

March 2021

Issue No. 351



*The Journal of The Vintage Sports Car Club of Western Australia (Inc.)*

# VINTAGE METAL

[www.vscwa.com.au](http://www.vscwa.com.au)

## AUTOPOLO — EXTREME SPORT



**PLUS** New Blower Bentley  
Lea Francis Hyper 14062

**March General Meeting — Monday March 8**  
**Light Car Club clubrooms,**  
**opp. 37 Moojebing St, Bayswater**  
**6.30 for 7.00 pm**

Vintage Sports Car Club of WA (Inc.)

ABN 49 845 981 838

Telephone: 0400 813 141

PO Box 1127, GWELUP WA 6018

Email: [admin@vscwa.com.au](mailto:admin@vscwa.com.au)

# OFFICE BEARERS AND OFFICIALS 2021

President: Glenn Swarbrick	Mobile: 0401 402 045	Email: glenn.swarbrick29@gmail.com
Vice-President: Paul Wilkins	Mobile: 0428 922 823	Email: paulwilkins@westnet.com.au
Treasurer: David Ward	Phone: (08) 9321 2738	Email: david.ward@taxhut.com.au
Secretary: David Moir	Mobile: 0400 813 141	Email: david.moir@iinet.net.au
Administrative Officer: Sheryl Swarbrick	Mobile: 0416 025 667	Email: entries@vscwa.com.au
Membership/entries correspondence to Sheryl at: PO Box 7277, SPEARWOOD WA 6063		
Club Management Committee:		
Mike Barnes	Mobile: 0437 260 433	Email: tbarnes1261@bigpond.com
Michael Broughton	Mobile: 0418 921 544	Email: mbroughton356@gmail.com
Stephen Gilmour	Mobile: 0439 172 007	Email: stephen@wwms.com.au
Mark Jones	Mobile: 0432 910 742	Email: markljon@iinet.net.au
Competition Committee Chair: Mark Duder	Mobile: 0419 661 129	Email: markduder@bigpond.com
Dads Army: Mark Jones	Mobile: 0432 910 742	Email: markljon@iinet.net.au
Regalia Officer: Chad Raven	Mobile: 0421 830 666	Email: chad.raven.69@gmail.com
Bar Manager: Graeme Whitehead	Mobile: 0412 919 370	
Membership/Entries Registrar: Sheryl Swarbrick		Email: entries@vscwa.com.au
<b>Vintage Metal:</b> Bob Campbell	Email: robertcampbell4@icloud.com	Ph: (08) 9279 7555 Mobile: 0419 849 835
	Snail mail: PO Box 5046, Midland WA 6056	
Historian 1969 on: Len Kidd	Mobile: 0422 797 461	Email: an.len@live.com
Historian pre-1969: John Napier-Winch	Mobile: 0429 439 007	Email: houseofwinch@gmail.com
Librarian: Mark Jones	Mobile: 0432 910 742	Email: markljon@iinet.net.au
Motorsport Australia Sport and Club Development Comm:	Paul Bartlett	Mobile: 0419 907 378
Council of Motoring Clubs WA:	Graeme Whitehead	Mobile: 0412 919 370
Concessional Examiner: Boyd Kolozs	Mobile: 0466 791 298	Email: kolozs@westnet.com.au
Chief Scrutineer: Barry Mackintosh	Mobile: 0497 136 523	
	Max Gamble	Phone: (08) 9276 2903
VSCC Log Books: Coordinator	Vacant	
Eligibility Officer: Group JKL	Max Gamble	Phone: (08) 9276 2903
Eligibility Officer: Group MOPQR	Neil McCrudden	Mobile: 0407 867 473
Eligibility Officer: Group N	Steve Boyle	Mobile: 0419 904 734
Eligibility Officer: Group S	Tony Brett	Mobile: 0427 004 709

**COVER:** Autopolo Trials and Jessica Austin gives the ball a good whack as driver Cameron Davey looks on. See page 12 for more Autopolo action.

## Advertise in *Vintage Metal*

Advertise your business in *Vintage Metal* at very reasonable rates.

*Vintage Metal* is published monthly 11 times per year (February to December), in A4 full-colour format with an approximate distribution of 400 per issue distributed by email. Rate card available from David Moir.

**Advertising copy closing date: 11th of the month prior to month of issue. Eg Copy for February issue due January 11.**

Magazines are in members' inboxes by the last week of the month prior to month of issue.

Of course, VSCC members can advertise cars and automobilia free of charge. Contact Editor Bob Campbell, **0419 849 835** or **robertcampbell4@icloud.com** for members' ads.

**For all commercial advertising contact David Moir**

**0400 813 141 — david.moir@iinet.net.au**

# FROM THE PRESIDENT



## Northam

The Northam Motor Sport Festival for 2021 is happening in about 6 weeks' time. We will have the Lindsay Monk Hill-climb at Mt Ommanney on Saturday 10 April and the Northam Flying 50 on Sunday 11 April.

We are working closely with the Shire of Northam and the Northam volunteers to make the event a success, particularly as last year's event was cancelled due to Covid-19. We encourage competitors and spectators to make a weekend of it to support the Northam business community. However, if you're planning to stay over on the Saturday night, you should secure your accommodation now as demand is high.

Entries will open on 26 February and close on 26 March. Entry forms and supplementary regulations will be shortly available on our website and will be emailed to competitors from past events.

There will be no compulsory scrutiny as we are using Motorsport Australia's self-scrutiny arrangements. However, we are planning a pre-season scrutiny morning at Caversham on a Saturday in March. This will be optional for competitors but we strongly recommend you front up with your car to ensure it meets all the safety requirements — especially if you haven't competed for a while or you're a first-time driver. We will confirm this with an email to members.

## Caversham

We have relocated the club's library, trophies, posters and other memorabilia to a more secure location, following a series of vandalism and attempted break-ins at the Caversham site in recent months. The Dad's Army crew are continuing to meet at Caversham twice a month and our monthly club meetings will be at the Light Car Club rooms at Bassendean for the foreseeable future.

The vulnerability of the existing clubrooms to damage and theft has prompted us to review the design of the new clubrooms proposed for the York St site off West Swan Road. We are working with the Caversham sub-committee to develop a more secure building and layout. As these changes may result in a substantial increase in cost and make the construction of new clubrooms unviable, we are also reconsidering other options for a long-term home for the club.

We will keep members informed of any significant change in plans via *Vintage Metal* and discussion at monthly meetings and will seek members' approval of those changes by voting at a meeting.

