucks doesn't it?).

I find it amazing that in a few short years we've gone from buying exercise equipment spruiked by Chuck Norris on daytime TV (if Mr Norris says buy, you damn well do what Chuck Norris says!) to purchasing classic cars with telephone number pricing with a click of the button from a small little device we hold in the palm of our hand.

Trying to find a reasonably priced, somewhat desirable classic that could be potentially used as a daily driver is exceptionally hard these days. The aforementioned online auctions sites are like whack-a-moles and so much time is needed to peruse the sites and monitor listings – all the while wondering if you're missing out on a bargain.

So, let's get this out of the way now – I'm no snob when it comes to cars – I believe the best classic someone can own is something that brings them joy and a big stupid grin when they slide into the driver's seat and if there is anything I love more than an old Land Rover – it's a Porsche. Don't get me wrong, I don't have the blinkers

on when it comes to marques, but it's hard to deny the driveability, refinement and lineage of a brand like Porsche (911s make me weak at the knees, not only in terms of sheer drivability and performance but the pricetags too; a 911 was never going to happen.) So, I looked to their entry level offering of the early '80s: the 944.

If the car you drive makes a statement about who you are then the 944 would be pretty bang on for me. Grew up in the '80s and never really accepted by the cool kids. Cheap – I think the term my family use is tight-arse. A bit of a late bloomer and mostly ignored during the '90s and noughties, but starting to come into its own almost 40 years later.

After much research and a few false starts, I found what looked to be a fairly reasonable example within my price range on Grays Online. A standard 1983 944. Non-turbo – even 944 Turbos are getting pretty crazy with pricing.

I registered and my finger hovered over the mouse button, 'Bid now' ... but is now a good time? Do I want to show my hand so early in the piece? I had zero idea. Should I wait to the last minute? I message a friend who had successfully purchased his fair share of cars from auction sites and decided to sit on it till the last minute.

The last minute rolled around and I was a sweaty mess. Button clicked and then the pop-up window 'please enter your payment details' Whaaaaattt?? How am I supposed to do that in the last 60 seconds of a bloody auction! Luckily, I had anticipated my ineptitude in this first-time experience and had my mate online ready to roll in-case I had a senior's moment with technology ... This story has a happy ending.

The 944 was delivered to Retromotive HQ a little over three weeks later and I have to say I had a bit of stupid grin when it rolled off the back of the tilt tray. You'll be seeing a little more of the 944 over the coming months as it settles in as the newest addition to the Retromotive team. As always, thanks for your support and please get in touch with any stories about your first experience using an online auction site to purchase a classic.

Cheers, Nathan 15-01-2021



When he is not out shooting or putting the magazine together, Nathan likes to pretend that he'll actually finish the series 3 Land Rover that sits in his garage gathering dust. Follow Nathan on Instagram @retromotive_editor



Photo: ©Shaun Maluga

IT ALL STARTED WHEN...

SHAUN MALUGA

Gwan currently runs TRS, an unassuming automotive shop in Venice, California, and has a large stable of cars he has collected over the years. He also has a long and varied history in the automotive field, ranging from mechanical engineering to racing.

When he was about six, Gwan's parents sent him from Indonesia to America with hopes of setting him up for a better future. Throughout school Gwan liked cars, but with his parents back in Indonesia and his guardian unwilling to give approval, Gwan had to sneak out to go racing.

While working at a supermarket, he bought his first car, a Datsun 510, a car that undoubtedly would pique anyone's interest in the automotive culture. The 510s were about 10-15 years old at the time and you could pick them up cheaply for \$600-700. Gwan raced his 510, and in his first year at the track he ended up winning the championship.

A friend who worked for Nissan recognised Gwan's driving potential and would often sneak him into Nissan cars to qualify for races; his identity concealed under the race suit and helmet. Gwan would go on to race with Nissan in an IMSA series before receiving a sponsorship from Honda. He met a guy who was cataloguing Honda Accords for the brochures and service/parts manuals. Apparently, the cars were supposed to be crushed when done and could not be driven on the street. The representative offered the catalogued cars to Gwan for \$1 each. After a few successful years racing the Accords Gwan moved on to a Honda Civic and, later, a Porsche 911 R.

As a senior project while at Cal State L.A., the Cal State School of Engineering & Technology staff and students designed and built the Solar Eagle: a world-class, solar-powered car. Gwan fabricated the body and wired and assembled the solar panels. Because of his driving experience, the Dean and the Professor thought Gwan would be a good candidate as one of the drivers in the first GM Sunrayce from Florida to Michigan in 1990. Following this, Gwan was also nominated as one of the drivers of the Solar Eagle in the World Solar Challenge, driving the Australian Outback from Darwin to Adelaide.

Upon graduating with a degree in mechanical engineering,

Gwan worked for a couple of automotive manufacturers on the development of LED technology for use in production cars.

While Gwan was tearing around raceways in California and beyond, he opened an automotive shop in Culver City selling performance parts. In the early 2000s, a guy was coming in regularly, buying parts to make body kits, namely for a Mitsubishi Eclipse. He would never tell Gwan what they were for exactly, brushing it off as some sort of magazine shoot. One day he fessed up and said it was for a movie called Redline. It wasn't until a year or so later that Gwan realised that Redline was the working title for what became The Fast and the Furious.

Following the movie's release, the tuner scene exploded and people would come in to Gwan's shop to buy nitrous, gauges, seatbelts and basically anything you can bolt onto a car. This developed into Gwan importing containers of Japanese engines he thought would do well in the US, such as the SR20 and B16/18 Type R engines.

Around this time, an article was written about Gwan's shop that went viral. The shop started importing containers from Japan every month, selling full front clips to racers around the US. The business was doing well, but property prices were doing even better. Gwan was able to sell the property where TRS was situated and relocated to a small private lot in Venice. With a secure income coming from his property investments, Gwan was now able to work on cars for sheer love, without the pressure of business partners nor the need to make large profits.

When it comes to vehicles, Gwan's tastes are eclectic, spanning from old to new and everything from Japanese to European. Gwan loves that owning a shop also justifies the purchase of modern computers and diagnostic tools needed to work on the more modern cars in his personal collection, such as the Porsches and Ferraris. Like a good parent, Gwan says he loves all of his cars. When pushed, he confesses the Hakosukas and a Datsun Bluebird are among his favourites; along with an old Mini that was once a parts car, but is now a father/son project for his son to learn to drive in.



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. Follow his work on instagram @shaunmaluga @fujifimxpro2



Photo: ©Isamu Sawa. Background design: ©Quan Payne.
'The design was a play of the complexity of the linework and a homage to the modernist design of the era'.

THE ANALOGUE WRIST

ISAMU SAWA

Form follows function is a 19th/ early 20th-century principle associated with architecture and industrial design. It means that the shape of a building or object should primarily relate to its intended function or purpose.

A wristwatch by its very nature follows this ethos – in its most basic form, it is usually small and round. It is round so that the time-keeping function can be housed in a concentric circular dial with rotating hands and indexes.

Over time, many wristwatches have become complex ‘tools’ housing other functions within this relatively diminutive form. From showing the date, second time zone (GMT), moon phase, calculating elapsed time (chronograph) and speed calculations – commonly referred to as ‘tool watches’. Brands such as Omega, Rolex and (TAG) Heuer are known for their ‘tool watches’ with their Speedmaster, Daytona and Carrera respectively.

The Breitling Navitimer pre-dates them. It was introduced in 1952 and is instantly recognisable as a true icon among pilot watches. A busy dial to the untrained eye, it is a practical tool in the right (pilot’s) hand and officially recommended as a pilot watch by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA).

Quan Payne, founder and creative director of Studio Payne, has his own creative agency in Melbourne and purchased his vintage Breitling Navitimer in 2019.

‘My first job out of university was with graphic designer Vince Frost, who wore a Navitimer, and one of my favourite musicians Miles Davis, also wore one. They both influenced me at a young age.’

‘I was travelling to Sydney for work and saw the watch in a storefront, and decided to purchase it then and there.’

‘I had never thought about buying a Breitling, as I’ve always found them too over the top. With a love for mathematics and science, however, I’ve always been fascinated with the slide-rule function. Seeing the vintage design that manages to make an incredibly complex watch face look elegant and considered was something I fell in love with.’

Combining the words ‘navigation’ and ‘timer’, the

Navitimer’s design has a chronograph function with a distinct rotating slide-rule bezel. This ‘wrist computer’ allowed pilots to perform various flight calculations; including average speed, distance travelled, fuel consumption, the rate of climb or descent, and conversion of miles to kilometres or nautical miles.

The readability was further enhanced by oversized Arabic numerals filled with radium that efficiently contrasted with the black dial.

After purchasing it, Quan said:

I got heavily into its history, as I didn't realise that mine – a Breitling Navitimer 806 Transitional – was a relatively rare version. All the Navitimers before this one had all-black dials and syringe hands. In 1963, they modified the design to a panda, however, and for only one year, they used the beaded bezel. In 1964, they changed to a milled edge or coin bezel.

As a designer, I am always interested in how complex information can be presented elegantly, and I feel that the Navitimer is a perfect example of that. When talking about design, I have an innate fascination for taking challenging content, data or information and creating a solution that is as usable as possible for the audience for which it was intended. That makes something completely unique.

This goes into other areas of aesthetic principles that I love – like Wabi-sabi – and why I am attracted to imperfect watches that tell stories of historic endeavours and achievements.

I enjoy vintage watches and researching, learning and discovering the history behind them. I think that vintage Breitlings are under-appreciated, mainly because of what the brand has become today. I hope like other brands, they rediscover their heritage...

With a new slogan ‘Legendary Future’, coined by its new CEO Georges Kern, Breitling has renewed its recent brand direction. The company has revisited its rich past and recreated the Navitimer Ref. 806 1959 Re-Edition (2019) – a watch that is as faithful to the original as can be.



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... Follow his work on Instagram

IDLE TORQUE

BRUCE MCMAHON

He could've been a detective that bloke Les Hughes. Sleuthing through follow-ups and referrals to dig out scraps of history, uncover fresh angles on interesting cars and owners, incidents and accidents. This bloke loves the hunt, the places it takes him and the people he meets.

Instead the genial Mr Hughes, working out of a home office in sub-tropical Brisbane, Australia, is arguably the world's foremost authority on Jaguar motor cars. Albeit a long way from the climes of Coventry.

In 1976, the teenager and Mark 1 Jaguar owner was looking after a club magazine when Jack Bryson, famed Australian importer of the British cars, died.

'Bryson had saved Jaguar. Sir William Lyons rang and said "I'm going to the wall" and Bryson stumped up for 200 cars, S-Types and Mark Xs. Cash money. And saved Jaguar,' says Les.

'But people were selling Mark V dropheads, claiming they were one of 50 made and all this sort of thing. I thought if I don't write all this stuff down, get it recorded, it's all going to turn into bullshit and go nowhere. So that's how I got going.'

And that's how he remains a sleuth and stickler for the company's history and how, since 1984, has published the Jaguar Magazine for lovers of the leaping cat across the globe. His was the world's first independent retail publication on the marque and the bi-monthly is now past its 200th edition. Still driven solo by Les, co-driven by wife Bronwen.

He'd headed to England to research his 1980 book – Jaguar Under The Southern Cross – and with 'luck more than anything else it all fell into place'. Doors opened, his new mate Andrew Whyte introduced him to the likes of Lofty England and old mechanics

from the 1950s. 'So I just got swept up in it. Stayed for three years and then came back and started the magazine in 1984.'

Les had been an apprentice lithographic artist, hated the trade, but now appreciated it was a lucky start for him as a Jaguar enthusiast.

The first Jaguar was only 16 pages, but it worked and it grew, prompting Les to give up a snack bar business in inner-city Brisbane and go full-time with his magazine from a home office in the suburbs.

It's now 100 pages, six times a year with some 12,000 copies sold of each issue sold across the world. Les never wanted – or made – a fortune, but the magazine has afforded him a rich lifestyle.

'The thing I feel most privileged about is the people I've met. The senior Jaguar people. The fact that I went to Le Mans every year they ran the Silk Cut Jaguars.

Some five Jaguar tours that included America, as well. I met Briggs Cunningham through that and Bob Tullius.

'All sort of doors opened, that's what gives us the depth in the magazine.

Lucky enough to meet them, photograph them, it gives the magazine some authority.'

And Les is gobsmacked at the material that keeps on flowing. He thought there'd be enough yarns for maybe 20 magazines and he's now passed 200.

He admits that he's been desperate at times and owned a couple of machines other than Jaguars (with a soft spot for Isuzu Belletts).

Among proper British cars, there have been a Series 1 XJ-C, first spotted as a factory hack, and a long-wheelbase V12 XJ. That XJ saloon and a V12 XJ-C



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

In the 1990s he was t-boned in a Jaguar XJ-R by a lane-cutting Corolla; pummelled into a lamp post which then fell neatly down the centre of the press car.

starred on the company's stand at the 1973 London Motor Show. Les discovered them both in Australia. His favourite? 'The one I'm driving right now, which is a 1997 six-cylinder XJ-R. I've owned it since 2003 and never owned a car this long. I don't want to sell it. I love it, simply adore it.' Les pauses. 'But I'd probably swap it now for a top line XF or something.' He loves getting into any Jaguar where all feels familiar, feels like you're in a Jaguar and everything is in the right place. He does think exterior styling is a touch commonplace right now – needs to more individual while appreciating the restrictions of

modern regulations.

But for Les there remains a tonne of history of this company, its cars and its owners to be recorded.

He's not long uncovered the original XK120, thought by many to have been scrapped but – converted to left-hand-drive by the factory for European high-speed publicity runs in the late 1940s – found unrestored in the United States.

'That's the original show car from 1948. That's what gets me really excited, finding stuff like that. I'll work until the day I die, I love doing it,' says accidental magazine publisher Les Hughes.



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DB4 GT

ZAGATO

✦ WORDS **BRUCE MCMAHON**

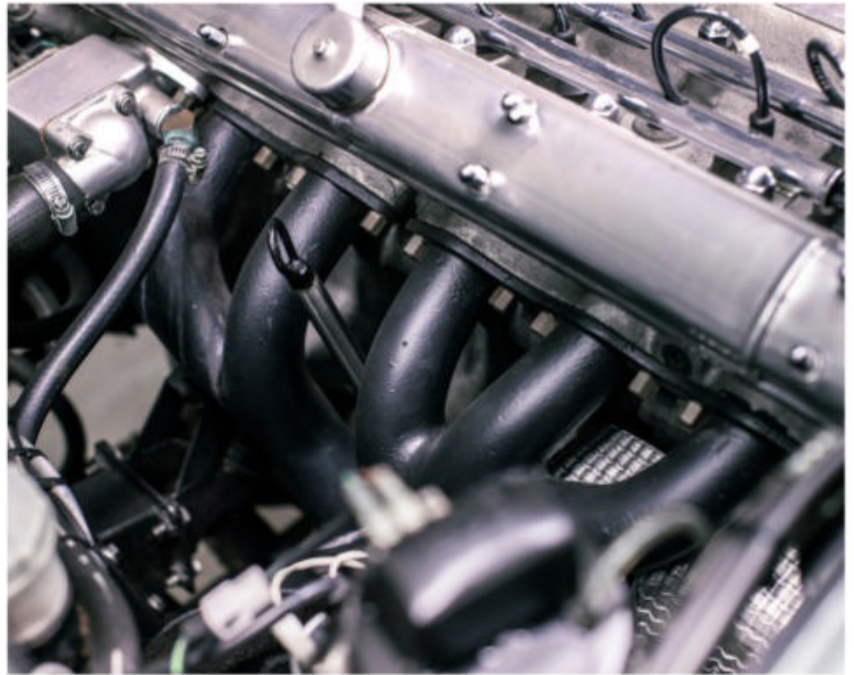
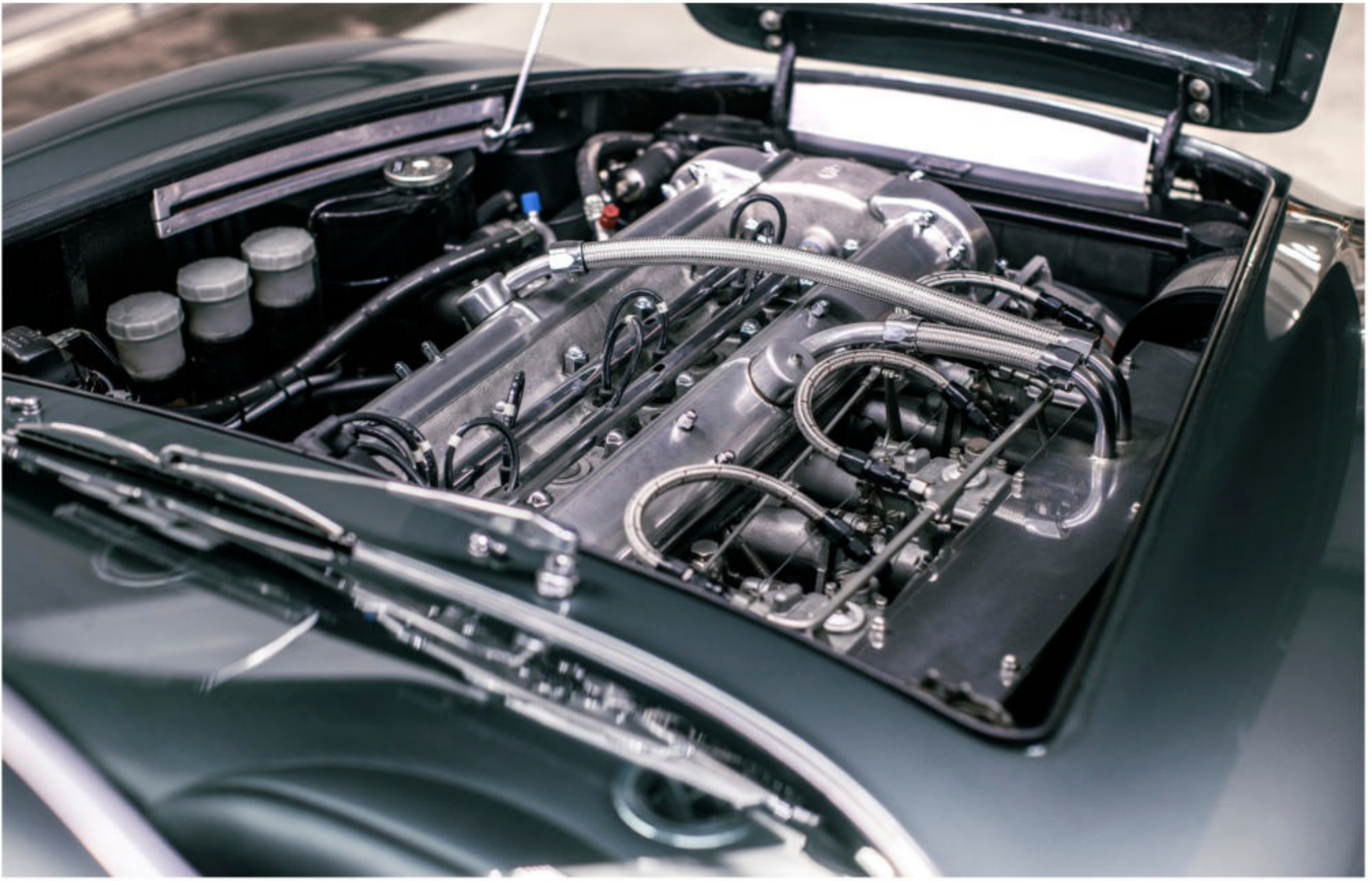
✦ IMAGES **NATHAN DUFF**

It fires with a menacing rumble, a hero car among a bevy of machines in a bespoke garage, prince among a royal pack of Jaguars, stately Bentley, drop-head Rolls-Royce, immaculate Austin Healey, a handful of Aston Martins, a low-slung XJ13 replica, and others.

Bob McKay has 20-odd cars – and a fair supply of trickle battery chargers – in a classic collection in the suburbs of Brisbane, but it's the Aston Martin

DBSZ that catches and holds the eye. A striking car with timeless road presence and glorious mechanicals.

This is a hand-crafted reproduction of one of the most handsome of all Aston Martins: the DB4 GT Zagato coupe built between 1960 and 1963; an English grand tourer with sweet Italian-designed body over a DB4 chassis. This one, Bob's green DBSZ, was built on an Aston DBS chassis in 2007-2008; one of a run of eight



IT FIRES WITH A MENACING RUMBLE, A HERO CAR AMONG A BEVY OF MACHINES IN A BESPOKE GARAGE

created by Paul Sabine's Brooklands Classic Cars stable in Cheltenham, Victoria.

The first deal for the car, originally with black bodywork, fell through. 'I had a Porsche down there at the time for Paul to sell. And he said he'd do a deal with me on the Porsche if I liked. So I said, 'look I don't like the black, why don't we paint it the same colour as my model, the Aston racing green. They took it back to bare metal and repainted it.'

Bob remains in awe of the craftsmanship of this stunning two-door concept: how the boot lid closes with a soft thunk when dropped from around ten inches above the lip and the small hand-beaten scuff plate in behind the interior door handle. 'Look at this grille, all hand-made, aluminium and you can't see any joins. Sensational.'

The former electrical engineer (though

not an electric car convert) began his motoring with an Austin 7, honed early driving skills with car trials and such. He bought a Triumph TR2 while on a scholarship in England. And while there were Porsches and Alfa Romeos and others over the years, there's been a predilection for British machines – Jaguars in particular. The E-Type once used to run the kids to school; Bob later converted it into a 4.8L, dry-sumped lightweight track weapon.

After selling his marina-building company, Bob toyed with the idea of buying a Ferrari; he'd owned a 308 GTB years before and could now afford another. 'But I have an English mate who said "why would you get a Ferrari, get an Aston Martin." I said that's a Ford, and he said well a Ferrari's a Fiat. So, I went to the showroom down the Gold Coast and fell in love with a Volante there, that

LEFT: Polished alloy, braided lines, a subtle variation on British Racing Green, an old-fashioned dipstick sticking its head up: there's devilish beauty in these details.



