

# Motor Vehicle Enthusiasts Club



No 149

# TRANSMISSION

JUNE 2022

If you find you need more information about this club or just can't wait to join ring Peet Menzies on 0417855222.

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Newsletter enquiries to Ted [longtelescope@gmail.com](mailto:longtelescope@gmail.com)

?



What is this magnificent car? The numberplate does not give it away at all. Read on and find out.

**We will call him Jesse.**

He lives way down south someplace in Woop Woop but he has some of the most neat stuff here and what he has done with some old wrecks makes your mouth water. We don't have a purist here, not a hot rodder either. Mebbe a feller with a lot of talents and a vision.

But I am getting ahead of the story a bit. The first car I was introduced to, Jesse called the Safari Wagon. Its a 1924 Dodge.

It spent most of its life in Kimba until 30 odd years ago a hot rodder brought it to the Adelaide Hills. He never did anything with it and basically abandoned it. When Jesse came on the scene it was dumped in a creek, but it did have a bonnet on it. Jessie reckoned the bonnet had protected what was under there from the elements and he could probably salvage some good bits from it so he took it home. He pulled the easy bits off, the maggie, starter/generator and the vacuum tank and pulled em to bits and found to his surprise that there was nothing wrong with them, they were in perfect condition. So he went to the engine. It wasn't completely seized, you could rock it back and forth a bit. He suspected a broken conrod and ripped the sump off, but there was nothing wrong under there either.

The problem was a couple of stuck exhaust valves which came free after an hours soaking with Inox and a bit of manipulation. And away she went. It needed a couple of wheels and with a body fashioned from whatever was handy it needed that special something. The something is a rocking chair. It looks straight out of Beverly Hillbillies. He has lightened the springs so kids can drive around the block without shaking their teeth



*And a rocking chair up back to keep Granny happy. Note the convenient steel step sticking down at the back to make boarding easier. You have to keep Granny happy!*



*A compass on the cowl so you don't get lost!*



*And the engine took remarkably little work to get it running sweetly.*

out, and there is even an aviation compass on the cowl so they don't get lost. It is a beauty and it runs sweet too. But this car is just for around the property, not for the road. It is the Rockin Chair Rocket.

So we move up to the shed. The first car is a 1928 Fast Four Dodge, but it is nothing like Dodge Bros made it.

It has Fast Four printed discreetly along the side and it looks lovely, but it wasn't always like this.

Jessie bought it as a rusty wreck from an old bloke that had had it for many years. He was an alcoholic and had done nothing with it. And apart from neglect it also had been pranged. The first thing he did once he had it in his own shed was to get it in running order. As it turned out it wasn't too bad. Basically a service to the engine, the bottom end was re-shimmed but no machining done. Once it was running ok he

drove it round the block for a while sitting on a chair tied to the chassis. At this stage he hadn't decided what exactly to do with the car. If it wasn't mechanically sound or if it didn't drive well there was no point it going to a lot of trouble with a body, it



*The fast four as it was found.*



may as well be another Rockin Chair Rocket. In Jesse's words, it wasn't too bad so he started coming up with designs for it and the idea of a boat tailed speedster was inspired by Auburn, Cord, Duesenberg and Packard. These upmarket brands all built boat tailed speedsters utilizing parabolic curves. Budget branded makes built speedsters but with linear curves they just did not have



that magic something that the parabolic curves generate. So Jesse built the boat tailed body by hand out of aluminium. And he restored the rest of the very tired panels. The running boards were from a different source. While prospecting in the bush in WA north of Kalgoorlie he came across a chassis mostly buried in the sand. There was no body but it did have running boards. He has no idea what make the chassis was but the running boards look the part on the Dodge. Looking at the photo of those panels you might expect there to be a bit of two pack bog in this vehicle. Jesse assures me there is absolutely no plastic filler in it and the whole thing was derusted chemically.



And there are a few tricky mods to make it run better and cooler. It fired up instantly and has a sporty note, as you might expect of a speedster.

But human nature being what it is, and Jesse may have crafted one absolutely beautiful motor car, but he decided he wanted something better. So he went looking and found a wreck for







*A better car but you won't find a ripple in the body-work of either of them.*

sale in the Murray Riverland. Off he went to check it out.