## Club Vehicles For Sale

The Management Committee has decided to sell off two of the club's vehicles which are now surplus to our requirements: The Caversham Car which was restored by Dad's Army in the past decade has been valued by classic car specialist and club member, Paul Blank at between \$25,000 and \$30,000. We have asked Paul to handle the sale on behalf of the club in his role as classic car broker. Likewise, we plan to sell the tandem enclosed trailer which Dad's Army have repaired after it was stolen, damaged and recovered 12 months ago. Ron Fabry is handling that sale on behalf of the club and we are asking \$2,000 for it.



# VSCC OF WA CALENDAR 2021

## March

- 6 Dad's Army
- 8 General Meeting – Light Car Club clubrooms, opp. 37 Moojebing St, Bayswater
- 9 Management Committee
- 14 Classic Cars & Coffee, UWA Business School Carpark, Hackett Dr, Crawley, \$10 per car, 8.30 to 10.30 am
- 15 Competition Group
- 23 Dad's Army
- 30 Dad's Army

## April

- 10 Lindsay Monk Hillclimb, Mt Ommanney Club Hillclimb Championship Rd 1
- 11 Northam Flying 50 State Regularity Championship Rd 1 (Historic only)
- 11 Curtin Radio Classic Car Spectacular – Trinity College Playing Field
- 12 General Meeting – Light Car Club clubrooms, opp. 37 Moojebing St, Bayswater
- 13 Management Committee
- 19 Competition Group
- 20 Dad's Army
- 25 Classic Cars & Coffee, UWA Business School Carpark, Hackett Dr, Crawley, \$10 per car, 10.30 to 12.30 pm
- 27 Dad's Army

## May

- 1 Dad's Army
- 3 General Meeting – Light Car Club clubrooms, opp. 37 Moojebing St, Bayswater
- 11 Management Committee
- 18 Dad's Army
- 18 Competition Group
- 23 Classic Cars & Coffee, UWA Business School Carpark, Hackett Dr, Crawley, \$10 per car, 8.30 to 10.30 am
- 25 Dad's Army



## Wanted!

### Jaguar engine 3.8 or 3.4 XK, to suit Jaguar Mark 2

Len Kidd is restoring a 1962 Mark 2 Jaguar. He is approaching the point of selecting an appropriate engine for the car

The existing engine is a 2.4-litre. Apart from

its being seized, Len feels that the engine is undersized

He would prefer the engine to be complete, however it does not need to be reconditioned.

**Please contact Len Kidd**

**0422 797 461**



# HELP!

Vintage Metal is your magazine. It needs input from you, the members of the VSCC of WA. This is most easily done by one of three methods;

1. Write a letter to the editor telling of your views about the future of the club or club matters that are important to you. Reply to a previous letter to the editor if you disagree with what was said, or even to support the previous writer. Use Vintage Metal as a club forum.
2. Write a brief profile of yourself and your career in motorsport or your activities as a member of the VSCC. Include photographs or contact Editor Bob Campbell to see if he has photographs that will illustrate your story.
3. Contact Bob with information about your motorsports activities and work with him to produce a profile of yourself. You can include your competition activities with and outside the VSCC. Again, you will need photographs.

Bob needs your help with letters or stories to make Vintage Metal a better club magazine.

Don't worry about your writing skills. Bob has many years of experience editing contributions to magazines that needed to be tidied up without losing the message the writer is sending. He can do the same for you.

The deadline for each magazine is the fifteenth of the month prior to the publication date.

Contact Bob on 08 9279 7555, 0419 849 835 or email [robertcampbell4@icloud.com](mailto:robertcampbell4@icloud.com) for more information or to organise a story.

**DISCLAIMER:** The Vintage Sports Car Club of WA (Inc.) accepts no responsibility for any problems resulting from any products, services or procedures advertised or written about in this journal. Advertisers or their representatives, outlets or agents must ensure at all times that products and/or services represented are suitable for the advertised purpose and intended use. Opinions or comments from contributors and members do not necessarily reflect those of the Club, its committee, its membership as a whole, or the Editor.

**NOTE! DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR THE APRIL 2021 ISSUE IS MARCH 15, 2021  
ADVERTISING DEADLINE MARCH 11, 2021.**

## Prewar Bodywork: Project For Sale



Are you looking to build a prewar special some day, here's an opportunity to get a major component to building something special.

I purchased this aluminium body over 25 years ago from John Hunting who had it built by Clive at Hammerworks to suit an MG or Riley but it's never been used, so it's untouched and like new (just a bit dusty).

It was my intention to build a prewar sports car with it, but with so many other projects I doubt I'll ever get to use it, which is a shame. So my loss will be someone else's gain. If you want to discuss purchasing this magnificent hand made prewar style body (no bonnet or grill) for a dream project then give me a call.

**Jack Del Borrello**

Mobile: 0411 877 517

Make an offer \$

# EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS



## Club Storage and the Smith Special

VSCC member Greg Bader has generously offered to store the club's memorabilia and other valuables in his factory unit. He has told us that no acknowledgement is necessary, but club secretary David Moir and I thought we should offer Greg a big thank you on behalf of the club membership.



On a more practical note, Greg did ask if we could help him in his search for more information on the Smith Special, a car built to take part in the 1951 Australian Grand Prix at Narrogin that disappeared off to the eastern states but is now in Greg's hands and is currently stored at the WA Motor Museum at Whiteman Park. Information can be passed to Greg by telephone on 0401 988 428 or by email at [greg@aushelby.com](mailto:greg@aushelby.com).

The Smith Special was described in the November 2017 issue of *Vintage Metal*, when it was being auctioned by Shannons (November 27, 2017).

The photograph on the left, from the Ken Devine collection, shows the car as it appeared at Narrogin in 1951. A close look at the photograph will reveal that the door is welded shut. This could have been part of the strip down for lightness (no headlights or grill) or to stop the door from flying open. It might also have stiffened the structure. You can take your pick of reasons.

I shall be speaking to Greg and a detailed (and accurate) story of the Smith Special will appear in *Vintage Metal* in the near future.

## No Minutes

In the previous issue of *Vintage Metal*, the minutes of the December 2020 meeting might well have set a new record for brevity, but this month we have no minutes at all as there was no monthly meeting, thanks to the government's instant 5-day lockdown.

If all goes to plan, we should be able to have our March general meeting as scheduled, so there will be minutes in the next issue.