ABOVE: 'ZAGATO', 'MILANO', these two words convey so much meaning. The DB4 Zagato is one of the most treasured Aston Martins ever made and this replica DBSZ (DBS Zagato) is surely better than the original.

BELOW: DBSZ crouches low and eager to the ground, its feet wide apart. Bob's treasured Zagato keeps some fast company.





ABOVE: Bob gets plenty of joy just sitting in his cars in the shed. He's not thrilled by modern traffic and driver skills: 'And if this thing has a prang, if someone runs into it, I'd hate to think how they're going to fix it properly.'

BELOW: David Brown not only made Aston Martin literally his own but masterminded some classics. So, why not make his initials synonymous with his brand?





THE OTHERS ARE WATCHED OVER IN HIS GARAGE BY JAMES BOND SILHOUETTES

started me. I joined the club, became fairly enthusiastic about Aston Martins.'

That DB9 was followed by a DB6, then a DB5 (which Bob rebuilt from boxes of bits), then a DB4, then a V8 and a DB7 before this DBSZ took pride of place. The DB9 and the DB7 have now gone, the others are watched over in his garage by James Bond silhouettes. Bob found the DB9 a bit too delicate to park anywhere – that became a headache. The DB7 was better, he said, but the costs and complications of repairs are a factor to be considered.

Bob believes there were 20 of the original DB4 GT Zagatos built, running gear, motor and chassis sent to Italy for the bodywork and then returned to England. 'Everything you read will say 19, but there were actually 20 with a bit of a dodgy deal done on the last one. None of them

were identical. I had this at Lakeside one time and some smart Alec put on Facebook "it's not the right shape". I wrote back there were 20 built, all different. There were subtle changes, the last ones for Le Mans had a longer snout, probably to catch the air. Paul chose the best features of each and when he built these new ones he was asking, I suppose, not much change out of half a million. They'd be a lot more expensive now because donor cars back then were in the \$30K range, you could probably get a wreck for \$25K. You won't get any now for less than \$100,000, they've just gone through the roof.'

Bob's DBSZ used all the running gear from a DBS – the original body ditched and the chassis shortened by some six inches. The width is the same as the DBS, so it is a tad wider – around 50mm – than the original Aston Zagato, but at 4230mm long

LEFT: Classic Aston racing green and Borrani wires look wonderful together. Bob's DBSZ is one of eight built in 2008 on a DBS shortened chassis and with DBS running gear.







*THE ITALIANS DESIGNED SOME BEAUTIFUL CARS,
ENGLISH CARS GET IT RIGHT SOMETIMES,
BUT QUITE OFTEN NOT*

and 1270mm tall, the reborn Aston has almost identical dimensions to the original car. At 1420kg it weighs in between the DB4 and DB5 Aston Martins.

The rear suspension comprises a De Dion axle with Watts Link and coil springs; the independent front-end has transverse wishbones and coils. It runs four-wheel disc brakes and 16-inch Borrani wire wheels, plus the luxury of power-assisted steering from the DBS – unlike the original coupe.

Power, delivered through a five-speed manual, comes from the DBS Vantage's Twin-camshaft 4.0L straight six, with DB4 GT pistons and camshafts; plus a trio of Weber 45s. Bob reckons it's worth around 300 horsepower (220kW), though he's not keen on too many outings these days; driving a manual car in today's city traffic isn't always fun. 'And if this

thing has a prang, if someone runs into it, I'd hate to think how they're going to fix it properly.'

The aluminium-bodied two-seater's cabin is lashed with wood and leather, boasts an array of analogue instruments and meters, a wood-rimmed steering wheel and cosseting seats. Inside and out, Bob thinks this is one of the prettiest of machines – thanks to that Italian heritage. (Motorcycle cops have been known to follow Bob and his DBSZ into his driveway to look at the coupe.) Bob smiles: 'The Italians designed some beautiful cars, English cars get it right sometimes, but quite often not. As an English car fan I've got to admit that [the English] made some awfully ugly cars.'

This painstakingly hand-crafted, Australian-made re-creation of the Aston Martin DB4 GT Zagato is not one of those.

LEFT: Traditional gauges with a tachometer redlined at 5500, great seats and superb period woodrim wheel are highlights of a comfortable cabin. The tachometer monitors the pulse of an engine good for 300 horsepower.



LANCIA B20 GT

OUTLAW

★ WORDS **STEVEN KITTRELL**

★ PHOTOGRAPHY **MIKE GRAMBUSH**



My first encounter with the Lancia B20 GT Outlaw came out of nowhere. It was the Tuesday morning of Monterey Car Week, just before my favourite event takes place: the Carmel Concours on the Avenue.

I was driving a bit of an outlaw myself, a GTO Engineering Ferrari 250 SWB Revival car. Just as I parked in my habitual parking spot in front of Bruno's Market off Ocean Avenue, I heard a rumble coming down a small side road. I quickly jogged through an intersection only to be narrowly missed by this devilish looking hot rod, which looked anything but American Muscle. Chopped and lowered, blacked out and not declaring its origins, it compelled me. I searched the concours field until I found it again. Still enamoured, that evening at a friend's car week party, I mentioned this astonishing machine to a stranger over cocktails.

'Oh yes, well, that's my car. I built it,' said Wayne Kelham in a modest tone that matched his attire. I was stunned and excited to dig deeper into what the vision really was. Little did I know that, on the same day, someone else had taken notice of the build and wanted one himself, but we'll get to that later.

A Lancia Aurelia may not be something you think of initially when it comes to 1950s Italian

sports racers. But in fact, the Lancia GT20GT car was probably the very first Gran Turismo. Equipped with a V6 engine in a strong tubular chassis and possessing an Italian pedigree, the Aurelia GT was embraced by aficionados and competed in such legendary races as the Mille Miglia and Targa Florio. For decades, these cars have been campaigned by many significant drivers.

Enter Thornley Kelham with a solid career of fine restoration and service in Gloucestershire. One standout car was the Bracco Aurelia B20GT, a special racer with a record including second outright in the 1951 Mille Miglia and a class win at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. The Bracco was an ambitious project for Lancia, featuring a chopped roofline, an uprated motor and a streamlined body to keep it competitive in a heavily populated race class.

Fast forward to 2015 on the lawn at Pebble Beach where Wayne and company were displaying the B20GT in front of a captive audience. They were quickly approached by a collector in the US, who was interested in something similar with modern upgrades. This is the essence of the outlaw, isn't it?

'We had little to no hesitation when it came to agreeing to this build. We couldn't wait to get back into the workshop and get started on a game plan.'

RIGHT: B20GT is widely recognised as the first true Gran Turismo and quickly acquired a following among racing drivers.









THE AURELIA GT WAS EMBRACED BY AFICIONADOS AND COMPETED IN SUCH LEGENDARY RACES AS THE MILLE MIGLIA AND TARGA FLORIO.

And getting their hands dirty both inside the shop and in the design studio they did. From start to finish, it takes an average of two and a half to three years from concept to completion. But these new outlaws couldn't come from a significant race car or prototype – no, they always get built from more standard machines modified to fit a customer's vision.

'Where did we find donor cars? Little barns I suppose,' Kellam said with a laugh. 'Could be in Europe or in the US – wherever we could get them, frankly.'

After knocking on enough barn doors, they found a dishevelled sixth-series Aurelia, stripped it down to the bare bones, and began to chop, widen, and create an outlaw. More than 5000 hours were invested in that first car, as a kind of test case. Having a large amount of creative licence to construct what they thought would be the best interpretation, Thornley Kelham and team penned something truly remarkable.

Whenever I come across a car like this, one looking to break a mould and show us something we never thought we wanted, I always think about the challenge and tribulations it took to get there. Wayne was quick to tell me that the biggest challenge was the metal work. An estimated 1500-1800 hours of work just to repair rust and body work with a myriad of passes on each panel – extensive work with

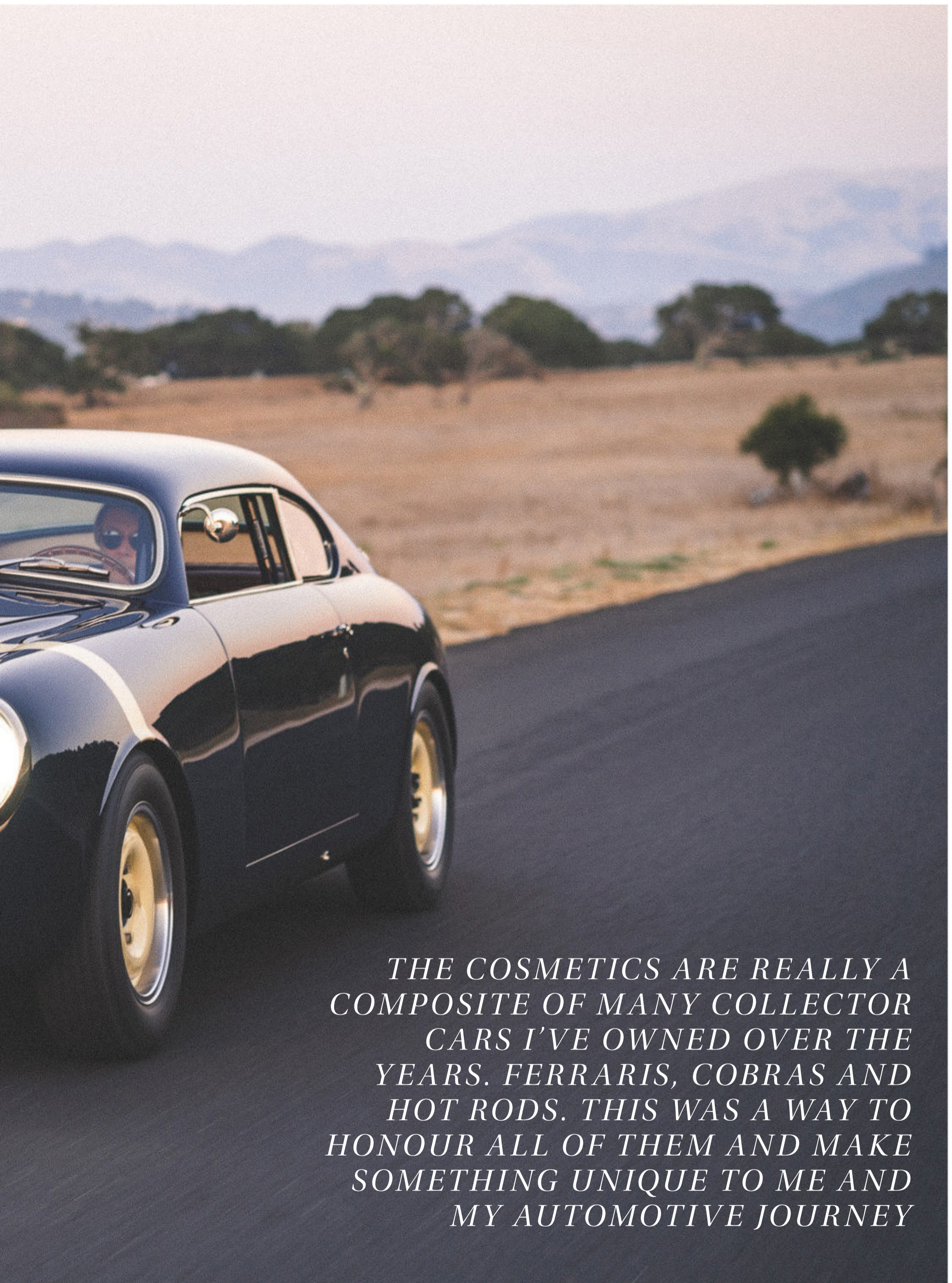
the English wheel and countless trips to the tool room with work by gifted craftsmen. A passion project on both ends of the court, the first car was completed and shipped over to US, right onto Ocean Avenue.

Now to our subject car, number three. I was far from the only one to take notice of the Lancia Outlaw that day. Circling the B20GT like a curious shark in Monterey Bay, Tex Otto was enthralled by the overall essence of the build and had to know its origins. He soon connected with the owner and the craftsmen behind it all. A build slot was locked in, and the fun was about to begin.

Without question, Tex Otto is the right custodian for this special Lancia Outlaw. His background as a creative director and graphic designer has given him such a keen eye and attention to detail – both elements required to create this wonderful rolling sculpture. Combining his professional experiences and personal automotive passions, Tex had no shortage of vision and input, which was something welcomed by Wayne and staff. It's a collaborative effort, supported on all fronts. What was delivered was something exclusive and exceptional. For the car to set itself apart from its predecessors cosmetically was not something Tex had expected, but that was absolutely what this build achieved. Nickel-plated brightwork items such as the grille,

LEFT: Thanks to a mildly worked 2.8-litre Flaminia engine, this outlaw packs a wholesome 225 horsepower.





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EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK, YOUR EYES WILL SETTLE ON SOMETHING NEW AND AESTHETICALLY PLEASING

headlight surrounds and windshield trim really make Tex's car pop and not seem as sinister in style as many other outlaws. To complement the phone-dial lightweight rims, painted in a contrasting cream, are the frosted art deco headlights. They were only offered on the earliest Aurelias in the day and this will be the only Kelham Lancia outlaw that's equipped, says Tex.

'When I was in England looking at the car during Retromobile, I noticed them fitted on another donor car. When Wayne offered them up for my build, it was just so easy to say yes.' Everywhere you look, your eyes will settle on something new and aesthetically pleasing. From the diamond-stitched red leather race seats, to the upgraded pedal box, the six carburettor trumpets and the knurled wooden steering wheel, every detail seems right. A wonderful surprise was seeing a rear licence plate light housing become more than normally meets the eye. When I asked Tex to open the rear boot to get a peek at the spare, he gave a push and twist: there was the space for the key tumbler and lock.

'The cosmetics are really a composite of many collector cars I've owned over the years. Ferraris, Cobras and hot rods. This was a way to honour all of them and make something unique to me and my automotive journey.'

Power comes from a 2.8L Lancia Flaminia motor with a different cam profile, making a stout 225hp (165.49kW). There is also a Flaminia gearbox with much taller ratios. The Nardi floor shifter is a major aesthetic element for me and pairs nicely with the optional Nardi bonnet scoop. Rack and pinion steering, air-conditioning and Wilwood disc brakes make the Aurelia useable in modern traffic.

'On the Tour D' Alps we were chasing this long hood Porsche 911 RS. Just right on his hip all morning, you know? Once we got through a long pass, he pulled over and waved us through. He just couldn't believe we were as quick and consistent as we were. Just demonstrates the overall drivability of this car – it's fantastic,' said Tex during the photoshoot in Carmel.

Wayne is currently finishing car number five while number six is in metal work at the moment. As far as cars seven to nine are concerned, well they are still up for grabs. The buzz within the car community is enthusiastic. 'Hearing Danny Sullivan (former Indianapolis 500 winner) say that the car was fantastic was rewarding in itself. We knew we were doing good things, but the reception from our peers made it all worth it,' said Wayne. 'Tex's car was absolutely an "ah-ha!" moment for me and our team wanted to use it as the starting point for the next build.'

LEFT: Superb in every detail: elegant grille in the perfect light, Nardi gearlever, diamond-stitched red leather racing seats, upgraded pedal box.

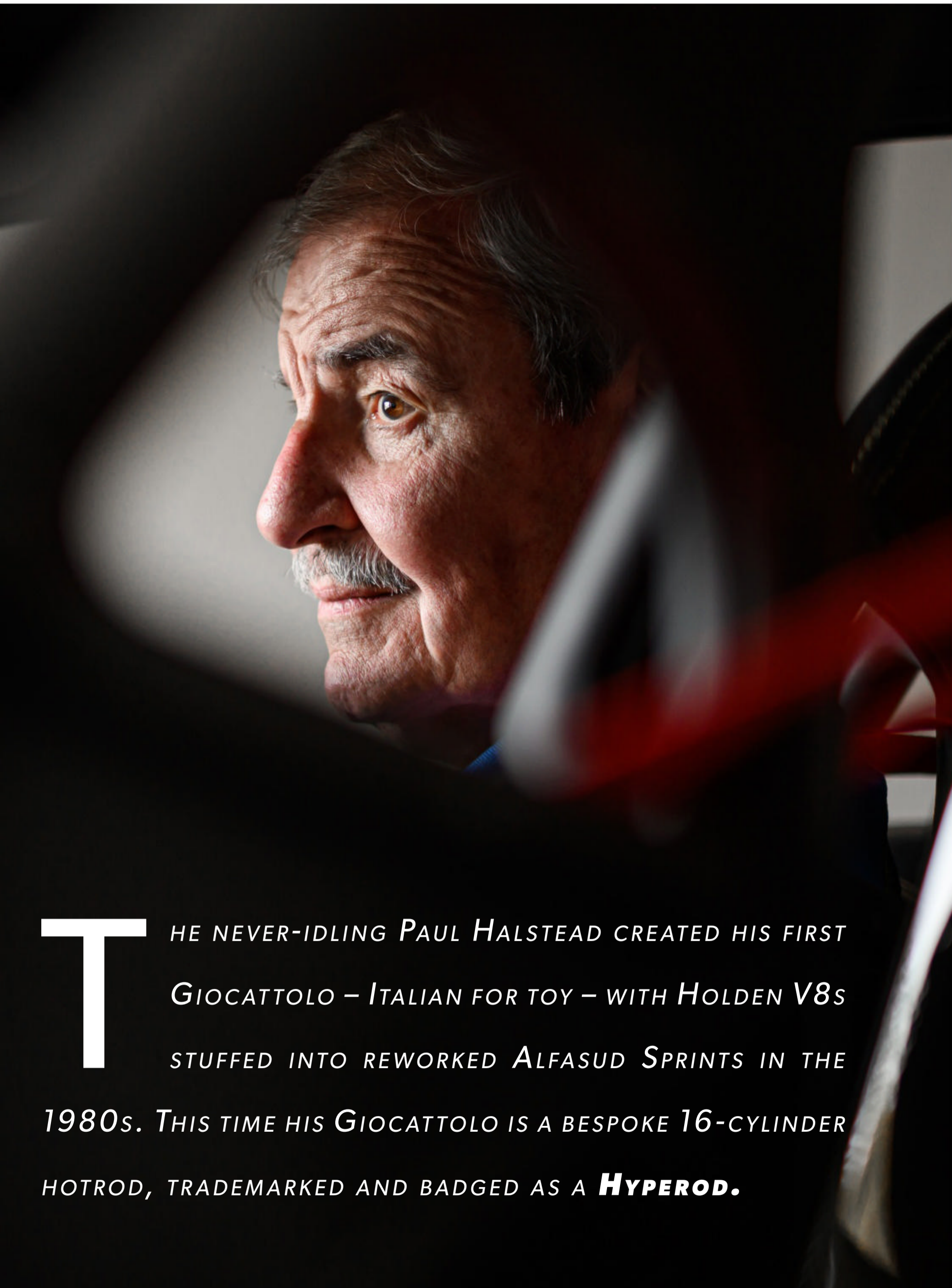
A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's hand gripping a black steering wheel. The background shows the interior of a car, including the dashboard and window, with a soft, natural light source from the side. The overall mood is focused and professional.

PAUL HALSTEAD | *TOY MAKER*

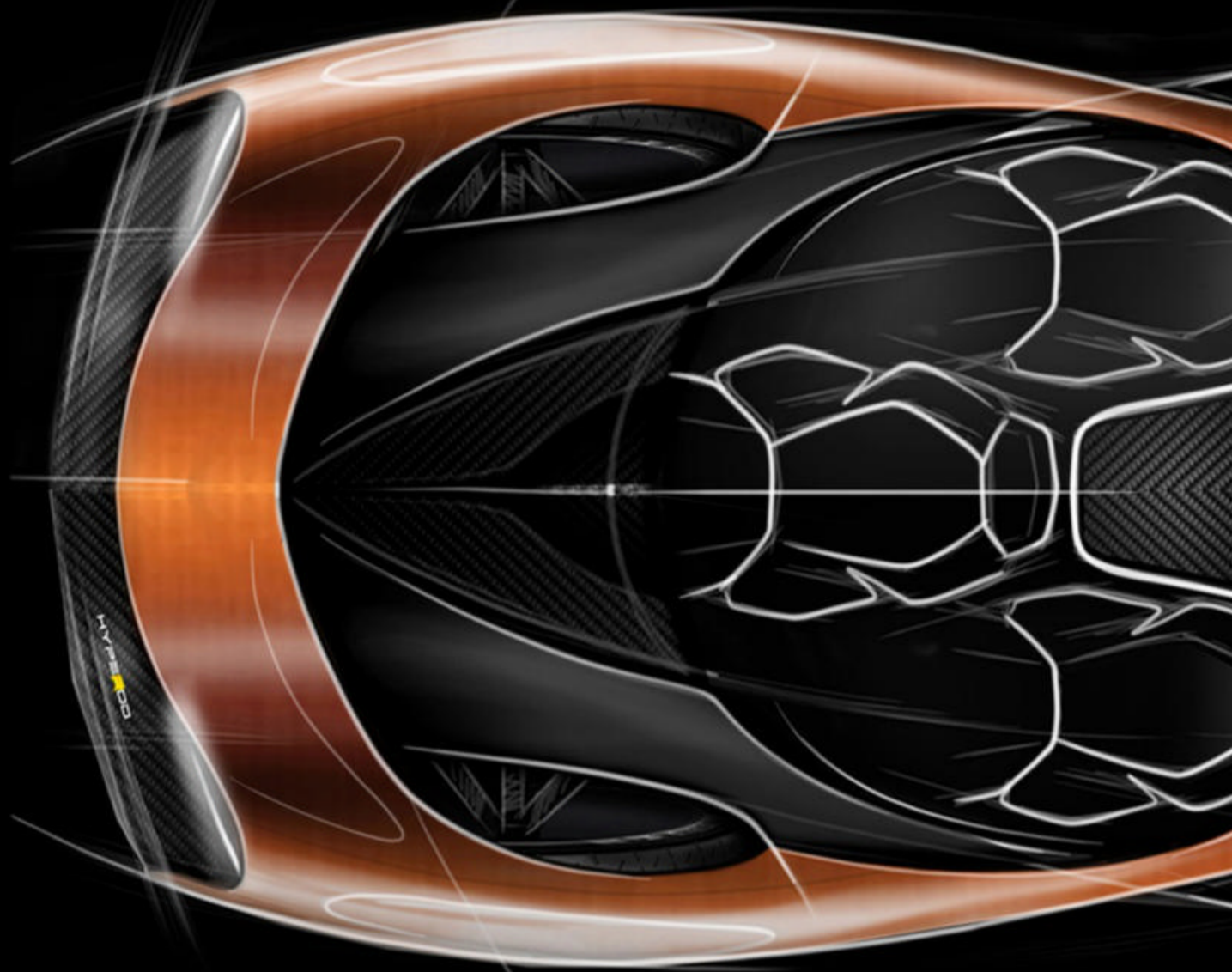
• WORDS **BRUCE MCMAHON**

• IMAGES **NATHAN JACOBS**

• ILLUSTRATIONS **NAISH CHAPMAN**



T HE NEVER-IDLING *PAUL HALSTEAD* CREATED HIS FIRST *GIOCATTOLO* – ITALIAN FOR TOY – WITH *HOLDEN V8s* STUFFED INTO REWORKED *ALFASUD SPRINTS* IN THE 1980s. THIS TIME HIS *GIOCATTOLO* IS A BESPOKE 16-CYLINDER HOTROD, TRADEMARKED AND BADGED AS A **HYPEROD.**



Paul Halstead is über upbeat about his latest project – a low and wild Giocattolo for the 21st century.