What he found was a better car. A buckboard with a better chassis, better engine, better transmission, and better panels but what made it stand out was the rear springs. They were special and they were excellent. It turned out they had built 3 buckboards from new as prototypes. This was one of them, hence the different springs.

So over about eighteen months he built another boat tailed speedster. This one with many subtle changes. This time the body was crafted from steel. Looking at the photos you can see the curve of the dash and how it continues around and flows into the doors. He made that bit 18 times before he got the appearance that he was after. The windscreen has been tilted back 7 degrees and then he had to manufacture a windscreen frame to suit. Once again there are no simplex curves on the body, they are all parabolic and this one is eight

*Two SU carbs for extra performance.*



*No front bumper but overriders to finish it off.*



*It took many goes before the doors met the cowl in a satisfactory manner.*



inches longer. Then there is a chrome bumper to finish it off at the back. In its sedan or tourer form, the rear fenders on these cars are made so the inner half is actually a scallop in the side of the body and the outer half is bolted on. So if you take one of those fenders off you basically get a fender that has been cut in half longways. You may notice in the photos that this car has full mudguards on the rear. He has cut up and joined together five fenders to make the pair and like everything else on the car the job is perfect. If he hadn't told me I never would have picked it. But that is what its like with both of these cars. The harder you look the more you find tricky little bits. He has gone to great pains to make the job more difficult and always the end result is perfect. A testimony to the skill of the builder.

And both of these cars are the same 1928 models.



*The windscreen and its surrounds are all hand crafted.*

*Left: The left hand numberplate.  
Right: A Stutz Bearcat, inspiration for these creations.*





*Here you can see the rear fenders. Originally only the outside half existed. And below is the front of those rear guards and stainless steel embellishments.*



*Notice the pinstripes on the spokes. They are shaped like a tuning fork and are of reflective material. When driving at night the reflection causes an ellipse to follow along next to the car.*



*And even the door frames are flashed up.*

*And notice the tricky little crescent shaped aperture for the spring shackle to move in.*



## A Topless Tucker?

by Bill Buys

I HAVE a 1/43rd scale model of a Tucker Torpedo among my diecast Dinkys, Corgis, Brumms, Solidos and other models of yesteryear.

It's probably worth about \$50, maybe more. But had it been a real one, it would have fetched well over a million bucks, in either US or AUD\$.

There are very few of them left in the world, because only 51 were ever built. All of them sedans. But now a convertible model has surfaced, causing quite a stir in the auto world.

A Tucker?

It was an American brand that emerged in the years following WWII and one that soon died because of bias, jealousy and/or some underhanded or mismanaged events.

Correctly called Tucker 48s, the number reflecting the year they were produced, they were originally called Tucker Torpedos, but founder Preston Tucker thought the torpedo name would recall the horrors of recently-ended world war, and badly reflect on the car.

Tucker himself was a man of many talents. He had worked, mainly in sales, for many car companies, among them Cadillac, Stutz, Dodge, Pierce-Arrow and Studebaker and was deeply involved with the Indianapolis 500 racing scene.

At one time he built racers for the Ford Motor Company, then, with war looming in Europe, he developed a Packard-engined armoured car with an advanced rooftop gun turret for the Dutch government, but the Germans invaded Holland before the vehicle was ready.

He then offered it to the US authorities, but they figured its 160km/h speed was way in excess of their design specifications.

After the war, the US car companies had nothing new to offer the public, which suited the enterprising Preston Tucker. His car was years ahead of anything the US had seen so far.

It had a 5.5litre horizontally-opposed rear engine, a central 'cyclops' headlight that turned with the front wheels, a perimeter frame for crash protection, a roll bar integrated into the roof, a padded dashboard, a shatterproof windscreen that

would pop out in the event of a crash, doors that extended into the roof, a collapsible steering column and several other innovations.



photo-credit-accelerate-auto-group-ebay\_100744053\_1

But a negative press and an ongoing Securities and Exchange Commission investigation, the latter due to government suspicions after big losses in trying to keep the failed Kaiser-Frazer carmaker afloat.

Tucker thought the media and securities onslaught was sparked by rumours started by worried Big Three people and it ended in Tucker being found guilty of shareholder stock fraud.