## Lea Francis Search

Elsewhere in this issue (page 14) there is a story about a Lea Francis Hyper that spent some time in Western Australia and was owned for a time by Jack Nelson of Ballot V8 and White Mouse fame. Ian Goldingham, who wrote the Lea Francis story, is seeking information about another Hyper that was apparently in WA back in 1969 and was advertised, or at least parts of it, in the VSCC of Australia magazine in June of that year. The ad read: LEA FRANCIS (Hyper) Front axle (twisted) with front hubs and drums and Perrot shafts. One front spring and two rear springs with hangers.

Complete gearbox with clutch and brake pedals. This is fitted with RH remote control gear lever. Differential mechanical parts, with one rear axle and hubs.

A set of 5 x (19") single laced well based rimmed Rudge Whitworth wheels, in useable condition.

Steering box with steering wheel, spark and throttle central controls, Pitman arm and draglink.

Contact Bob Hadaway 46 Buxton Road Wembley Downs, Western Australia.

If any member knows of the car or Bob Hadaway could they please contact Ian at [goldie@kiwilink.co.nz](mailto:goldie@kiwilink.co.nz).

Ian's address and telephone number are: 7 Bulwer Street, Devonport, Auckland 0624, New Zealand. Telephone +64 9 445 8811.

*Bob Campbell*

## Vale Ken Stewart-Richardson

Former VSCCWA member Ken Stewart-Richardson passed away on February 9 from the effects of cancer. Many of our members will remember Ken and all of us extend our condolences to his wife Mary-Ann, who is still a life member of the club.

Ken's funeral will be held on Wednesday, 24 February at Fremantle Cemetery, the Samson Pavilion entrance, Carrington Street, Palmyra.

There will be a wake from 3 pm to 5.30 pm at the Italian Club Fremantle, 65 Marine Terrace, adjacent to Esplanade Park.

# DAD'S ARMY NEWS



## Caversham Car

Ron Fabry has been in touch with the surviving creator of the Caversham Car, Ray Harris about the valuation of the car.

Paul Blank assessed the value at from \$25,000 to \$30,000 and Ray was impressed. He replied:

G'Day, Thank you for your latest update regarding the "Caversham, fibreglass body", that Ken & I made all those years ago. Like me, Ken would have been as delighted & surprised at this development! Like me, Ken would hardly believe it! We'd both be flabbergasted", to use a term not often used today. Thank you for the pictures & the almost unbelievable news! You chaps have done a wonderful job in your restoration work! Absolutely magnificent!



Graeme Whitehead, David Moir and Syd Sunter-Smith packing library books

by Tuesday February 23 so that we have running water in all the places we need it, which will be a big help for both the clean up and for kitchen duties, from preparing tea, coffee and morning tea to washing up afterwards.

## Standard Project Car

Hugh Fryer has donated a Standard Flying Eight chassis to Dad's Army as a project car. It seems to be from a 1939 model as pictured below, which means it has independent front suspension by transverse leaf spring and upper wishbones and the chassis is underslung at the rear. The car doesn't look very sporting, but the chassis looks promising. It



Take care, TTFN, Ray Harris.

As soon as space is available, the car will be moved to the WA Motor Museum in Whiteman Park. It is for sale (see *From the President*, page 3 above) to help fund future project cars.

## Clean Up at Caversham

The clean up of the Caversham premises proceeds apace and the main tasks facing Dad's Army are concerned with preparing the Club's collection of memorabilia, valuables and the club library for transportation to secure storage.

Graeme Whitehead is organising a whiteboard to be set up in the kitchen where everyone will see it. It will be used to show a job list, so anyone who is at a loose end can find something useful to do.

The plumber hopes to have a proper water supply installed



Mark Duder, Wally Phoebe and Denny Cunnold packing memorabilia

is the same as the chassis under Bryan Scrivenor's supercharged Flying Standard, which is also based on a 1939 chassis.

The chassis comes with a gearbox, but Dad's Army will have to find a suitable engine.

It should be a fun project and suitable for round the houses events, track events and Lake Perkolilli.

*The Scribe*

## DAD'S ARMY DATES - 2021

	WORKSHOP SATURDAY	SECOND LAST TUESDAY	LAST TUESDAY
MARCH	6	23	30
APRIL		20	27
MAY	1	18	25
JUNE	12	22	29

# NEW BLOWER BENTLEY BY BILL BUYS



The Blower Bentley's finest hour, second place in the French Grand Prix at Pau, 1930. Painting by Robin Falconer.

built in the late 1920s. All were campaigned on the racetracks of Europe, with the most famous one, Birkin's own Team Car No. 2, registration UU 5872, racing at Le Mans and playing a pivotal role in the factory Bentley Speed Six victory in 1930. It even finished second in the 1930 French Grand Prix at Pau, stripped of its lights and mudguards. Even in stripped, 'lightweight' form, it still weighed over two tonnes.

Bentley's own Team Blower — chassis number HB 3403 — was disassembled to its individual components, before each part was catalogued and meticulously scanned in 3D to create a complete digital model of the entire car.

Surprisingly, not everything was handled in-house; Bentley instead contracted out numerous detail jobs to specialists.

The chassis was formed and hot riveted together by Israel Newton & Sons, Ltd., a 200-year-old company known for making boilers for steam engines.

The solid nickel silver radiator surround and copper and steel fuel tank were beaten together by the Vintage



The first of the continuation cars in profile

hidden changes dictated by modern safety concerns.

The 90-year old Bentley Team Blower is still used regularly on the road, including completing Italy's Mille Miglia, daily hill runs at the Goodwood Festival of Speed and a recent tour up the California coastline. It was at the 2019 Monterey Car Week and in a parade at Laguna Seca, culminating in the 2019 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, where the car appeared with two of the other three Team Blowers.

Many of us remember the stirring sight of Peter Briggs' Blower Bentley thundering through the streets of York, its massive presence harking back to W. O. Bentley's apprenticeship at the North British Locomotive Works. Now there are 12 exact replicas of Tim Birkin's racing model being created by the Bentley company. Bill Buys tells the story.

**ONE** of the most iconic Bentleys — Sir Tim Birkin's 1929 supercharged 4½-litre 'Blower' — has been reborn with 11 matching cars to follow, each individually handcrafted by a team of specialists from Mulliner, Bentley's bespoke coachwork division.

The new cars will form the world's first pre-war race car continuation series.

Only four original 'Team Blowers' were



The first of the continuation cars with the original Birkin car behind

Car Radiator Company, Jones Springs Ltd handled the leaf springs and shackles, Vintage Headlamp Restoration International Ltd crafted the headlights, and Lomax Coachbuilders furnished a new ash body frame which was then covered in Rexine in the Mulliner shop in Crewe.

Using the original 1920s moulds and tooling jigs, and an array of traditional hand tools alongside the latest manufacturing technology, 12 sets of parts will be created before Bentley's heritage technicians assemble the new Blowers.

