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Collectors Club

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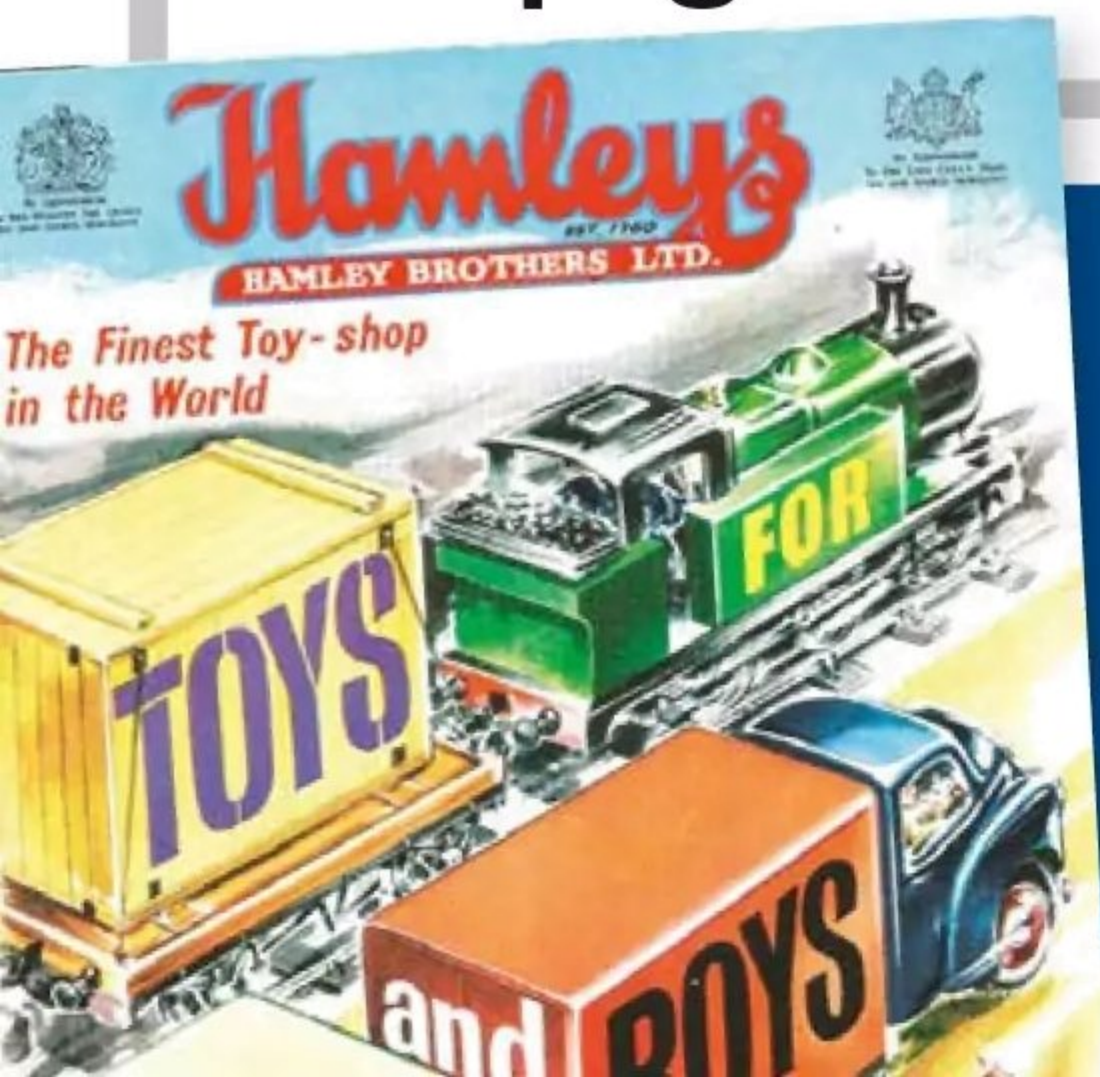
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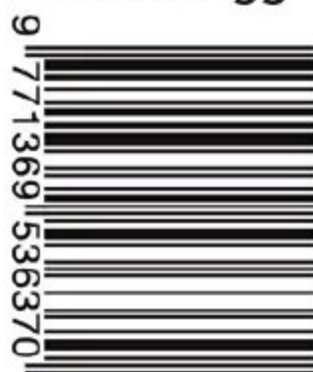
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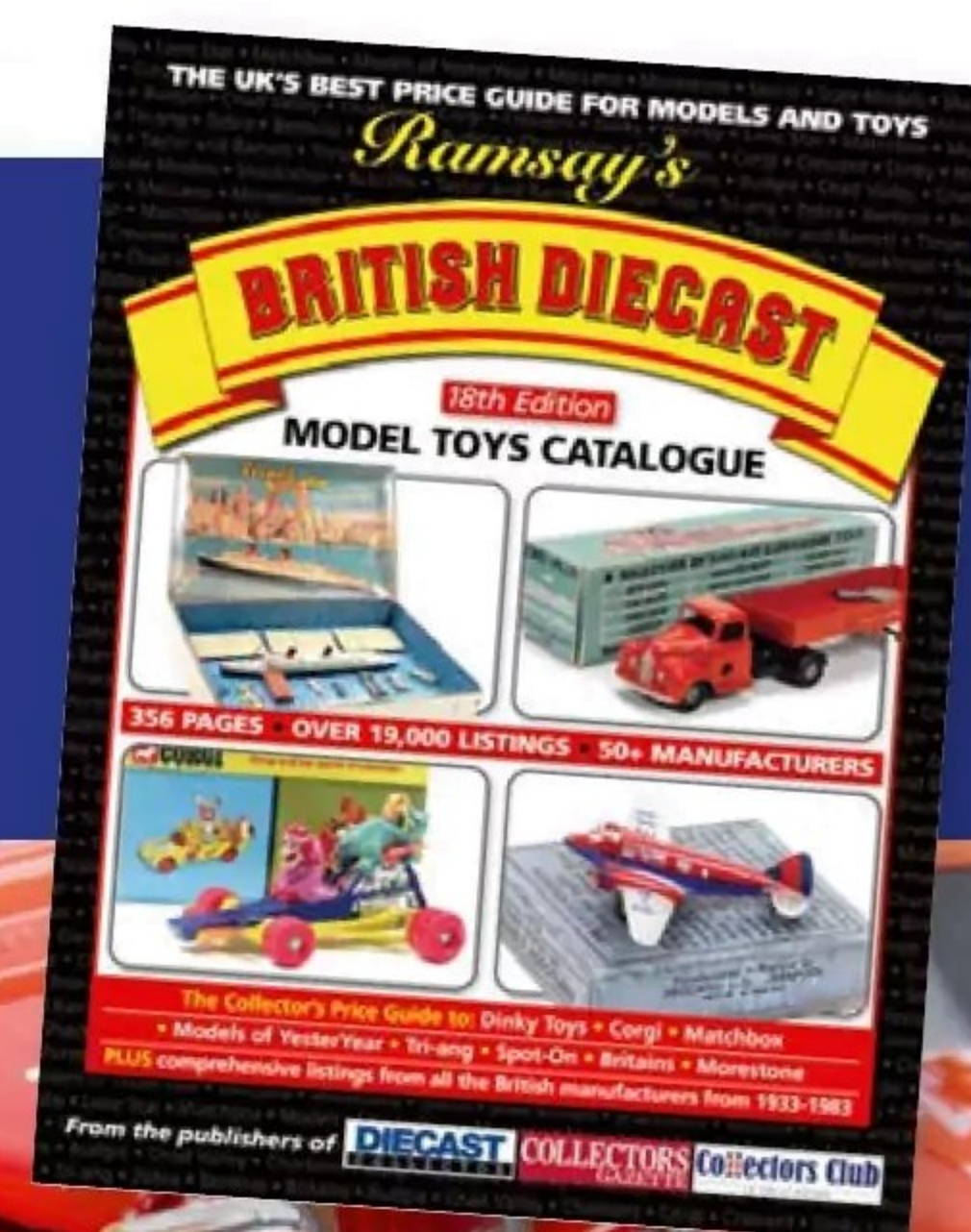
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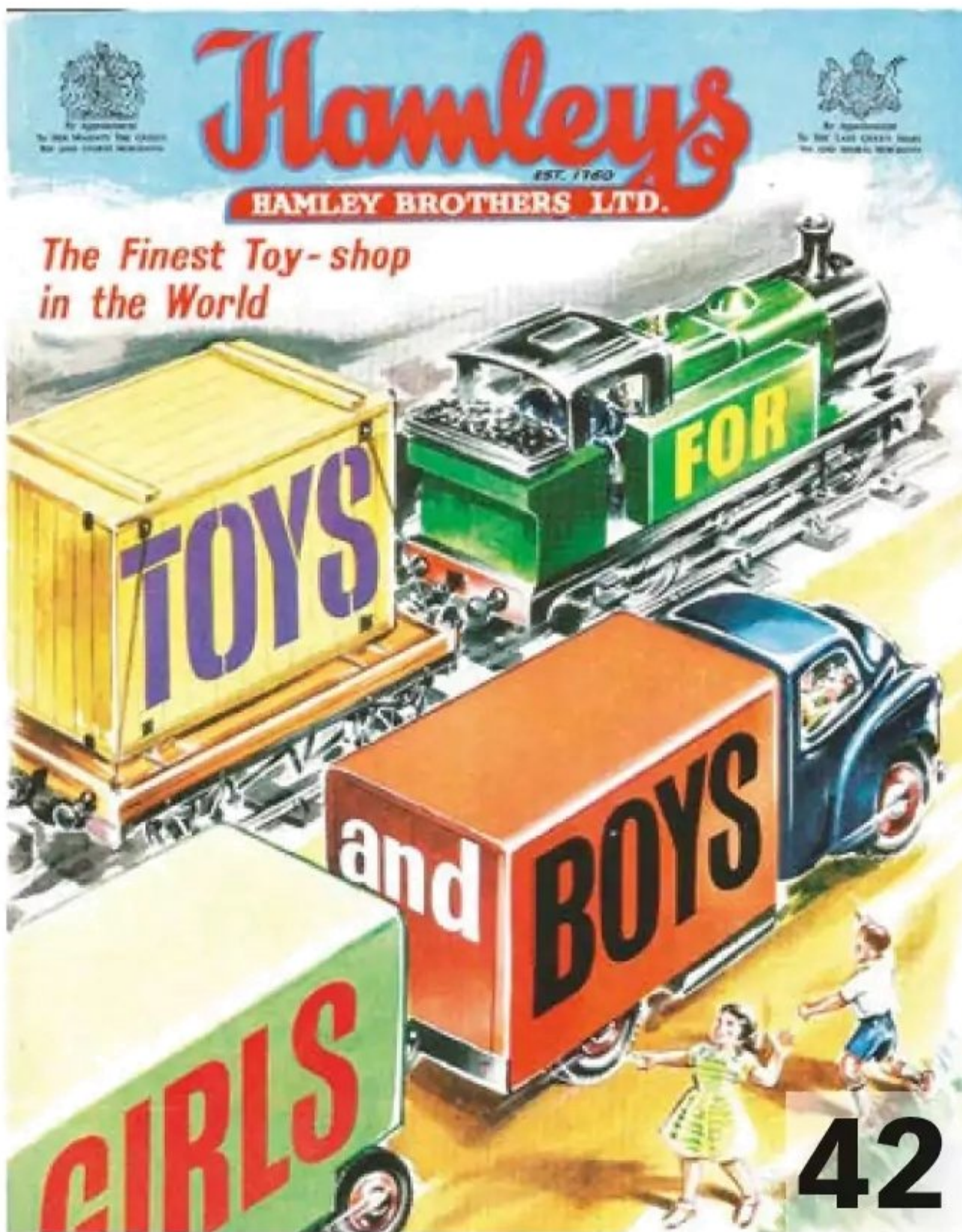
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NEWS

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HORNBY HOBBIES BRINGS WONDER TO KENT

HORNBY Hobbies, Britain's leading model maker, has announced the opening of an exciting new experience, The WonderWorks, located in Margate, Kent. Formerly the Hornby Visitor Centre, the interactive attraction will immerse visitors into the world of Hornby Hobbies' famous hobby, toy, collectable and specialist brands through a range of educational and sensory experiences, all designed to evoke visitors' imaginations as soon as they walk through the door.

The reimagined experience features new miniature worlds and incredible exhibition pieces, along with a redesigned café with updated menu featuring local produce. In addition to interacting with the impressive exhibitions, visitors will have the opportunity to discover the history of the company and to learn how Hornby, Airfix, Corgi, Scalextric and Pocher make their models and kits. Daily workshops and special events will help new and existing Hornby Hobbies fans to

get the most out of their hobby.

"After nearly a year of planning and hard work, we are very excited to unveil The WonderWorks, and to bring a new energy to the way we showcase our iconic brands," said Olly Raeburn, CEO, Hornby Hobbies. "The WonderWorks will offer visitors an entirely new, interactive experience, which is both the ultimate haven for enthusiasts and the ideal introduction for those new to the world of miniature."

Set in part of the former factory that has been home to the famous brands for almost 70 years, the previous Hornby Visitor Centre attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world and has been featured on TV series *Hornby: A Model World*.

Tickets for The WonderWorks experience cost just £5 per adult, with concessions available for families, children and groups.

For more information see www.wonderworksmargate.co.uk. ■

SOLIDO PROMISES A YEAR OF DIVERSITY

THE end of the year is approaching fast and Solido has unveiled the first models for 2024.

Whether in 1/18 or 1/43 scale, the company based in Morbihan, France, promises a spectacular year. At the same time, 2024 will be a year of re-order, as Clément Rouvière, Product Manager at Solido, explains: "This year Solido is going to stabilise, and we're going to give pride of place to our new 1/24 and 1/43 ranges in order to build loyalty among our customers, while remaining attentive to their expectations. We're looking to the world with a broader range to satisfy as many people as possible."

While the company celebrated its 90th anniversary back in 2022, the Solido name itself will celebrate its 90th anniversary in 2024. So, it's natural that a large number of new models, in both 1/18 and 1/43 scale, will soon be arriving. Stability will definitely be the order of the day, with more regular releases set at 16 models per month (8 for 1/18 and 8 for 1/43).

In 1/18 scale, we can expect a wide variety of models including a Dacia Duster 2023, Honda Civic EG6, BMW 635 CSI, 993 RWB and the Mazda RX-7 FD and Renault 5 GT Turbo.

The JDM (Japan Domestic Market) is in the spotlight too with two iconic 1/18 scale models: the Honda Civic and the Mazda RX7. For Clément Rouvière, the

arrival of the famous Mazda in the range is a pleasure, but above all "a sign that the world of collecting is getting younger!"

Since its comeback in 2015, the French brand has been keen to surprise its fans and collectors around the world. The brand goes where it's not necessarily expected, to offer a subtle blend of originality and *coup de coeur*. Clément Rouvière reiterates the brand's credo: "We have to continue to surprise, while always remaining connected to our collectors." He also adds that surprises are part of Solido's DNA: "It's a bit like our trademark, and for 2024 we've got a model that will leave you speechless!"

So, be better watch this space... ■





NEW ALCALINE MODEL TRUCK SERIES RELEASE

Search Impex has announced the release of a 1/50 scale Mercedes Actros MP4 Gigaspace (4x2) tractor unit with 3 axle, regular curtain trailer, customised in the distinctive livery of Kent-based operator, Alcaline Transport UK Ltd.

Commissioned by Alcaline to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the company in 2023, this is the first time an official production run of models has been made for this operator and they have been produced exclusively for Search Impex by WSI Models as a certificated Limited Edition (135 pieces).