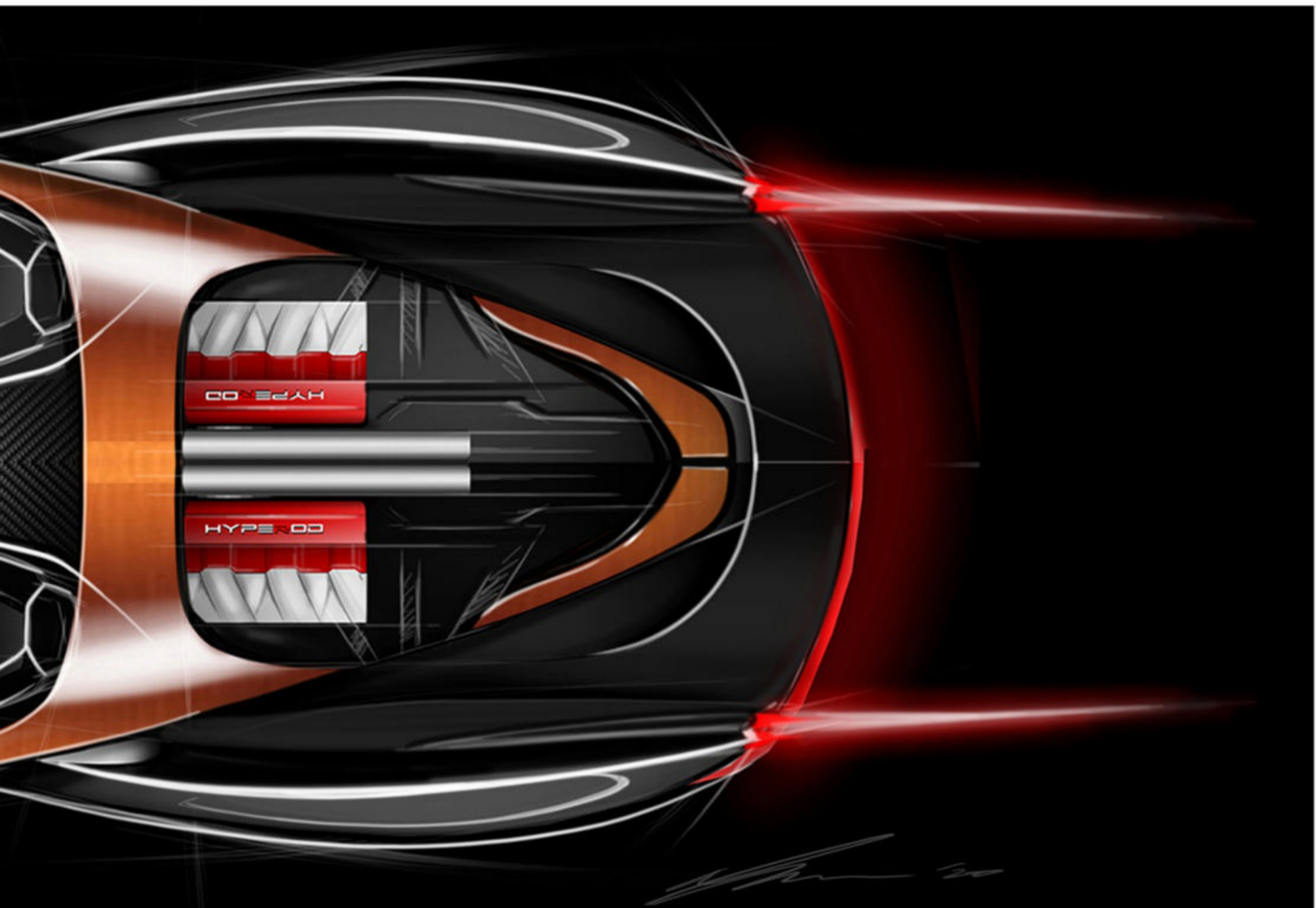
This all-original Australian machine will run a pair of harnessed GM V8s, copper-burnished body up front and maybe polished alloy out back. Exposed mechanicals. Analogue instruments. No doors.

This will be a steam punk supercar for the ages. Paul has spent a lifetime in and around cars, back to teenage days grafting a Standard 14 horsepower engine into an Austin Eight for his first street machine. He's an IT guru, businessman and graphic artist. Exported Australian V8 engines to Italians and sold a Bell helicopter used in a famed prison break-out. Imported De Tomosas and Lamborghinis. Raced exotic machines and still embraces business and engineering challenges. Now clear of two bouts of cancer, the 74-year-

old has little truck with downtime. 'I was in intensive care and going to die. That doesn't faze me. Not one iota. I'm fatalistic about this, giving it my best shot. But I really want to build [the Hyperod Giocattolo]. That's my motivation,' says Paul.

The young Victorian's only formal training came from part-time study at Melbourne's School of Graphic Arts. He probably wanted to be a designer from the outset he reckons, but began working on motoring magazines while busy buying his sister's Triumph Herald convertible; stripping it, chopping the windscreen, fitting seven inch Dunlop racing rubber, Holden motor and, inspired by Ford's GT40, a centrally-mounted exhaust pipe.

About now, a good mate went to work in the state railway's computer department. Paul followed, worked there for some two years before his



mate took off to a new computer company called ADAPS.

He said, 'come over, it's fantastic.' And it was with about 150 staff, oldest was the managing director at 29. It was a fun place and computers were expensive, so we worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it was a good grounding in the computer industry.

They encouraged us all to have mad cars. So I had the first E-Type Jaguar convertible with the Moss gearbox and flat floor. It was second-hand, I paid \$3500 for it. Then I moved to a two-door Falcon, one of those Superbird things, six yards of bad taste with massive rubber for those days.

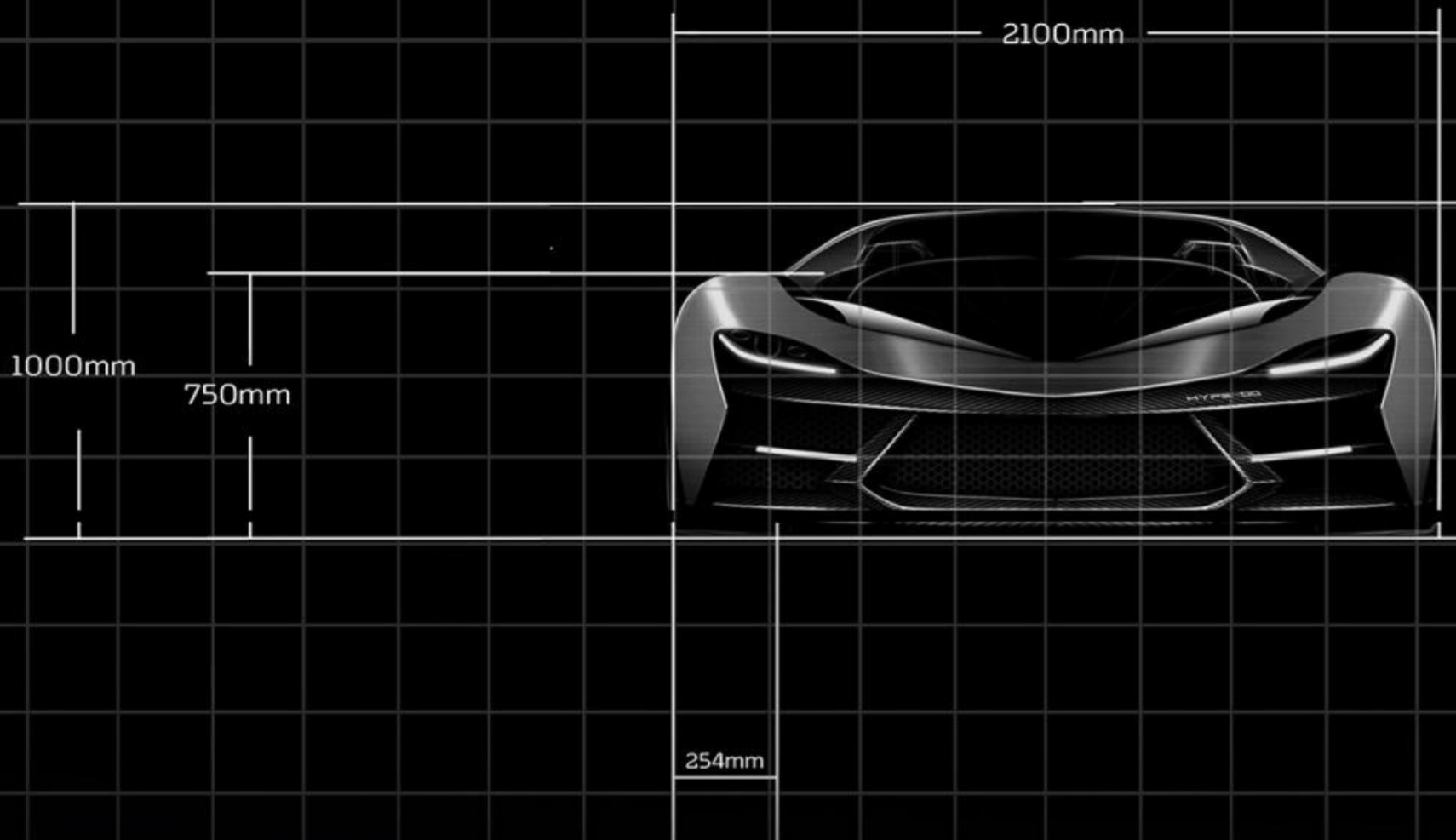
In 1972, Paul and a friend flew to California, bought a car, drove down into Mexico and then back through the States to the east where the car was sold and Paul headed to London.

There, he sold the wares of the small firm

Computer People and after a successful few months wanted to head home from an English winter when the Corniche-driving boss offered him a Rolls-Royce to stay. 'Sorry, I couldn't imagine anything worse than a Rolls-Royce,' said Paul. He settled for a De Tomaso Mangusta as his company car and stayed for two years before time in New York with the Chase Manhattan bank, and then back to Australia.

In 1976, he kick-started a contract services company 50-50 with ADAPs and built this into an Australia-wide business before selling out for 'quite a few million bucks' in 1984 and opening the Toy Shop, a Sydney workshop slotting Cleveland V8s into De Tomaso bodies crated from Italy.

'I looked at this business and thought why am I building these things and selling them to these ratbags down Parramatta Road to put on their



lots.’ So Paul opened the famous Toy Shop in North Sydney with a tricked-out showroom stacked with De Tomasos, Lamborghinis, Chopard watches and second-hand exotics.

‘It was a real destination, people would come in to look at cars and I’d say, “what have you come to buy”, never “can I help you” because people say “no thanks, just looking.” So I’d say, “what’ve you come to buy” and they’d say they couldn’t afford anything. I’d say “as a matter of fact you can, I have a Toy Shop key ring here for \$10.” I had 1000 done for \$2.50 each, sold thousands. A real good money spinner.’

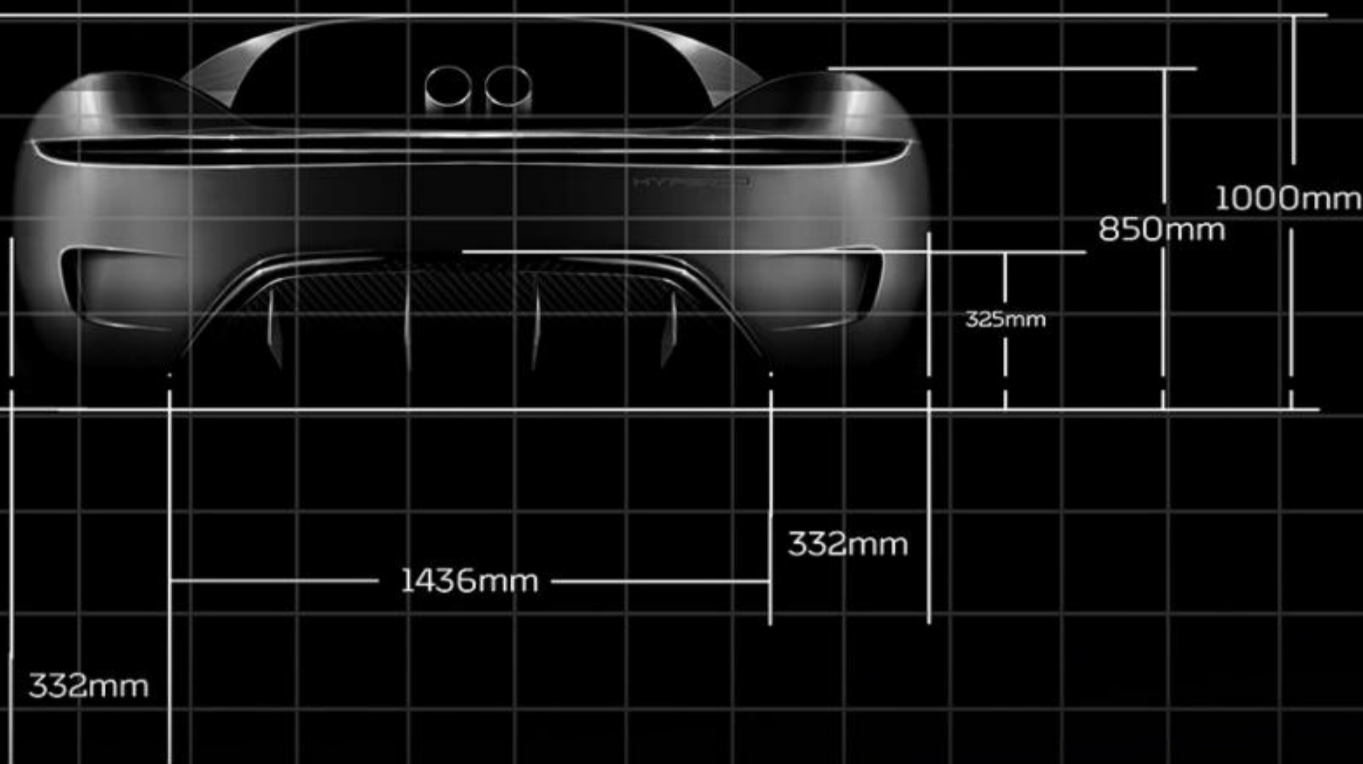
The Toy Shop sold to the famous and the infamous. Panteras at \$89,000 and Countachs at \$250,000. And a white 47G2 Bell helicopter, traded as part of a three-car deal, went for \$150,000. ‘About four weeks later, the Postcard Bandit (Brenden Abbott) was pulled out of Long Bay jail in a helicopter...yeah, my helicopter – November X-Ray Bravo 77B, I’ll never forget it.’

Then Ford Australia stopped making Cleveland

V8s and the Italians weren’t interested in Holden engines. Paul lost export credits, plus his income, from selling the V8s. The dollar dropped against the lire and a Luxury Car Tax was mandated. Best to sell the shop front, but keep his workshop. Enthused by Alfa Romeo’s one-off Group B rally car, Paul and his mate, ex-McLaren FI wizard, Barry Lock built a copy with mid-mounted Alfa V6 up against a ZF gearbox in the back of an Alfasud Sprint. It was a quick unit, Paul said, but Alfa Romeo weren’t keen on selling him the coupes in knock-down form to build more.

So the pair turned to buying new Sprints and adding, with some difficulty, a 5L Holden V8 – good for around 190kW and 260km/h – behind the front seats using a carbon fibre bulk head held in with aircraft bolts. ‘I think we were the first to use a structural member of carbon-fibre in a production car.’

In 1986, Paul and crew moved north to Caloundra on Queensland’s Sunshine Coast to begin manufacturing Giocattolos with the Lock-



designed double wishbone rear suspension bolted to the five-speed ZF.

‘Absolute little weapons,’ Paul recalls. But it was an expensive exercise for his Giocattolo Motori outfit. ‘We were up against it from day one. Even though I’d stuck about \$4 million into it, we weren’t travelling all that well for money.’

At one stage, he was two months late on a loan repayment from the Queensland Industry Development Corporation and, even when that was sorted, a new QIDC boss ‘set about burying me’.

Paul was bankrupted and, after paying out his crew, headed back to Melbourne in an old Falcon ute. Just 15 of those original Giocattolos were built and the survivors are still prized today.

That was the end of Giocattolo Chapter One and Paul Halstead went about re-building his stocks by dreaming up three new companies. One tagged the World’s Greatest Business Card Company, one called Cars Online; this was pre-internet and used faxes for dealers to accurately describe stock.

But it was another recruitment company for the computer industry that set Paul up again. ‘Made a few more bucks and started building another car.’ The first of these Hyperods will be the Giacottolo Marcella after a promise to his ex-wife. After that the customer’s name will be added to the car and the books – chassis number X, Giacattolo Jack, chassis number XX, Giacattolo Jill.

And while there’ll be a swag of rare and wonderful elements in the chassis and body design of these cars, the soul of these Giacattolos will be a unique power plant, one that’s already scored with the SEMA crowd and rated number one engine by Hagertys at the 2018 Las Vegas show.

‘When it came to the power plant I wanted something exotic, I wasn’t just happy with a standard 7L V8,’ Paul explains.

‘I was really familiar with the GM LS7 motor, a beautiful engine and I’d supercharged one, which I’d put into a wide-bodied Monaro, which was a bit of a fun thing on the way through. A magnificent car with [569.28kW] at the rear wheels and your



grandmother could drive it.

‘No, I needed something a bit more exotic. I was measuring things up and – these are already dry-sumped – I worked out that if I rolled them over at 45 degrees I could slide another one in next to it and I could join the two of them together. The engine mounts were now parallel to each other and just needed a plate to bridge across the mounts.’

It took some 12 months with driveline specialists Albins Engineering in Ballarat before an alloy plate and transmission case, with six-speed sequential gearbox and limited slip differential, were designed and built.

‘The gears come straight off the crank, but we had to put in an idler gear to get the gears to reverse so the output shaft ran in the right direction.’ And with timing of the blueprinted V8s phased, so that one runs 45 degrees behind the other, this plant will run as a 16-cylinder engine, good for maybe 1029.7 kW. It’ll be adequate, Paul promised.

That was the beginning of a Hyperod project that’s cost around \$1 million to date. Designing

and fabricating the exhaust pipes alone – eight out the top and eight flat out the bottom – came to \$16,000, but Paul well understands the price of tooling up for a prototype. ‘It never stops. Trust me.’

The three-seater Giacottolo will sit at the legal minimum ride height of 100mm, on bespoke suspension and carbon-fibre tub, designed by Barry Lock and Paul. The motor will be a stressed part, bolted direct to the tub. Radiators will sit up front and pipes and electricals run down the walls of the tub and the fuel tanks sit under the passengers.

Inside a Halstead Hyperod, the driver sits centrally in an F1-style cockpit with analogue instruments, all branded, to monitor mechanicals. Passengers sit back and behind some 18 inches, their inside shoulders overlapping the driver’s shoulders.

Paul thinks the McLaren F1 is the best of the best, a thing of absolute beauty and a piece of automotive jewellery, yet a struggle for some to clamber aboard.

Here, the metre-high Giacottolo has the benefit



of no doors – saving ancillaries’ weight plus the need to cut a hole in the tub – so the step-in to the cabin is around 450mm.

Still, at 74, Paul wanted easy ingress. So he set about designing a gear set that takes the drivetrain from the steering wheel across to the right-hand side and then to a shaft that runs down the inside of the tub to the steering rack. ‘I’ve designed this box that has these 100mm gears, they run three across and two down. The tricky part is it’ll be built like a skeleton watch with a cutaway frame to support the gears, but you’ll be able to look in through clear sheets of lexan to see the gears working.’ The steering wheel will fold up and down vertically and lock in with a pin.

Pirelli rubber will be 285/30-20s up front and 355/25-21s down back on bespoke wheels. There’ll be six-pot radial AP calipers for the discs and an AP pedal box.

‘And being a Hyperod, I want people to be able to see all the mechanicals. If you look in the windscreen it runs down past the driver’s feet and you can see the rack, all the pick-up points

for the front suspension, plus the horizontal coil-over shocks. You can look at everything and see everything happening.’

That includes the mechanical marvels of the paired V8s out back and Paul’s pleased with the flow of the latest body design. He’s looking for the front of the prototype to be copper over carbon fibre, an idea pinched from Peugeot’s Onyx 2012 concept. There’s a sliding top designed too; but that’s a complex piece of work, so won’t be fitted on the first of these rods.

Paul is still chasing down some funds, but the objective is to get the Giocattolo Marcella, the first Hyperod, on the invite list for the Pebble Beach concours in 2022. If not, he’d be chasing a spot at Detroit’s annual Autorama.

He’d also be heading to the United States to build a short run of these 21st century Giacattolos down the track, but hasn’t settled on a pricetag yet.