The company says the 12 continuations will be identical wherever possible to the original — mechanically and aesthetically— with only minimal





No other pre-war Bentley had an impact like the supercharged 4½-litre 'Blower' Bentley.

While it never won an endurance race, it was the outright fastest race car of the day, and counted among its fans the author Ian Fleming, who later decided that his famous fictional secret agent James Bond would drive a supercharged 4½-litre Bentley.

The Blower Bentleys were born from Sir Tim Birkin's philosophy to extract more speed from the racing Bentleys of the day.

While W O Bentley's method was to increase engine capacity – from 3-litre, to 4½-litre, to 6½-litre – Birkin was impressed by the Roots-type supercharger developed by

British engineer Amherst Villiers, which boosted the 4½'s power from 130 bhp (96kW) to 240 bhp (178kW) in race tune. He persuaded Bentley chairman and noted team driver Woolf Barnato to sanction production of 55 supercharged 4½-litre Bentleys, with five allocated for competition.

The first 'new' Blower was shown at Crewe a little while ago, driven by company chairman Adrian Hallmark.

'To drive the first new Blower in 90 years was a privilege,' he said. 'And the quality of the car would make (famous Bentley racer) Sir Tim Birkin himself proud.'

'The craftsmanship is exquisite, and I'm pleased to report that the car drives just as beautifully as our original Team Car.'



The company says it'll take two years to complete the 12-car series, though the first has already been completed.

If you want one, well bad luck, old chap, since all 12 have already been spoken for. What each cost is not known, but Bentleyologists reckon it's probably about \$2.7 million Australian.

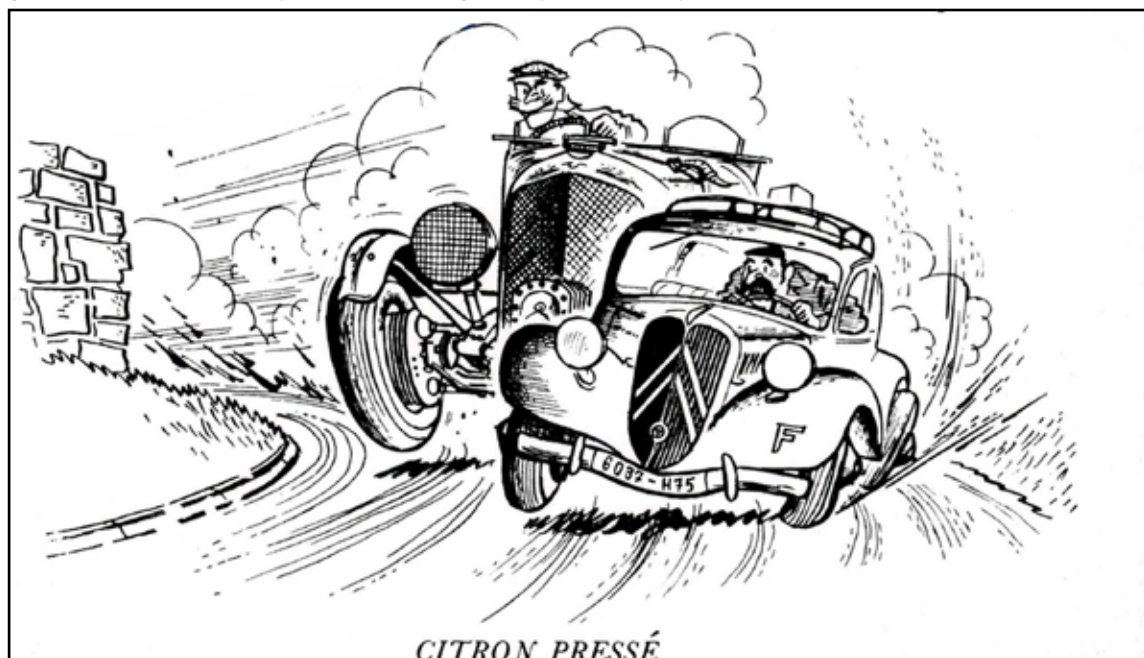
The completed Blower Bentley Car Zero will next be put through more than 20,000 miles of real-world testing, and about 5000 miles of track testing.

Even the car's top speed will be recorded.

However, the first brand new Blower Bentley in 90 years is a thing to behold.

It's a bit surprising though, since the company has plans to go fully electric by 2030.

Of course, not everyone takes the Blower Bentley altogether seriously. For example, the late Russell Brockbank had a bit of fun with it. (From *101 Brockbank Cartoons.*)



# FROM THE LIBRARY: AUSTIN '7' SPECIALS – BUILDING, MAINTENANCE AND TUNING BY L.M.(BILL) WILLIAMS



**There** are some fascinating books in the VSCCWA library, and this one popped up when we were packing the library for removal to secure storage after the spate of break-ins in late 2020 and early 2021.

Published in November 1958, it was in sufficient demand to warrant a reprint in July 1959. The library's example is from that first reprint and was sold by the *Technical Book & Magazine Company* of Swanston Street, Melbourne for 34/9 (£1/14/9 or \$3.48, not allowing for inflation).

Williams worked for The Austin, but in the late 1920s he set up Cambridge Engineering in Kew Green, Surrey, a company dealing exclusively with the building, tuning and supply of standard and special parts for Austin Sevens. This book is his retirement project after 30 years of running his company.

The book tells how to rebuild an Austin Seven with improved performance, better handling and, most important if you intend to compete with your Seven, better brakes. Many of the parts described in the book are no longer available, but a surprising number are, or reproductions, copies or developments of the 1950s parts are readily available, even if it involves internet ordering from the UK.

The advice Williams offers on improving the reliability of the Seven is still valid and, if you wish to use your car in competition, the modifications to the suspension described will help you get around a circuit quite a bit faster. When describing how to convert the brakes to hydraulic operation, using Morris Minor brake parts, he warns: 'In fact, there is one drawback which is often overlooked. The stopping power is so increased that care has to be taken when using the brakes

in an emergency, to avoid being rammed!' Perhaps not so much today as in 1958.

Suspension modifications described include better location of both front and rear axles and the conversion of the front to a split axle, similar to the Ballamy conversions popular from the mid-1930s to the 1950s.

Engine modifications include relieving inlet ports and cylinder bores to improve gas flow, improvements to camshaft profiles and the best carburettors for the job. Supercharging is also mentioned and is used on Williams' own road going special, the LMW Special, pictured at right. The LMW is a remarkably modern looking car for an Austin Seven special.