Established in 1993 in Lympne, near Hythe, Kent (and now with operating centres in Italy and The Netherlands), Alcaline UK is an international haulage company offering specialist road, as well as air services, throughout Europe, together with significant on-site warehousing and storage facilities for customer use. Whilst the major operational focus is on the Anglo-Italian market, Alcaline also serves customers in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. And, by working with established trading partners in other areas of Europe, the company can also cater for customers' distribution needs in a number of additional markets including, currently, Switzerland, Malta and Spain - and plans are now well underway to develop significant business in the German, Austrian and Polish markets.

With a UK fleet of 120+ vehicles and 240+ trailers - which includes one of the largest fleets of Mega trailers in the UK, as well as steel coiler trailers (run mainly by the Dutch operation), Alcaline's clientele comprises a number of Blue Chip customers, together with several manufacturers in the automotive and aviation industries. Full loads, part-loads and groupage services to Europe are available as standard, as are express next day "Just in Time" deliveries to Belgium, France, Switzerland and Italy. And with the offices based about ten minutes from the Channel Tunnel Terminal and only thirty minutes from the Port of Dover, the location is perfect!

Models, available from Search Impex, are priced at £169 (including UK delivery & VAT). For details of availability of this and other models, collectors can visit the Search Impex website at www.search-impex.co.uk or call on 01332 873555. ■

OBITUARY – DAVID BUSFIELD

IT is with the deepest regret that we have to inform you that David Busfield recently passed away unexpectedly. You will find his last feature on Morris J Van in the December issue of *Diecast Collector*, as well as two articles in the last issue of *The Journal* (the Dinky Toy Collectors' Association magazine), which will now act as a fitting memorial to him.

David supplied these articles with his usual meticulous

attention to detail and excellent photography. David was extremely knowledgeable about the history of Meccano products, especially Dinky Toys and Hornby railways.

He will be sadly missed by us here at *Diecast Collector*, along with members of the DTCA and HRCA; his contributions were highly valued.

Our condolences go out to David's family and friends at this time. ■



HOW MUCH?!

WE are definitely a nation of collectors, as new research from Airtasker reveals 68% of the population spend an average of £5,500 on collectables. Moreover, 32% say they're 'big' collectors with two thirds (72%) considering moving to a bigger property to make room for their keepsakes, and 83% admitted they argue with loved ones about their items taking up too much space!

To celebrate collectors (and help prevent further rifts) Airtasker is launching the British Collector Awards calling enthusiasts to enter themselves, or a loved one who deserves the accolade.

Whether you're a collector

of 90s nostalgia, vintage cars or royal memorabilia, Airtasker is looking for the biggest and most outrageous treasure troves, with five UK winners in line for top awards. Four runner-up finalists will receive a medal, along with £200 to help build display areas to showcase their collections and one overall winner who will bag a £1,000 to house their hero products along with the 'Britain's Best Collector' trophy.

You can email your entry directly to: ukcollectors@thewilful.com. Applications are open until 26th January 2024, with shortlists being selected in February. The overall winners will be announced on 21st February 2024. ■

NEWS

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NEW FROM MATRIX



NEWS has reached us of a selection of new Matrix models coming soon.

First up, from British Heritage Models (www.britishheritagemodels.co.uk), are two famous British cars; the 1953 Daimler DE36 'Green Goddess', and the 1980 Aston Martin Bulldog.

The 20-foot-long green Daimler prototype, built for Daimler chairman, Sir Bernard Docker, was the costliest vehicle at the 1948 Earls Court show. At £7,001 (or nearly £250,000 today) it was probably the most expensive car on sale anywhere in the world too.

The unique Bulldog, styled by William Towns, was a British one-off concept vehicle produced by Aston Martin, in 1979. Initially,

a production run of 15–25 cars was planned, but the project was deemed too costly, and only one was built.

Next in the line-up, this time from Spa Croft Models (www.spacraftmodels.co.uk), is the 1949 Aston Martin 2 Litre Sports. Called the DB1 after the DB2 was produced, the colours available are a pale metallic blue (open), and black (closed), plus the 1949 Le Mans car (finished 11th) in Sussex Green.

The final release is a model of a one-off 1966 Jaguar E Type, known as the Coombes Frua E Type. It was commissioned by former racing driver and later Jaguar salesman, John Combs, with Coachwork by Frua and Italsuisse. It proved to be too expensive to produce and only this prototype was built. ■

NEW TOY COLLECTORS PRICE GUIDE 2024

IF you've been a regular reader of the *Diecast Collector* for a while, then you'll know that each year we publish *Toy Collectors Price Guide*, which brings together hundreds of auction prices from around the world, along with full colour pictures, to help you put a potential estimate on your collection.

Well, this year is no different and we're pleased to announce that the *Toy Collectors Price Guide 2024* is available to buy from 23rd November... either direct from us at Warners or on the high street at WHSmith. Priced at £8.99, the guide clocks in at nearly 100 pages and features more than 1,473 collectables, totalling a whopping £360,000.

In terms of the collectables, we've got a bumper diecast section with all your favourites covered, along with model railways, toy figures, tinsplate, TV and film memorabilia and other



toys, games and collectables.

There's also an expanded eBay section featuring online results from the popular auction site.

Available as either a paper product or a digital edition, you order your copy for £8.99 (plus postage and packaging) by visiting ccofgb.uk/tcpg2023 or calling us on 01778 392006. ■

NEXT MONTH

February 2024
Issue 316

PLUS...

- Mercedes 600
- Mini at Monte Carlo
- A-Z of diecast collecting
- Auction results
- All the latest news
- Extensive selection of new model releases



Let there be light!

We look at miniature cars with working lights

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Please note: These planned editorial contents may be subject to change where necessary.



THE MERL IS PLAYING AT FARMING

A new 'Model Farming' gallery featuring over 150 farm toys has opened at The Museum of English Rural Life.

WHAT do Henry Ford, the prolific farm toy collector Peter Wade-Martins, and a little girl called Pippa Hughes have in common? The answer: they all feature in the new 'Model Farming' gallery in the Museum of English Rural Life (The MERL), at the University of Reading.

'Model Farming' at The MERL is the first public UK museum gallery devoted to farm toys. Visitors will be able to see over 150 carefully selected toys from an incredible collection of over 2500 items that was generously donated to the museum in 2019 by the collector, Peter Wade-Martins.

The displays use farm toys, alongside scale models and other artefacts, photos, and imagery to reveal the fascinating story of agricultural mechanisation.

The gallery was officially opened by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Robert Van de Noort, who had the opportunity to explore the new displays and meet Peter Wade-Martins to find out more about the story of change in the countryside, as explored in the gallery.

Robert Van de Noort said, "It is wonderful to see The MERL continuing to develop its displays, providing new opportunities for visitors of all ages to learn about farming and the countryside, from children learning through play to academic researchers. We are very grateful to Peter for making this possible through his wonderful collection".

Peter Wade-Martins said "I can't think a better place for the collection to be than in this University Museum where it can now be seen as a teaching and a research collection.

"Putting the collection together over 20 years was partly re-living my childhood. My favourite toy was the red Dinky Massey Harris tractor with a muck spreader. I remember playing with one for hours, but I don't remember what I used in the muck spreader in place of muck on my mother's carpets!

For it to be recognised as a national reference collection is the best possible outcome."

Dr Ollie Douglas, Curator of MERL Collections said, "No museum would ever be able to tell this complex story of agricultural mechanisation through full-sized objects. Modern tractors are very expensive and there is no way we could even fit a contemporary combine harvester in our building. We are incredibly lucky to have this unique resource to illustrate processes of change and the ways in which they were shared through play, through such detailed and engaging artefacts. The Peter Wade-Martins Collection has been carefully catalogued with the support of our brilliant conservation team, and meticulously photographed by a dedicated volunteer, so it is now also available to explore online."

The gallery also celebrates the people who have played with farm toys. Also at the opening event was Pippa Hughes, who is pictured in the gallery as a child in the late 1940s with her own 'carpet farm', which she donated to the Museum in 2010. Her story echoes the experience of so many children who first learn about farming through these toys. The gallery features a hands-on toy table to allow young visitors to play!

Ms Hughes said, "I am delighted to see the picture of me and my childhood toys in the gallery. It means a lot to me and my family to know that the collection which generations of my family have played with, will be useful to researchers in the future."

As for the famous industrialist, Henry Ford, you'll have to visit to find out more about the part he played in the story told by these new displays... ■

MORE INFORMATION

To plan your visit to the gallery, visit <https://merl.reading.ac.uk/visit-us/galleries/model-farming/>

What's new...

Our team of experts take a look at this month's model releases, including fine handbuilt replicas, scale construction and the latest in farm models.

SOLIDO'S NEW SNAKE BARES ITS TEETH AND IT'S A THING OF REAL BEAUTY

The story of how, in 1962, the pretty AC Ace became the mighty AC Cobra, with Ford's awesome V8 shoehorned under the bonnet, has been well documented over the decades, but it was all basically down to one man – Carroll Shelby. The 1959 Le Mans 24 Hours winner had rightfully earned the reputation of a man to be listened to, so when he approached AC with his idea of the engine transplant, AC took him very seriously and an iconic car was born.

As the car was developed, a new chassis was created to drop the even bigger 7.0-litre (427 cu.in.) V8 into. This bigger lump necessitated a bulge and air intake in the bonnet to accommodate it, further adding to the car's incredible looks.

Solido's latest version of its stunning, 1/18 scale replica of the Shelby Cobra is just exquisite in the sumptuous metallic red shade chosen, with those iconic, twin white Shelby stripes from front to back, of course. What sets this new release apart from previous models is the addition of the beautifully-recreated hardtop, finished to match the body. The hardtop is removable and the roll hoop is too. If you want to display the model with the hardtop off, the roll hoop fits neatly into three pre-drilled holes. It will need to be removed, though, should you prefer to display with the hardtop in place.

The finish, as you can see, is nothing short of

SOLIDO
1965 Shelby Cobra
427

SCALE: 1/18
PRICE: £55.99
REF: 1804909

www.solido.com

incredible. The depth of the colour is beautiful to behold and the metallic, almost mirror-like finish is flawless all over. The 'knock off' wheels (that's a reference to the method used to remove them rather than infer that they were acquired illegally!) are excellent, as is the life-like, Goodyear-branded rubber that adorns them. The lines of the body are perfectly crafted, giving that oh-so-important and evocative look of this classic car the correct look and stance.

The interior is very nicely done too, with plenty of detail to enjoy – very important for a roadster, of course, because there is no hiding place if the hardtop is removed. Even if the top is in place, both doors open, so it's still possible to enjoy the view inside. The front wheels are posable, and turning these turns the steering wheel too, although it's quite a stiff movement, so this function can't be operated in reverse!

This truly is a stunning replica, especially for the price. If you have ever been tempted to take a ride in one of these, either on road or track, this really is the next best thing – and it's much cheaper too. ■

RIGHT With the supplied hardtop in place (located with three lugs into the upper bodywork), the Cobra takes on a very sporty look.

BELOW The finish of the sumptuous red paintwork is very dramatic and is superbly finished off with those iconic Shelby stripes.





HAND
BUILT

STAMP MODELS
**1940 Cadillac Fleetwood Sixty
Special Sedan - metallic maroon**
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £115.00 REF: STM 40201

www.stampmodels.com

Fine model of the family Cadillac of the day, with excellent moulding, finish and level of detail, with the large plated front wing trims particularly noticeable.



HAND
BUILT

MATRIX MODELS
**1963-67 Wolseley Hornet - 2-tone
green**
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £110 REF: MXMM 430091

www.matrixscalemodels.com

Companion to the Riley versions shown below, another well-detailed model of the "De-Luxe" badge-engineered Mini. A real beauty of a model.



HAND
BUILT

MATRIX MODELS
1963-67 Riley Elf - blue/white
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £110
REF: MXMM 430082

www.matrixscalemodels.com

This version of the Elf in blue with Old English White roof, has its interior in red, with the detailed wood-effect fascia again. Another lovely model.



HAND
BUILT

MATRIX MODELS
1963-67 Riley Elf - grey/white
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £110
REF: MXMM 430081

www.matrixscalemodels.com

Sweet little model of the Riley version of the "Mini-with-a-boot", well-moulded, finished and detailed, with particularly neat window surrounds and wheel trims.



HAND
BUILT

MATRIX MODELS
1975-81 Jaguar XJ-S - dark green
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £115
REF: MX 41001-203

www.matrixscalemodels.com

A third colour for Matrix' version of the early XJ-S, British Racing Green, with beige interior. The comes with the same fine level of detail as previous models.



HAND
BUILT

GOLDVARG
**1976 Pontiac Catalina Sedan -
Athena Blue**
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £125 REF: GC 069A

www.goldvargcollection.com

Fine replica of this everyday Pontiac, in metallic mid-blue with tonal blue interior. All the trim is replicated, as are the interior details and whitewall tyres.



HAND
BUILT

GOLDVARG
**1976 Oldsmobile 98 Regency Sedan
- Gold**
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £125 REF: GC 071A

www.goldvargcollection.com

Excellent model of this typical mid-range 1970s Oldsmobile. In an attractive solid light yellow, with a beige vinyl roof, and a lighter beige interior. Excellent detail.



HAND
BUILT

GOLDVARG
**1976 Oldsmobile 98 Regency Sedan
- Dark Blue**
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £125 REF: GC 071B

www.goldvargcollection.com

The other colour for the Oldsmobile, a rich dark metallic blue, with light blue vinyl-effect roof, and mid-blue interior. Excellent finish and detail again.



WSI MODELS
Liebherr LTM1090-4.2 Mobile Crane
"Transgrua"
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €228 REF: 51-2146

www.wsi-models.com

The colours of Transgrua are convincingly captured in this release of the LTM1090-4.2 mobile crane. The outriggers extend and the boom telescopes smoothly.



SIKU
Fendt 728 Vario Tractor
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £39.99
REF: 3293

www.siku.de

Well-built model tractor with metal chassis, plastic body panels, plastic cab and plastic wheel rims. It has working linkages and steerable wheels.



BRITAINS
John Deere 6R 185 Tractor
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £35.99
REF: 43351

www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk

With working front and rear linkages, steerable wheels and a detachable cab, Britains well-made tractor offers plenty of display options.



UNIVERSAL HOBBIES
Massey Ferguson 7S.190 Tractor
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £69.41
REF: X993042306412

shop.masseyferguson.com

Based on existing tooling this 7S.190 tractor sports updated bonnet, exhaust, work lights and GPS receiver. It has good levels of detailing.

NEW FROM BRITAINS PRESTIGE COLLECTION

A good-looking and well-proportioned model of Massey Ferguson's flagship 180 hp 6S tractor. It's beautifully engineered with metal linkages, axles, engine and transmission. On the front linkage the lower links unfold into their working position and are supported on two rams. It also has an adjustable length top link. The bonnet does not open but has glazed lights and sports Massey Ferguson decals down both sides. There's engine detailing visible under the bonnet side panels.

Universal Hobbies has improved the cab's exterior with glazed work lights, glazed warning beacons, a radio aerial, a white GPS receiver and fixed driving mirrors. There are cab access steps, fuel and AdBlue tanks detailed on the left-hand side. Although the cab does not detach, nor the door or window opens, a detailed interior is visible through the windows. It's equipped with black floor matting, black steering wheel, passenger and driver's seats and on the driver's right-hand armrest two monitor screens.

For attaching equipment the tractor's fitted with Universal Hobbies latest three-point linkage. The lower links are supported on two rams and there's a slide under the rear axle which locks them in the raised position. An adjustable length top link is provided and a hook for attaching trailed equipment. ■

UNIVERSAL HOBBIES
Massey Ferguson
6S.180 Tractor

PRICE: £69.41
SCALE: 1/32
REF: X993042306459

shop.masseyferguson.com



ABOVE A detailed rear view of the three-point linkage.

BELOW A good looking replica of Massey Ferguson's flagship tractor.