For now, it’s all about the design and the build of a Hyperod. His ex-wife, Marcella, still a good friend, calls him mad. Paul Halstead prefers eccentric.

BMW

E9 RESTOMOD

★ WORDS COLIN FABRI

★ IMAGES NATHAN DUFF





The original BMW E9 was a highly successful and stunning coupe designed in the late 60's and achieving sales of over 30,000 during its 9-year production. Paul's BMW E9 that you see in pictures here, can only be described as being in 'like new' condition, restored and upgraded to the highest quality – however it certainly didn't start out like this for him.

Some history first – the E9 coupe was first manufactured in 1968 with a 9-year production run. Whilst there were a few different models, all housed the BMW straight 6-cylinder engine with capacities ranging from 2.8 litre to 3 litre. As a 3 litre there were the standard CS and also CSL homologation versions, universally known as the 'Batmobile' due to its unique aerodynamic panels. The

bodies were built by Karmann, a German coachbuilder who at the time built many of the bodies for BMW, Audi and VW, and best known for their highly successful 20 year build of the VW Karmann Ghia. From the Karmann factory in Osnabruck, West Germany, the BMW E9 complete built bodies were then returned to BMW for fitting of the engine, drivetrain and final components.

Paul's car started out life as a 1971 3.0 CS automatic in Silver, originally sold in Germany then on sold and imported into California at the beginning of the 80's. In about 1983 the car had its engine replaced, for reasons unknown, and the car was resprayed in Fjord Blue. The car was purchased and imported into Canberra being owned by a prominent member of Canberra's BMW car club. Paul purchased the car

RIGHT: Sitting pretty in Turkis Metallic - a rare but original paint colour for some E9's.



in 2017 and knowing full well it was in need of some work and had some visible rust to be dealt with.

After further investigation, Paul discovered the visible rust was hiding further layers of rust and at that point Paul hatched his full rebuild Restomod plans. First step was to pull the car apart, getting down to the inner panels that needed the rust repairs. Tongue in cheek, Paul tells me the German coach builder, Karmann's name translates to 'Invented Rust'. There is nothing special about Paul's car, they literally all disintegrate slowly from the inside out.

'Dealt with' in Paul's car context meant first disassembling the car in his garage, meticulously recording and storing the removed parts. The stripped car was then sent to the sand blasters to finally uncover the extent of the rust damage, so the major works could begin. Paul tells me that the

797 hours – a sadly specific number of metal work, including a variety of rust treatments and panel fabrications to mudguards, the firewall and floor pan, to then rebuild and finally create a better than original result. From there the car was put on a rotisserie, undercoated and sprayed with multiple coats of colour and clear. The fabrication and rust repairs were carried out by Mofu Fabrications and after the final respray by Final Touch Autos, the result is spectacular. During the fabrication work, which took the best part of a year, Paul sourced a new engine and gearbox to repower his E9. A more modern BMW 635CSi B34 engine and 5 speed Getrag gearbox were located at a local wreckers and the work began on the powertrain. The engine was fully rebuilt with numerous performance parts and further upgraded with an aftermarket ECU controlling all aspects of the

RIGHT: Back when a BMW kidney grille was only 2% of the car.







ABOVE & BELOW: A glimpse of the re-trimmed Tan German Nappa interior. A more modern BMW 635CSi B34 engine is now the heart of this stunning BMW E9.



engine management. New wheels, shocks and rubbers all around, the entire running gear now all replaced. The next step was for a completely new interior, sound deadening was added to all of the metal surfaces and new carpets went in. The four seats were trimmed in Tan German Nappa, woodgrain dash restored, central locking and other modern conveniences added. I ask Paul about the performance when compared to the car as when he originally purchased it, 'The E9 is much lighter than the 635 that the new engine came from, the car rides better and, oh yeah, it has significantly better acceleration!'

Paul's E9 took the best part of 2 ½ years to complete with virtually every part of the car being restored or upgraded to some extent. The car was sprayed in a stunning aqua colour known as Turkis Metallic

which was actually a rare but original paint colour for some E9's. Looking into the engine bay, it's a work of art, the engine intake and exhaust parts all ceramic coated, the bay is just immaculate. The exhaust continues below the car, and unusually, exits on the left and right side of the car just behind the rear wheels – combined with a lower than original stance gives this E9 a very purposeful look. Completing the walk around the E9 it looks as new, though better in every way than when it left the factory. It literally takes your breath away when the garage door goes up and natural light floods onto the deep coloured surface. Seen for the first time, this unusual colour just works, matching the flowing lines of the body and the bright chrome-work beautifully.

This E9 is a true 'Restomod' in every sense of the word and Paul, rightly so, is one very proud owner.

RIGHT: Tan German Nappa interior and the restored woodgrain dash. A cheeky nod to the increased engine displacement on the rear bootlid.







FORD

RANCHERO

✦ WORDS **BRUCE MCMAHON**

✦ IMAGES **NATHAN DUFF**

Ex-racer, car carer and motorsport guru Wayne Park is moving left ... into the slower lane.

Back in 1986, Wayne started out as a mechanic, built and raced dozens of machines while developing a trusted automotive service business in inner-city Brisbane. Now comes the time to take a breather, time for his own special road car and cruising into a slow-down lap.

‘When I started up, I never had a car myself. Cars were just equipment to get to and from work and I was just

building race cars, preparing cars for other people,’ says Wayne. ‘I’m getting to that stage now where I’m no longer building cars for customers and wanted something for myself. A car to go to and from work.’

Wayne always liked the look of Chevrolet’s El Caminos – that sloping back window appealed – but as a Ford man it had to be a Ranchero. And had to be a 1972 model to get that back window style, and before the front bumper became big and ugly from 1973.



BY HIS RECKONING, HE'S ONLY EVER OWNED FOUR RACE MACHINES IN HIS LIFE, YET RACED MORE THAN 40 DIFFERENT CARS OVER 36 YEARS

'So a '72 Ranchero gives me that shark nose front I'm chasing and that sloping back window. And any blue [colour] would do to a degree. I spent my whole life in red and black race cars with tachos. I wanted a car without a tacho, with an auto, and I wanted a blue car to enter a new phase of life.'

Wayne Park's race career started when he was 18 and landed a job to build a Commodore for the Bathurst 1000 – part-payment was a co-drive at Mount Panorama. That deal led to similar offers and Wayne was 'knocking off Bathursts' through the 1980s and 1990s.

He ran some nine Bathurst 1000s, thinks his best result was eight outright. 'It's deadset one of those things I mentally try and block out,' Wayne said. He rarely enjoyed the physical strains of Australia's annual touring car marathon.

But the combination of skilled race mechanic and handy racer meant Wayne built up a steady, ongoing business preparing and restoring competition cars for others, then borrowing them to hit

the circuits. He competed in all manner of events from Porsche Cup Racing to Targa Tasmanias and Australian Safaris. By his reckoning, he's only ever owned four race machines in his life, yet raced more than 40 different cars over 36 years. While fettling race and road cars in Brisbane, Wayne's business also devised and refined rules and regulations for Australia's ProCar Series, Nations' Cup and the first series for V8 ute racing – he built the first 32 V8 Brute utes for the track.

He's raced and prepared cars for circuits from Spa to Le Mans, Silverstone to Monza and every Australian track. Among the machines have been a range of Porsches, V8 Supercars, a Mercedes Sauber C9, a Ford GT40, a clutch of Ferraris and a Bizzarrini GT.

But Wayne took the helmet off in 2017; a tad disillusioned with motorsport, though still a keen driver.

So, he set off looking on the web for a blue Ford Ranchero GT; and about a year later, this one turned up in California,

LEFT: Wayne Park reckons he spent his whole racing life in red and black cars with tachos, so he wanted a blue car and, please, no tachometer!



THE '72 UTILITY WAS ORIGINAL, ALL GENUINE, BUT IT'D 'HAD THE SHIT KICKED OUT OF IT'

in an orchard somewhere north of Death Valley.

A mate checked it out for Wayne and told him the '72 utility was original, all genuine, but it'd 'had the shit kicked out of it'. It landed in Brisbane with the glovebox stuffed with original registration papers, litter bag, warranty and maintenance book; Wayne became the Ford's third owner, the second had it for around 12 dodgem months after the original owner.

Meanwhile, someone had done a burn-out in the coupe utility and worn out one rear tyre, knocked the lobe off the camshaft. Every panel had a dent in it, but when Wayne stripped it down and got in behind rear quarter panels, it was still shiny, bright metal.

Now Wayne faced a dilemma.

He'd bought the Ranchero as a workshop ute, an everyday driver and hack. But when it arrived, he realised that he had a responsibility to the Ford, something

fellow racer and classics owner Peter Harburg had bestowed on him. Peter said if you were fortunate to own an original, you were really just the custodian and with that came a responsibility as to whether you have the right to bastardise a vehicle.

'So, I had a moral problem here and didn't think I could knock it about. I was going to drive it, full on, as a dented car, and then I anguished over it for ages,' Wayne recalls.

Now he understood that he had to fix the Ranchero and treat it right. The 35,125-mile (56,528.21km) Ford was taken back to the chassis rails, the original blackjack applied in 1972 as good as new. It was almost as good as new in the cabin too and the body still tight.

'I didn't pull the dash out when I painted it, didn't want to induce a squeak or a squeal, just taped it all up to paint. When I pulled the door trims off, it was brand new inside – bright, shiny steel. Looks

LEFT: Wayne is the third owner and reckons the second owner had it for around 12 dodgem months!







*WAYNE THE EX-RACER RECKONS THE V8'S POWER
OUTPUT IS PROBABLY JUST A BIT MORE
THAN A BOAT ANCHOR*

like this poor old boy had loved it and cherished it his whole life. So, we fixed up the body and now it stays at home more so than going to work. I'll drive it a bit ... but the boys aren't going to get hold of it.'

Wayne's Ranchero GT's 400 Cleveland was rebuilt in the shop with the smallest camshaft to be found. Wayne, the ex-racer, reckons the V8's power output is probably just a bit more than a boat anchor.

Ford built some 500,000 Rancheros from 1957 – two years before the El Camino arrived – through to 1969. This 1972 model, the sixth generation, was built on the same chassis as the Torino sedan and two-door Torino GT, famed for its starring role in Clint Eastwood's 2008 movie 'Gran Torino'.

The Ranchero here runs a three-speed auto transmission with steering column shift allowing room for the driver and two passengers. One of the few unoriginal touches is that the driver's seat with a

Subaru WRX seat grafted inside the original seat and upholstery. Old racers don't have great backs.

The spray liner in the cargo tray, added by the second owner, isn't factory-original either. Nor is the HQ Holden towbar hitch that Wayne has cleverly hidden behind the Ford's RNCH numberplate and chromed surround sourced from San Diego's Pacific Beach Ford dealership.

Wayne reckons his Ranchero drives like an old Fairlane, smells right and rarely hits more than 1600rpm. Though, with this Ford's big thirst and small fuel tank, he's always noting highway fuel stops for future reference. 'It's like a big cruisy boat and that's where my head is right now.'

Still, there's also room in his life for the rebuild of a 1973 Mustang tucked up in the workshop.

That car may score a few non-genuine bits added and hidden away. 'But it's blue, no tacho and an auto too,' Wayne smiles.

LEFT: The sixth-gen Ranchero was built on a Torino chassis. The original 1957 model pre-dated the Camino by two years.



TOYOTA

FJ25

★ WORDS **JAMES CORBETT**

★ IMAGES **NATHAN DUFF**





On Thursday 20 September 1957, just 12 years after the end of World War Two, an Australian newspaper carried a small article that read:

The first Japanese vehicle to be regularly exported to Australia will be here soon. It is a four-wheel drive land cruiser made in Japan by the Toyota Motor Co. A shipment of 12 LandCruisers will arrive in Sydney by ship in the first week of October. The price is not yet known.

Australia was the first country outside of Asia to receive the LandCruiser, with the first ever exports having gone to Burma the previous year, and the United States received just one in 1958. The LandCruiser was the vehicle that Toyota chose to lead its export drive into the world's markets. It could be said that Australia and the LandCruiser were made for each other, and they were, but remember this was a time that not just Holdens ruled the road, but also Austins and Morrises. British cars were enormously popular. The Japanese war was still an unforgettable scar on many families, and the Mother Country, Great Britain, was still a big deal. And the Mother Country sent us Land Rovers. In that context, the fact that the LandCruiser succeeded, tells you that it was very good at what it did.

It seems odd now, looking at the present might and confidence of the Japanese automotive industry to realise that the FJ25's DNA was for a large part forged in US. The FJ25's predecessor the BJ Toyota's design was reverse engineered from American Jeeps captured in

the Pacific war. Not only that, its B engine had very little difference from that of a vintage Chevrolet. The J stood for Jeep. This vehicle evolved into the FJ25 with improvements like longer leaf springs from a Toyota truck – for a better ride – and the larger F motor – also basically a General Motors copy – wrapped in an intentionally less military look. It also christened the LandCruiser moniker.

Not only did this machine excel at what it was built to do, but it got to prove itself on a very big stage. The biggest infrastructure project Australia had ever seen in fact: the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Scheme. It's hard to imagine now how a civil project could attract the public's imagination in such a big way, but this was harnessing nature on a grand scale in some of the country's most rugged terrain. Changing the flow of rivers, for electricity and reliable water, and doing it in Australia's biggest mountains. The newspapers reported on the progress, children did endless school projects on it, and no doubt politicians rode on its back. Cinematic newsreels regularly showed hard men and harder machines grinding through impossibly steep, muddy terrain. Australia was no longer a rural outpost of Great Britain, but a modern nation capable of anything.

The man who bought Australia and Toyota together was Sir Leslie Thiess, a self made man of varied business; best known for the construction of roads and airfields. He had been in Japan opening up trading opportunities when he came across the LandCruiser, and tried to buy a number of them to evaluate for use in his contracts for the Snowy River

LEFT: 'Look, but please don't touch!' The oxidised paint winces when it is touched by the oily human hand. How could you ever paint over such patina?



Project. Toyota already had a Distributing Agent in Australia, B& D Motors, and Toyota suggested that Thiess place his order through them. This was done and it is believed that an initial batch of 12 found their way to the mountains. Because of protectionist trade tariffs of the time these vehicles had locally made bodies fitted from the doors back. They must have impressed Sir Les, because by 1959 he had secured the Queensland franchise for Toyota vehicles, selling more than half the Australian total sales of 69 units in the first year. By May 1961, he had obtained the Toyota agency for all of Australia and Papua New Guinea. Thiess was mercurial in his approach to business. It is interesting that in Toyota's early years with Thiess, the focus was very much on light trucks and machinery. The cars in the beginning were almost a small bonus sideline.

The FJ25 is like the holy grail for collectors of old LandCruisers. Paul McFadden is just such a collector, and he found his holy grail on a farm near Murwillumbah. His car drives, but is not restored – and I think all the better for it. Not that it hasn't presented some challenges even to look like this.

'It was missing two of the wheels. The 25 has wheels with a large oval hole, and no split rim, so they are distinctive. I was lucky with that, I rang around a lot of dealers and found one that still had a set. Really lucky! I needed a front bar too. After looking for two years, I found a guy in Canada that had one, and he needed those two extra wheel rims, so it couldn't have worked out any better.'

You might think not having a fancy paint

job makes life easy when the car is on public display every day, but I notice 'please don't touch' signs on all of Paul's unrestored cars. It looks like a bit of humour at first, but as Paul explains, 'The oil on people's skin seeps into the oxidised paint and leaves a really obvious mark. A hand print, especially in this climate in summer. You can't clean it off without washing the rest of the oxidation off as well and it ends up blotchy and looking wrong.'

This simple machine oozing evidence of history sits among a cluster of about a dozen veteran off-roaders, occupying the prime real estate at the front of Paul's Queensland 4x4 Sales showroom. 'All the modern stuff gets pushed into the background, and selling them is what puts my food on the table, so maybe I have it a bit wrong, but they add atmosphere to the place. Actually, I do think it relaxes people when they walk in to buy a car and see these old girls. They know immediately that I'm interested in four-wheel-drives and knowledgeable about what I'm selling. It's good, and basically I just like them. I don't really sell them anymore ... unless I find a better one.'

Paul has a photo-wall loaded with images of the classics that he has sold in the past.

'There are two or three on that wall that in hindsight I shouldn't have sold. I've had some blinders that I moved on. But anyway that's what you do. I started collecting and selling the oldies, just because it was something different, and not mundane. They're just as trendy as a classic Volkswagen now. I don't think there are any cheap LandCruisers left out there anymore. The horse has bolted, everyone knows what they are. To me the great

LEFT: Taking in this particular view, it's difficult to believe this Cruiser still drives!







thing about them is that as a classic they are still reasonably affordable, and you can use them and enjoy them. They are more usable than a classic muscle car and you can get into something for fifteen to thirty grand that will be good to go. My advice is not to buy the project. Pay more and get the lovely old thing that's been garaged and loved. The money in doing a project can be out of control.'

Paul and his dad Greg will think nothing of jumping on a plane to bring an old Cruiser back from somewhere far-flung.

'If it's the right car at a sensible price, not even a bargain, you have to act quickly or it will be gone. Sometimes it's not even the right car. We flew down to Adelaide to drive back an FJ55, via Birdsville.'

For those not familiar with this part of the world, that is a 3000km trip, two thirds of it on corrugated dirt roads in the desert.

'The car turned out to be a shocker. Not what I was expecting. I don't think the sellers were trying one on, I just don't think they realised how crook it was. We bought an old Nissan Patrol down there as well, just so we had a back-up vehicle. It made it, though. No problems other than a tyre.'

It doesn't always work out.

'Sometimes you have to walk away. The deal just gets to be too unrealistic ... in the wrong direction. Who Knows, possibly in five or ten years time I could be kicking myself.'

There are other larger photos on the wall. Family photos of summer holidays with a very

young Paul, one of a group of kids standing next to LandCruisers on the beach.

'I've been around this game since I was seven. Dad had a business that specialised in selling 4x4s and I was always tagging along. I've done other things in between, but I enjoy this.'

In a subtle way, Paul's 1960 FJ25 exudes something special, standing out from an already interesting group of machines. A plaque on the dash tells you that it was sold new by Thiess Toyota Mascot.

'This car had been sitting in a garage, not started for 14 years. We put a battery, plugs, points and fuel in it and it started straight up. It's amazing, it drives so similar to a petrol seventies or eighties FJ40. So torquey.'

In a way, that's not surprising, not a lot changed mechanically in LandCruisers during that time; but the big difference is that the FJ25 does not have low range. The four-speed manual transmission carries a very low first gear. Its immediate successors reverted to a three-speed, plus a high and low range. Paul says that is like an all-wheel-drive. Despite this, it proved to be more than a match for the Land Rovers initially used on the Snowy Mountains Hydro Project. A period newspaper road test announced that the FJ25 had 135 horsepower (99.29kW) and a weight of 3135 pounds. That's about 1425 kilograms, compared to the Land rover's 70 horsepower (51.48kW) and 1318 kilograms. Perhaps that power to weight ratio, with plenty of torque and robustness, was the key to the Toyota's success.

LEFT: Outwardly, this ancient workhorse bears almost no relation to huge, imposing twenty-first century four-wheel-drives, but it sure did the job in the Snowy Mountains back in the day!







R

OPEL

GT

WORDS COLIN FABRI

IMAGES NATHAN DUFF





The Opel GT was manufactured between 1968 and 1973 and in that time over 100,000 were produced. While that doesn't make them particularly rare, they are rare in Australia; as all were produced in LHD form only, and of course not sold here. Wim, the owner of this beautiful example, imported his car in 2015, after first importing himself ten years earlier to live here permanently.

Wim always had a soft spot for these cars. Growing up in the Netherlands, it was not uncommon to see one on the road. What really triggered his interest was that in the corner of the factory, where he was working during school holidays, a guy was restoring an Opel GT. This started Wim's love for the car and in the back of his mind he knew one day he would own one.

After moving to Australia permanently, he returned to the Netherlands every few years for a holiday and catch up with family. On his trip in 2014, he had some spare time and went online to see what GTs might be available. After checking out a few, he came across the example you see here. A 1971 Opel GT with an interesting travel passport. The car was sold new in US, then transported to Germany, then travelled to Netherlands where it is was eventually restored in 1992. At that time, the mechanicals were renewed with the engine having a full

rebuild. The engine was rebuilt again in 2008, this time to European specs. It ticked all the boxes for Wim; so, taking the plunge, he purchased the car and applied for import approval.

While imports can often be a difficult process, Wim told me that his experience with importing into Australia (an MGA) gave him the confidence to go ahead. 'The car was ready to be collected in Brisbane around midday. I drove up there with a friend and, having already lined up the compliance and roadworthy inspections, was able to drive the car home fully registered that afternoon.'

Opel cars were developed by the German company started by Adam Opel in 1862, making it the third oldest car manufacturer in the world. Originally building sewing machines, then Penny Farthings, the company moved into vehicle production becoming the largest car manufacturer in Europe by 1930. After being listed on the stock market in 1929, General Motors acquired a majority stake in the company. Although, World War II drastically crippled the company, it managed to survive and in the late 1940s started producing passenger vehicles again. From 1962, Opel was determined to produce a sports car for the general public and to that end, the 'Opel Experimental GT' was created as a styling exercise and was first shown in 1965 at the Paris and Frankfurt Motor

LEFT: More than 100,000 Opel GTs left the factory but how many have you seen in Australia?







THE HEADLIGHTS ARE TOTALLY UNIQUE ON THE OPEL GT, PHYSICALLY BEING ROTATED REMOTELY FROM A LEVER NEXT TO THE GEAR SHIFT

Shows with overwhelming positive feedback. It then went into production as the Opel GT from 1968. The single piece steel body work came from Chausson in France and full assembly was then completed in the Opel factory in Bochum, Germany.

Opel was aiming for a sale price of DM 10,000. The timing was perfect. There were no other sports cars available in that price class at that time and the popularity of the Opel GT exceeded all expectations. 103,463 cars were built in only six years of production through until 1973. Both a 1.1L and 1.9L engine options were available; with the larger one being most popular, providing the sporty feel to match its looks.