There is even an explanation of how to select suitable aluminium sheet for lightweight bodywork and how to shape it and fit it to the chassis and frame.

All in all this is a comprehensive guide to building an Austin Seven Special. With this book and a suitably ancient Austin Seven, you could create for yourself a great little car for round the houses, Lake Perkollilli or even the proposed trials and beach racing events.

The book is number 421 in the VSCCWA collection and will be available for loan as soon as Club Librarian Mark Jones reassembles the library in its new home.

If you are chasing your own copy, [abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com) indicates that a copy in good condition will probably set you back about \$US120 plus shipping. There was apparently at least one more reprint in 1964 and Haynes republished it in 1970.



SHANNONS



# 2021 CLASSIC CAR SHOW

## ASCOT RACECOURSE SUNDAY 18 APRIL

**ADULTS \$10, AGES 16 & UNDER FREE!  
10AM - 3PM • FREE PARKING**

PROUDLY POLISHED, FUELED AND ROLLED OUT BY:



# JKANDL SQUARE RIGGERS UPDATE



Front to rear: Graeme Cocks drives Warren Milward, Shane Burns drives Dean Whisson, Gary Byfield mallets for Cameron Davey (obscured).

## AUTOPOLO — EXTREME SPORT FOR VINTAGE CARS

Credit as the founder of the modern game of Autopolo goes to Joshua Crane Jr. of the Dedham Polo Club in Boston, USA. Joshua was an early convert to the motor age. He purchased a Curved Dash Oldsmobile, America's first volume produced motor car and he would drive to the Polo ground.



'A hit, a very palpable hit' as the bard might have said. (He did say it, in Hamlet, Act 5 Scene 2.) The malleeteer is Gary Byfield, driver Cameron Davey.

Autopolo was soon being played at county fairgrounds across the USA to big crowds. It was even played in Australia. The last Aussie game was probably played in Sydney at around 1930.

That was until February 2021 when a small bunch of enthusiasts got together at Brooklands Airfield near York to put mallet against ball to see whether Autopolo could be revived.

Austinista, Hugh Fryer, was the umpire in his silver

It wasn't long before he worked out that Polo could be played with Oldsmobiles of five horsepower rather than the one horsepower, four-footed mounts they were using. This was in 1902.

It was Ralph "Pappy" Hankinson, who popularised the sport. Pappy was a Ford dealer in Topeka, Kansas. In July 1912, Pappy held an autopolo match in an alfalfa field in Wichita. "Build it and they will come" could have been a quote from Pappy himself, for come they did, in their thousands to see two teams — the "Gray Ghosts" and the "Red Devils" battle it out.



Graeme Cocks's malleeteer, Warren Milward, scores an equally palpable hit



Austin Seven while three Ford Model Ts of Graeme Cocks, Cameron Davey and Shane Burns attempted to make sense of the sport. Each driver had a jockey as they were called although one of the participants coined the term 'malleter' for the person who sits in the passenger's seat hitting the ball. Malleeters included Dean Whisson, Gary Byfield, Jessica Austin, Graeme Lockhart and Warren Milward.

The ball was a 45cm fit ball which was not over-inflated so that it would fly across the airfield when hit. The mallets were made from laminated bamboo broom handles with glue-lam heads made from timber scrounged from a skip bin at a building site.

Like old-fashioned horse polo, the ball can only be hit from the left-hand side of the car. This turned out to be a very smart move as it avoids crashes, and makes it

A brisk passage of play between two of the Model Ts easier to predict where opposition players will approach the ball.

The game was great fun and a championship event with two teams is planned for the first weekend of March. Anyone with a Ford Model T is welcome to enter.

So, more than 120 years after Joshua made that first hit with a mallet as he was driving his merry old Oldsmobile and 110 years after Pappy lined up two teams driving Ford Model Ts we have Autopolo revived at Brooklands Airfield near York in the Avon Valley. Yes, Joshua and Pappy will surely be looking down at this splendid sporting arena in Australia, maybe even shedding a tear or two, but also smiling as they hear the roar of the mighty Model T motors, the sound of mallet against rubber and the roar as a goal is scored in the greatest contest of all.



It's a serious business, this autopolo, as two Ts give chase

*Heza Henry*



Umpire Hugh Fryer keeps the little Austin well clear of the big Fords.



All three Ts in action, but only one seems to know where the ball is.



To quote the editor's late father, 'Never mind the ball, get on with the game!'



There it is! Now how do we get to it?

# HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN LEA FRANCIS HYPER 14062



**The Field Family Hyper at the Bulli  
Pass Hillclimb May 1933. (Alan Muston  
Collection)**

*This is the first of a series of articles by Ian Goldingham about Lea Francis S type Hypers that migrated to Australia. The Lea Francis company started out manufacturing bicycles and its car production was inconsistent. The Hyper Sports models came along in 1928 with a Cozette-supercharged 1½-litre Meadows engine. A Hyper Sports won the 1928 Ulster Tourist Trophy race. Car production stopped again in 1935, but in 1938 a new company produced a range of cars with twin high cam pushrod OHV engines, designed by Hugh Rose, who designed the similarly laid out Riley Nine engine. This engine grew to 1.8 litres in postwar models and a stretched 2-litre version of this engine powered the Connaught Type A Formula 2 car in 1952 and 1953. Lea Francis ceased production in 1953 and, apart from a clumsy looking two-seater, the Leaf-Lynx, that was produced in prototype form in 1960 with a Ford Zephyr 6-cylinder engine, that was the end of the line for Lea Francis as a manufacturer.*

This series of assembled and potted histories of the various Lea Francis S type Hypers that have inhabited the land down under, was inspired by Max Gregory. Over the years I became aware that there had been a number of these cars competing in various forms in all aspects of motorsport over Australia. The core information has come from the senior generation of antipodean Lea Francis enthusiasts, namely the late Arnold Henderson, Albert Ludgate, Max Gregory and Neville Webb backed up by the ever-helpful Ross Smith and his family records from Robinson Motors.

These Australian records have of course been backed up by the extraordinary depth of information that we enjoy from the Lea Francis factory records for which we have to thank both Barrie Price and Colin Poynter as our Pre-war Registrar.

Fortunately, I have also had the help of other Australian historians, some who have no connection with Lea Francis at all, but are keen to see the country's motorsport events recorded in a relevant fashion. These days that's a mite easier with access to digital archives of period newspapers, in particular "Trove" the National Library of Australia's digital service, without which there would be little meat on the bones of this story. This became a critical component in this year of Covid, as I was unable to hop on a plane and go searching the archives myself. I have had to rely on the kindness of good friends like Warren Webb, Andrew Cox and Bob King along with the favours of people who have never heard of me or Lea Francis cars, let alone knew anything about their family having owned one!