An appeal and revisit of the events proved he'd done nothing wrong, but by then his company and his advanced cars are no more.

Tucker never officially launched a convertible and there are no official documents mentioning such a thing.

But Benchmark Classics of Madison, Wisconsin, said it had an unfinished prototype of a Tucker convertible that it restored and it's listed for sale on eBay with a Buy It Now price of US\$2.175 million( about AUD\$3.4million.)

It's been listed by Accelerate Auto Group and they say the convertible was one of several unfinished Tuckers, the car bearing chassis number 57, that Tucker was working on when the company was shut down.

It features a reinforced version of the 48 sedan's chassis developed with Lenki Engineering, the same company that helped Tucker build the first prototype for the 48.

After Tucker went under, the convertible allegedly sat at Lenki Engineering for many years until it was sold to an employee who wanted to complete it.

The car then traded hands a few times before ending up at Benchmark Classics.

Accelerate Auto has posted on its website a number of documents it claims authenticates the car, among them an affidavit from a person said to be a former Tucker employee confirming the convertible's existence.

The convertible has many original Tucker parts, including a flat-6 engine in the tail and connected to a Cord transmission. The original engine was good for about 166 horsepower.

So, is it the real thing?

Whatever, it seems clear it's the only one of its kind, in which case the Buy It Now price might be a bargain.



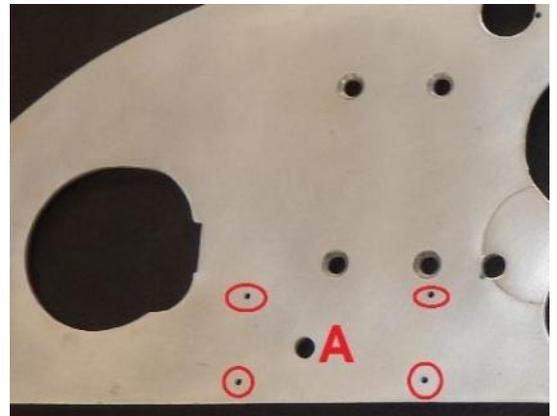
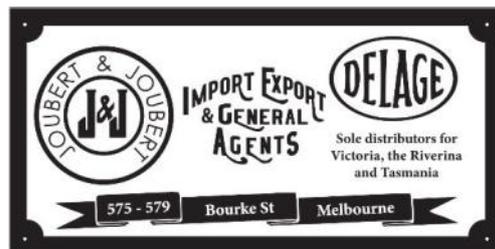
Often it's the little bits and pieces that set a veteran or vintage car apart.

Dealer's plaques were found on many cars but too often they're gone and not easily replaced. Rick McDonough shows us how (relatively) easy it is to create a replacement. This article is reproduced courtesy of Rick McDonough and The Edwardian, the bi-monthly magazine of the Veteran and Vintage Car Club of Australia (ACT).

Modern technology has now brought a number of formerly 'specialised' services within the range of the home enthusiast's abilities. One such example is that of remanufacturing brass plaques. It wasn't that long ago that you had to have a specialised firm do the artwork, then produce a costly die, then produce a largish quantity in order for the whole process to be economically viable. Now, with materials readily available, you can do 'one-off' plaques very easily yourself.

When restoring my Delage dashboard recently there was evidence that a Dealer's plaque had been affixed to its lower left edge — a typical location for such things. The four small holding fasteners were still in-situ, but the plaque itself had been removed in the 50s by the then owner's desire to mount a knob of some description in the same spot ('A' in photo below). Being unable to obtain an original plaque, I set about producing one for myself. The following is how I did it. Firstly I did the artwork for the final design. I was fortunate to have 'a friend of a friend' who was a graphic designer, and he was able to convert my amateur images into a professional image I could use.

Note — while the image here shows it reading normally, you in fact need the image to be back-to-front, ie mirrored.