The Opel GT is a good looking car from all angles and has more than a hint of Corvette to it (third gen C3), which may not be a coincidence as both companies were owned by GM at the time – although, as Wim points out, the Opel GT was designed first. While the engine is mounted up front, it is technically a mid-engine car, as the engine sits behind the front axle. This combined with a very low centre of gravity means the steering is sharp and the handling tends

towards neutral. The engine is a 1.9L 4 cylinder ‘CAM in Head’ engine, which, in itself, is highly unusual – and as an awkward fact, was the same engine used by Holden in the early Sunbird variants in Australia. While not a noted performer in the Holden guise, remove 300kg, move the engine to the middle and lower it as per the Opel GT, and you have a completely different recipe – the Opel GT being more than three seconds quicker to 100km/h!

The Cam in Head design is virtually unique to the Opel GT. It was a transitional design step when moving from the older Cam in Block/pushrod designs and prior to a fully Overhead Cam design. While still relying on pushrods to activate the valves, the cam and the pushrods are now fully housed inside the head, rather than down in the block. This design was a compromise to improve efficiency and performance (happy Opel engineers) while using up existing stock from the Opel parts bin (happy Opel bean-counters). Another unusual design element, the headlights, are totally unique on the Opel GT, physically being rotated remotely from a lever next to the gear shift. They rotate

CLOCKWISE: 1.9-litre ‘CAM in Head’ four; elegant curves in vicinity of C-pillar; the only GT in its price class; simpler day – four on the floor and a plastic knob!



ABOVE, BELOW & LEFT: A solid bright red paintjob and black interior, a favoured way to colour your late '60s/early '70s GT; forward opening bonnet a charming period touch; so tiny but so much detail, note retractable headlight a-la-Lotus Elan *et al.*







around a north/south axis via a system of rods, transforming the sleek bonnet to an unusual 'Moon Buggy' like appearance when lit up.

For those of you enjoying the positiveness of this story, it may be time to look away as we are about to get a bit dark ... Whilst out for a drive in 2018, Wim found the car suddenly start to run poorly, like it was running out of fuel, something was definitely wrong. When he had to stop for a red light, the engine stalled and, at the same time, flames erupted from underneath the bonnet. The fuel line had come off the carburettor splashing fuel onto the hot exhaust below – an instant fire. Luckily, Wim had a fire extinguisher in the car, and with help from a local, managed to extinguish the flames. The engine itself faired ok. However, the majority of the engine bay wiring and the front-end paint job were very damaged. Thankfully, the car was well insured and Wim decided to take the required repair opportunity to bring the car to the next level, so instead of only painting the front section, the car received a full respray. His Opel GT was transported to JH Classics in Yatala, just south of Brisbane, where the team there went to work replacing the damaged wiring, as well as other burnt items. And repainting the engine bay, and then the entire exterior of the car. Paintwork was now restored to the original colour 'Flame Red': the best and fastest colour to show off its aerodynamic good looks. Back on the road in September 2019,

Wim drives his Opel GT as much as he can. He enjoys taking it out for a drive into the Gold Coast Hinterland where there are many great roads perfectly suited to the GT. The GT is also a regular at various Cars & Coffee events. Any excuse to take the GT for a drive is a good one, even an occasional drive to his job at Oldtimer Australia in Brisbane, where he is the Operations Coordinator for this classic car dealer – a bucket list type job for sure.

'It's an easy car to drive and enjoy, great on twisty roads, you point it into any corner and the car will go where you want the car to go. It's such a unique car here in Australia. Wherever I go, people want to know what the car is, where it came from and why haven't they seen one here before.'

Wim tells me it has 59,000 miles (94,951.3km) on it; however, adds that the speedo only has five digits, so could be 159,000 (255,885.7) or... Either way, his example drives well and, thanks to the recent respray, now looks stunning as well.

The Opel GT production story ended in late 1973. The need to re-design the car to be competitive with newer designs, such as the Datsun 240Zs, and the ending of the contract with the French body manufacturer, forced the decision to end production. For the lucky Opel GT owners like Wim, their cars live on, his example having its 50th birthday next year. So there may be a cake, but just to be on the safe side, no lit candles.

CLOCKWISE: A hint of Corvette to the snout; any excuse and owner Wim is into the car and driving; neat Opel-branded tachometer; just six letters cover brand and model (unlike today!).





MARCELLO GANDINI

★ WORDS **JAMES NICHOLLS** ★ PHOTOGRAPHY **JAMES NICHOLLS / BMW / DOCUBYTE / LAMBORGHINI**



Paying a visit to the Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile di Torino, the Italian National Motor Museum in Turin, 'Mauto' as it is known, is a veritable treat. To do so when there is a special exhibition on one of the greatest of all Italian car designers Marcello Gandini and to meet the great man himself, doubly so.

Marcello Gandini's birthplace is itself the birthplace of Italian motoring, Turin, where the son of an orchestra conductor was born on 26 August 1938. Upon meeting the small, dapper 80-year-old, now troubled by a bad back, it is difficult, until one starts talking to him, to realise that he has been responsible for some of the greatest automobile designs of all time – supercars and saloons, utility and sports cars, motorcycles, push bikes, trucks, and even helicopters.

To do justice to all that, to what this incredible designer has achieved, he would need a very large tome; so, here we will simply limit ourselves to the marvellous and amazing creations from his golden period of the late 1960s through the 1970s. The Carrozzeria G Bertone was founded in 1921 and was an already successful coachbuilder, producing bodies for Maserati, Alfa Romeo, Ferrari et al. Gandini succeeded

Giorgetto Giugiaro as chief designer in 1965.

Gandini's first opportunity at Bertone was the creation of one of the looks of the swinging 60s: the Lamborghini Miura. It was Gandini who dressed the chassis and mechanicals of Dallara, Stanzani and Bizzarrini; it was Gandini who styled this shock of the new automobile, which simply dumbfounded all who saw it, and immediately desired it. Gandini was the coming man and the designer for a new era of the motor car. The boy, whose interest in all things mechanical had begun when presented with a gift of Meccano, had dreamed up one of the enduring motoring icons of the Century – but that was only a start.

In 1969, on the stand at the Turin Motor Show was shown the Bertone Runabout. Inspired by racing speedboats of the period, it would in turn become the Fiat X1/9 and the Lancia Stratos. The previous year in Paris, the Alfa Romeo Carabo, perhaps the most extreme of all wedge-line designs of which Gandini was the pioneer, was shown; its arrow-shaped body a mainstream element of car design ever since.

Gandini would go on to produce the Lamborghini Espada, a Miura crossed with a family saloon, though unlike any family saloon that had ever been seen before, with its ground clearance of just 119cm and its 12-cylinder engine limited



to 'only' 240km/h! Another great Alfa Romeo design by the maestro, with resonating echoes of the Miura, was the Montreal, the prototype of which was presented in 1967 at Canada's Expo Montreal. Nuccio Bertone said of it that it was created to satisfy 'the maximum aspiration reached by man, when it comes to creating cars'. Gandini's prototype is even more glorious than

the resultant production model, preserving the lightness and proportions of the original drawings and, to my mind, lending support to Bertone's lofty claims.

Next up it was the turn of Lancia. Presented in 1970 at the 52nd Turin Motor Show, the Stratos HF Zero was an extreme rocket ship. Gandini's design was dubbed by his boss Bertone, 'Progetto



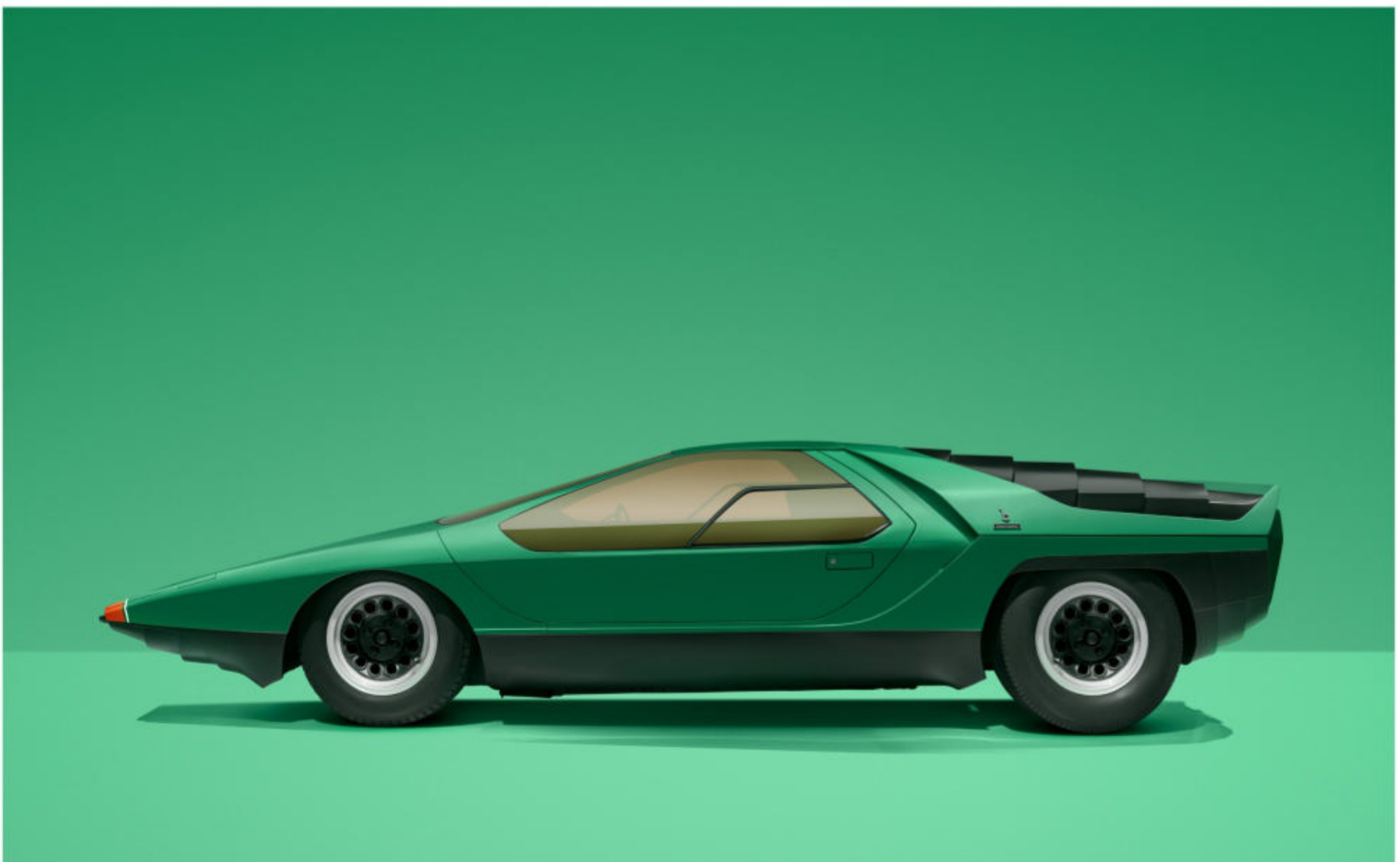
Zero', its aim, to 'redesign from scratch' the concept of the motor car. Gandini's masterpiece, based on the humble Lancia Fulvia, had an amazing upward tilting windscreen through which ingress to the cabin was achieved! The Zero led on to the Lancia Stratos HF of 1971, the legendary rally car that won four World Rally titles.

The revolution of automobile design was now fully in swing as Gandini turned the architecture of the car on its head. The design of the Stratos Zero and then his Lamborghini Countach subverted a whole previous mode of thought. Gandini had moved the engine from the front to the middle and pushed the cockpit forward and shortened the bonnet, creating vehicles that





ABOVE, BELOW & LEFT: The Lamborghini Marzal (just 110cm high), Alfa Romeo Carabo (perhaps Gandini's most extreme wedge) and BMW Garmisch (re-created from Scratch by BMW to celebrate its 90th anniversary) are all unique designs from Marcello Gandini.





set a new paradigm of dynamicism and wind resistance, the results of which can still be seen in cars being built today.

If the Carabo and the Zero were stark like brutal sharp knives, Gandini's work still retained many elements of beauty that are exemplified in his work in 1972 on the Maserati Khamsin: the grand tourer coupé named after the warm winds of Egypt. Perhaps, though it is in another Lamborghini, the incredibly avant-garde Marzal, that Gandini's work achieved its apotheosis. A maximum height of 110cm delineated its aerodynamic profile, but this still allowed for a comfortable interior for four with access via gull-wing doors, while it was powered by a 2L six-cylinder in-line power unit derived from the 12-cylinder Miura located transversely at the rear.

Therefore, in its 90th anniversary year saw BMW pay tribute to Gandini by recreating from scratch one of his lost works, the BMW Garmisch. The Garmisch, one of his lesser known designs, vanished after its debut at the Geneva Motor Show in 1970. Re-launched at the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este in May 2019, the Garmisch again demonstrates the vision and elegance of Gandini's pen.

Sitting down alone together, ultimately the final words come from the still active genius himself, 'I am the son of a composer and director of past times. Since children never want to do what their parents did, they always try to take different roads, I too ... I dedicated myself to cars and design and this caused my father some grief. When I was four, I started playing the piano, and I had to exercise for years, all the time at the piano, but I did not like it at all.

'The car that made the greatest impression in my life, and I also got to know him later, was

Mr. Bertoni, who designed the Citroen DS. I particularly like the fact that it is one of the few cars that has been constructed freely, not at all worrying about marketing, product placement, no worries about technicians involved, costs, and as a matter of fact it almost caused the firm to go bankrupt. Citroen almost went bankrupt for all the problems it had to face! But what is exceptional about this car is the fact that for once the designer could really do what he had in mind. That is important ... isn't it?

'I don't like to say which is the favourite of my designs, I don't even ask myself what I prefer of my old designs because I don't like to look back, and I always say that my favourite is the next one that I will do.

'I still do draw cars, but my job has changed a lot in the last 20 years, even a bit more, because now there are loads of stylists, thousands of stylists, all brands have 500 stylists.

'And I, by choice and also because it was something I had to do, dedicated my research on the most technical part, to design cars with innovations starting from a blank sheet of paper, up to building a prototype able to run. And this is what I like most. And that, I hope, I will be able to continue.

There is a connection between cars and architecture, but I like the design of moving things, not of still things. I also designed many houses, but there is a different feeling from a car, an airplane, a helicopter, a motorcycle because movement modifies, it enhances and gives value to the design and the sensations. And I like houses, the beautiful ones, I designed a lot and I really love them, but there is not the same spirit. The moving object has a life of its own. Whereas a house can only have a life if someone lives in it, it's different.'



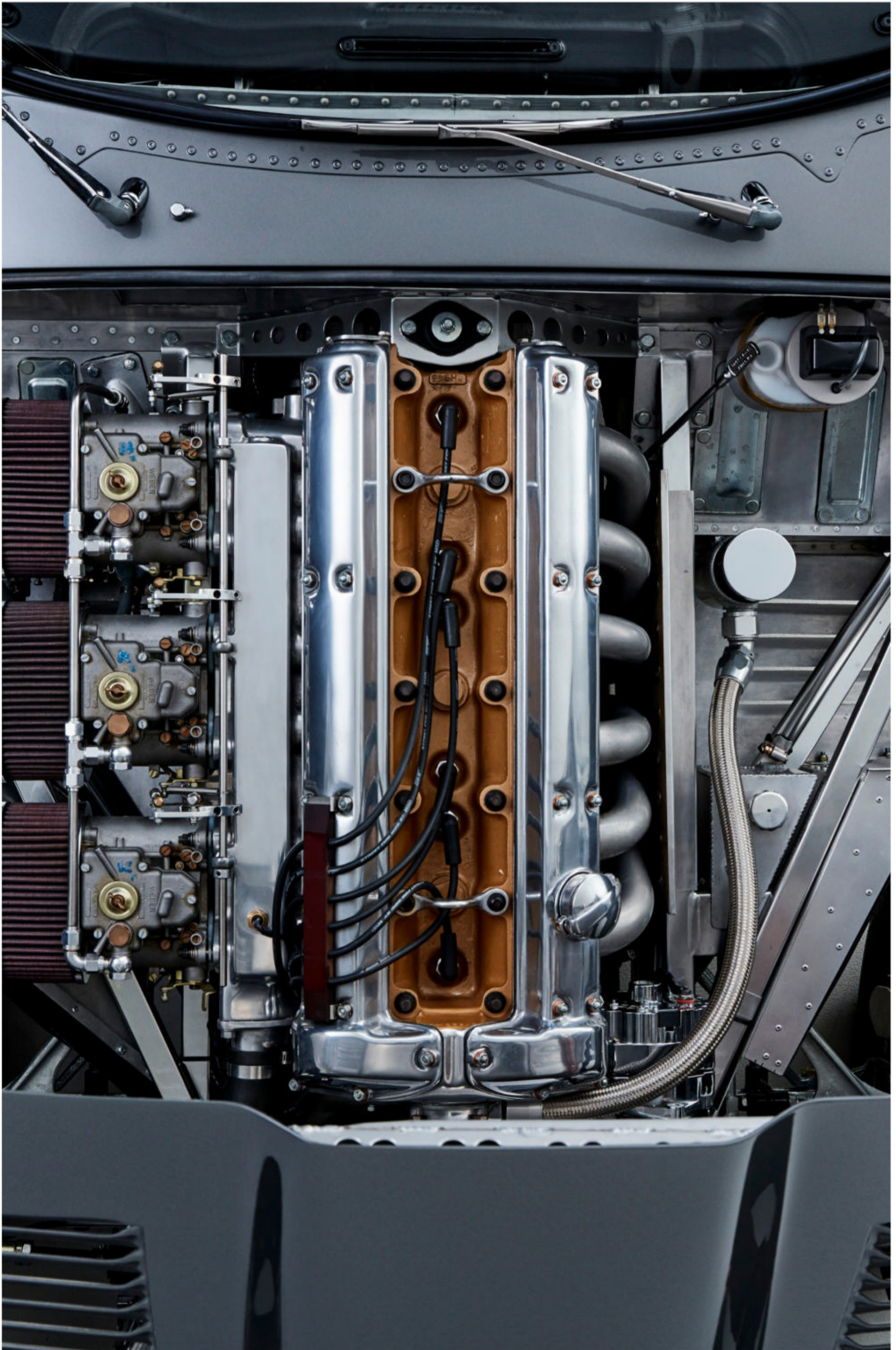
CONCOURS SPORTSCAR RESTORATIONS

✦ WORDS BY **COLIN FABRI**

✦ IMAGES **CONCOURS SPORTSCAR RESTORATIONS**







It's not often you come across a person with just the right combination of drive, passion and the business skills to succeed in often challenging times. Being great at what you do is a pre-requisite for long term business success, though never guarantees it. Rather, it is a complex combination of skills relying heavily on the ability to adapt over the longer term. Gavin King, and his 27-year business, Concours Sportscar Restoration ticks those boxes.

Gavin grew up on the Northern beaches of Sydney leaving school in 1988 and starting an apprenticeship at a local Independent Jaguar workshop. Here he learnt mechanical skills and a love for all things Jaguar. On a typical day, the workshop would be full of late 80's near new XJ's and XJS's as well as E-Type's and MKII's.

After a few years he then moved on to another local workshop, this time one specialising in the restoration of mostly Aston Martins, DB6's, AM V8's and even the occasional Lagonda. Here, Gavin received a further dose of English sportscar exposure, cementing his future in working with these classics.

In 1993 he made the decision to start a business in partnership with a spray painter mate, and Concours Sportscar Restoration was born. In addition to the mechanical services the two started restorations, focusing on the classics

he had become familiar with. This continued until 1994 when Gavin bought out his partner, moved to larger premises and continued Concours Sportscar Restoration on his own. In 2002 the big step to even larger premises occurred and the King family relocated to the current location in Tuggerah, about 1 1/2 hours North of Sydney.

To date the business has gone from strength to strength and Gavin's adaptability has seen him move from restorations onto recreations. His recreations cover the whole gambit from completely new chassis builds to recreations based on the older E-type platforms. A combination of aluminium panels formed with an English wheel and updated technologies give a modern take on a 'Low Drag' or 'Lightweight' version of the E-type. Fuel injection, computer control, power steering and air conditioning are just some of the updates that go into these stunning vehicles, making them more practical and useable for his customers.

Concours Sportscar restoration has completed both complete restorations back to original like condition as well as recreations using an original chassis or custom chassis as a base. Considering Gavin's company is involved in both restoration and recreations of the same car models it is a unique opportunity to compare the two side by side.







Note how the removal of the front and rear bumpers yields a cleaner streamline, while the bonnet vents hint at a major power boost.



Original XK120 (1948-1954)

The Jaguar XK120 was a stunning open top 2-seater designed in the late 1940's by Jaguar chief engineer William Heynes. Production began in 1948 with 242 being traditionally built with wooden frame and aluminium formed panels. The later versions were changed to an all steel construction and production continued until 1954 with some 12,000 having been produced. During its production the XK120 was available first as an open 2 seater, then later a fixed coupe and drophead coupe versions. The '120' nomenclature comes from the claimed top speed of the car of 120 miles per hour making it the world's fastest production car at the time. All XK120's were fitted with Jaguars' 3.4 litre straight 6 engine, double overhead cam and fed via twin side-draft SU carburettors producing 160hp.

Concours XK120 Recreation (2020)

As a base for the first recreation, an original XK120 chassis was sourced. This chassis was subjected to a complete restoration, including mounting to a body jig to check and fix alignment and then replacement of all floors and sills. At this point modifications were made to accept an updated suspension, and the chassis sprayed in 2 pack black, ready for the new body panels. The all new aluminium panels are all hand formed on an English wheel and trial fitted to ensure accurate fit. The main change to the external appearance for the recreation was the deletion of the front and rear chrome bumpers, giving this version a cleaner and more modern look. Next up for improvement was the engine. Based on the 3.8 MKII unit, the internals are upgraded with custom forged pistons and conrods and an increase of compression to 10.5:1. Up top the intake is XK120 style with twin 2 inch SU carburettors, increased from the original 1 3/4 inch. With the completed engine upgrades the 3.8 litre now produces 285hp, a healthy improvement over the original. Virtually everything on this car is either reconditioned or new, and where applicable upgraded.