Exklusiv

Opel Diplomat B, 1972
Nr. 262695 64.95



Lada 2105 VFTS, 1000 Lakes
Rally, S.Brundza, V.Neyman, 1984
Nr. 263360 72.95

1:18



Hyundai i30 N, 2021
Nr. 254915 64.95



Mercedes W124 Tuning, 1986
Nr. 265110 64.95



Exklusiv

Opel Kadett C Coupe, Exklusiv
bei Model Car World, 1975
Nr. 262203 64.95



Saab 900 Turbo, 1981
Nr. 260251 64.95



VW Golf II GTI, 1984
Nr. 265059 64.95



BMW 320 Gr.5, Rodenstock, DRM,
Zolder, M.Winkelhock, 1979
Nr. 254278 69.95



Lotus Ford 79, Formel 1,
M.Andretti, GP Argentinien, 1979
Nr. 260057 64.95



Porsche 935 J, Liqui Moly, DRM,
Spa-Francorchamps, R.Stommelen, 1980
Nr. 254275 69.95



Tyrrell P34, Formel 1,
P.Depailler, GP Schweden, 1976
Nr. 253521 64.95



VOLVO F88, 1977 1994
Nr. 245209 ~~149.95~~ 59.00



MAN F2000, Wandt, 1994
Nr. 252472 ~~149.95~~ 59.00



Mercedes 1838 SK II, 1994
Nr. 236576 ~~149.95~~ 59.00



Scania 143 Topline, 1987
Nr. 236584 ~~149.95~~ 59.00



Volvo F88, Bilspeidition, 1971
Nr. 236579 ~~149.95~~ 59.00



Lada 2105 VFTS, 1983
Nr. 263357 67.95



Skoda 130 L, 1988
Nr. 265181 67.95



Toyota GR Yaris Rally1, S.Ogier,
B.Veillas, Rallye Monte Carlo, 2022
Nr. 265184 72.95



Volvo 240 Turbo, Nordica, Brunn,
J.Cecotto, A.Olofsson, ETCC, 1986
Nr. 252499 69.95



Volvo 240 Turbo Custom, 1985
Nr. 252502 64.95



Alpine Renault 1800 S, J-C.
Andruet, M.Petit, Rallye Monte
Carlo, mit Figuren, 1973
Nr. 264287 49.95



Ford Puma Rally1, C.Breen,
P.Nagle, Rallye Acropolis,
2022
Nr. 265375 39.95



GMC 950 COE, 1954
Nr. 263395 32.95



Hyundai i20 N Rally1,
D.Sordo, C.Carrera,
Rallye Acropolis, 2022
Nr. 261775 39.95



Lancia Stratos HF, S.Munari,
M.Mannucci, Rallye Monte
Carlo, mit Figuren, 1975
Nr. 264288 49.95



Mack Serie F, 1977
Nr. 264960 32.95



Nissan 35GT-RR LB-Silhouette
Works GT, JPS, 2019
Nr. 265268 37.95



Praga V3S 6WD, 1962
Nr. 264963 47.95



Toyota GR Yaris Pandem,
RHD, 2022
Nr. 261875 34.95



Toyota GR Yaris Rally1, T.Katsuta,
A.Johnston, Rallye Monte Carlo, 2022
Nr. 256725 39.95

1:87

Fiat 691 T Renntransport-SZ
Set, Ferrari, mit 2 Ferrari 312
T2 F1 und 6 Figuren, 1977
Nr. 263618 99.95



A SQUADRON OF WESTLAND GAZELLES APPROACHES FROM AVIATION 72

Hot on the tail fins of two versions reviewed in the November 2023 issue, a further five new releases of Aviation 72's excellent Gazelle tooling have literally just landed on the helipad. This brings the number of releases, by Aviation 72 of this very attractive helicopter, to 17.

The Gazelle is a French five-seat helicopter, commonly used for light transport, scouting and light attack duties. Powered by a single Turbomeca Astazou turbine engine, it was the first helicopter to feature a Fenestron tail (a shrouded, multi-blade anti-torque device housed in the vertical surface of the tail) instead of a conventional tail rotor.

Designed by Sud Aviation, later Aérospatiale, and manufactured in France and the United Kingdom through a joint production and development agreement with Westland Aircraft, further manufacturing under license was undertaken by SOKO in Yugoslavia and the Arab British Helicopter Company (ABHCO) in Egypt. Introduced to service in 1973, the Gazelle has been operated by a number of export customers and has featured in numerous conflicts around the world.

Featuring excellent attention to detail and a superb paint finish every time, Aviation 72's Gazelle looks great in any livery – and there are

AVIATION 72
Westland Gazelle
– five different
scheme

SCALE: 1/72
PRICE: £49.99 each
REF: AV7224013,
AV7224014,
AV7224015,
AV7224016,
AV7224017

www.aviation72.co.uk

plenty to choose from here! The cockpit is easily visible through the ample glazed area and the respective markings are crisp and accurate. Each model comes with its own display stand.

The five new liveries modelled for these latest releases are: Westland Gazelle British Army Training Unit Suffield ZA736 (AV7224013), Westland Gazelle XX450 Royal Marines (AV7224014), Westland Gazelle XW849 Royal Marines "Gladys" (AV7224015), Westland Gazelle Armée de Terre camouflaged version (AV7224016) and Westland Gazelle HT.3 XZ936 Empire Test Pilots School (AV7224017). All five are limited releases of just 240 pieces (AV7224013, AV7224016 and AV7224017) or 196 (AV7224014 and AV7224015). ■



ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT: British Army Training Unit ZA736, Royal Marines XX450, Royal Marines "Gladys", Armée de Terre and Empire Test Pilots School XZ936.



ABOVE All five make for a very impressive line up and this view also clearly shows the unique Fenestron tail, with the rotor incorporated into the fin.



OXFORD DIECAST
Plymouth Savoy Sedan 1959
Oklahoma Highway Patrol
SCALE: 1/87 **PRICE:** £9.95 **REF:** 87PS59001

www.oxforddiecast.co.uk

For such a small model, it's big in detail both inside and out. Whether you collect emergency or American vehicles, you won't be disappointed with this patrol car.



WSI MODELS
Scania 3-series with Nootboom
Euro 4-axle Low Loader
SCALE: 1/50 **PRICE:** €174 **REF:** 01-4031

www.wsi-models.com

The classic 3-series Scania appears with a Nootboom Euro 4-axle low loader trailer. The model authentically captures the appearance of the original.



WSI MODELS
Volvo FH05 with Palfinger
PK165.002 Crane "Mammoet"
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €80 REF: 410302

<https://store.mammoet.com>

A 10-4 chassis configuration is the base for this replica of a Volvo FH05 which has been fitted with a Palfinger PK165.002 knuckle boom crane and ballast box.



TEKNO
DAF CF 2-axle Skip Truck
"Recruiting"
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €139 REF: 84495

www.tekno.nl

A 4x2 DAF CF truck chassis fitted with a skip loader body, complete with a detachable skip. The model is fully operational and functional.



HEAVY HAUL REPLICAS
1990 Mack RD800 "DeBerardinis
Heavy Haul"
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: \$289 REF: HHR129A-1

www.heavyhaulreplicas.com

Known as "Big Kenny", this Mack RD800 tractor is superbly created to the smallest of details to make it a true replica of the in-service truck from DeBerardinis.



HEAVY HAUL REPLICAS
Mack RD822SX "Marinello Truck
Sales"
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: \$279 REF: HHR129E-1

www.heavyhaulreplicas.com

A new line of heavy haul trucks in the colours of Marinello Truck Sales. The opening bonnet reveals the intricate detailing of the engine bay.



HEAVY HAUL REPLICAS
Mack RD800 Tandem Axle Tractor
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: \$249
REF: HHR129D-4

www.heavyhaulreplicas.com

The standard release Mack RD800 incorporates a short chassis with operational suspension and steering. The cabin doors and bonnet all open.



IMC MODELS
Faun Goliath "ALE"
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €185
REF: 410279

<https://store.mammoet.com>

A monster 8x8 prime mover which has been released in 1/50 scale by IMC Models. The ALE graphics are authentically applied.



WSI MODELS
Volvo FH4 Globetrotter with 3-axle
Brick Trailer
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €169 REF: 01-4024

www.wsi-models.com

A 3-axle brick trailer with a working loading crane, paired with a Volvo FH4 Globetrotter tractor in a 6x2 chassis configuration.



WSI MODELS
Scania R Highline CR20H 6x2 with
3-axle Tipper Trailer
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €162 REF: 01-4067

www.wsi-models.com

A new Scania R Highline 6x2 tractor has been paired with a 3-axle tipping trailer in the colours of Martemoen. The trailer has a tipping body and a pivoting tailgate.



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N Gauge

Oxford Diecast - Commercial vehicles

NEW



NFTC002 Ford Transit Connect "Network Rail" NEW £6.50



NFTC001 Ford Transit Connect in Royal Mail red... £6.50

HO Gauge (1:87 Scale)

Oxford Diecast - Cars

NEW



87ED58008 Silver Gray/Ember Red Edsel Citation 1958 NEW £8.50

Public Service vehicles

NEW



87DS46005 Junction City Ambulance DeSoto Suburban 1946/8 NEW £8.50

NEW



87PS59001 Plymouth Savoy Sedan 1959 Oklahoma Highway Patrol NEW £8.50

OO Gauge (1:76 Scale)

Atlas Editions - Buses

NEW



JB04 AEC Q1 3 axle trolleybus - "London Transport" (RRP £29.99) BARGAIN £5

NEW



JB03 Bedford OB - "Wallace Arnold" (RRP £29.99) BARGAIN £4

EFE - Buses

NEW



15113EFE Leyland National Mk.1 Long 2 Door Cumberland Motor Services ERM35K NEW £35.66

NEW



15112EFE Leyland National Mk.1 Long 2 Door Demonstrator FRM499K (Aberdeen) NEW £35.66

NEW



15117EFE Leyland National Mk.1 Long 2 Door Nottingham City Transport NPD110L NEW £35.66

Northcord Model Company - Buses



UK6509 ADL Enviro400 MMC - "Abellio London" £51



UK6527 ADL Enviro400 MMC in Stagecoach North Scotland £57

Oxford Diecast - Buses



76IR6008 Bus Eireann Expressway Irizar i6 (RRP £27.95) BARGAIN £16

NEW



76DB002 Duple Britannia Barton NEW £21

Cars

NEW



76MST003 Austin Maestro in black NEW £7

NEW



76LRD2002 Land Rover Discovery 2 White Gold NEW £8.50

Public Service vehicles



76SFE012 Scania Pump Ladder CP28 in South Wales Fire & Rescue red £20.50



76VE0002 Volvo FL Emergency One Pump Ladder South Wales Fire & Rescue Service £25.50

Commercial vehicles

NEW



76MB012 Mercedes Actros Semi Low-Loader in JCB yellow, 531 70 Loadall in JCB yellow NEW £50



76SRH001 Scania R Series Highline Box Trailer in Eddie Stobart £25.50

NEW



76SEN002 Sentinel Dropside in Tate & Lyle navy NEW £15.50



76SEN001 Sentinel Flatbed in LMS maroon £15

Military ground vehicles



76K2002 Austin K2 Ambulance in 51st Highland Division 1944 brown £14.50



76RL004 Bedford RL Bomb Disposal Van in Broadridge Heath green & red £16



76RL001 Bedford RL RAF Kinloss Mountain Rescue £16



76K2001 RASC Katy Western Desert Austin K2 Ambulance £14.50

1:72 Scale

Atlas Editions - Buses



4642101 Burlingham Seagull - "J.T. Whittle & Sons, Blackpool" (RRP £14.99) BARGAIN £3

Corgi - Aircraft - military



AA28008 Messerschmitt Bf109 E-4 PeilG IV Gerat, G9-JV, 10/NJG 1, Germany, 1940. £54

NEW



AA35711 Messerschmitt Me262A-1A, 'White 7/1', 9./Jagdgeschwader 7, Germany, 1945 NEW £54

Oxford Diecast - Aircraft - military



72HOR001 De Havilland Homet in RAF Far East training squadron RAF Seletar/Butterworth 1955 (RRP £33.95) BARGAIN £19

NEW



AC111 Fairey Swordfish FAA/RN Historic Flight. RNAS Yeovilton NEW £16

1:48 Scale

Corgi - Aircraft - military

NEW



AA27903 McDonnell Douglas Phantom FGR2, XV466/D, No.1435 Flight, RAF Mount Pleasant, Falkland Islands, 1991 NEW £162

O Gauge (1:43 Scale)

Corgi - Cars

NEW



VA15101 Ford Transit Custom Sport in orange glow NEW £34



VA13508 Mini 1275GT - Black Tulip £27



VC01501 Ultimate Ford Escort RS Collection - including Mk1 RS1600, Mk2 RS2000, Mk3 RS1600i, Mk4 RS Turbo & Mk4 RS Cosworth £144

Public Service vehicles



VA15202 Ford Ranger Raptor in Police Demonstrator £34.19

Commercial vehicles

NEW



CC80506 Wallace & Gromit Austin A35 Van - 'Cheese Please!' Delivery Van NEW £28.79

Oxford Diecast - Cars



43DS1002 Land Rover Discovery 1 Mistrale £21

NEW



43DS1003 Land Rover Discovery Mk1 in Marseilles green NEW £21

Commercial vehicles



43TX5003 TX5 Taxi Prototype VN5 van "Royal Mail" £17



IXO
Volvo 164 E (1969)
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £24.99
REF: CLC504N.22

Despite the lamentable loss of Volvo estates being sold in the UK, IXO keep the memory alive with this beautiful 164E in 1/43 scale - detail is exquisite.

www.ixomodels.com



IXO
Mazda 626 GD (1987)
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £24.99
REF: CLC520N.22

A welcome entry amongst the current plethora of tuned JDM, regurgitated Skylines and the current obsession with the Datsun 510. Beautifully done.

www.ixomodels.com



IXO
VW 411 LE (1970)
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £24.99
REF: CLC522N.22

A must for any VW collector or enthusiast, this model delivers with good use of plated parts and fine detail, bringing authenticity and exactness.

www.ixomodels.com



CORGI MODEL CLUB
Mercedes Benz 600 Pullman
SCALE: 1/52 PRICE: £37.99
REF: 247

The quality of the paint and trim on this model is superb and for display it looks amazing. A great all-round addition and it's bound to be a success.

www.corgimodelclub.com



OXFORD DIECAST
Duple Britannia Barton
SCALE: 1/76 PRICE: £24.95
REF: 76DB002

You can feel the summer holiday nostalgia seeping straight out of the packaging with this one! An excellent representation of a classic vehicle.

www.oxforddiecast.co.uk



NORTHCORD MODEL COMPANY
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 - Plain White
SCALE: 1/76 PRICE: £66.99 REF: NMC UK6201

While initially looking a little 'naked' without a livery, this model makes a great addition to any model bus fleet. The interior detail is very good.

www.ayrey.co.uk



MINI GT
Subaru Impreza WRC97 1997 Rally Sanremo Winner #3
SCALE: 1/64 PRICE: £15.00 REF: MGT00512-L

A simply sublime replica of the iconic Scooby Impreza, wearing the livery of the 1997 Sanremo winner. Excellent finish throughout.

www.clevelandsdiecast.co.uk



MINI GT
BMW M4 M-Performance - Fire Orange
SCALE: 1/64 PRICE: £12.59 REF: MGT00526-R

BMW's M4 really looks the part here, finished superbly all over in sumptuous Fire Orange and featuring some really good detailing.

www.clevelandsdiecast.co.uk



MINI GT
Shelby GT500 Dragon Snake
Concept
SCALE: 1/64 **PRICE:** £12.59 **REF:** MGT00535-L
www.clevelandsdiecast.co.uk

Whenever Ford's Mustang gets the Shelby treatment, you know it's going to be very special, and that's definitely the case with MINI GT's replica too.



MINI GT
Nissan Skyline GT-R (R34)
Tommykaira R-Z red
SCALE: 1/64 **PRICE:** £12.59 **REF:** MGT00543-R
www.clevelandsdiecast.co.uk

Bearing allegiance to the legendary Japanese car tuning house, Tommykaira, this R34 Skyline really looks the business. A great miniature all round.