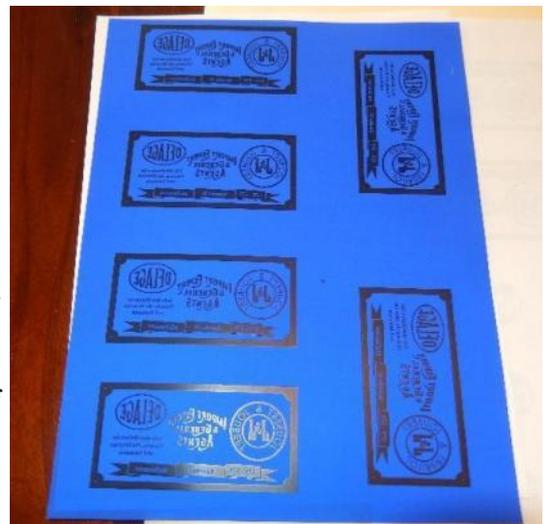


The next step was to print the image onto 'Press 'n' Peel' transfer film. This is available from Jaycar. You get a

pack of 5 sheets for \$40. Press 'n' Peel (P'n'P) is a mylar like film with a blue powdery emulsion coated onto it. This coating is very weakly adhered to the plastic film.

When printing you must use a laser printer— not an inkjet. I believe this has something to do with fact that Laser uses a plasticised type toner, (as opposed to ink) and can therefore be remelted onto the surface of your brass/copper blanks. As the sheets aren't particularly cheap, I printed several plaques onto a sheet in case some didn't work out. You'll see here how the image has printed out back to front — as intended.

Next was to cut some blanks, slightly oversize, out of a sheet of brass. Scrape any burrs on the edge of the blank that may have resulted from the cutting/shearing process. Burrs tend to keep the P'n'P (and the iron — see later) from making solid contact. I also ensured the surface of the blanks were both scratch free and 100% clean of any contamination.



The next step is to make the P'n'P image stick to the brass blank. I left about a 15mm border around each image when cutting them out of the P'n'P sheet. Place the P'n'P with image face down onto the blank — which explains why you did the back to front image and printing, as when it is flipped face down on your blank it will now read the right way.

Now it's time to get the iron out. Temperature setting on the iron is quite important. Suggested starting temperature is 135-165 degrees C. I used an iron



setting of 'Cotton'. Time varies with the size and thickness of the blank, but I generally ironed for about 2 mins. I used the timer on my phone to assist with this. DO NOT USE STEAM! I also used a piece of plain paper between the iron and the film to reduce friction and prevent the iron from catching on the film. Be very careful not to move the P'n'P sheet while you iron it otherwise you'll distort the image. This is very likely to happen when you start ironing. Therefore it is best to first just place and press the iron on the board and after 20 or so seconds start moving it.

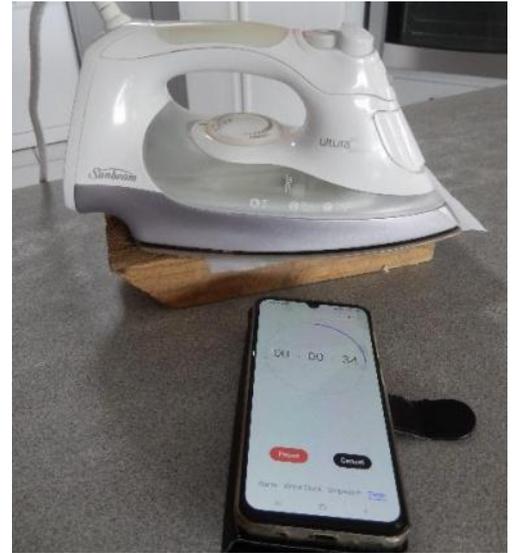
The way the transfer of image works is that the toner re-melts and sticks to the brass blank, but as the blue coating has poor adhesion to the sheet it comes unstuck as you peel it off leaving the residue only where the toner was. This residue is known as a 'resist' because it will resist the corrosive action of the acid etch process. Given this 'resistance' it means that when you do your initial artwork you need to think about what areas of the finished plaque are to be left 'high' and which areas are 'low', ie. eaten away by the acid. You almost have to think of it as a 'negative'.

Now comes time to peel the P'n'P off, but only after the blank has cooled down. If you peel it off whilst still hot you will not get very good results, this is because the toner is still sticky and not set so it will come off. I peeled the sheet back very slowly so I could spot any non-fused parts before the whole sheet is off. If it was a bit patchy I could flip it back down and give it a bit more ironing. I also used a 'Sharpie' felt pen with a fine tip for any touch—up work on the brass blank if any of the image hadn't transferred properly.