Low-drag E-Type uses a custom monocoque with aluminium panels and a unique roof, handmade and rivetted to the body. The result is stunning!



Original Jaguar – Low Drag E-Type (1962)

Soon after the release of the series one E-type, a concept car was produced to create an aerodynamic styled racer to more follow the spirit of the D-type. The steel chassis was retained; however the panels were created in aluminium instead of steel, with a 'Low Drag' aerodynamic rear via new panels, and the rear hatch was welded shut. The front windshield had an increased rake and all windows other than the front were made in Perspex for weight reduction. The majority of the interior was stripped out and discarded.

Only one Low drag coupe was ever produced with Jaguar deciding to sell it off rather than develop further. Originally sold to one of Jaguars racing drivers, it was subsequently owned by a number of collectors throughout its life and is believed to now reside in a private collection in Sussex, UK.

Concours – Low Drag E-Type

For this recreation Gavin uses a custom monocoque instead of the standard designed chassis. The car has all new aluminium panels hand formed with an English wheel, including the Lightweight Spec aluminium bonnet. The unique roof is handmade and rivetted to attach. The engines are completely refurbished and the 3.8 litre, or 4.2 litre, is strengthened and updated as per the Concours XK120. The gearbox is all new with alloy casing. To date Concours Sportscar Restoration have delivered 3 to customers and currently a further 2 are currently under build. They are expected to be used for both road and track and as such are setup with adjustable style race suspension replacing the original.



With 150 additional horsepower and dramatically reduced weight, the suspension, brakes and steering have all been commensurately upgraded.



Original Jaguar – Lightweight E-Type (1963-1964)

Where the Low Drag E-type was designed as a coupe version, the Lightweight E-type built between 1963 and 1964, were based on the convertible. Only 12 were manufactured and like the lightweight, also featured handmade aluminium panels instead of steel. The engines have an aluminium block rather than the iron block of the standard car, and overall weight of the car was reduced to around 1000kg making it more than 200kg lighter. The weight reduction process was hugely effective and combined with engine upgrades, making around 340hp, could accelerate to 100km/h in a little over 4 sec. The cars were intended for the track and were entered into various races, however, did not see the same success as the earlier C and D-type cars.

Concours – Lightweight E-type

The Concours Lightweight E-type recreation is built for the enthusiast driver in mind. Built in batches of 3, they are fully assembled with the exception of paint, allowing clients to test drive the car before customising the colour to their preference. As per the Low Drag recreation, the chassis is a custom Monocoque with hand formed aluminium panels created with traditional processes. Panels are formed on the English wheel from patterns and placed on wooden or fibreglass bucks for trial fitting. Fitted with a new 5-speed gearbox and performance 3.8 litre engine, the car also has modern conveniences like air conditioning, catalytic exhaust system, adjustable suspension and electric power steering. Induction for the engine is provided by ‘old style look’, but modern operation, EFI 8 stack throttle bodies. Gavin has, of course, driven both restored originals and his own recreations, and I asked him to compare the driving experience between the two. ‘Our recreations are about 300kg lighter and have 150 more horsepower than a standard E-type. The power to weight is therefore drastically different and the car feels lighter, nimble and more secure on the road. Whereas the originals had things like skinny tyres and long suspension travel, once these items are upgraded the car just feels more modern and alive on the road’.

BLUEBIRD

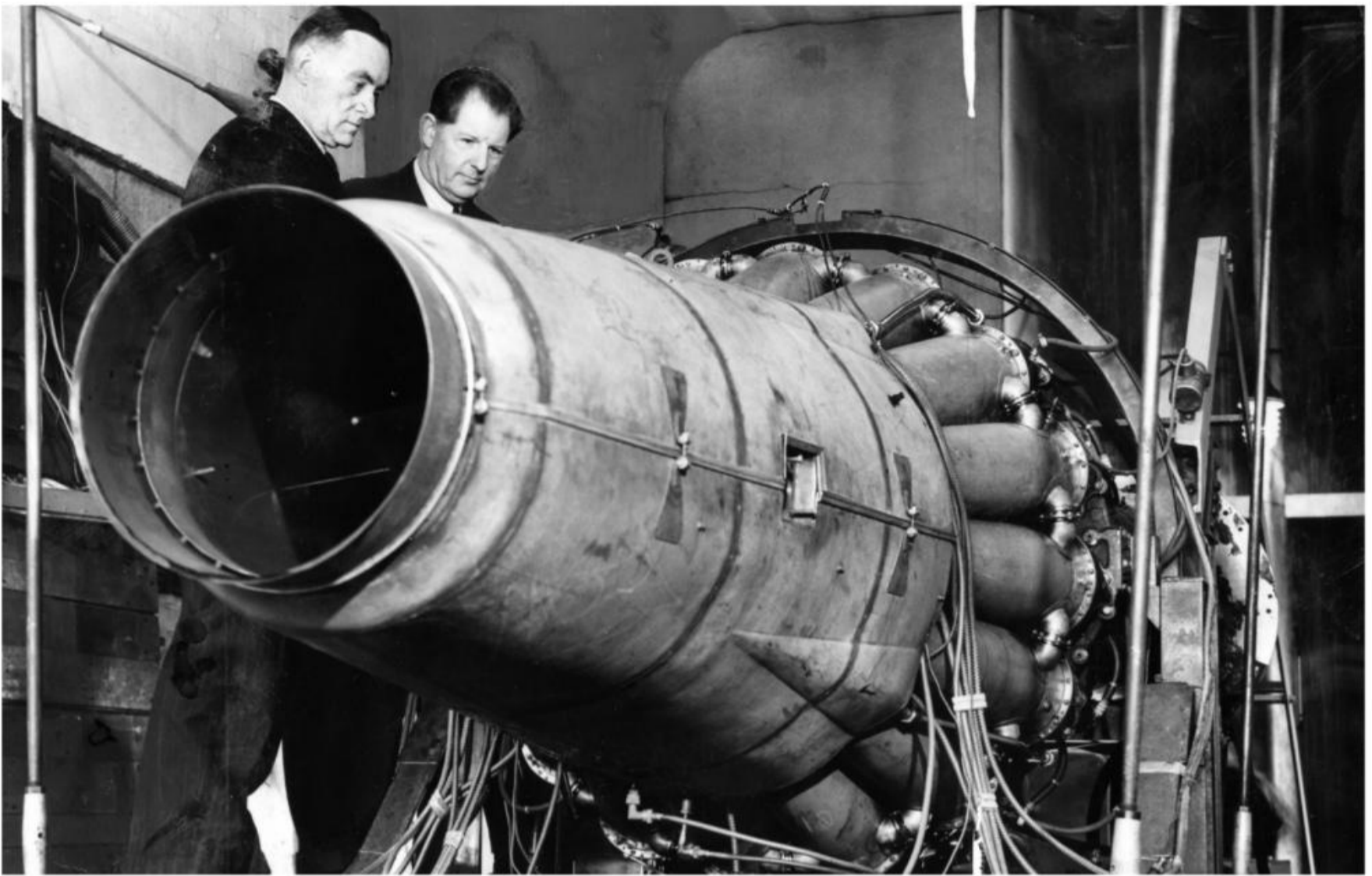
PROTEUS CN7

✦ WORDS **JAMES NICHOLLS & VINCENT DE ROSSI**

✦ IMAGES **SCANS FROM DONALD CAMPBELL ARCHIVE**







ABOVE: Planet New Ltd image shows Sir Malcolm Campbell (left) and Major Frank B Halford, Chief Engineer of the Goblin jet-engine, designed and developed by the De Haviland team examining the engine after a test run at the De Haviland Works, Hatfield, Hertfordshire 18th March 1947. This is the engine Campbell will use for his world water-speed attempt.

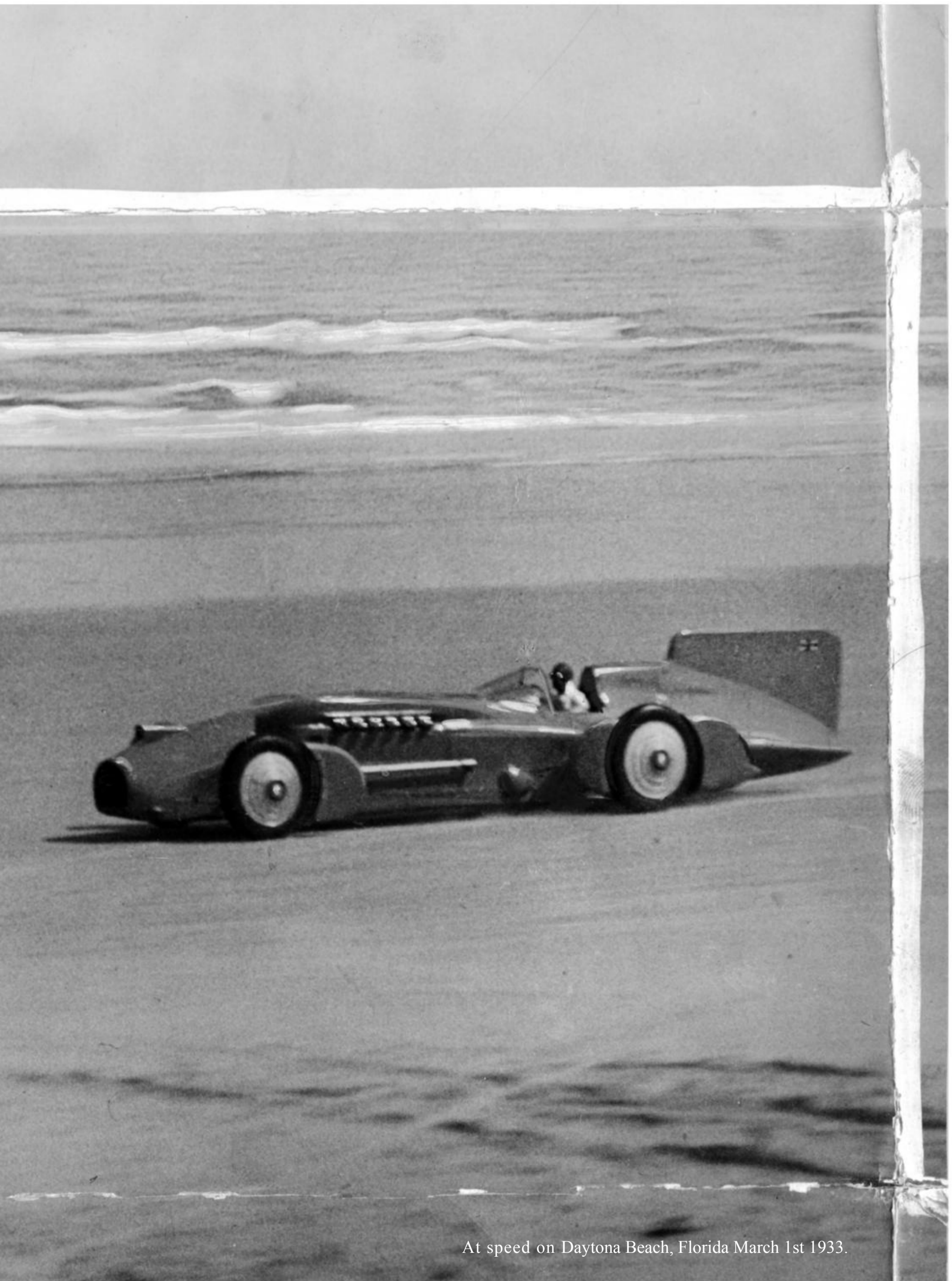


ABOVE: Image supplied by Keystone showing Sir Malcolm Campbell examining the tyre that burst at 280 mph at Bonneville Salt Flats, Utah 12th September 1935

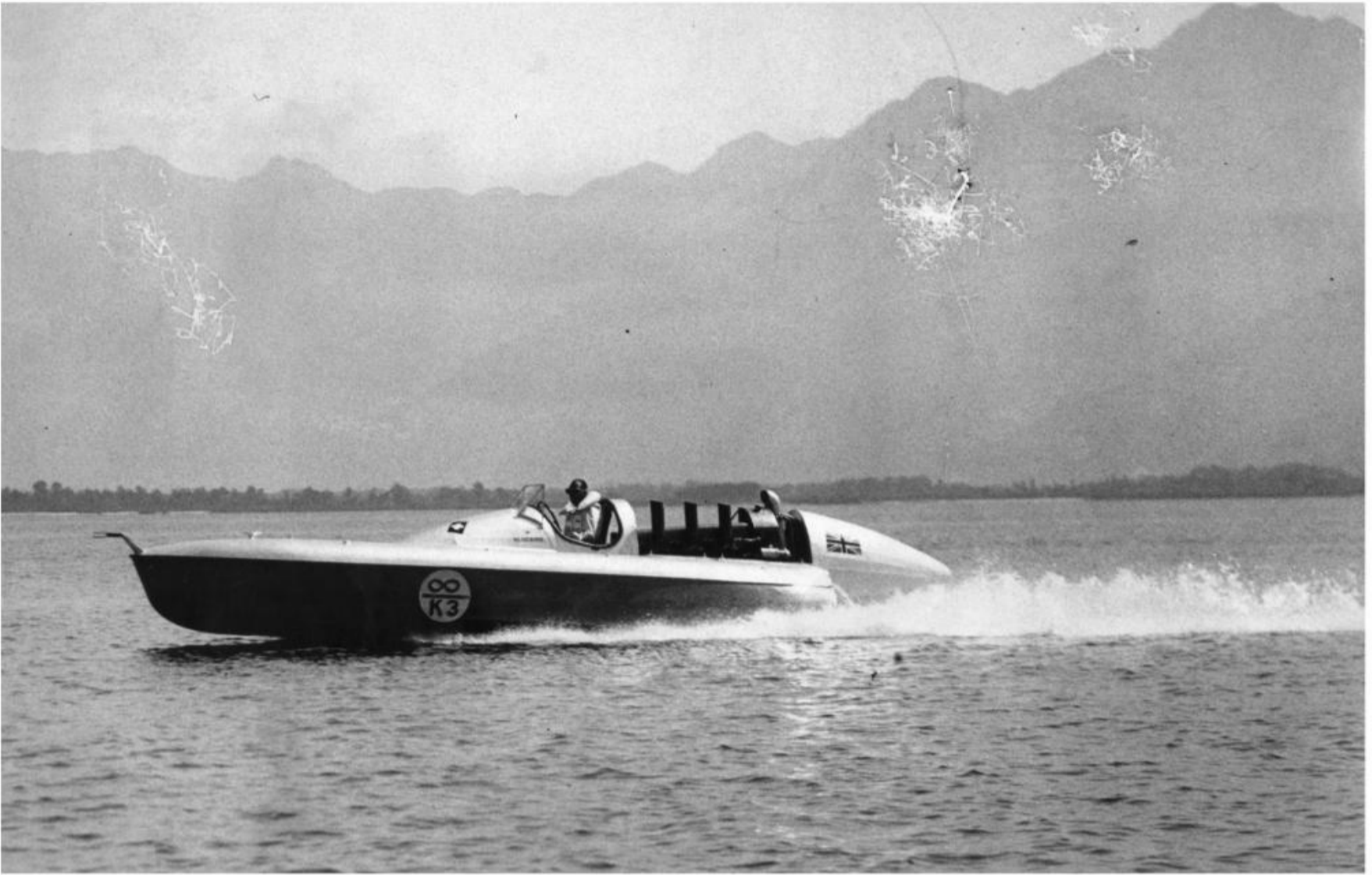
A few years ago at auction I came across a selection of old press prints supplied by various news agencies. The Lot contained 19 images of Sir Malcom Campbell in his various Bluebird boats and cars breaking the world water-speed and land-speed records. No one else bid on these important historical original prints and I was able to pick them up for a song. On the back of many was written the original caption and instructions, with some cropped marked by chinograph pencil. Sir Malcom Campbell and his son Donald Campbell were instrumental in the golden age of speed-record breaking after the First World War until the 1960s and were true “rock-stars” of the time before moon exploration and the swinging ‘60s and the world moved on. Since I was a small boy though I have always had a fascination with speed-records on land and water and have visited many places where these heroic feats took place. In Australia these include Lake Dumbleyung in WA and Lake Eyre on which Donald Campbell became the only person to break the world water and and land-speed records in the same year in 1964.

PREVIOUS PAGE: This image was distributed by Planet News Ltd and is a first photo of Sir Malcolm Campbell’s new world speed record of 272 mph, showing the watching crowd at Daytona Beach, Florida March 1st 1933.





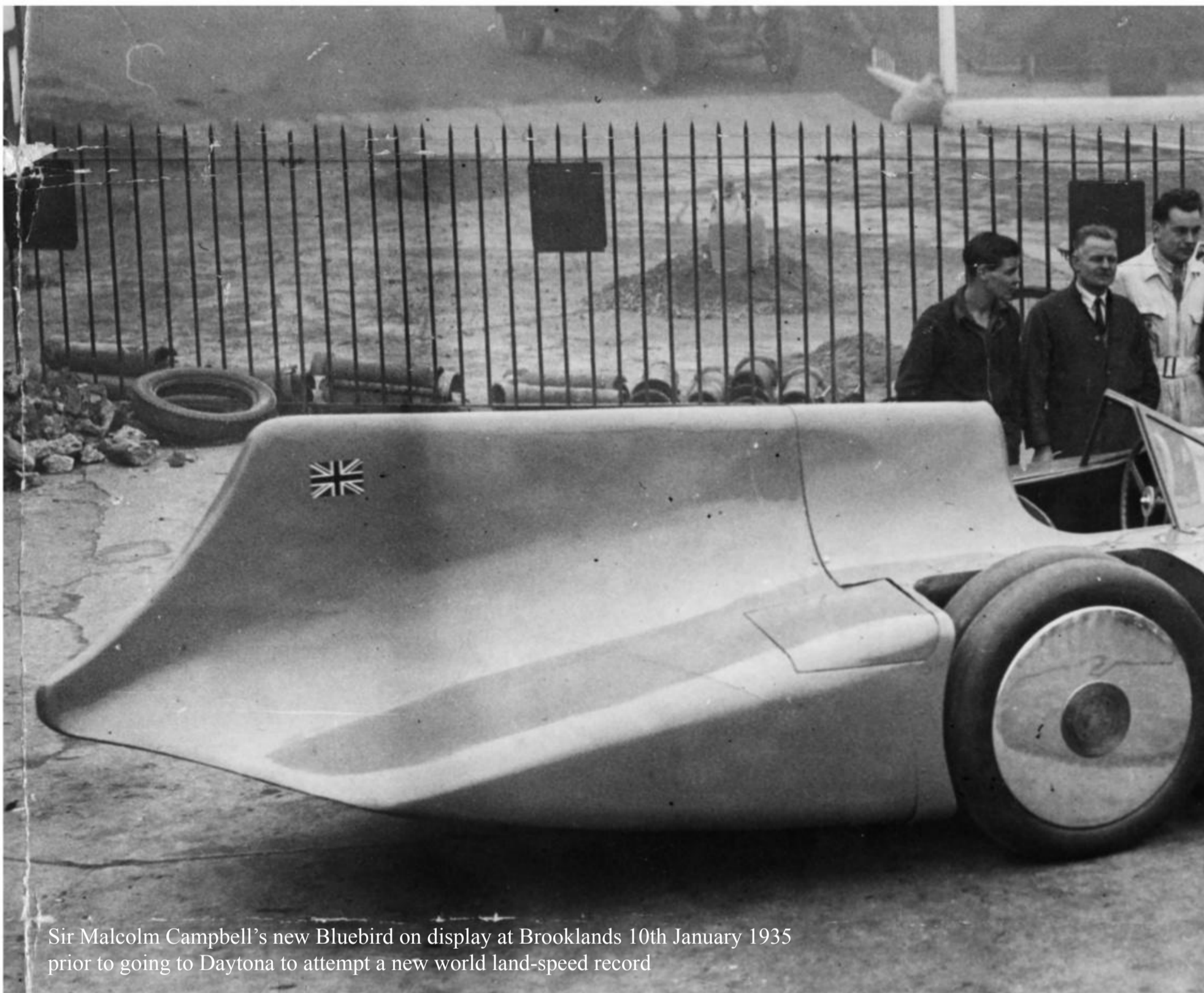
At speed on Daytona Beach, Florida March 1st 1933.



ABOVE: Image distributed by Fox Photo Ltd of The Bluebird at speed during a trial run on Lake Maggiore 19th August 1937. **BELOW:** The Associated Press, London showing a close up of Sir Malcolm Campbell seated in the cockpit of Bluebird at Porchester near Portsmouth May 29th 1947. **RIGHT:** Malcolm Campbell in his new Panhard in 1906.







Sir Malcolm Campbell's new Bluebird on display at Brooklands 10th January 1935 prior to going to Daytona to attempt a new world land-speed record

Bluebird CN7 is one of a long line of speed machines associated with the Campbell family, it's the first car to exceed the 400mph barrier and the last wheel driven car to do so.