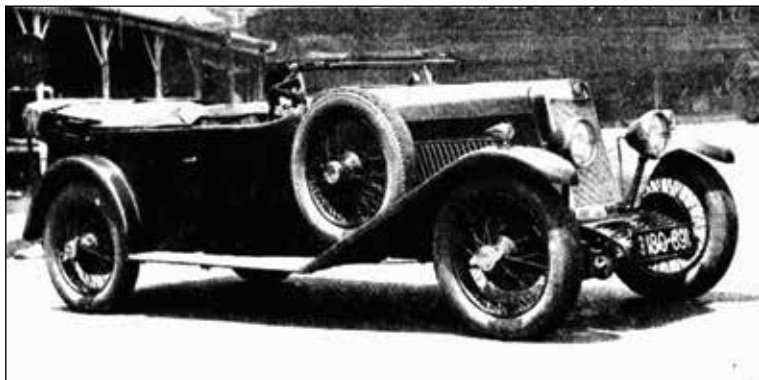
The internet was also responsible for the creation of Mark Bisset's Primo Tipo website which has prove to be a cooperative goldmine in flushing out those never seen before photos about Australian motorsport events that everyone seemed to have forgotten ever existed! The good will generated by this cooperative site will no doubt

produce more gems of pictorial information in the years to come.

Finally, I make no claims that this is the full and final version of these car's histories. Just by publishing what has been revealed will undoubtedly flush out more details and photographic evidence to add to our knowledge of the past.

Hyper chassis 14062 was erected in June 1928 and in August was fitted with a Cross and Ellis two-seater body. The Lea Francis Owners Club register confirms that this body was removed prior to September 1928 and sold on to a Mr Mason of Penrith, Cumberland (now Cumbria). The rolling chassis with its rare capless radiator being exported to a wealthy meat exporter and grazier in Sydney by the name of Mr Thomas Alfred (Jack) Field (1874-1944) of Warrawee. New South Wales.

But upon its arrival in Australia, it certainly had a genuine Cross & Ellis tourer body fitted, as evidenced by the following article in the Sydney Morning Herald, it was used by Coggins the Lea Francis agency as a display and demonstrator vehicle for the next few months. At this time the Hyper carried NSW registration plates 180-891



14 Jan 1929 Motor Traders Motor Show Royal Agricultural Showgrounds THE EXHIBITS. W. T. COGGINS. Stand 41

Another very interesting car shown was the supercharged 1498 C.C. hyper-sports Lea Francis, similar in chassis to the winner of the Ulster Tourist Trophy Race in Ireland a few months ago. The car externally is sporty looking, having a low fabric-covered four-seater body, and a slightly inclined radiator, whose filler cap is concealed under the bonnet. The super-charger is Cozette. and is situated in front of the engine, in

the place usually occupied by the fan, with the carburettor beside it. The car is claimed to be capable of a speed of 120 miles an hour in top gear, and 80 miles an hour in third, and is fitted with Dewandre vacuum servo four-wheel brakes. This car's price is £495. A similar model, not super-charged, is priced at £475, and is also speedy, although not the equal of the super-charged model in that respect.

The supercharged Lea Francis car had a fabric body finished in green, the lines blending well with the raked radiator. For this kind of car, the fabric body would seem to be the best, owing to its light weight. In the case of the Lea-Francis the weight was still further decreased by using only two doors, although the body was a full four-seater.

Just where this body came from is unclear but is undoubtedly the same one that was on the car at the NSW Penrith races in October 1930. Its NSW registration number at that time was 1855.

Under Jack Fields custodianship the Hyper became a regular and successful competitor on the New South Wales motorsport scene. The majority of events were trials, hill climbs and regularity tests as the state's road regulations made speed events almost impossible to organise in the public domain.

In the written reports it is next to impossible to correctly identify the Hyper's driver, as T.A. Field, known as Jack had a son who was also called Jack! Regardless which Jack was driving, they were able to accumulate an impressive number of trophies and meat prize packs. The irony of which was that the meat had almost certainly come from the family farm.

After Mr Field the car may have had several owners, the order of which is uncertain as some of them may have only been drivers. Jack Field died at "Mahratta", his country home in 1944.

The car is reported to have been imported to Western Australia as early as 1935, but this unverified. I believe the next confirmed owner was Errol Douglas Bode a young engineer born in Mackay Queensland. In February 1931 he joined the Colonial Sugar Refining Company Ltd. as an office boy in the head office in Sydney. The company must have seen potential in this young man as jobs were few and far between in 1931 and it was an achievement to be selected by a company with CSR's stature. After a year in head office, he was offered an apprenticeship to become a fitter and turner. These positions were given to young men the Company thought had the potential to become technical managers of the future and who would keep its complex plant operating. The training was diverse and thorough, spending time in different sections to gain as much experience as possible. Progressing through the drawing office in O'Connell Street, Errol began work as a junior engineer at Pymont, and as his



Hyper 14062 being put to good use as the Pace car at the Penrith Race track 1930. Elegant ambulance!



Errol Bode at 90 years old in 2003

abilities became evident, he was moved around CSR's many and wide spread operations. Errol had many interests away from his work particularly membership of the Amateur Drivers Club which included taking part in reliability trails with our member Bob Simpson. Also, having been given a camera while at school he was immediately "hooked" and photography became a lifelong interest. In 1938 on his way to the old Roseville Rifle Club, the motorbike he was riding became involved with a car and Errol was to spend three months in North Shore Hospital, also as result of this accident would be unfit for military service.

Around 1940 he was sent over to Perth as Assistant Engineer at the Mosman Park Refinery. I suspect that he may well have been the person that took 14062 from the East Coast of Australia 2,000 miles over to its Western shores.

On the 2nd of June 1945 this advertisement appeared in the West Australian newspaper:  
**SUPERCHARGED**  
1. litre Lea-Francis

Fabric Body Tourer. 1930 model, in sound mechanical condition, bodywork fair, MP £230. HP £150. E.D Bode, c/o Colonial Sugar Refinery, Mosman Park.

The Hyper was still painted with wartime white visibility mudguards. It retained its original "Cross & Ellis" tourer body, along with distinctive cap-less radiator.

The next known owner was Mr Jack Nelson a prominent racing driver from Perth, who certainly had the Hyper after World War Two.