Now comes time to remove the excess brass (i.e.. all the brass not covered by the resist). The acid used is Ferric Chloride. I couldn't get any of this in Canberra. I tried various hardware stores and even pool shops, all to no avail. I ended up ordering a litre online from a Sydney Supplier— cost about \$40 posted. I used a clean Chinese take-away type container to put the FeCl in. Before putting the plaque in the acid I covered its backside with packaging tape. This is another type of resist as I didn't want the unprinted rear side to be eaten away by the acid. I also made a sort of tongue with the packing tape so I could grip the plate to lower and lift it out of the acid. I also made a bracket that I could sit my plaque on in the bath. This kept it off the bottom and allowed the acid to freely circulate over its face. By putting the plaque in the bath face down, you are allowing all the particles of brass that are being eaten away to fall downwards, away from the plaque. I left the plaque in about 80 minutes but checked it a couple of times over that period to make sure all was well. The acid will eventually lose its effectiveness if several items are done.

Once satisfied that the etching was deep enough I then removed the plaque from the container and rinsed it off and trimmed the excess brass off the

*The plaque, face down in the bracket. This kept the face of the plaque off the bottom and allowed the acid to circulate over it. Note — I also covered the bracket in tape so the acid didn't waste its effectiveness on it.*



*The back side of the plaque covered in tape and the 'tongue' used to grip it with.*



oversize blank. This final trimming took a fair amount of time I might add. Once to final size I then removed the resist with some paint thinners. Acetone works fine too.

In summary it was a very satisfying exercise. The beauty of this process is that it is simple, uses readily available materials, and there is really no design you can't reproduce. I now have a very presentable Agent's Badge to attach to the dashboard.

Rick

*And the final product, now mounted on the dash and with the background infilled with black paint.*

*As it came out of the acid bath, but rinsed off. This perspective shows the depth of the etch. You can also see that the resist is still present. The next step here was to remove the excess brass seen beyond the outer border of the plaque.*



### **Military invasion.**

Recently we had 2 buses containing about 70 officer cadets from Duntroon Military Academy visit the hangar. A lot of them didn't look like your typical Aussie digger. It turned out most were exchange students from friendly (we hope) countries. Fred Ferrari is giving them a lowdown on the hangar's history.



## Driving blind.

Maybe in your youth you came across someone that drove a car or motorbike while he was blind. Move forward to 2022 and some people are still doing it. And generally telling someone where to go might get you a negative reaction, but on this day the driver had to be told where to go, literally.

At MVEC's rally to the other end recently, the drivers had to navigate their way round a simple course marked with witches hats and flags while running against the stopwatch. The added level of difficulty is that they were doing it while blindfolded. Those annoying masks you had to wear while the covid business was running made a comeback as they make excellent blindfolds when worn a bit higher than originally intended. So the driver had to actually listen to their navigator. He was going to go nowhere by himself. And those navigators had trouble coming to grips with the idea that pointing which way to go with your hands was a waste of time when the driver couldn't see them. And then to up the ante they had to do a simple reverse manoeuvre. That really sorted em out.

But no one died and as the rest of the 50 km course was normal navigating with sight, nobody got into any serious trouble.



*Jim Henderson the navigator looks relaxed at the moment. Will that change to terror once Mike Wright starts driving blind?*



*Where's that bloody steering wheel gone? Peet Menzies is about to receive orders from Judy the navigator.*

### **1960s 350 Holly carby refurbished**

I bought it about 20 years ago and have just replaced it with a brand new one so want to sell it. I had it in my 1971 Toyota Land Cruiser FJ40.

Am asking for \$400 ono. Details: Ranid May, ranidmay@yahoo.com and m: 0431 269 360.

### **Free stuff**

Get your free ads in here  
Give stuff away, sell stuff, get information, find a lover. Got a story to sell? Whatever you like.  
Email Ted at [longtelescope@gmail.com](mailto:longtelescope@gmail.com)  
Or phone 89886049

### **Previous editions**

All previous editions of Transmission are now available at [mvec.weebly.com](http://mvec.weebly.com)

### **English wheel**

With 8 anvils  
\$400  
Ted 89886049  
[longtelescope@gmail.com](mailto:longtelescope@gmail.com)

### **1928 Dodge Standard 6 bits**

Gearbox \$50  
Diff \$50  
All engine parts, electrical parts.  
  