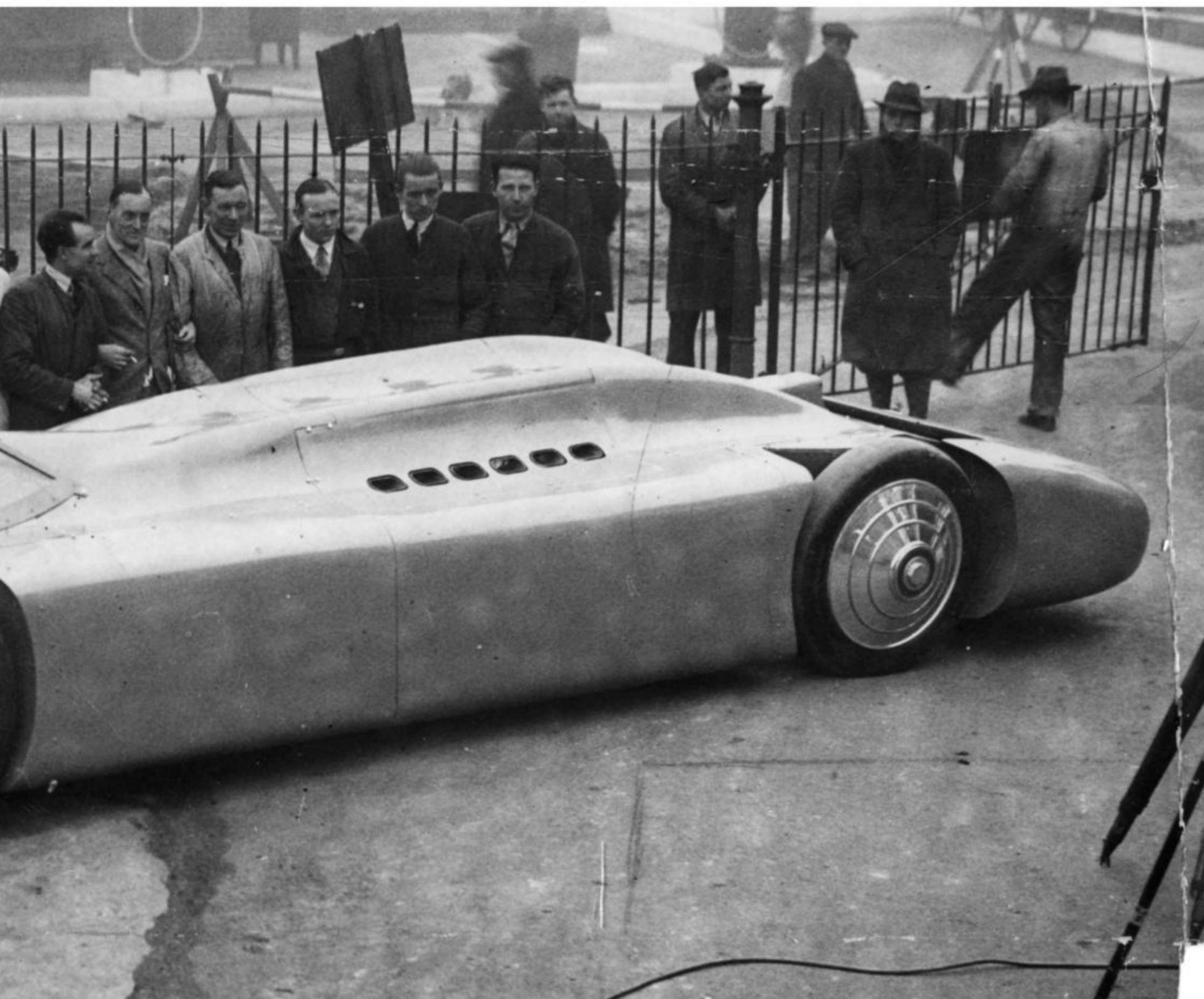
Bluebird's first record attempt in September 1960 at Bonneville ended in disaster when a gust of wind caused the four-ton Bluebird to veer of course and fly into the air, it hit the ground somersaulting several times then sliding several hundred feet before coming to a standstill on its belly. Donald Campbell escaped serious injury, perhaps it was significant that his lucky teddy bear 'Wappott' was in the cockpit with him but

Bluebird was severely damaged.

Undeterred Campbell rebuilt Bluebird this time with a distinctive high tail to aid stability. A new venue was found at Lake Eyre in South Australia. Bad weather meant that record attempts in 1962 and 1963 had to be abandoned. Eventually, despite mechanical problems and unpredictable weather, on 17th July 1964 a speed of 403.10mph was attained.

Campbell's record was short-lived. Rule changes meant jet-propelled cars were now accepted. By the end of 1964, the record had been broken five times and was 133mph faster.

Bluebird Proteus CN7 was a revolutionary



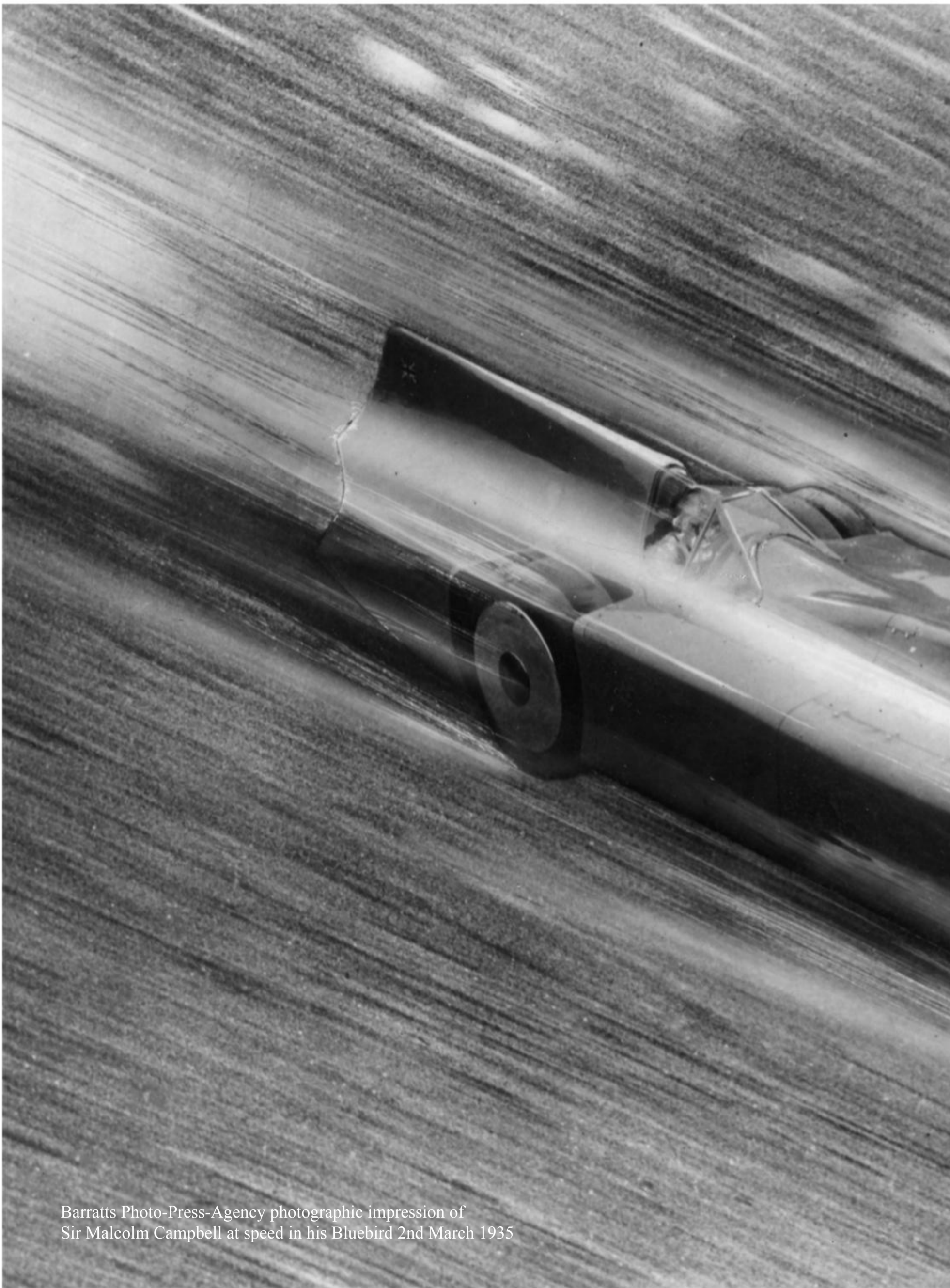
and advanced car for its time that featured an advanced aluminium honeycomb chassis, fully independent suspension and four-wheel drive. It also had a head-up display for Campbell.

It's widely acknowledged amongst motor racing's finest engineers that Bluebird was the first car to properly recognise, and use, ground effects. It was built in a way that you build an aircraft, constructed using a monocoque working with a lot of lightweight structures, but at the time motor racing teams weren't doing that, not even in Formula One.

Bluebird was powered by a Bristol-Siddeley Proteus gas turbine engine that developed over

4,000bhp. It was a two-spool, reverse flow gas turbine engine that was specially modified to have a drive shaft at each end of the engine, to separate fixed ratio gearboxes on each axle. It was designed to do 500mph, but surface conditions, brought about by adverse weather in 1963 and 1964, meant that its fastest recorded time was nearly 100mph short of its hypothetical capability.

Engineers say that should an exact replica be built today and achieve its potential, it would beat the existing record of 470.444mph set by Don Vesco's 'Vesco Turbinator' in 2001 and still be the fastest wheel-driven car today.



Barratts Photo-Press-Agency photographic impression of
Sir Malcolm Campbell at speed in his Bluebird 2nd March 1935





PONTIAC VIVANT

WORDS **STEVE KITRELL**

IMAGES **IAN WOOD**



It is not difficult to be completely smitten by this car the moment you see it – drowning in its natural body waves, immersed in its rich colour palette, and lulled to sleep by its wonderful exhaust note. For 40 years it was hidden from the public eye, tucked away for a long and unwarranted slumber. Fast forward to today to find it has been completely restored and has made its rounds to some of the top Concours events in the world, enticing show-goers to stop, stare and ponder its origins.

We can bet that is why you are here as well – charmed by its splendour and curious to get a better grasp on just how this one-off 1965 Pontiac Vivant 77 Prototype came to be. Let's take a trip to Detroit and look at some of the most interesting design cues straight from the brilliant mind of Herb Adams.

His name is synonymous with success under the GM heritage brand. Herb Adams was an engineer and designer, penning some of Detroit's most iconic cars of the 1960s and '70s.

The Vivant prototype was a side project (out of view of GM executives) and virtually down to Adams' own imagining, marrying parts and pieces together to create a cool original. There are some cues from the Bertone B.A.T. cars, *inter alia*.

Even to begin to build this complicated project,

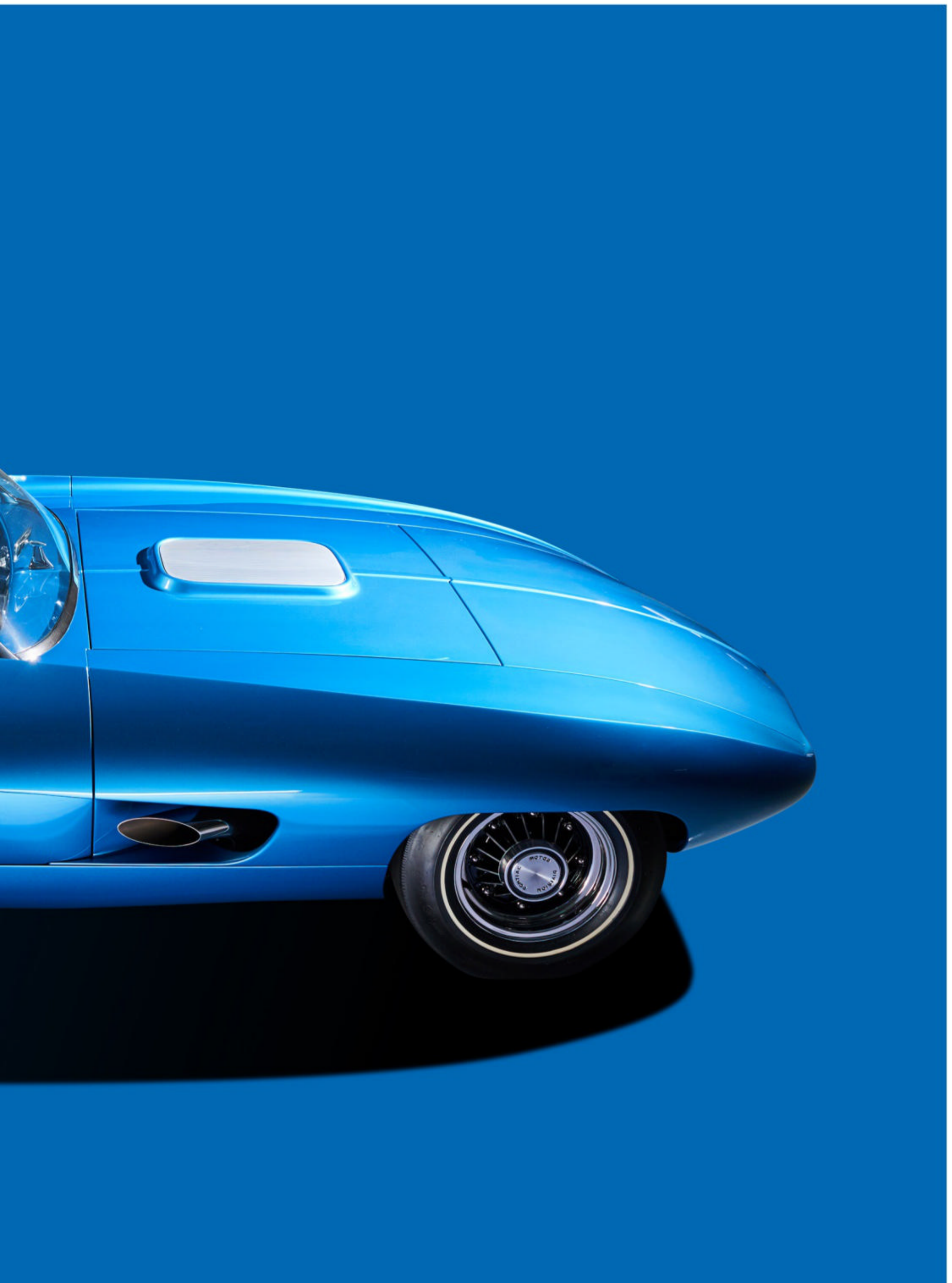
Adams needed to enlist some help. Luckily, he didn't have to venture out too far to secure local talent, with the kind of European flair he was looking for. Known as 'The Beatles of Troy, Michigan', John Glover, Jack Henser and Harry Kennedy constituted a triple-threat of Englishmen, all masters of the English Wheel. They would be working in aluminium.

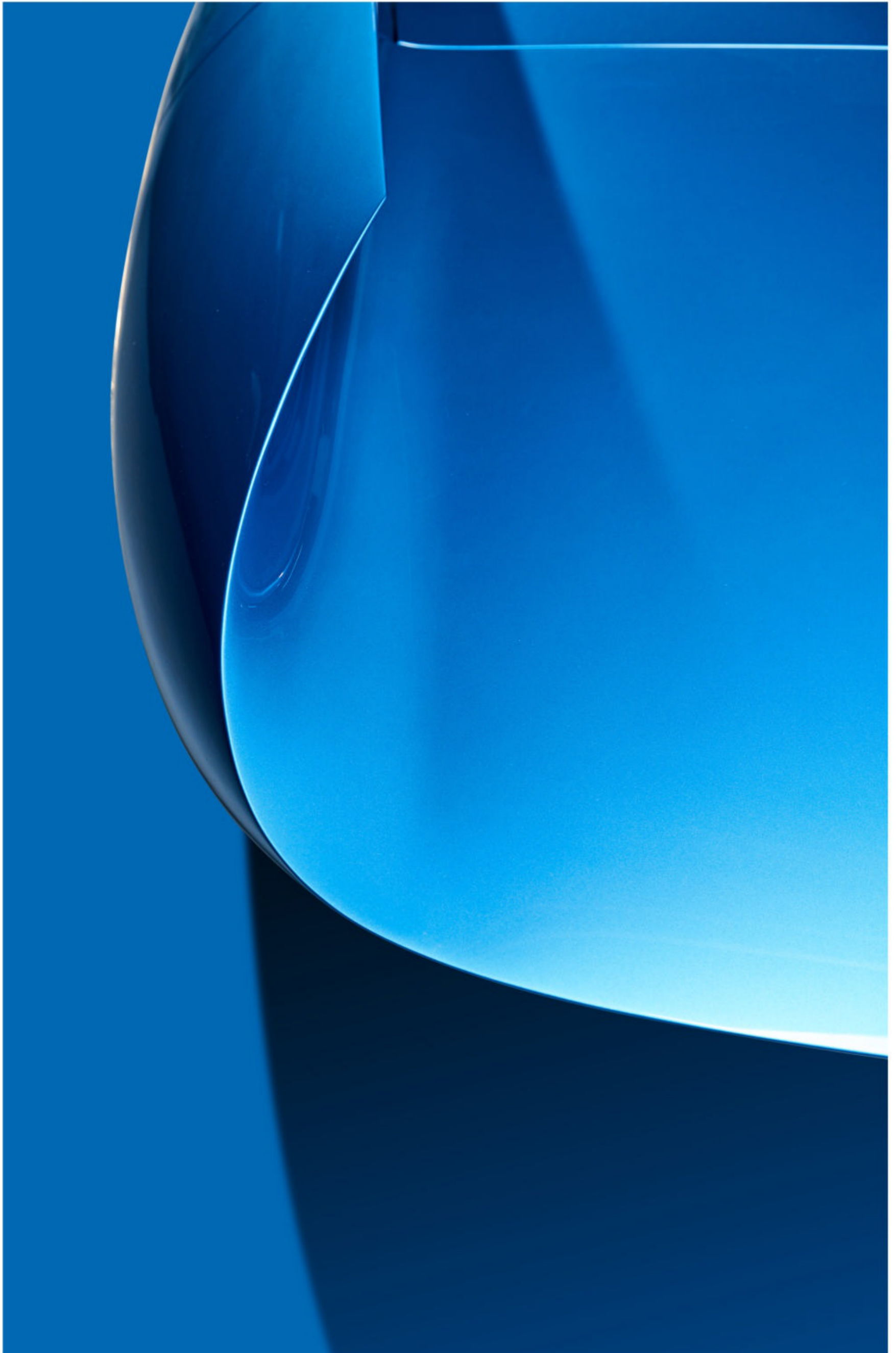
Just look at it. A mini masterpiece and a worthy subject of a case study. When taking a step back, you start to notice that a lot of conventional items are missing. Mainly safety and wind protection, but again, this is a one-off so that can be expected. A chopped, frameless and raked windshield, no bumpers, door handles and side mirrors make this car streamlined and simple. This isn't about cutting corners but rather an intentional emphasis on the streamline.

Our Vivant was no slouch on the road, either. Adams actually drove it for years before selling it off to fund other projects. The hand-rolled body was mounted on a special chassis. Adams installed a one-off NASCAR powered Pontiac 370 cubic-inch V8 engine paired with a Tempest Super Duty transaxle and a four-speed Muncie gearbox. The GM paint code is Nassau blue 192 matched with Daytona Blue leather seats. You'll even notice the rare Stewart Warner gauges and eight-lug wheels from GM that were found on various models.









'IT'S PURE ROCK 'N 'ROLL, THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO DESCRIBE IT,'

The Vivant made its debut at the Detroit Autorama in 1966 before being shown at several other shows that year, making a mako-shark-type splash wherever it went. It then disappeared for 40 some-odd years, with little trace. It was rumoured that the car was sold by Adams in order to settle some period racing debts. Besides, as most builders can attest, the best project is always the next project.

Putting the car back into the design room, we are delighted to review its credentials. The main inspiration came from a trio of Bertone-bodied concept cars. Franco Scaglione penned the Bertone Aerodynamica Technica B.A.T. cars in the early 1950s, pushing the boundaries of what rear fenders could look like. Can you see it? The manta ray curled-over wings, flowing gracefully around the back end of the car?

But let's start at the front, where two wide nostril-like openings dominate. A dynamic façade with a hood-split nose and headlights tucked in tight to the cavity. The leading edge of the front fender, as it makes its way up the body line, is truly fantastic. That edge starts strong, getting thinner and tighter as it reaches the end. Think of it like finding the perfect break point on a wave, feeling nothing as you drop in, tucking into the ideal barrel.

Inside the cabin feels very period for any sporty GM car. Large comfortable seats with a typical

looking four-spoke faux wooden steering wheel. Odometer and tachometer front and centre with your other gauges located below the trident-like script on the painted dash. As we swim in the blue fishbowl, I find myself attracted to the metal brightwork around the gauges and center console, like a fish lured by shiny bait. Your spare arm – if driving a-la Peter Perfect with one hand – sits high up on the door sill: you tuck in comfortably in the middle of the body wave arch and feel right at home.

This is how show patrons saw the car in the late 1960s. Fast forward to 2007 when the car was discovered by three businessmen who then offered it up on eBay. A post-auction sale was made and the Vivant was off to its next owner. The car was displayed in 2011 at the Glenmoor Gathering of Significant Automobiles before undergoing a full restoration.

The restoration was carried out by Dr Mark Brinker with the help of Jake Yenny and his team at Jem Motor works in Loveland, Colorado. Herb Adams himself oversaw the project, with much insight and enthusiasm according to Yenny.

'It was a complete car, but a concept notwithstanding, so it was neither fully functioning nor usable when we got our hands on it,' commented Yenny with much excitement. 'Herb's collaboration on the

LEFT: A fabulous detail which reflects the whole: the Vivant was astonishing in 1966, and still is!







HERB ADAMS CREATED A CAR THAT SEEMED DESTINED FOR EXCELLENCE.

project was amazing. Such a sharp man and he still does a lot of consulting work for major manufacturers and race teams. We are just so humble and grateful.'

A remarkable 8000 hours were accrued to finish the car. The restorers were able to save the entire body, but expensive repairs were required to bring the Vivant to Concours condition.

Pebble Beach was an obvious choice for this car, so out West it went in 2017, where it was displayed in the 'American Dream Cars of the 1960s' class. (Pebble Beach always curates wonderful and interesting classes each August during Monterey Car Week. The idea here was that each vehicle was built in America and was the product of an individual designer's vision.) After competing with numerous outstanding vehicles, the Vivant took home a Best in Class award.

The car was then sold to Phillip Sarofim, a young collector from the Los Angeles area. Savvy and tasteful, Phillip understands special coachbuilt cars and rotates many historically significant automobiles in and out of his garage. More importantly, Phillip uses all of his cars and loves to drive hard.

'It's pure rock 'n' roll, that's the best way to describe it,' said Sarofim over the phone. 'The dichotomy of the striking shape and

the powerful sound it produces. Like Angus Young pulling out his Gibson SG and wailing in your garage.'