SOLIDO
Koenigsegg Jesko 5.0 V8 - 1599hp
SCALE: 1/43 **PRICE:** £27.99
REF: SOL 4312601
www.solido.com

You can definitely feel the speed here! A stunning representation, with sleek lines and fine detailing. The interior is just as good as the smart exterior.



SOLIDO
Alpina B10 (E34) BiTurbo
SCALE: 1/43 **PRICE:** £27.99
REF: SOL 4310403
www.solido.com

Based on a car from the early 1990s, this miniature features all of the same detail and elegant lines. A superb addition for any collector of the marque.



SOLIDO
Lada Niva Green 1980
SCALE: 1/18 **PRICE:** £55.99
REF: SOL 1807304
www.solido.com

The real-life quirky, utilitarian Russian off-roader might be out of your price range, but this miniature isn't! Definitely something a bit different.



SOLIDO
Ford Puma Rally1 Hybrid Goodwood Festival of Speed 2021
SCALE: 1/18 **PRICE:** £65.99 **REF:** SOL 1809501
www.solido.com

Looking every bit a wild and formidable competitor, this next-generation hybrid-powered car has been impressively modelled with stunning detail.



SOLIDO
Volvo 850 T-5R 2.3i Turbo - Black
SCALE: 1/43 **PRICE:** £27.99
REF: SOL 4310603
www.solido.com

Looking sleek, this 1990s classic estate car is the companion to the yellow and green models previously released. A good looking replica for any collection.



CULT SCALE MODELS
Land Rover 88 Series III - Russet Brown County - 1978
SCALE: 1/18 **PRICE:** £206.99 **REF:** CULCML114-5
www.ayrey.co.uk

With a limited edition run, this particular model was No.1 of 150 produced. While not an impressive colour, it is very much true to life and a great replica.



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XW849 ROYAL MARINES "GLADYS"

MGT00608-L - 1/64 BMW M3 NO.3 JPS TEAM BMW 1987 ATCC
CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER (LHD) (AUSTRALIA EXCLUSIVE)



► 608 Prototype Sample, Approval Pending

**MINI
GT**
LHD version shown

MINI GT

MGT00627-L - 1/64 FORD PUMA RALLY1 NO.42 M-SPORT
FORD WRT 2022 RALLY ITALIA SARDEGNA 2ND PLACE (LHD)



► 627 Prototype Sample, Approval Pending

**MINI
GT**
LHD version shown

MGT00658-R - 1/64 RANGE ROVER DAVOS WHITE (RHD)



► 658 Prototype Sample, Approval Pending

**MINI
GT**
LHD version shown

MGT00682-L - 1/64 DUCATI PANIGALE V4 S W/DUCATI GIRL



► 682 Prototype Sample, Approval Pending

**MINI
GT**



PR640041 - 1/64 PADEM GR YARIS SATIN GOLD

POP RACE



PR640056 - 1/64 NISSAN STAGEA CHROME SILVER



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Into the New Year...



As we head into 2024 **Stephen Paul Hardy** takes time out to reflect retrospectively on the past seven years and, with eager anticipation, to look forward prospectively to another year in the world of automotive scale models.

Seven years ago, I happened by chance to find myself penning a scale model review which somehow, very much unplanned, just led to one article after another virtually every month since.

Having contributed to national circulation magazines throughout the eighties and nineties, the penning of magazine contributions was no stranger to me. What was different in 2016 though was that I found myself waxing lyrical (or otherwise) about details not of 1:1 scale automobiles but those in lesser scales. True I had a good grounding in talking about scale models through regular contributions to the quarterly *Volkswagen Model Club* magazine, first published back in 1978. And then in the early eighties occasional features for the much respected *MODEL AUTO Review*. The common theme that permeated through from the late seventies into my early excursions into the world of glossy scale model magazines in 2016 was – yes you probably guessed it – a deep interest in the Volkswagen marque. Indeed, it also looks like being a main theme this month as well...

BELOW Spanning both the air- and water-cooled Volkswagen generations OttOmobile's modelling has been consistently exacting in authentic detail as here on the eighth generation Golf GTI (centre)

Sadly its range has only ever embraced two Beetles. The 1983 Oettinger enhanced 1200 based on the 'Special Bug' Edition Käfer made in Mexico for sale in Germany (left) and one of the rarer versions from the succession of Jeans Beetle Editions - the S716 (export) Jeans Beetle II of 1974 (right). This particular version sat on "Weltmeister" steel rims instead of the more usual Lemmerz 'GT Sports' ones.

A PHOENIX RED

That first 2016 feature, published in the August, reviewed the then new OttOmobile model of the S716 Jeans Beetle II (OT637) in L32K Phoenix Red. It and its companion Beetle Oettinger (OT155) released in April 2015, remain for me, as two highpoints in OttOmobile's 15-year long history.

From that point things started to get busy in terms of new scale models. AutoCult had by then only existed for barely 12 months and after many a sideward glance at its fascinating and eclectic emerging range, I fell for my first model in the August – the Denzel WD 1300 Super 1954 (#05013). It arrived in a parcel with another tentative excursion into the world of 1/18 models – this time in the form of a dark red and black VW typ.34 'Razor Edge' Karmann Ghia from the Model Car Group's 'Best of Show' brand (BoS) which at that stage was in its infancy. The scope of detailing at 1/18, and the finesse of AutoCult's products, captivated me equally and drew me into the fast-expanding world of automotive sealed resin models.





ABOVE 2023 additions to OttOmobile's already extensive coverage of the Golf production history in 1/18 sealed resin modelling. There is no doubt more will follow in 2024.



ABOVE Early examples of Bos 1/18 modelling - the typ.34 Karmann Ghias.

RIGHT One of the delights of well detailed 1/18 models is that they engender sales brochure style photograph, as here with the reflection captured in the hubcap.



Enthused by a forever love of the typ.34 Karmann Ghia and that red /black version (#183925/BOS009) I also fell, a year later, for the second issue in white/black (#BOS348) together with one of the earliest Avenue 43 releases - the much coveted VW 1500 typ.3 Cabriolet (#60003) prototype of 1961.

GOLF GENERATIONS

A regular item in my reviews over the past few years is that of the successive generations of Golf. Now in its eighth and heading into the ninth with EV and possibly hybrid motive power still being mooted, I see as I write this a Volkswagen Press release come through announcing the ID. family have just announced a new arrival; introducing the ID. GTI in unmistakable next generation Golf body style.

Golf releases from OttOmobile have continued unabated with recent additions to the catalogue of Volkswagen GolfVIII GTi (OT405) and VIII R (OT413) together with the preceding GolfVI R (OT412) Add to these a Golf A1 in ABT tuning guise (OT1014) and A2 GTi Edition Blue (OT1030) scheduled for November and December release respectively.

BAJA!

Now for some less serious fun. I think that Solido have really nailed it with two of its latest 1/18 diecast releases - the Beetle BAJA, 1975/76 (in metallic blue S1809601 or red S1809602). I don't usually head into



a scale model review in the mindset of dismantling and rebuilding them but this pair beg that to be done. I could happily use all four pages this month just on the BAJA theme, as these two are fascinating and enticing in equal measure. Throw in the latest colour version of Solido's superb Meyers Manx Buggy (purple metallic S1802706) as well and the potential for conversion and modification modelling here is immense. Make no mistake the models are great as supplied but with customisation their potential is virtually limitless.

Serious stuff first though: using brand new toolings for the main bodywork both represent the first generation "Super Beetle" - the 1302 of 1971-72. The flat windscreen is not quite flat enough in my view but the rest of the modelling is great. Particularly notable are the early 1970s US rear light clusters, and with the enhancement of a touch of Tamiya Acrylic



ABOVE The Solido BAJAs have arrived bringing with them virtually limitless potential for customisation!

X-27 Clear red paint on the moulded reflector panels of the chrome light housings, they make probably the best 1/18 scale US Beetle rear light clusters ever made. What is missing are the matching larger US market front indicator lamps which Solido have the tooling for and used on the VW 1303 "Custom Metallic Red" (S1800512) (*Wolfsburg Winners* October 2020 issue).

As for the less serious stuff, the engines are standard 'upright' four-cylinder ones from the Beetle and interestingly slightly different from the one in the Manx. High rise suspension systems, protection cages etc., are all fabulous. The roof rack on the red version begs loading up and the long-range lamps it carries are notable in that they carry clear lens detailing inset in the chromed surrounds. Immediate thoughts for conversion work include fine detailing the engines or replacing them with a Porsche flat six, swapping baseplates/chassis between the BAJA and the Manx to make a seventies street BAJA and full off-road BAJA Buggy (!). Moving into the eighties, when so much wild customisation was being carried out on late series Beetles, the blue version with its rear scoop cowlings begs being turned into a Custom Concours creation.

Or for an ultimate conversion job the biggest challenge would be to create something akin to a 1302 converted along the lines of BAJA styling but shown at the 1971 Geneva Mortar Show as a drag racer named "Big Fire" by German tuning ace Theo Decker from Essen (TDE). Needless to say that did have a Porsche 911 engine hanging out of the tail!

AUTOCULT UPDATE

Amongst the stunning recent 1/43 sealed resin releases from AutoCult and its Avenue 43 brand are:

- Renault Ligne Fleche 1962 (#06058) - which was French designer Robert Broyer's interpretation of the future of automotive design - the "Ligne Flèche" (arrow shape)
- Mercedes-Benz SSK Gläser 1931 (#05048) - Gorgeous model of a stunning one-off by coachbuilder 'Gläser' of Dresden for client Baron von Lüttwitz on one of only 33 SSK chassis ever made by Mercedes.
- DKW F11 Universal 1961 (#06057) - DKW's 'new look' 600 range premiered at IAA 1957 reaching production as the 'Junior' two door saloon in August 1959 and later as a cabriolet. It has come to light, thanks to photographic evidence, that an estate version, as modelled by AutoCult, was also envisaged but never reached series production.
- Mercury Paragon 1940 (#06059) - Another head-turner of a model from AutoCult. This the first ever design by Albrecht Graf von Goertz (later famed for his beautiful BMW 507) integrated the front of a Mercury and the rear of a Lincoln. Sadly though, the 'Paragon' ended up as yet another automobile that never reached production - on this occasion thanks to the intervention of WW II.



ABOVE 2016 and the model that kicked off seven years of monthly model reviews.



ABOVE Consistent with its other 1/18th diecast models Solido's BAJA Beetles come with opening doors.



ABOVE Perfect authentic captures in 1/43 by AutoCult: the pretty 1954 Austrian Denzel WD 1300 Super...



ABOVE ...and the legendary VW 1500 typ.3 Cabriolet prototype of 1961.

LEFT The degree of fine detailing achieved by AutoCult would easily lead you to believe this was a 1/18 model.





ABOVE Innovation from Fendy Hu: models supplied with optional wheels.



ABOVE AutoCult's attractive DKW that should have been but never was.



ABOVE Fire engines invariably make charismatic models as exemplified perfectly by this latest offering from AutoCult.

BELOW Only one Chevrolet Corvette Impala XP-101 was built in 1956 but both colour versions from Avenue 43 are totally authentic! Watch out for more "never seen before"s in the range in 2024.

- Renault Type LO Camion Pompier 1926 (#12019) – Unlike many appliances built by specialist firms on commercial chassis from leading manufacturers during the transition from horse drawn to motorised era Renault's LO model was one of the manufacturer's standard product range. Displaying many of the idiosyncrasies of fire appliances of its time this model is a delightful extension of AutoCult's coverage of the historic fire vehicle theme.

- Pontiac Phantom Concept 1977 (#60078) – Existing effectively only as a fibreglass shell the slightly scary Pontiac Phantom concept (with the internal code name "Madame X") was renowned designer Bill Mitchell's swansong as a retirement gift to himself and last project for his Studio X

- Chevrolet Corvette Impala XP-101 1956 (turquoise #60098) (dark blue #60099) – Another stunning concept car which, this time, appears to have been developed right up to a road worthy state of preparation. Combining styling elements of the sporting Corvette with the large Impala saloon, it was first shown in turquoise at the 1956 GM Motorama event, followed by the 1957 Chicago Auto Show for which it was given a colour change to blue. Both of which are captured by this 'must have pair' from Avenue 43.

A PHOENIX RISING

A strong new entrant into the scale model world during the time I have been writing reviews was DNA Collectibles from Switzerland. A tale of positivity, and high aspirations with loads of passion driving the company which went very sadly awry thanks largely, I believe, to the severe restrictions on logistics, communications et al caused by the 2020

pandemic and overing into 2021. The first chapter of that story finally ended in liquidation a year ago after some six months of uncertainty... and not a small amount of bitter aftertaste for many collectors who had pre-ordered models. Collectors were not the only fall-out losers though, Fendy Hu, DNA Collectibles' manufacturer in China was left in considerable financial and practical difficulties. One of the success stories then of 2023 has to be that of Mr Hu's resolve and determination to turn the negativity of the situation around into one of positivity and hope. Production of what we recognise as former DNA models are now in modest start up again, with a forward program of further releases including totally new offerings. What is significant in my view is that Mr Hu is putting a lot of effort into ensuring previous small authenticity errors in DNA Collectible's modelling are corrected whilst at the same time further improving the quality and durability of forthcoming products under a new brand – RadScale Collectibles.

Mr Hu's determination to ring the changes are illustrated by his instigating a series of improvements to, and the reissuing in four colours, of the former DNA000061 Volvo 164E (*My kind of Volvos* January 2022). The improvements to the 164E include a better stance relationship between the wheels and bodywork, more authentic rear underbody detailing and a photoetched side trim line in four parts instead of the previous long single piece. Other noticeable changes to models include the provision of optional sets of wheels (in different finishes) and totally revised showcase based packaging.

Announced RadScale new releases include revised versions of the former DNA Collectibles models VW Golf 7 GTI Club Sport Edition in three colours – LC9A Pure White / LY3D Tornado Red / LC9X Deep Black Pearl and Subaru Legacy Touring Wagon STI S402 / four colours – 02C WR blue Mica / 65Z Diamond Grey / 37J Satin White / 32J Obsidian Black Pearl ("Trucks make light work" April 2022). In addition to these and other revised models due in the next twelve months will be several totally new models.

I hope very much to be able to further update this story, complete with some reviews of newly released RadScale models, during 2024 in my forthcoming new series of quarterly reviews. Yes, a New Year resolution because after just over seven years – with 95 magazine issues contributed to, totaling something like 430 pages (or put another way circa 230,000 words penned and over 30,000 photographs taken) – I have decided that it is time to release precious page space to (hopefully) a new generation of contributors... ■





Fifth generation fighter

The RAF and Royal Navy's latest fighter, the F-35B, has been modelled in 1/72 scale by Hobby Master. **Jarrold Cotter** takes a look...

ABOVE A brace of Lockheed Martin F-35Bs en route to the UK. The leading one is an RAF example, the aircraft below it is a US Marine Corps example. MoD/Crown Copyright

The Lockheed Martin F-35 is an advanced, stealth, fifth generation fighter combining speed and superb agility. There are three variants, the F-35A, F-35B and F-35C. The Royal Air Force and Royal Navy use the F-35B, initially named the Lightning II in UK service.

The F-35A is a Conventional Take-Off and Landing (CTOL) aircraft, the F-35B is a Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) variant while the F-35C is a Carrier Variant (CV). The F-35 will replace the US Air Force A-10 and F-16, the F/A-18 for the US Navy and the F/A-18 and AV-8B Harrier for the US Marine Corps.

The first of three developmental Lockheed F-35Bs for the RAF was completed in November 2011, with the first flight on April 13, 2012. These three aircraft were delivered for evaluation and designated BK-01, BK-02 and BK-03, with each aircraft assigned the RAF serial of ZM135, ZM136 and ZM137 respectively. These RAF serials were used to mark some original English Electric Lightning F.1 serials used in the 1960s.