Ted 89886049 [longtelescope@gmail.com](mailto:longtelescope@gmail.com)

## **Wots on**

### **17th July**

#### **MVEC vs Classic Holden Car Club annual cricket match.**

At the picturesque Batchelor oval. You can throw balls at a Holden owner or just come for a drive and watch. And there will be a barbie fired up there at lunchtime. BBQ ashes being the cuisine of the day. And if you are not into cricket, it's a nice drive.

**Walter took his wife Ethel to the state fair every year**, and every time he would say to her, "Ethel, you know that I'd love to go for a ride in that helicopter."  
But Ethel would always reply, "I know that Walter, but that helicopter ride is 50 dollars and 50 dollars is 50 dollars."  
Finally, they went to the fair, and Walter said to Ethel, "Ethel, you know I'm 87 years old now. If I don't ride that helicopter this year, I may never get another chance." Once again Ethel replied, "Walter, you know that helicopter is 50 dollars and 50 dollars is 50 dollars."  
This time the helicopter pilot overheard the couple's conversation and said, "Listen folks, I'll make a deal with you. I'll take both of you for a ride; if you can both stay quiet for the entire ride and not say a word I won't charge you! But if you say just one word, it's 50 dollars."  
Walter and Ethel agreed and up they went in the helicopter. The pilot performed all kinds of fancy moves and tricks, but not a word was said by either Walter or Ethel.  
The pilot did his death-defying tricks over and over again, but still there wasn't so much as one word said.  
When they finally landed, the pilot turned to Walter and said, "Wow! I've got to hand it to you. I did everything I could to get you to scream or shout out, but you didn't. I'm really impressed!"  
Walter replied, "Well to be honest I almost said something when Ethel fell out but, you know, 50 dollars is 50 dollars!"



# MOTOR VEHICLE ENTHUSIASTS CLUB INCORPORATED

## RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

JULY 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 to May 30<sup>th</sup> 2023

FAMILY NAME.....GIVEN NAME.....

SPOUSE/PARTNER (CHILDREN UNDER 16 yrs.).....

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: STREET NAME/NUMBER.....

SUBURB/TOWN.....STATE.....POST CODE .....

POSTAL ADDRESS.....SUBURB/TOWN.....STATE..... POST CODE .....

PHONE.....MOBILE.....

YOUR EMAIL (please print clearly).....

**INITIAL JOINING FEE OF \$20.00 PLUS ANNUAL FEE OF \$40.00**

**NOTE\*** CLUB REGISTERED VEHICLES ARE NOT REGISTERED AND THIRD PARTY INSURED IF YOU ARE NOT A FINANCIAL MEMBER

### PAYMENT AND APPLICATION DELIVERY: PLEASE TICK BOX TO INDICATE METHOD

POSTED TO MVEC – PO BOX 911 DARWIN 0801

DROPPED  OFF AT HANGAR WITH PAYMENT

PAID ONLINE: ACCOUNT BENDIGO BANK BSB 633-000 ACCOUNT 142 473 552

**IF PAYING ON LINE IN THE PAYMENT DESCRIPTION INCLUDE**

**(YOUR NAME AND THE WORDS MEMBERSHIP FEE)**

**OR IT WILL BE TREATED AS A DONATION**

EMAIL APPLICATION TO: [mveclub@bigpond.com](mailto:mveclub@bigpond.com) Phone (08) 89424839

SPECIAL INTEREST VEHICLE/MOTOR CYCLE DETAILS (Use Extra Sheet if Needed)

| No | YEAR | MAKE | MODEL | BODY TYPE | CONDITION | REGO |
|----|------|------|-------|-----------|-----------|------|
| 1  |      |      |       |           |           |      |
| 2  |      |      |       |           |           |      |
| 3  |      |      |       |           |           |      |

\* OFFICE USE ONLY PAYMENT RECEIVED

CARD ISSUED

DATE.....

CLUB MEMBERSHIP NUMBER