Phillip's lighthearted nature and attention to detail made for a wonderful talk about his upbringing with unique cars, which interestingly started from (the same) Dr Brinker, who was a neighbour of his as a child and teenager.

'He's the reason I began looking at more out-there cars, models you don't find on a lot. That's why this car is better than a more powerful Corvette I can just go out and buy right now. He showed me that there are cracks and crevasses in the car community.'

Other than the sound and feel of the car, Phillip made sure to mention that it just has a presence about it, almost impossible to describe unless you see it for yourself. 'It's deceptively large and looks bigger in the metal. It assumes a grandeur that's hard to define.'

Phillip took his Vivant to the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este in 2018 where it was acknowledged and received a special award. This is actually rather fitting, since a Bon Vivant is someone who loves the good life. From a star-car at its Autorama debut in 1966 to its modern world tour and beyond, Herb Adams created a car that seemed destined for excellence.

LEFT: It was no surprise when the Vivant won its American Dream Cars of the 1960s Class at Pebble Beach in 2017.

GIOCATTOLO

COMPETIZIONE

★ WORDS COLIN FABRI

★ IMAGES NATHAN JACOBS





Paul, the owner of this very special black Giocattolo is no stranger to the model. He, alongside Barry Lock, conceived the Giocattolo company Giocattoli Motori and its vehicles way back in the late '80s. Many, if not most, would know the story of the Giocattolo, as it has by now entered folklore. A car designed on the Sunshine Coast to be better than the best sports cars around of the day. A stunning iteration of the classic Alfa injected with Holden V8 mid-engine testosterone – what's not to like. Plans were big, motivation was high, prototypes were developed, followed by the production of 15 vehicles. That is literally the end of the story. The end was swift and brutal and involved changes in government investment policy and shifting goal posts that weren't able to be dealt with. It sent the company and Paul bankrupt. Subsequently, some may say the first Giocattolo wasn't a success – I disagree, I have driven one.

Some of the events that occurred during the development were simply ground-breaking. Holden aficionados would know that back in 1988 the first electronic fuel injected V8 was installed into the Holden 'super limited edition' flag-ship Walkinshaw VL Commodore: complete with 4 bolt mains and twin throttle body inlet manifold. So how did this Holden developed engine end up being supplied to the Giocattoli Motori car company, in quantity, to be installed essentially into an Italian Alfa body? It's not like you could buy one over

the counter at your local Holden dealer. Paul made the deal directly with the Holden Engine Company – right under the nose of Holden Corporate itself. It had never been done before, and has never been done since.

Now over 30 years later, that's all water under the bridge. Paul didn't get to keep his pick of the production Giocattolos, like you might think. By the end of the '80s, there was no company and all cars, parts and premises had to be sold off to keep the wolves at bay. No, it wasn't until the 2000s for Paul to be back on his feet and in a position to purchase the black one you see here. At the time, it was a standard Giocattolo – a laughable term in the context – exceptionally well-conceived and engineered. It had Kevlar reinforced panels replacing the majority of original steel, reducing weight and adding rigidity, and a 5L Holden V8, a midship replacing the previous rear seats. The engineering to accomplish what I just wrote in one short sentence was a substantial undertaking. The final result was that the car looked the part, and went the part, successfully outperforming the best from Europe and gaining cult status.

Paul's is not your standard Giocattolo in any sense. From the outset, Paul was always going to modify this one. In essence, his plan was to turn it into the second iteration of the original car: one that would have evolved from further development, had the business continued. It was a noble plan.

RIGHT: Paul Halstead was the very proud owner of this black Giocattolo, which he acquired 20 or so years ago and has recently sold.







Paul has owned his 1989 Giocattolo for nearly 20 years – chassis number 11 from out of the 15 and technically the last one ever built. The changes for this one in definition are simple: more power, improved handling, less weight, and, while he was at it, sounds even better. And a name for this upgraded package, ‘Competizone’ of course.

The original engine was removed, and a higher performance upgraded engine package was sourced, enlarged to 383 cubic inches. Unfortunately, this configuration was not reliable and Paul was back to the drawing board. The second attempt was with a brand-new block built into a complete engine by Ian Tate; whose experience is legendary, having built many race engines for Peter Brock and the Holden Dealer Team in the past. The engine was strengthened with forged pistons and conrods, up top bigger valves, solid roller cam and larger injectors allowed the engine to produce a measured 397.17kW and 677.91Nm. The engine capacity is now 355 cubic inches or just on 6L. As a brand new engine, the block was then able to be stamped with the same factory engine number – a nostalgic touch. The exhaust system was then rebuilt without the restrictions necessary at the time. Of the exhaust, Paul said, ‘The single biggest thing both Barry and I hated on the production models was the exhaust system, which had to be strangled to pass the 78db drive-by testing back then’. The exhaust is now high mounted on the engine and exits via a simplified

muffler design through the redesigned rear panel and in-line with the rear lights.

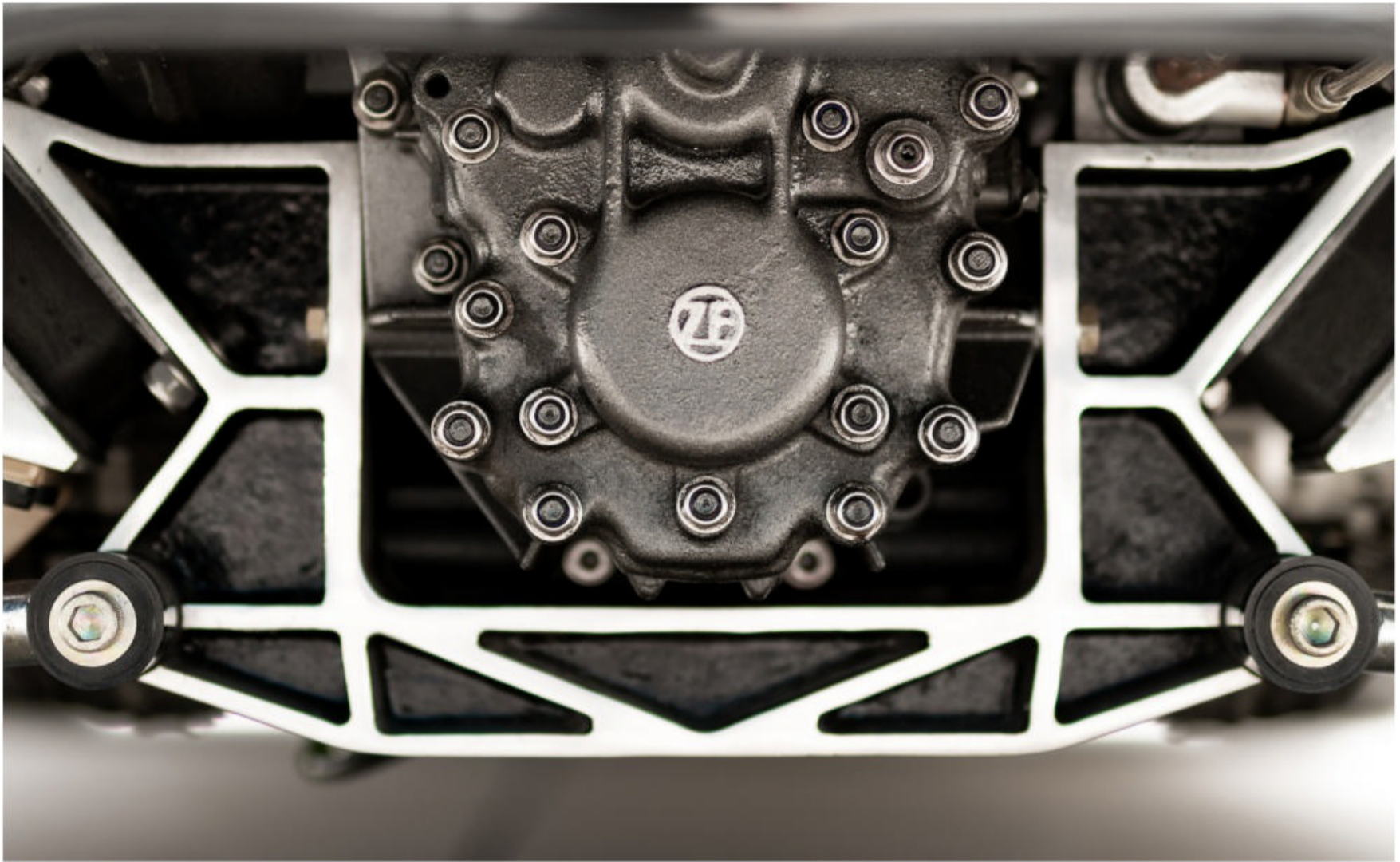
Braking was improved with larger AP discs all round, possible with the large wheels now fitted. 17 inch instead of the original 15. Paul told me the rubber is not any wider, just that the original tyre sizes are almost impossible to get these days. In addition, there are now twin master cylinders with balance bar adjustment. Handling was improved with new Macpherson struts and stiffer springs, as well as the anti-roll bars

The weight is significantly reduced in Paul’s car; an estimated 1000kg now, and after the weight loss program it retains – well not too much. Gone is the air conditioning, electric window motors, engine hood and most of the glass, being replaced with Lexan polycarbonate, all except the front windscreen. Lightweight Porsche GT3 seats replace the original Recaro’s, providing additional support while cornering. The car was light to start with, via a healthy dose of Kevlar reinforced panels having replaced the original Alfa Sprint steel ones on the production Giocattolos. Only the doors and roof remain in steel. The rear hatch has been altered to allow heat to be extracted more efficiently in conjunction with new roof vents. The rear lexan windows were also modified and angled-in to allow air flow into the engine bay, similar in design to the Ferrari 288 – which, by the way, doesn’t come close to the rarity of the Giocattolo 15 built versus

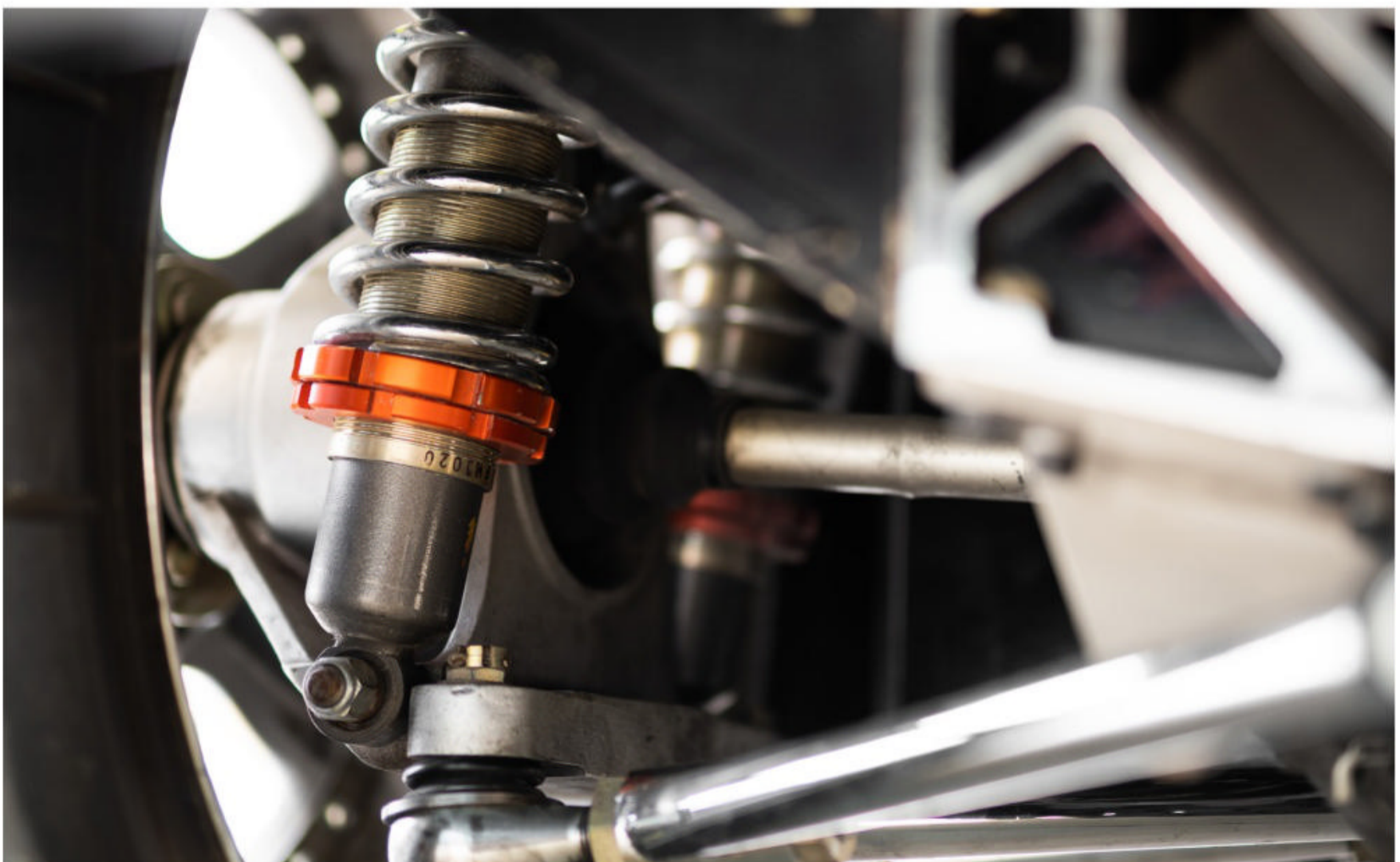
RIGHT: A unique sports car built to take on the world.







ABOVE, BELOW & LEFT: There was never any such thing as a 'standard' Giocattolo. Almost everything has been hand-built, including the Holden 6.0-litre engine. Amazingly, kerb weight is just 1000kg!



272 of the Ferraris.

Paul's upgrades are thoughtfully done and beautifully conceived. The cars upgrades are a cohesive package and achieve the power, handling, weight and noise combination he was after. The car is a true race car for the road. In March this year, at the Melbourne Grand Prix, it completed five laps of the track in an F1 support race, and in the hands of a friend of Paul's. Although he was intending to run a stint himself on the Friday, the entire F1 event was dramatically closed down due to the Covid crisis.

The development of chassis number 11 has taken a lot of time and money; and after 20 years of ownership, Paul has recently sold the car to further a new venture. However, the black beast hasn't gone far, and it drives past his workplace on a regular basis.

So where to from here? Upwards, of course, with the new venture being an all-new Giocattolo in the making. Just as the first one was conceived to be better than the best, the new Giocattolo takes this concept to a new, 'hyper level'. The new creation, code named 'Giocattolo Marcella, turns up the engine power to number 11 with two LS7 7L engines. Please read back that last sentence until it sinks in ... and yes you read that correctly. It's essentially a twin crank 16 cylinder configuration with custom Albins transfer unit combining the power and torque of these 7L engines into a 14L naturally aspirated fire-breathing monster. The LS engines are a clever choice. They are well regarded, cost effective, reliable

and will meet emissions requirements. Just as in the '80s, Barry Lock is again involved and was instrumental in the design and unique packaging of the twin engines.

The body is equally unique and, from rendered designs, looks like a purposeful and modern day hot-rod. Paul has cleverly trademarked the 'HyperRod' name for his Giocattolo Mark II, and is currently in the process of creating the wooden buck that will ultimately allow the polished aluminium panels to be formed over. There is nothing ordinary about the design, and the car is a three-seater with the driver occupying the middle position. Similar in a way to the Maclaren F1. However, the team has cleverly added features to allow easy access – no mean feat.

While a lot of this information may seem fantastical, I can assure you that all of it is real. I have personally seen the engine; and with the exception of its wiring, it is physically complete. The prototype car as whole, though, is still about two years from completion, and the plan extends to building further examples in a limited production environment – most likely in US.

Talking with Paul, you can't help but realise that there is so much about this new Giocattolo to get excited about. An all Australian design from a visionary who has the proven entrepreneurial skills required to make it happen, and who has surrounded himself by equally clever people that can assist. So, watch this space – and be prepared for the new Giocattolo to tear a great big hole in it.

RIGHT: The Azzurro is tiny by 21st century standards.





BORGWARD

ISABELLA

✦ WORDS LARA WILDE

✦ IMAGES JESSE DONOGHOE





There are not many motoring stories that start on a boat but this one does. In fact, this automotive tale began in 2012 on a yacht. Les was sailing with his friend off the coast of Queensland enjoying the salt air and wind swept spray on his skin when he noticed a sheet of newspaper in the water. Reaching out he retrieved the rubbish and in doing so the classifieds section caught his eye.

Les freely admits that he never buys or even reads the Courier Mail so it was complete serendipity that this sheet of cars for sale washed up against the boat he was on. The car advertisement that took his fancy was for a 1959 “Borgward Isabella”. As a child, Les had admired a Borgward in his hometown of Cairns in Far North Queensland and now the ad for the curvaceous two door coupe piqued his interest.

Returning to shore, Les made some calls and became the proud owner of the cream coloured Borgward. Like all car lovers his first instinct was to add his own touch to the distinctive automobile. A fresh set of white wall tyres and some supple red leather upholstery on the front seats and she seemed like a whole new car. The previous owner was so envious of the transformation that he immediately raced out to purchase another Borgward, this time from the Fred Hollows Foundation clearance sale.

Perhaps it was fate, perhaps it was blind luck, but the Borgward was definitely blessed to have found Les who not only knew what a Borgward was but also appreciated the story of Carl Borgward, the man behind the brand. You see once upon a time, Borgward was a serious competitor in the automotive industry. In its heyday Borgward was larger than Volvo, Alfa, Saab and BMW. The story of Carl Borgward, his passion for cars and the machines he built is a tale for the ages.

Born in Germany in 1890 with 12 siblings, Carl Borgward was the son of a coal merchant and completely obsessed with the automobile. As children many of us played with Hot Wheels and Matchbox toy cars, but as a child Carl was designing and building his own toy cars to race across the kitchen table. As a young man he completed a metal working apprenticeship and went on to study mechanical engineering while continuing to design and develop machines for his paying customers.

In the mid 1920s, Carl unveiled his first automobile the “Blitzkarren”. By today’s standards the three-wheel machine was very basic but it ticked all of the boxes for his target market. It was affordable, easy to fix and very practical. In 1931 Carl stepped his car design game up delivering the “Goliath Pionier” and it was instantly a huge success. This

LEFT: Borgward was larger than Volvo, Alfa, Saab and BMW, but has all but faded away today.







THIS PAGE: The Borgward remains a favourite for Les. Steeped in history and a rare sight on the road. It's no wonder it holds a special place for him. The original key and owners wallet for the Isabella



AS HE SERVED TIME IN THE PRISON CAMP, CARL TOOK NOTE OF THE AMERICAN VEHICLES, STUDYING THEM AND PONDERING THE POSSIBILITIES.

second car in the Borgward stable was a cunning design that slipped through many bureaucratic loopholes resulting in an automobile that did not require a driving licence to operate it and it did not incur any vehicle tax. Feeling a little bit chuffed with himself, Carl decided to push his limits a little more and bring the struggling Hansa-Lloyd-Werke company into the Borgward family. In doing so, he took the Borgward enterprise from small time producer to a major player and industrial scale manufacturer overnight. World War II struck a blow for many businesses in Germany, but where others saw disaster, Carl saw opportunity. He quickly turned his manufacturing plants into war machine factories. Had Germany won the war, things may have turned out very differently for Carl, but instead the Americans bombed his factories and locked Carl up in a Prisoner of War Camp until 1946. Yet again, Carl saw hope where others saw despair. As he served time in the prison

camp, Carl took note of the American vehicles, studying them and pondering the possibilities.

After his release from the prison camp Carl was almost 60 years old. Undeterred, Carl took his passion for cars, his new ideas inspired by U.S. automobiles, and the energy normally reserved for men a third his age, and began to rebuild his Borgward empire. Starting from scratch without loans from the bank or outside investors, Carl launched an upper mid-range saloon in 1949 to debut his revolutionary Pontoon shape. Other automotive manufacturers in post war Germany rapidly adopted the Pontoon shape in their designs.

It may have been the first time that Carl's innovation and design genius was embraced by other manufacturers but it most certainly wasn't the last. Borgward led the way by introducing technical innovations such as direct fuel injection, automatic transmissions, air suspension and turn signals into production vehicles.







*BORN IN GERMANY IN 1890 WITH 12 SIBLINGS,
CARL BORGWARD WAS THE SON OF A COAL
MERCHANT AND COMPLETELY OBSESSED
WITH THE AUTOMOBILE*

By 1959, Borgward was a serious business employing 20,000 people to produce a full range of automobiles for many purposes. Borgward was the largest industrial company and corporate taxpayer in Bremen and the second largest auto producer in Germany.

In 1959, Les's Borgward Isabella was built. The elegant two door coupe was created to compete with Ford and Opel and to provide the driver with a cheaper alternative to a Mercedes Benz. Her feminine curves and classic appointments of polished timber, shiny chrome trim and sumptuous leather enable her to stand out in a car park. Deep in the belly of the beast is a compact four-cylinder motor punching out a whopping great sixty ponies. The interior seats four adults comfortably and wishbone independent suspension provides them with a smooth ride.

The 1960s saw the American market move to a more compact car and European car

exports began to dwindle. This change hit the Borgward company hard and without finance from banks or investors it quickly faltered. In 1961 Borgward was insolvent and forced into liquidation; the behemoth that was Borgward was no more. Carl sold off assets and paid back creditors but at 72 years old he ran out of steam. Carl Borgward died in 1963 but the dream that he began in 1919 lives on. Today the Borgward brand has been reborn offering a selection of SUVs and a thrilling new concept car.

Les has a selection of unique vintage cars scattered across the planet yet the Borgward remains a favourite of his. When asked if he would own another Borgward or upgrade to the newer models, he politely declines. The cream coloured lady Isabella suits him perfectly and to know that it comes from Carl Borgward, a man who shared Les's passion for all things automobile makes her all the more special to him.

LEFT: Built to compete with the entry level offerings from Ford and Opel this Borgward Isabella was champaign on a beer budget.



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