HISTORY OF THE F-35B

Lockheed Martin's F-35 Lightning II embodies capabilities based on thinking developed through evolving requirements since at least 1983, when the US Navy launched its Advanced Tactical Aircraft (ATA) programme to find a stealth replacement for the Grumman A-6 Intruder. That same year, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) began its Advanced Short Take-Off/Vertical Landing (ASTOVL) programme, looking to develop a supersonic successor to the Harrier.

Two classified programmes ran under ASTOVL, which was always intended to produce information of value to the US and UK. The STOVL Strike Fighter (SSF) research ran from 1987 to 1994 and examined the feasibility of creating the technologies necessary for a stealthy, supersonic STOVL fighter, while the Common Affordable Lightweight Fighter (CALF) programme ran for just a year from 1993, combining the ASTOVL and SSF work into a single effort to provide a Harrier replacement specifically for the US and UK.

Meanwhile, ATA had suffered insurmountable technological and financial challenges and closed down in 1991. In 1990, however, the US Navy had already turned its attention to replacing the Grumman F-14 Tomcat, for which requirement the USAF's Advanced Tactical Fighter (ATF) was seen as a potential basis. The proposal was examined as the Naval ATF, but dismissed in 1991 as too expensive. ATF ultimately evolved into today's Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor.

The USAF had begun a replacement programme of its own in 1990 and the Multi-Role Fighter (MRF) was to succeed the General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcon. By 1992, MRF was also being considered as a replacement for the USAF's Fairchild Republic A-10A Thunderbolt II and the US Navy McDonnell Douglas F/A-18C/D Hornet fleets. However, as budgets and forces were cut following the end of the Cold War F-16 upgrades became more attractive and with its focus on ATF, so the USAF ended MRF in 1993.

More or less simultaneously and prior to the termination of NATF, the US Navy returned to the quandary of how to replace the A-6, examining new options under the Advanced-Attack/Advanced/Fighter-Attack (A-X/A/F-A) programme from 1991. Because it promised to create an aircraft of superior performance and capability, the USAF identified



ABOVE This underside view of the model of ZM148 shows a different payload which includes underwing fitted weapons. Note also the interchangeable jet nozzle at the rear.

LEFT The underside of this model of ZM135 shows the great detail of the weaponry included.



ABOVE A dramatic picture showing F-35B ZM145 with its jet nozzle angled down. MoD/Crown Copyright

A-X/A/F-A as a potential replacement for its General Dynamics F-111, McDonnell Douglas F-15E Strike Eagle and Lockheed F-117A Nighthawk aircraft.

With NATF cancelled, A-X/A/F-A gained new air-to-air requirements and became the Advanced Attack/Fighter (A/F-X) and although progress was made, Congress became concerned at the number of projects under way with hopes of reaching the same or similar goals. As a result, A/F-X, ASTOVL and its components were merged under the Joint Advanced Strike Technology (JAST) programme in 1994.

JAST aimed to gather and amalgamate all the formative technologies existing under the various programmes, but lasted barely a year, becoming Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) when it reached its concept definition phase in 1996. Later that year, Boeing and Lockheed Martin were awarded contracts to produce two JSF demonstrators each for a competitive fly-off, with Boeing's aircraft designated the X-32 and Lockheed Martin's the X-35.

In 1997, Lockheed Martin added Northrop Grumman and British Aerospace to its team, and the UK has since remained the primary overseas partner on the programme. The intention with JSF was to create a stealth tactical aircraft in three major variants: the conventional take-off and landing (CTOL) A model was

LEFT Hobby Master's F-35B models the aircraft in great detail.

BELOW Hobby Master's F-35B with everything open. All model images Hobby Master.





ABOVE This rear view of the model highlights the distinctive, outward-canted twin fins.

LEFT This head-on view of the Hobby Master model highlights the faceted, stealth fuselage and intake design of the F-35B.

RIGHT A carrier-borne take-off by an F-35B. *MoD/Crown Copyright*



ABOVE An RAF F-35B takes on fuel in flight. This offers a good view of the low visibility stenciling on the aircraft. *MoD/Crown Copyright*

primarily an F-16 replacement, the STOVL B model was intended to succeed the Harrier, and the carrier-borne (CV) C would belatedly fill the hole left by the US Navy's A-6, while also replacing some US Navy and Marine Corps F/A-18C/D aircraft.

Boeing was first into the air, with the X-32A, on September 18, 2000. The X-32B followed on March 29, 2001 and the test programme concluded on July 28. Lockheed Martin trailed by only a few weeks, flying the X-35A on October 24, 2000. With A testing completed on November 22, the aircraft was modified to the X-35B configuration, first flying in its new form on June 23, 2001.

While Boeing had completed CV testing with the X-32A, Lockheed Martin chose to fly a dedicated X-35C, which flew for the first time on December 16, 2000. The X-35 test programme concluded on August 6, 2001.

On October 26, the Lockheed Martin/Northrop Grumman/BAE Systems team was announced as winning the JSF contract and the X-35 began to evolve into the F-35B Lightning II.

The UK formally announced its intention to

acquire the F-35B in 2006. For many years, the country's JSF programme was known as Joint Combat Aircraft (JCA), which remained F-35B based until the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review, which switched the British requirement to the F-35C. However, with the 'Queen Elizabeth' class aircraft carrier design well advanced for STOVL, rather than the catapult and arrestor gear required for CV operations, JCA resorted back to the F-35B, at the same time increasingly becoming known as JSF.

Squadron Leader Steve Long became the first British pilot to fly an F-35, on January 26, 2010 and in July 2012 the government announced its decision to purchase an initial batch of 48 aircraft. The first of these was delivered on July 19, 2012 for trials work, a task the RAF's 17 (Reserve) Squadron assumed in 2014.

The 2015



ABOVE A side on view of the Hobby Master model showing how the wings are blended into the fuselage.

BELOW A Hobby Master F-35B mounted on its stand.



ABOVE F-35Bs ZM144 and ZM146 close in on the camera ship. Note the lightning flashes on the tail fins. MoD/Crown Copyright

Strategic Defence and Security Review confirmed the UK's intention to buy 138 Lightnings and subsequent work has seen a massive infrastructure upgrade at RAF Marham in Norfolk, the type's RAF/Royal Navy main operating base.

In British service the aircraft is now known only as the F-35B Lightning, losing its 'II'. The first frontline Lightning unit, No.617 Squadron 'Dambusters', arrived at RAF Marham with an initial four aircraft on June 6, 2018.

Six aircraft from No.207 Squadron, the Lightning Operational Conversion Unit (OCU), landed at Marham on July 16 2019, and a second operational unit, 809 Naval Air Squadron (NAS), began initially forming in 2023. After trials aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth in 2018 and 2019, operational aircraft from

ABOVE A stack of four RAF F-35Bs. The fighter is flown operationally by the RAF's 617 Squadron, the famous 'Dambusters'. MoD/Crown Copyright

617 Squadron worked from the ship for the first time in June 2020.

THE F-35B MODEL

Hobby Master is a well-known make of diecast metal aircraft models. The company's model of the F-35B shows great attention to detail, and is a very impressive piece made of heavy metal with a minimum of plastic parts.

It is modelled to a true 1/72 scale and is professionally painted with all markings pad applied to a high level of accuracy. It comes with numerous optional parts for the undercarriage and weaponry, allowing the model to be displayed with the landing gear in the down or up positions.

The model can additionally be configured in a normal flight guise or STOVL mode, with the lift fan door open and an angled thrust vectoring nozzle. A pilot figure is included and the model can be displayed with the canopy open or closed. It is also supplied with a stand.

There are numerous choices of UK F-35Bs represented, as well as those of other operators. All round this is a very accurate and pleasant model, representing the UK's first fifth generation fighter very nicely. ■



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Powerplant: one Pratt & Whitney F135 turbofan rated at 40,000lb st (177.88kN) with afterburning and 40,500lb st (180.10kN) for vertical take-off	Maximum speed: Mach 1.6
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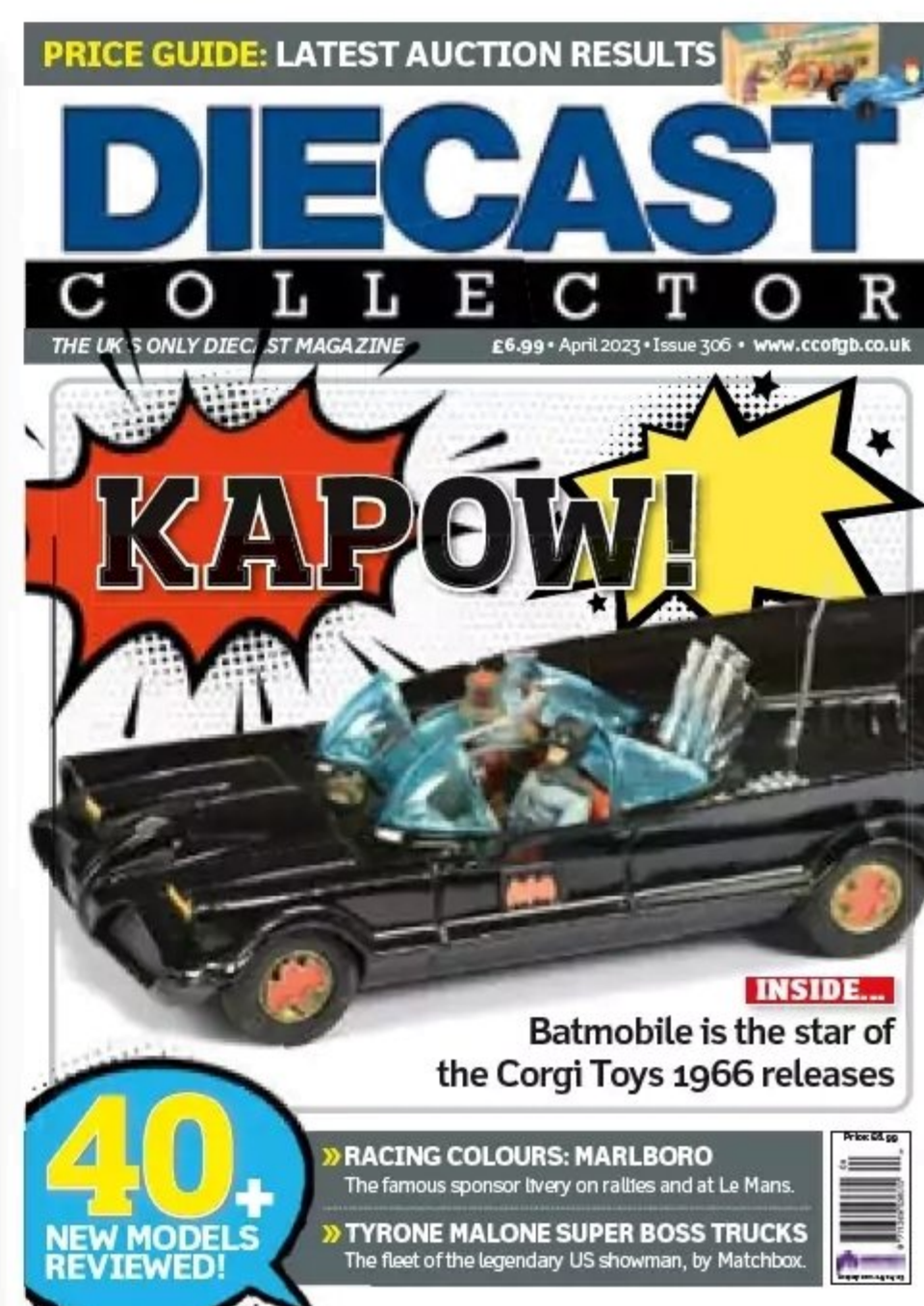
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Diecast Collector 2023 index

Keep track of articles in previous issues, organised on a monthly basis for easy reference. The listings will track the main subjects of non-regular features together with the subjects or some regulars like *Off the Beaten Track* and *Top Vintage Dinky*, but not the contents of *What's New*, *News & Events* or the *Auction Price Guide* etc.

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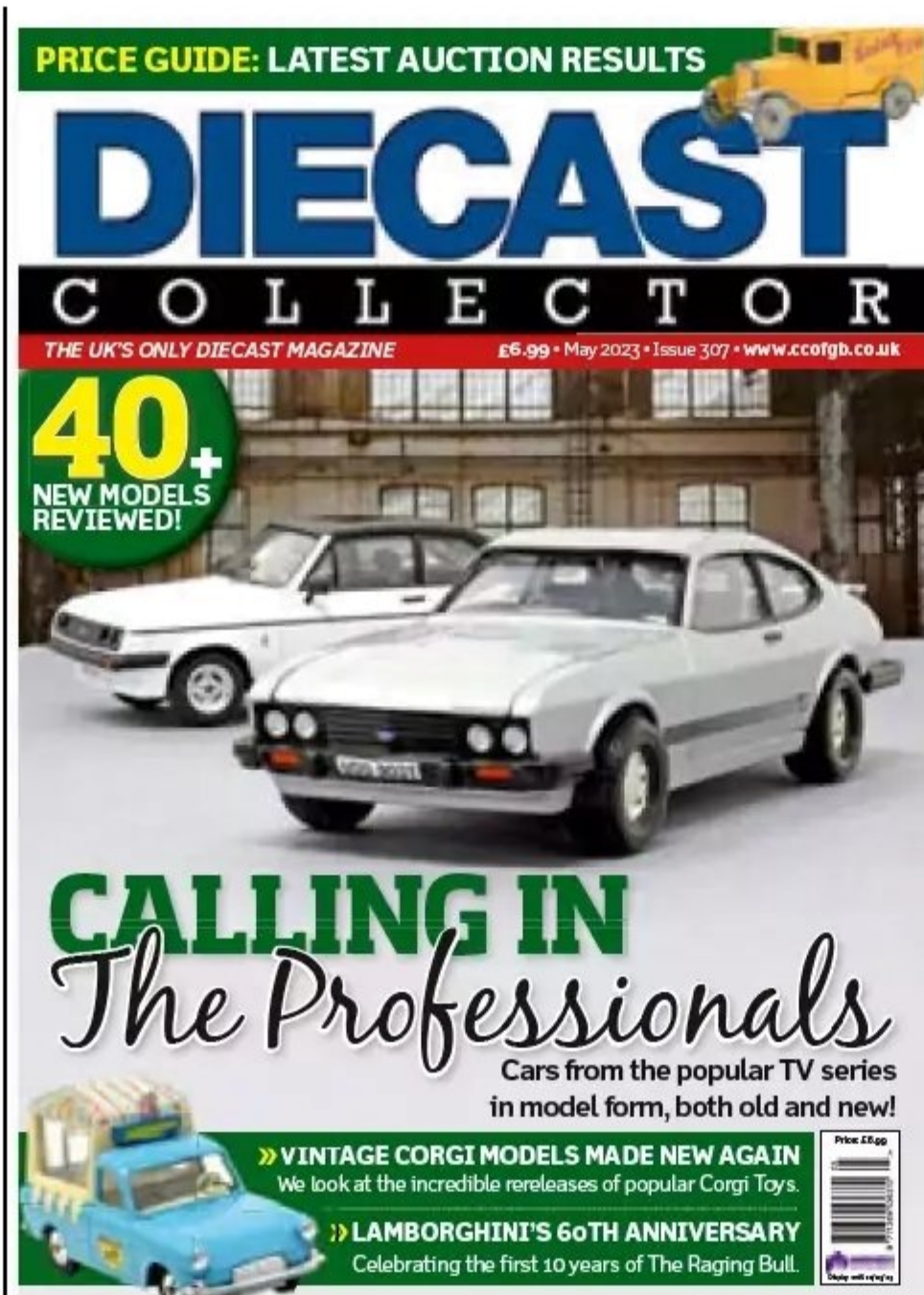
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Matchbox Hydraulic Excavators

Paul Brent Adams compares different versions of the same model, made three years apart.