Graeme Cocks a motoring historian of Perth offers the



Post war paint job. (Robert Beal Pritchett collection VSCCA archives)



Jack Nelson beside Hyper 14062. (Bob Pritchett collection VSCCA archives)

following: "Jack was born in 1912, the son of a prominent businessman at the Perth Markets in Wellington Street. The family's business was chiefly auctioneering and exporting Western Australian lamb and beef. He began racing when he negotiated with Pat Kerr to purchase the wreck of a Ballot raced at the 1935 Phillip Island Grand Prix. Jack Nelson swapped his almost new Morris Minor tourer for the Ballot remains and some cash. No doubt, Jack Nelson believed he could make something of the parts to challenge the outright speed of Dyer's Bartlett Special. He was certainly a race car designer and builder who made sure that he had the best possible equipment prepared as diligently as possible for race day. The car was re-built with a Chevrolet Four chassis. He recalled that he had

help from the old inter-city record-breaking driver Len Hope to tune the double overhead cam Ballot engine. "The Ballot rev limit was 4000, but we coaxed it up to 4500 and the engine felt the strain and the crank snapped at the last crankpin," he said.

"Jack Nelson's daring drives in his Ballot racing car at Albany were legendary. The crowds were always entertained by his spectacular driving style which showed total commitment to getting around the circuit as fast as he could."

After the war, he went into partnership with James Harwood and operated a car sales business called Performance Cars Ltd in James Street and Mounts Bay Road. Jack Nelson was made a life member of the WA Sporting Car Club in 1957 in recognition of his services



Hyper 14062's comprehensive dash board circa 1947. (Bob Pritchett collection VSCCA archives)





Arthur Collet (Left) and Clem Dwyer (Right)

erected where the Leaf and Wolseley stood. The third car was a 1946 Austin 16 belonging to my father. As you can see the Leaf has full weather equipment and six wheels. It was easier to remove the hood than to fold it, so that's what we did!

“My recollections of the car are still quite clear – good road holding, especially on winding roads, that very high third gear, giving the ability to cruise at 60mph all day long. In fact, it was a delightful car, a real pleasure to drive.

“It's quite apparent at this stage that the rear and waist line of the Cross & Ellis body has been altered to a squarer profile and slight cutaway on the driver's side. This no doubt has led to the speculation that the car had acquired an “attractive local Australian body” which was reported in the Leaflet. But further research has proved this perception to be false and may well be



A photograph showing the restyled rear of the Cross & Ellis tourer body, taken at Perth in late 1952 prior to the accident in which the Hyper was badly damaged.

relatively serious event as Andrew Cox reports that the bent front axle 1916F and gearbox 4313F were removed along with we think the damaged radiator.”

Peter commented “I regret to tell you that I sold the radiator badge at a Swap Meet in Perth in 2003, I had kept it all those years and thought the rest of the car had long ceased to exist. Ron McDougal took the parts from me when I purchased a Cottin et Desgouttes from him. How the Leaf parts got to the East, I have no idea, but I am glad that they are still around.” (Those components are now with David Blackwood's 14015 in Tasmania.)

Interestingly Peter's report fits in with the following ad in the VSCC of Australia Magazine in June 1969.

to the sport. he began his own private investment company which he ran through his later years until he passed away in the year 2000.

Ex-owner Peter Wells recalls that the Hyper was bought by Arthur Collett around 1949, and used by him to tow his racing MGTC to various round the houses race meetings, then popular in WA. The blower had been removed, and was stored in the home of Clem Dwyer, one of WA's top motorcycle and car racers. – Dwyer was involved in the 1939 AGP won by Alan Tomlinson and his MGTA.

Peter continues “I bought the Leaf from Collet in 1952, using it as an everyday car while I built a new tubular framed body for my 1934 Wolseley Hornet Special. When that project was completed – it took around 6 months with the help of my father.

“The photograph below was taken in late 1952 or early 1953. The wooden frames were being built for a double garage that was



aligned with another Hyper.”

Second Hand Car Sales Advertisement: *Western Leader* 10th December 1952

Lea-Francis 1929 "Hyper" sports, wizard car for vintage enthusiast or mechanic. £145.

“I sold the Leaf probably very early in 1953 to Kevin Hart, at that time he was working next door to me at a motor wrecking shop in Hay St Perth. Kev used it for about two or three years, breaking a couple of rear axles in that time. I can't recall when he had the misfortune to overturn the car on returning from a motorcycle race meeting in Bunbury, but I purchased some of the remains from him in 1959 or 1960.

The motor had already been sold.

It was obviously a

The exhaust side of the Hyper engine, taken while in Jack Nelson's ownership



LEA FRANCIS (Hyper) Front axle(twisted) with front hubs and drums and Perrot shafts. One front spring and two rear springs with hangers. Complete gearbox with clutch and brake pedals. This is fitted with RH remote control gear lever. Differential mechanical parts, with one rear axle and hubs. A set of 5 x (19") single laced well based rimmed Rudge Whitworth wheels, in useable condition. Steering box with steering wheel, spark and throttle central controls. Pitman arm and draglink.

Contact Bob Hadaway 46 Buxton Road Wembley Downs, Western Australia.

This ad pretty well confirms that the moral remains of 14062 as we knew it, were broken up and scattered to the four winds. The real question now, is what actually took its place! (See *Editor's Ramblings* on page 6 for information request.)

Some time after the accident a sports saloon body was supposed to have been placed on 14062's chassis. This body was in a partial state, "awaiting repair" condition, just who built this body or where it came from is unproven at this stage but we have enough circumstantial proof. It was to remain on the car until the early 1970s by which time it had passed through the hands of at least one further owner, a Mrs Jones(?) possibly of Perth, who still had the car in 1972.

It was from her that well-known racer Roddy MacPherson bought the Hyper, which he says, was in a reasonable mechanically complete and sound state. The car still had the sports saloon body in poor condition on when he bought it. At this time, I have had no luck in finding photos of this stage of 14062's lifespan.

Roddy confirms the radiator was one without the visible cap and that the car had the remains of the original four-seater tourer body bundled up as well to one side. The Hyper was not running and he recalls they used a trailer to get it to his friends' garage in Sydney, where he removed all of the saloon body, such that when the car was shipped back to the United Kingdom, all that was left were the parts he thought were original. It was apparent that a fair proportion of the original Cross and Ellis body remained along with the original guards and hardware. Just exactly what happened to his Antipodean import when it arrived back in Britain, is a story in itself!

There is now more than strong thought that the Australian saloon body was almost certainly that which had been on the remains of Hyper 14078. Roddy was adamant that 14062 did not have 14078's plate on it when he bought it or when he sold it. The registrar's notes record that it is Barrie Price who informed Peter Pringle (the LFOC Secretary) that 14062 was running with 14078's commission plate attached to its firewall and that he said it had been doing so since 1976.