From the 1950s, until the early 1960s, Matchbox models grew steadily larger. This tended to make the early models appear rather under-sized compared to later issues, so Lesney replaced many early models with larger versions of the same subject. As many as four different models within the span of a dozen years in some cases. Not only were these new versions larger than their predecessors, they were generally more detailed.

Apart from their size, how do you tell these different castings apart, especially at a fair, when trying to fill the gaps in your Matchbox collection? Surprisingly, model price guides are not very helpful. They may provide plenty of information on casting changes, colours, wheel types, and the various combinations that exist on a particular model, but if you want to know how to tell a first type Matchbox Weatherill Hydraulic Excavator from a second type, you are basically on your own. I therefore set out to draw up my own list. Once I started, it quickly became apparent that while the models are similar, there are many detail differences, which actually makes it easy to tell them apart, even without a tape measure.

Here we are looking at the two versions of the Matchbox No.24 Weatherill Hydraulic Excavator, which were produced in the 1950s, just three years apart. Whenever Matchbox replaced an existing model with a larger version, the new model was given the same catalogue number as the casting it replaced. Confusing. To make things less complicated, collectors added suffix letters to the official model number for each casting. The two versions of the Weatherill are therefore known as No.24a and No.24b.

THE REAL DEAL

F.E. Weatherill Limited was founded in 1947, and survived until the 1980s. Based in Hertfordshire, they made hydraulic excavators. Early models were based on a Fordson tractor; later types were purpose built. The hydraulic arms could lift the bucket up,

swing it over the top of the cab, and empty it to the rear – usually into a waiting truck. The Matchbox model depicts one of the early, tractor-based vehicles. Matchbox also produced a Weatherill in the larger King Size series, model number K-1, released in 1960. However, this is a later design, and is not simply a scaled-up copy of No.24.

SCALES

Due to a lack of information on the real thing, it is rather hard to pin down the scale of these models. Early Matchbox catalogues actually gave model scales, and No.24b is listed at 1/75 – although I would have thought it a little larger. If we say that No.24b is somewhere around the model railway scale of OO (1/76), and that No.24a is rather smaller, I do not think we would be too far off.

MATCHBOX 1-75 SERIES NO.24A WEATHERILL HYDRAULIC EXCAVATOR

This was the first model to carry the number 24, and was released in 1956, being replaced by its bigger brother in 1959. Oddly, this model is slightly wider than No.24b, due to the projecting axle ends. The bucket elevates, and swings back over the cab, just as on the real excavator.

Main recognition points: the arms holding the bucket are straight, and have no detail on their sides. The triangular supports are also plain. The arms pivot on lugs cast into the vertical uprights. There is a straight cross brace between the arms just ahead of the lugs (bent into a shallow 'V' on my example). The bucket sits between the arms, with an angled guard protecting the attachment points. The right side of the bucket has a projection just above the guard, which is not found on No.24b. The sides of the bucket are slightly curved, and there are five projecting teeth.

The radiator guard has the letters WH cast-in, with a raised rib at the bottom. The nose of the tractor is flat, with no radiator detail. The top of the bonnet has a raised centre strip, which soon fades out. The front



ABOVE Even in the short space of just three years, the level of detail on Matchbox models increased substantially, as shown by these two examples of the No.24 Weatherill Hydraulic Excavator.



ABOVE The bucket of No.24a sits within its carrying arms; on No.24b the arms are behind the bucket. No.24a also has the name LESNEY cast inside the bucket.



ABOVE MADE IN ENGLAND is cast beneath the bonnet, and No.24 beneath the driver on No.24a - note the direction in which the words read.

MATCHBOX NO.24 WEATHERILL HYDRAULIC EXCAVATOR

Number	24a	24b
Year	1956	1959
Length	58mm	67mm
Width	26mm	24mm
Height	25mm	29mm
Weight	26g	30g



ABOVE The rearranged wording inside No.24b, which now reads from rear to front. Only No.24 retains its original position; **MADE IN ENGLAND** has moved from beneath the bonnet to the raised part of the cab, next to the driver; **WEATHERILL HYDRAULIC** is now under the bonnet; and **BY LESNEY** (rather than simply **LESNEY**) is just ahead of the cab - but this reads across the model.

BELOW Both models have the letters **WH** cast in to the front guard. The raised line at the bottom is deeper on No.24b, which also depicts the tractor radiator at the top - this area is flat on No.24a.

of the cab roof, and the rear deck edge, are square not rounded. The hydraulic mechanism ahead of the cab is small, and the cylinder is level with the leg of the driver. There is a raised rim around the cab. On the right side, the cab edge slopes downwards in a straight line. The driver is the same colour as the rest of the vehicle. The body overhangs the chassis more than on No.24b. There is generally little cast-in detail. The wheels are grey metal, in two sizes. In absolutely tiny figures the number 23 (rather than No.23) appears on the back of each wheel. This, obviously, does not match the actual model number.

The words **MADE IN ENGLAND** are cast beneath the bonnet, with the number No.24 beneath the driver. This writing reads front to rear. The **LESNEY** name appears inside the shovel itself. The model name does not appear on the casting. The colours used on this model vary according to which model guide you consult. Some just say yellow, others yellow or orange. I would describe the latter as an orange-yellow, or egg-yolk yellow - light orange at a pinch. Detail painting is limited to the hydraulic cylinders ahead of the cab on each side, and the exhaust pipe on the lower left side, which are touched in with silver. These have almost worn off my model. A black rectangular decal bearing the words **WEATHERILL HYDRAULIC** appears at the rear - again, almost gone from my example.

MATCHBOX 1-75 SERIES NO.24B WEATHERILL HYDRAULIC EXCAVATOR

The second version of the Weatherill was released in 1959. It was replaced in 1967 by the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow. No.24b has much more detail than the earlier model, except for the lack of painted silver trim. Again, the bucket can be raised, and swung over the cab.

Recognition points. This time the main arms have a 'kink' near the top, the supports are a different shape, and there is detailing on the sides. The vertical uprights to which the arms are attached, have holes in them, with a pin passing through - this holds the arms in place. The bucket, still with five teeth, overlaps the

arms that carry it. The sides are straight. There is a bar behind the bucket, between the arms. The **LESNEY** name has disappeared from inside the bucket.

The radiator guard still has the letters **WH** cast-in, while the rib at the bottom is deeper. The radiator grille of the tractor now has two recesses, with a vertical centre bar. The top of the bonnet is flat, without a raised centre strip. The hydraulic cylinders ahead of the cab are larger than on No.24a, and are no longer level with the legs of the driver. The driver has more headroom than before, but the cab lacks the previous raised outline. On the right side, the cab edge has a short angled section below the front window, the rest is straight. The lower body has more cast-in detail. The front of the cab roof, and the 'bustle' at the rear, are both slightly rounded, compared to No.24a.

Inside the body, the wording has been rearranged, and increased. It now reads rear to front. **WEATHERILL HYDRAULIC** appears beneath the bonnet (but the box says Hydraulic Excavator); No.24 beneath the driver; **MADE IN ENGLAND** has moved to the lower section (the raised part of the cab); with **BY LESNEY** under the vertical support arms.

The model is yellow, with no extra detail painting. Plastic wheels are fitted, in grey or black. The **WEATHERILL HYDRAULIC** decal is still applied to the rear. ■



The rear of the two models is very similar - neither gives the driver a rear window.

The classic era

Porsche is one of the most popular collection themes, both for road cars and racing cars. **Francisco Mota** shows how Porsche related trucks are joining the group, with model makers offering various classic transporters.

Photos: João Carlos Oliveira

For those of you who follow *Diecast Collector* closely, the theme of racing transporters is something you've read before in this magazine. In recent years, model makers discovered that this is something of interest for many collectors, even for those who would not consider collecting trucks or buses before. However, when those vehicles have a strong relation to other models in their collections, the appeal of such objects raises dramatically. Without entering the complex world of dioramas, it still makes for a nice display to have a racing car and the transporter that it was taken on, to and from races, side by side in your shelf. On the other

hand, the support trucks the team used for taking spare parts and tyres, or even the mobile workshop that helped solve many problems during race weekends is also of interest for many.

All of this is taken to another level when the team we're talking about is Porsche, one of the manufacturers with a longer story in every kind of racing. Model manufacturers know that all things related to the German brand are extremely popular among scale model collectors. They started their investigations some time ago, looking for transporters and support vehicles that would give the chance to make a good scale model; one that collectors would



like to add to their collections. If you bring to this strategy the classic car factor, you have another winning formula and another collection theme that would appeal to several collectors. That is how we came to this story about classic Porsche transporters, limiting the period of search to before the early 1970s... the classic era.

A LOT TO CHOOSE FROM

Immediately we came to the conclusion that there's no shortage of scale models following this criteria, all of them painted in that dark red colour so typical of all racing department support cars from Zuffenhausen. The choice is very wide, between recent releases and older scale models, and can be found from brands like Minichamps, Autocult, Premium ClassiXXs, Schuco and others. For this article, we tried to bring what we feel is a cross section of what was produced in 1/43 scale, leaving some models out to guarantee the maximum diversity possible, between big transporters, small support vans, medium sized trucks and even a unique workshop on wheels.

Starting with the oldest one, we have a 1953 Opel Blitz closed truck, released some time ago by Premium ClassiXXs. Porsche used this kind of vehicle to carry replacement parts and tools to and from races. Some were fitted with a tow hook and an open trailer to pull various cars to race events. The truck itself was a

descendant of a series of Blitz light trucks, made from 1930 in successive generations until 1975. The model we have reproduces a restyled version, as launched in 1952, with a cabin design heavily inspired in American trucks, with a straight six petrol engine. The model is a fairly basic diecast, without opening parts but not missing much from the original and with a very nice underfloor. The Opel is contemporary of Porsche race cars like the special body 550 coupe, as raced by the works team in Le Mans 1953. We found a resin model of such a car, manufactured by Spark and they look great, side-by-side.

MERCEDES CARRIES PORSCHE

We change to Mercedes-Benz for the next couple of light trucks, this time we're looking at Mercedes-Benz L3500, a very popular truck in Germany at the time. It was built as a 3.5 tonne and Porsche used it in their race department in the early 1960s. We've found two versions of it, one with a rear canvas grey cover, complete with the Porsche lettering (made by Minichamps) and another very unique model. This is also a L3500 (made by Premium ClassiXXs) with the open cargo bed filled with two 550 Spyder race cars, one on top of the other, using a special built rig. The cars are under red dust covers, in fact, they are just two monoliths, there are no detailed models under the covers. This duo of L3500 looks gorgeous and we can

MAIN IMAGE From left to right, three trucks used by Porsche racing team in the 1960s: 1963 MAN 635, 1961 Neoplan FH11 and 1966 Opel Blitz, all released by Schuco in their 1:43 Pro.R series.

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There's no shortage of Porsche related scale models, all of them painted in that dark red colour so typical of all racing department support cars from Zuffenhausen. The choice is very wide, between recent releases and older scale models, and can be found from brands like Minichamps, Autocult, Premium ClassiXXs, Schuco and others.

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ABOVE Opel Blitz from 1953 is a Premium ClassiXXs 1:43 scale model, simple but realistic. Next to it we have a contemporary special body 550 Coupé, by Spark.

compare both interpretations by each model maker. Even if it seems they are not exactly the same model year, the comparison shows very similar levels of detail, with good quality paint finish and all the most relevant components around the body and chassis. The Premium ClassiXXs effort has precise window wipers, two black grilles over the front mudguards and, of course, the great pair of hided 550 Spyders. But the Minichamps model also has some great detail, like under the chassis.

MOTHER OF MOTORHOMES

The third subject is the most spectacular in this group, released not long ago by Schuco in its Pro.R resincast model series. German bus specialist Neoplan, Porsche's neighbour from Stuttgart, built the FH11 model from 1961 and Porsche ordered one to be converted to something very unusual in the early sixties. Seats were taken off and working benches fitted with workshop tools, so more complex repairs could be done by the trackside. The rear floor of the bus was higher than the front and it was perfect to install a table and seats to hold meetings and receive guests, probably one of the first motorhomes in the paddock of the early sixties. Schuco did a fantastic job reproducing this vehicle, featuring all the multiple

windows, the higher ones green-tinted. There are photoetched grilles, front and rear, excellent wheels, bumpers and perfectly shaped headlamps and smaller lights. The underfloor features the monocoque design that Neoplan was one of the first bus manufacturers to use. Looking inside this FH11, we can see the workshop in the front and the meeting table at the back. A gorgeous model.

For the next one, we stay with Schuco Pro.R series, but changing for something much more heavy duty. The MAN 635 transporter was used by the racing department to take cars to and from race events since 1963 and for a decade. The well-known original Diesel truck had a solid reputation for reliability, giving the perfect basis for this conversion. There are two decks for take cars, the top one is longer, because the lower one has a compartment in front of it to transport spare parts and tools. Porsche used a double cabin configuration for this conversion, so a crew of mechanics could also be transported in the rear seats. Schuco make another masterpiece of this one, reproducing all the visible details. The front features chromed surround grille and windshield, extra spotlights under the bumper, realistic headlamps and

BELOW Two takes on the 1960 Mercedes-Benz LP3500, the one with the canvas hood is a Minichamps release, while the other carrying the pair of covered cars is by Premium ClassiXXs.



ABOVE Rear view of 1953 Opel Blitz showing all the necessary details to make it look as real as possible.



ABOVE The pair of covered cars seem to be 550 Spyders. They are modelled as blocs of resin, there's no cover to take off...



ABOVE Neoplan's rear grille is a photoetched part in Schuco's scale model!



ABOVE Neoplan FH11 conversion from bus to workshop on wheels entered service at Porsche in 1961, model by Schuco Pro.R.

RIGHT 1966 Mercedes-Benz LP608 by Premium ClassiXXs supported racing cars like this 906/6 from Quartz.



ABOVE On top of the page, the MAN 635 in all its glory, above the 1966 Opel Blitz articulated truck, both modelled by Schuco.



ABOVE 1963 MAN 635 was a common sight in the 1960s European roads, not so much the Porsche transporter version, reproduced by Schuco.



ABOVE German license plate and rear lights perfectly reproduced in the MAN 635 transporter



ABOVE The articulation system could not be simpler, but it looks good and works.



ABOVE This was how the Opel lightning looked like in the 1960s, perfectly modelled by Schuco.

very nice door mirrors. Wheels look like the real items and there are extra boxes for tools under the chassis, as well as fuel tanks. Looking underneath, we can see the spare wheel and the main chassis components. The diminutive rear lights are perfectly reproduced. On the top deck, there's side guards that demand to be handled with extreme care, as they look realistic but fragile. A great piece in a collection like this one.

LIGHT TRUCKS

In 1966, Porsche ordered a more agile and easy to

maneuver transporter, an articulated Opel Blitz of the newer generation. The truck tractor also features a double cabin, with two doors only, pulling a very simple double deck trailer. The top deck is slightly inclined over the cabin and features side guards. Schuco's 1/43 reproduction looks amazing, even if the original had a very simple design. Great looking headlamps and front grille, detailed cabin, excellent wheels and several small details to be seen under the chassis. The articulation works well and the trailer can be easily separated.

The following item is a light truck, a Mercedes-Benz LP 608 made by Premium ClassiXXs and reproducing a support vehicle used in 1966. Many teams had vehicles like this one, a versatile way of transporting spare parts, tools and whatever necessary for a race weekend. The scale model is a very straightforward one, well executed, with its voluminous cargo box featuring all the details of the real item. It served during a long period, starting when cars like the Porsche 906/6 raced at Le Mans 1966, so we got a diecast replica of such a car to keep it company, a model from Quartzo.

The next one is a VW Bulli T1 Langpritsche from 1967, the extra-long wheelbase race transporter based on the original Bulli. The conversion was originally made by American racing team Bunker, in the late fifties. A Dutch collector recreated it recently. It's





LEFT & BELOW Not a true original, but this recreation just had to be here. Autocult discovered the longest VW Bulli and made a great model out of it.



made on a 1967 donor Bulli and not only features the Porsche colors, to match contemporary racing cars from the same collector, but also a Porsche 356 SC flat four engine. Autocult released a model of this recreation and even if the works team never used it in period, we reckoned it would look good in this article, specially carrying a 1954 Le Mans 550 Spyder, a resincast by Spark. Autocult reproduced this one with the usual care, with excellent details like door mirrors, hubcaps, headlamps and perfect windows that allow a look inside the light grey seats and white steering wheel. A bit of “what might have been”, however, Porsche used other VW Bulli derived vehicles in their racing department.

THE BIG ONE

Not long ago, we featured a story about several replicas of the biggest model in this collection, the Mercedes-Benz 0317. In that story we had different liveries of the same big closed transporter, all released by Schuco as diecasts with opening rear doors. This time, we have the Premium ClassicXXs version from 1970, painted in the Porsche Salzburg colors. It served as “Renntransporter” and support garage during many races, for example in Le Mans 1970, where the team won with their famous red and white Porsche 917K, a model by Minichamps that we added for photographic purposes only. The

truck represents very well the original transporter, featuring a detailed front-end chromed grille, exterior rear view mirrors and a complete dose of other interesting details, some of them visible through the windows. On the roof, there are three translucent plastic panels, to let day light into the cargo area, which was big enough to carry three cars. The main feature in this big and magnificent model is the rear door opening in two parts, plus two metal ramps and two supporting rods, for the collector to play with, if he wishes to display a 917K being uploaded. To complete the scene, we’ve added a VW Combi T2 panel van with the same Porsche colors, also made by Premium ClassiXXs, that wouldn’t look out of place around the Porsche service area in the early 1970s.

There are other scale models available if you wish to enlarge this theme, you just need to hunt them down. For example, Schuco released a few versions of the Mercedes-Benz L319 light truck and Minichamps launched a VW Transporter T1 panel van, some time ago. Surely, model makers will find other lesser-known classic Porsche transporters and support vehicles to keep some of us busy. ■



ABOVE Excellent headlights, with chromed frames and nice painted hub caps.

BELOW Mercedes-Benz 0317 (Premium ClassiXXs) was commissioned by Porsche for its racing team in the early 1970s, at the same time the iconic 917K (Minichamps) was racing. VW T2 (Premium ClassiXXs) was around too.



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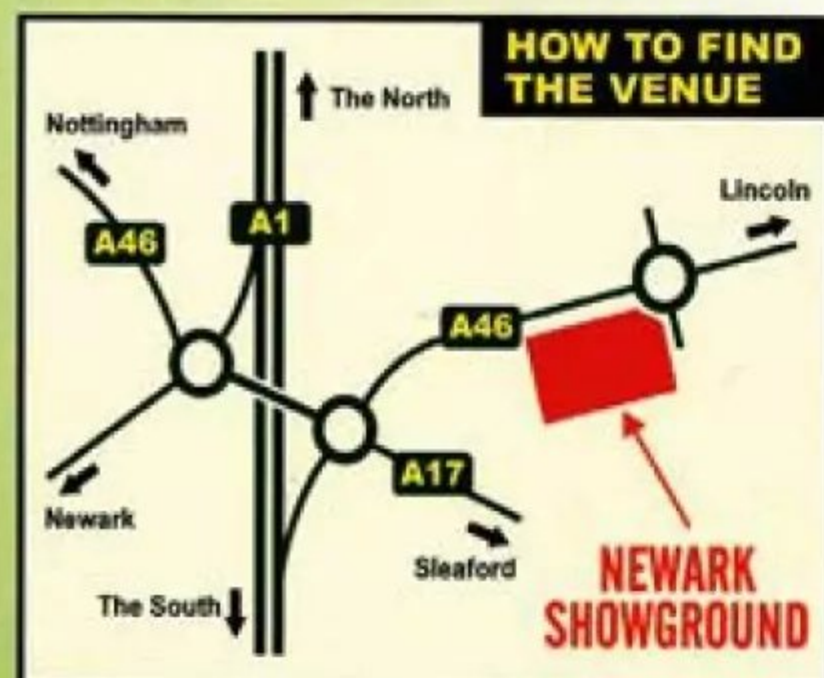


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Fabulous FAB 1

Mike Pigott continues his series on Gerry Anderson's TV-21 models with a look at a high-quality model of Lady Penelope's FAB 1 from a little-known Japanese manufacturer.

Without a doubt, the most popular road vehicle from *Thunderbirds*, or in fact any of the TV-21 Supermarionation programmes, has to be FAB 1, Lady Penelope's futuristic, gadget-laden pink Rolls-Royce. It has always been very popular in toy form. Of course, the original diecast model by Dinky has been the most sought-after, although more recently Corgi produced a near-copy of this that was also in approximately 1/43 scale. Smaller diecast models have been produced by Eidai Grip, Matchbox, Bandai and Tomica.

The design of FAB 1 is based on a 1960s interpretation of what a Rolls-Royce may look like a century into the future. It has certain styling cues common on 1960s concept cars including the bubble canopy and multiple headlights, plus some original touches such as twin-steer front wheels and a central chauffeur's seat. As it turned out, none of these features are common in cars of the 21st Century; by 2065 it's possible that cars will be fully autonomous with electric or hydrogen-cell power.

AMIE

In 2014 a new 1/43 scale diecast model of FAB 1 was released, under the Amie brand. Unlike the similarly sized Dinky and Corgi examples, this was intended as

a serious collectors' model and had no working parts or action features.

Amie is part of the large Japanese toy and hobby company Kokusei Boeki Kaisha Ltd. Based in the suburbs of Tokyo, the company was founded in 1918 as an import-export business. After the war, the firm began specialising in toys and hobbies. Current products include plush toys, diecast and plastic vehicles, plus souvenirs and promotional items such as keyrings and badges. Kokusei Boeki also acts as importers and distributors for several international model companies including Norev and Diecast Masters.

Its own diecast product ranges included KB Ships and KB Wings, which are quality replicas of Japanese naval vessels and aircraft. Licensed character models are sold under the Amie brand, which comprises 1/43 diecast items and 1/18 resin models. Amie seems to have the rights to only two franchises; Japanese superhero Ultraman, and *Thunderbirds*. There are just three *Thunderbirds* models made by Amie; a 1/43 diecast FAB 1, a 1/18 resin FAB 1, and a resin Thunderbird 2 made to a similar size (although being resincasts, the latter two are outside the scope of this article).

BELOW FAB 1 by Amie.

AMIE FAB-1

As mentioned, Amie's FAB-1 is intended as a serious



model and not a toy. While around the same size as the earlier Dinky and Corgi versions, it has no moving parts, so does not have the inaccurate sliding canopy or drop-down grille with firing missile. The main body is diecast and painted the correct shade of salmon pink, including the dashboard. The casting captures the shape of FAB 1 very accurately, with its rounded, slightly-arched side profile. The triple headlights and taillights have clear lenses with chromed bezels, and the retractable rear-view mirrors are in the 'up' position. The trim strips along the sides and boot lid are very shiny, and appear to be chrome foil rather than tampo printing. Fitted behind the canopy is a pair of very fine whip aerials, which were not included on previous models. Substantial bumpers in chromed plastic are fitted at front and rear, with printed 'FAB 1' license plates. The distinctive sloping grille is also a thick plated piece, and has been given a black wash to make the bars stand out. There is a separate Spirit of Ecstasy mascot mounted on top. The base is black plastic with some underside detail and a pair of exhaust pipes fitted at rear. Wheels have chrome hubs with 'bullet' type centres, plus treaded rubber tyres. The interior is extremely well detailed. The seats are correctly shaped and are accurately finished in black with fine white piping. The dash is visible, as is the aircraft-style steering wheel. The canopy is clear and has the rails in pink with silver edging.

There are actually two versions of the smaller FAB 1 produced: the first one came with figures of Lady Penelope and Parker, while the second type didn't. The model shown includes the figurines. Both figures are very nicely finished. Parker is wearing a grey suit and cap, and is seated in his central driver's seat with his flip-up microphone raised. Lady Penelope is in the rear passenger seat, wearing a white dress and black jacket.



ABOVE View of the detailed interior through the canopy.

RIGHT Side view showing figures of Lady Penelope and Parker.



ABOVE Model in its packaging.



Her hair is up in a bun, but is painted light brown rather than the correct blonde.

PACKAGING

Amie's FAB 1 is mounted on a large rectangular black plinth with a clear cover. The version with figures came in a black outer box with red *Thunderbirds* logos. The one without figures was packaged in a red and white box with silhouettes of all the Thunderbird ships.

It was something of a coup for a smaller company like Kokusei Boeki to release a high quality replica of FAB 1, when more prestigious manufacturers of TV-21 models such as Aoshima and Product Enterprise did not, leaving an obvious gap in their ranges. The Amie model was officially licensed by ITV, but not by Rolls-Royce. In fact, there was no reference to the car's marque, and it was described on the plinth as 'FAB 1 – Lady Penelope's Super Saloon Car'. The current owner of the Rolls-Royce trademark is the BMW group, which is not particularly receptive to allowing its prestige brand to be used on *Thunderbirds* merchandise; this was the reason why the 2003 live-action *Thunderbirds* feature film used a Ford Thunderbird as FAB 1.

Amie's FAB 1 is quite a desirable model, but is not easy or cheap to buy. It was only available in Japan and a few other far-Eastern countries, so passed under the radar of many collectors. The version without figures seems to have been produced in smaller numbers and is more difficult to find. Both types are long out of production and currently sell for around £150. ■

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It has always been very popular in toy form. Of course, the original diecast model by Dinky has been the most sought-after...

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The female perspective

Hazel Ralston talks us through her collecting story... from the early days of marriage, to getting hooked on Spot-On.

But these are just toys!" Little did I know, when I uttered these words in the late 1970s, that model cars would play such a large part in my life over the decades that followed.

I made the comment when visiting the family home of my husband-to-be Andrew who showed me a modest wall cabinet with a display of Dinky Toys sitting on top of their boxes. Having been raised as an only child in the 1950s, I had absolutely no contact with toy or model cars, although cousins did have trains sets. My toy life was firmly centred

round dolls, prams and other "girls' toys".

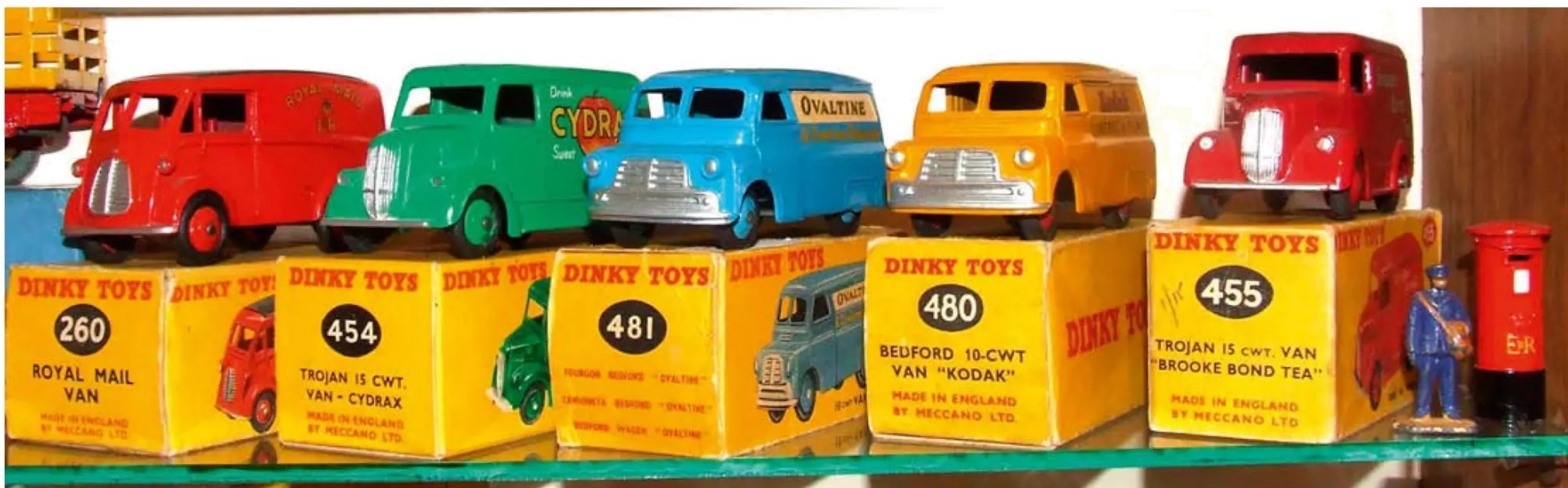
Andrew frequently asked if I had not seen toy cars in toy shops as a child and the answer was always, "No." I can remember seeing a Lone Star Cowboy Outfit in a local newsagent and perhaps there were cars, but I must have blanked them out!

Glasgow had important toy shops, including the famous Clyde Model Dockyard in the Argyle Arcade, but I never went there, instead focusing my attention on the Wylie Hills' toy department and the Dolls' Hospital. All these wonderful places have now, of course, long disappeared.



TOP A stand at the Paris Retromobile show, still one of the best events for quality collectable toys.

ABOVE Hazel takes a break from going round a toy fair and examines a purchase.



TOP Dinky Toys with advertising liveries were among the first diecast toys to catch my eye. I liked the period brand names such as 'Cydrax' and 'Ovaltine'.

ABOVE This Penguin cabin cruiser attracted me because of its simple design, and cost only £5.

RIGHT The cover of this mid-1950s Christmas catalogue from Hamley's Regent Street toy shop reflects the outlook of the era that certain toys were for girls and others for boys. Hazel's life-long interest in toys has taken her from her childhood dolls to a more eclectic adult collection which takes in items previously deemed to be suitable for boys only.