By 1975 Hyper 14062 had been repatriated and Roderick McPherson then commissioned Barrie Price to rebuild it for racing and rebody it with replica 1929 TT coachwork.

"In reply to the letter from H. M. Crump (July 1978 issue *Motorsport*) concerning the Lea-Francis Hyper owned by his brother in the early thirties, Mr. Crump is correct in stating that Don Higgin used the original KD 7361 in the TT and many other races. The chassis No. of this car was 14139. It eventually spent some 30 years in Edinburgh with various owners and gradually deteriorated. Roderick MacPherson purchased the remains in the early sixties.

"Roderick eventually imported a Hyper from Australia (14062). We were instructed to rebuild this car and manufacture a faithful replica of the body fitted to 14139 which differed from standard in certain respects. KD 7361 was then "adopted" for this car which is now owned by Roy Beebee of Rugeley. Signed A. B. PRICE Lea-Francis Ltd. Studley"

They managed to get the car UK registered KD 7361, which was a number originally on Hyper chassis 14139 — one of the 1929 team cars which was subsequently scrapped.

Peter Harper took over 14062 early in 1976, then Len Potter, before acquisition by one-time Meadows apprentice Roy Beebee, who drove it to Stanford Hall in June of that same year.

He rebuilt the engine, first with the original roller-bearing crank — later with a solid crank and plain bearings. It is believed that at around this time, the original crankcase 9050? was swapped with 8912 which came from a P-Type which is still fitted today. Beebee developed the car extensively, making it the quickest S-Type for a period, complete with No.8 Cozette and twin-port head.

After his death in 1996, the car fell into disuse until it was sold to, and enthusiastically campaigned by Andrew Dixey. Maintained to exacting standards by Brewster Mudie and a regular sight in all forms of VSCC competition. Andrew also developed it further with specially made alloy rods. After 10 years Andrew sold the Hyper to another active VSCC competitor Peter Tierney with whom it spent a year, before moving on to Roger Lear's hands in 2013. In 2020 it was back on the market at Brightwells Auction

### **Acknowledgements and Sources**

Andrew Cox, Barrie Price, Colin Poynter, Max Gregory, Arnold Henderson, Robert King, Ron Lee, Roddy McPherson, Albert Ludgate, Ross Smith, Neville Webb, Peter Wells, Tim Shellshear: librarian VSCCA Archives Lea Francis Cars Ltd (Factory Records), LFOC Pre War Register, Robinson Motors Ltd Sales Ledgers, Terdich period photo collection V.S.C.C of Victoria. Alan Muston collection and the Robert Beal Pritchett collection from the VSCCA archives, Trove Australia. Primotipo.com.au, Terry McGrath Motoring Archives.



## FOR SALE

English wheel, large aperture, large anvil wheel, and six die wheels. Excellent condition. Wheel is located on my farm in Lower Chittering and can be inspected by arrangement.

**\$625.00 or nearest best offer.**

Contact: John Lambie, mobile 0428 931 246

Email: [john.lambie@westnet.com.au](mailto:john.lambie@westnet.com.au)

---

## FOR SALE

**Kincrome 3000kg trolley jack**

**\$300.00 or near offer**

**Contact Mike Zlatovich**

**0466 681 340**



---

## WANTED!

**COLLECTOR SEEKING MODEL AERO  
ENGINES 30S – 60S TYPES**

Mark Jones is hoping to purchase and add to his small collection of model aero engines: diesel, glow plug and petrol ignition types. These were mini engineering marvels!

**Contact Mark (VSCCWA librarian) on**

**0432 910 742**



---

## WANTED

1 x 45DCOE13 carburettor

Contact Stephen Strickland – 0428 982 149

If no answer, please leave message. Work takes me out of mobile range.



## TRUST YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSIONS WITH SHANNONS

Shannons have designed Home & Contents insurance specifically for motoring enthusiasts, including **\$10,000 worth of enthusiast cover**. Plus extra features like a **10% Multi policy discount** when you add a home and/or contents policy to your existing Shannons car or bike policy. You can even pay your premium monthly at no additional cost.

When it comes to insurance for your home, there's only one person you should talk to – a fellow enthusiast at Shannons.

So call Shannons for a 🏍️ 🚗 🏠 quote on **13 46 46**.



SHARE THE PASSION

**INSURANCE FOR MOTORING ENTHUSIASTS  
CALL 13 46 46 FOR A QUOTE | SHANNONS.COM.AU**

Shannons Pty Limited ABN 91 099 692 636 is an authorised representative of AAI Limited ABN 48 005 297 807, the product issuer. Read the Product Disclosure Statement before buying this insurance. Contact us for a copy.



**Vic D'Ascenzo**

- Sales
- Service
- Repairs
- Spares

Ph: (08) 9250 2468  
Fax: (08) 9274 4868  
Email: Midlandmowers@iinet.net.au  
www.midlandmowers.com.au




20 Elliott Street  
Midvale WA 6056



**BOB CAMPBELL**  
Printing  
Layout & Design  
Text for Web or Print  
Newsletters,  
Brochures, Flyers

Tel: 08 9279 7555 — Mob: 0419 849 835  
Email: robertcampbell4@icloud.com

**BATTERY ALL TYPES**

Your one stop  
**SOLAR and BATTERY shop**

<p><b>BUNBURY BRANCH</b> Unit 1, 46 Strickland St Bunbury WA 6230 ☎ 9791 7520 Mobile: 0417 897 004 bunbury@batteryalltypes.com.au</p>	<p><b>BUSSELTON BRANCH</b> Unit 1, 3 Albert Road Busseton WA 6280 ☎ 9754 4746 Mobile: 0429 897 004 busseton@batteryalltypes.com.au</p>
---	--

www.batteryalltypes.com.au

**Paul Blank** BA Ind Des

**Classic Car Broker**

paulb@classicrally.com.au

Collectors'  
Cars for sale



1988 Bentley Turbo R \$42,500



1976 Ferrari 365GT4 2+2 \$179,000



1973 Jaguar E-Type V12 FHC \$137,000



1982 Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit \$27,500



1935 Triumph Gloria racer \$46,500



1988 Porsche 928S4 LHD \$27,900



1935 Bentley 3 1/2 Litre DHC \$249,000



1959 Facel Vega HK500 \$265,000

Request an email with full details and photos on any of these cars. 0407 097 911 or email me.  
**WANTED:** More classics which have not been advertised yet. MD28143