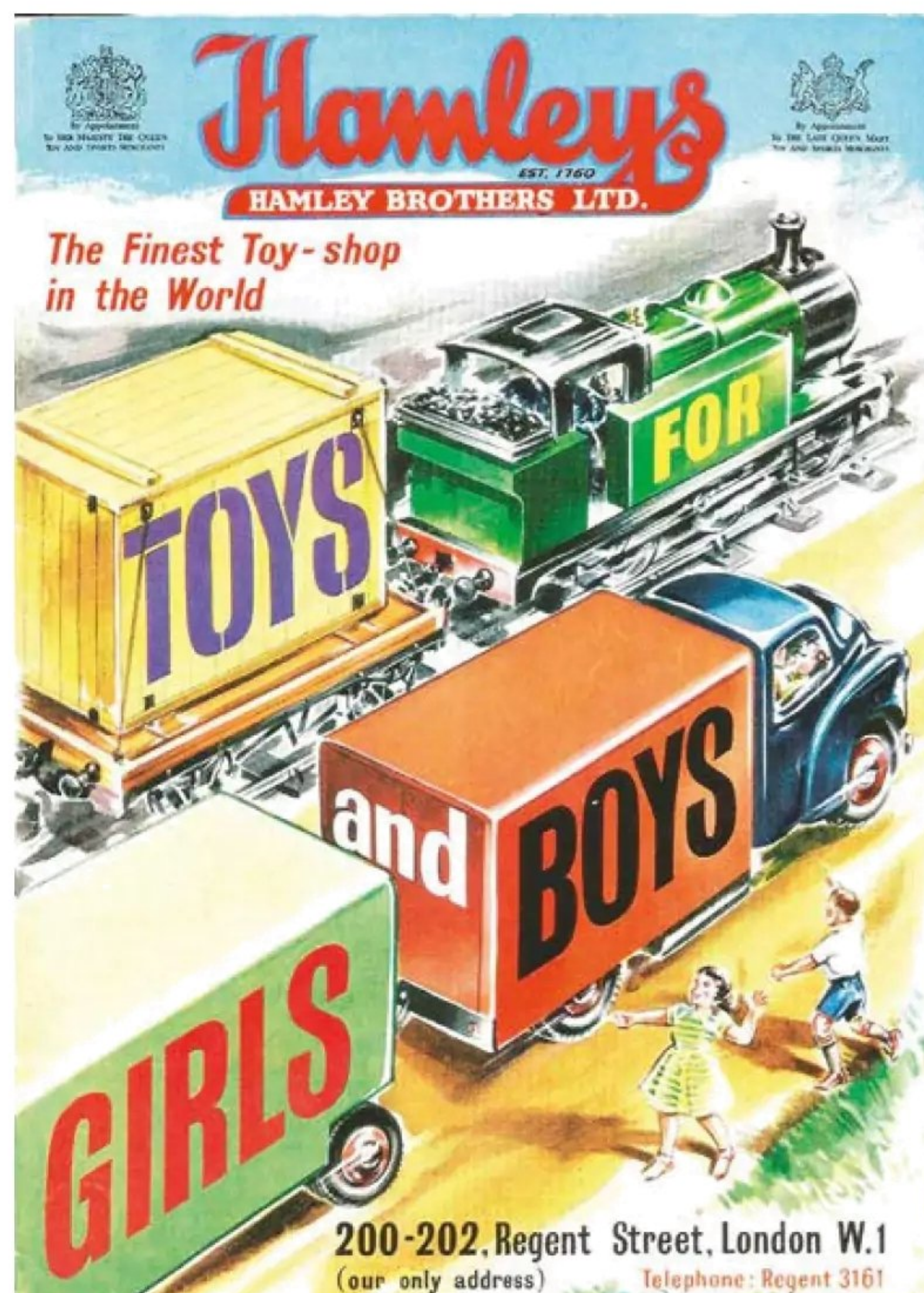
After we got married, I soon discovered that holidays would often have a connection to toy collecting, whether that meant going to a toy fair or tracking down some hidden shop. I have not-so-fond memories of tramping through the streets of Nice and other French towns in 30 degree heat in an attempt to find a model shop, only to get there to be greeted with a sign in the window saying "fermé". More fruitful were the trips to London which invariably took in a visit to what was the Mecca of toy dealing in these days: the Grays Antique Market in Davies Mews off Oxford Street. Back in the eighties the traders here were legendary figures in the world of toy collecting: Pete McAskie, Patrick Trench, Colin Baddiel and Mike Room. Stock was plentiful, prices reasonable and Pete McAskie in particular was always willing to take other items in part exchange, so that year on year the collection grew in both quantity and quality.

In retrospect, collecting in that era was perhaps too narrowly focused on Dinky and Corgi to the exclusion of lesser-known makes such as Budgie, Lone Star and Benbros which were obtainable but not considered so desirable. One year Patrick Trench had a pile of early Lone Star Road-master models from 1956, priced at £3.50 and he was keen for us to take some of them, but they seemed rough and crudely made and the opportunity was not taken up. Now, of course, Lone Stars are extremely desirable. Nevertheless, it was through visits to Grays that we became aware of the appeal of European brands like

CIJ and JRD and many of these were bought from Mike Room who had contacts with European collectors and who visited toy fairs abroad in his camper van.

One particular early purchase from Pete McAskie sticks in mind: the 'Liquid in Bulk' tanker by Morestone. A quantity of these had lain forgotten in a warehouse and had recently emerged on the collecting market. What appealed to me is the way the lettering on the tanker is cast into the body rather than being applied by the more usual methods of tampo-printing or waterslide transfer.

These days, of course, internet purchases have to a large extent taken over from model shops and even swapmeets. But one annual highlight remains: a trip in February to Paris for the Retromobile event, the biggest classic car show in Europe, which runs for several days and is attended by top toy dealers from all over the world. To be in Paris at that time of year is indeed a bonus, and somehow the fact that the exhibition coincides with the season of St. Valentine means that some of the romance rubs off





ABOVE The Distler set with rechargeable battery-operated car is so unusual that it has always been a special favourite of mine.

on the Retromobile show which certainly has an air of glamour and style that sets it above your average British swapmeet! No pasting tables and boxes to rummage in here: everything is tastefully displayed in glass cases and the stalls are set up as miniature shops.

To begin with I saw trips to toy fairs as an opportunity for me to leave Andrew and escape to do some “real” shopping elsewhere. However, as time went by, I initially was drawn to stalls selling girls’ toys and have acquired an amazing selection of cookers, washing machines, sewing machines. The ‘diecast’ theme applies here too, for some early post-war toymakers used their metal casting machinery to create toys for girls. A special favourite is an

early-post war ‘Washing Set’ by Timpo, which contains diecast replicas of a washing tub, washing board, mangle, iron and ironing table. This is in fact a piece of social history, reflecting not only the labour-intensive domestic tasks of that austere era, but also the notion that somehow girls would want to spend their playtime re-enacting the drudgery of the housewife’s role!

I then began to look more closely at vehicles – not so much Dinky Toys, perhaps because I had seen many of them at home, but the more unusual models, such as the ‘Electromatic Strom-Tankstelle’ or ‘Power Filling Station’ by Distler of Germany. This consists of a tinsplate replica of a Shell filling station containing two large batteries



RIGHT Timpo made many diecast toys in the late forties and some were aimed at girls, such as this washing set. It is probably rarer than many Timpo cars and I was fortunate to find this example with all the pieces still tied to the backing card.

LEFT The earliest purchase I remember making from London’s Grays Antique Centre: the ‘Liquid in Bulk’ tanker by Morestone, part of a series intended to represent ‘Trucks of the World’.

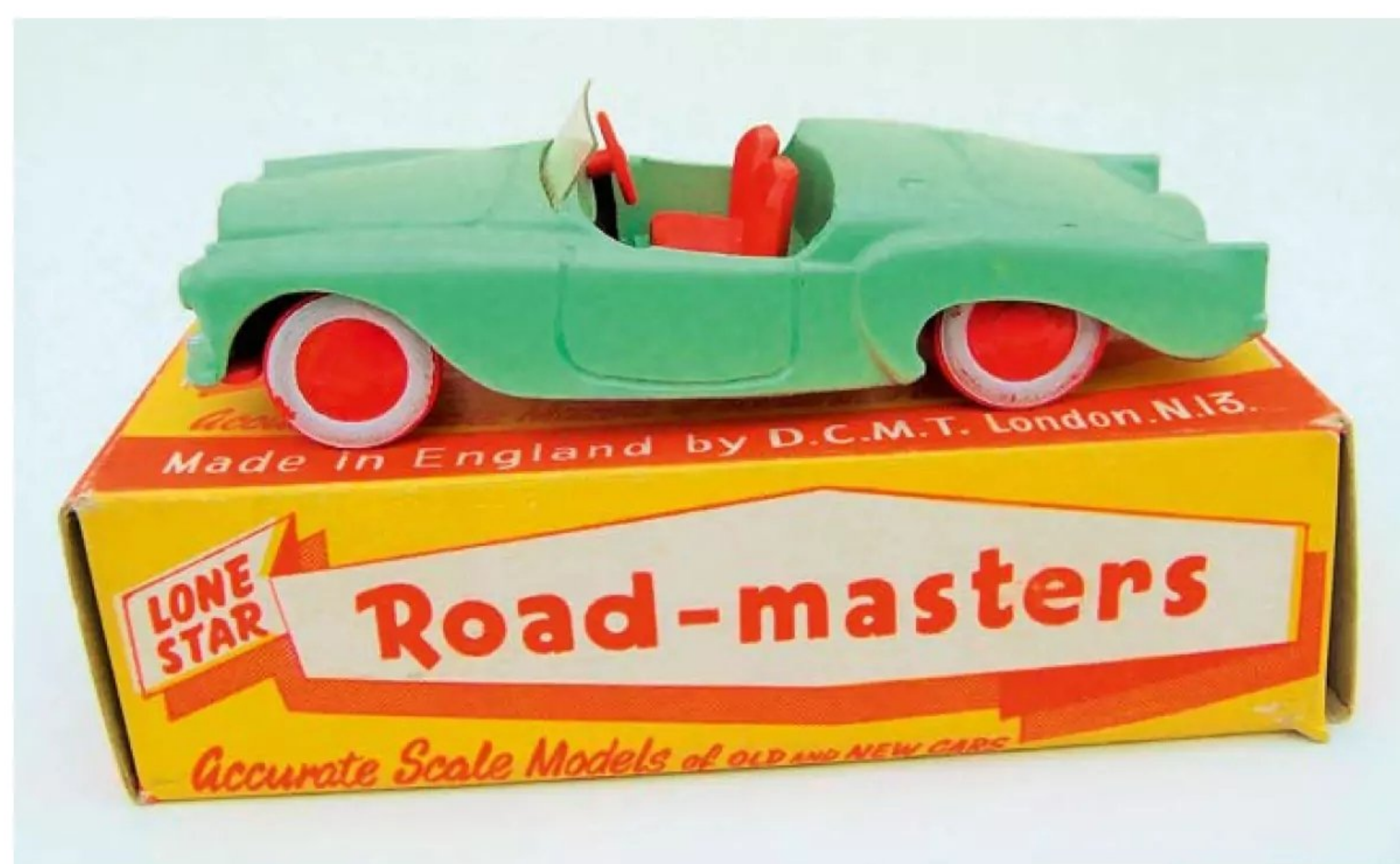
BELOW My prize piece:
Spot-on's Routemaster bus.



and a 'hose' from the petrol pump which plugs in at the back of the car (a 1950s Studebaker), just as if it is being refuelled. And in fact that is exactly what's happening, as power from the batteries is transferred to the accumulator inside the car. In general, I'm not a fan of the extravagant styling of American cars, but there is something so original and colourful about the filling station set that makes it irresistible...

Spot-on Models have always appealed to me because the whole range is to a consistent scale and I had longed for a Spot-on Double Decker Bus. It was a great day when I got one, mint in box and complete with the all-important picture card and other leaflets. I won't say how much I paid for it but it was a significant sum.

Of course, the joy of toy fairs is about discovering models you didn't know existed and also getting something at a bargain price. At a recent Doncaster visit, I was happy to purchase a Clyde Cruiser by



ABOVE In the 1980s early toy products of DCMT Lone Star seemed crude beside Dinky Toys and no-one wanted them, even at a price of £3.50 each. This example was acquired many years later and cost considerably more!

Penguin, complete with box, for just £5. I have lost count of toy fairs we have attended or had a table at over the years. Indeed, we ran our own for a few years but that is another story!

I have noticed that there is an increase in women attending toy fairs in the UK and making purchases. At one time, it was always the case that women would accompany their husbands/partners and help man the stall (and I've done that!) However, we have some way to go to catch up with French women, who are out in force each year at the Paris Retromobile event making significant purchases.

When I first saw Andrew's collection in the late 1970s, I could never have imagined that toys from a bygone era would have kindled a hobby and brought me a great deal of pleasure. When looking at a cherished piece in a display case it is very satisfying not only to reflect on how attractive it is, but to recall the story of where and when it was bought. And you don't need to be a male to experience that! ■



Desert Island Diecasts

Imagine you're stranded on a remote island and had only taken a handful of your collection favourites on that fateful trip, which five would you want it to be? **Richard Davies** is this month's castaway hero.



LEFT Kenna Rover P5

Being of 1958 vintage I guess this makes me as one of the last of the baby-boomers, enjoying the 1960s 'golden age of diecast'. I can certainly remember that by the early 1970s (as the manufacturers started to swap to display-boxes) my interests had moved on. To Airfix kits mostly.

Thinking about being stranded on that hypothetical desert island I was keen to have five models to reinforce past memories, so my choices (with one exception) are not special favourites but will bring back thoughts of my childhood.

CORGI NO.356 VW PERSONEL CARRIER

I don't know how other readers played with their toys as a child, but I do recall setting up 'situations' and then imagining the dialogue. With this Corgi VW it was a lost fictional American serviceman from a US base in East Anglia or a military surplus vehicle.

DINKY NO.969 BBC TV EXTENDING MAST VEHICLE ON A BEDFORD CHASSIS

My original was very, very playworn; the classic

hand-me-down from an older boy next door. There was no mast and I thought from the shape of the casting Dinky had created a military fire engine. Some years later (when all my old toys had long gone to a jumble sale) and we experienced the firemen's strikes in the 1970s, I assumed the toy could only have been a Green Goddess replica.

CORGI ORIGINAL OMNIBUS D5 MIDLAND

Generally, I have zero interest in buses because growing up in the Black Country (West of Birmingham/South of Wolverhampton) every bus I saw was in Midland red. There were no other colours so I thought buses were dull. Back then all media, TV and newspapers were in black and white, with the only colour images of buses available for a child being postcards, calendars and toys – they were invariably Routemasters. It was quite a few years before I realised buses can differ! When I came across Corgi's D5 model a while ago it brought back memories of frequently queuing at a bus depot waiting to get on and get home from school and looking at those buses very close up (well, there was nothing else to look at).

//

My original was very, very playworn; the classic hand-me-down from an older boy next door. There was no mast and I thought from the shape of the casting Dinky had created a military fire engine.

//



ABOVE Corgi No.356 VW Personnel Carrier.



ABOVE Dinky No.969 BBC TV Extending Mast vehicle.



KENNA ROVER P5

As a youngster I was a member of the Cub Scouts. Occasionally there were trips out when the parents provided transport and the most popular Dad was the driver of a Rover P5. It was very impressive and huge by contrast to the usual Fords, BMCs or Vauxhalls. I remember he owned a saloon then a coupe; much later he progressed to the early Range Rover.

Years afterwards I was so impressed I ran an old P5 for a few years; I am not mechanically minded and sold it on. But being so familiar with the real car, and with the Kenna version having such an accurate interior, it had to be the first-choice replica.

SPOT-ON ERF

This is my only original toy, which I had restored more than 20 years ago. There were no spare parts available back then, so the old cracked windscreen was used as a vac-form template, which rather personalises it. I have no idea who gave the truck to me but it was in my toy box from my earliest memories. It must have been the start of my Spot-On enthusiasm!

Now my collecting focuses on original 1960s diecasts of 'everyday' cars and trucks; the sort of vehicle shown in Ladybird or I-Spy books of the era, nothing exotic and still no buses...

If setting out my favourite castings now it would be Spot-On and Tekno, and if in a 100 years my bleached bones are found on that remote island then I am sure the ERF would be close by! ■

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP FIVE DESERT ISLAND DIECASTS?

Fancy having some fun and sharing your choices? Just email the editor photos of your five choices, together with about 125-150 words on each, including your reasons for choosing, to cathyh@warnersgroup.co.uk.

ABOVE LEFT The only original vehicle taken to the desert island this month; a Spot-On ERF truck.

ABOVE RIGHT Corgi Original Omnibus D5 Midland bus.



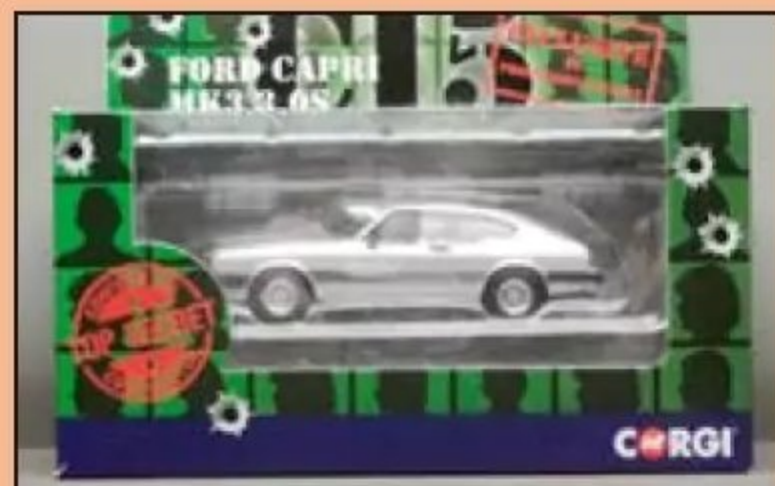
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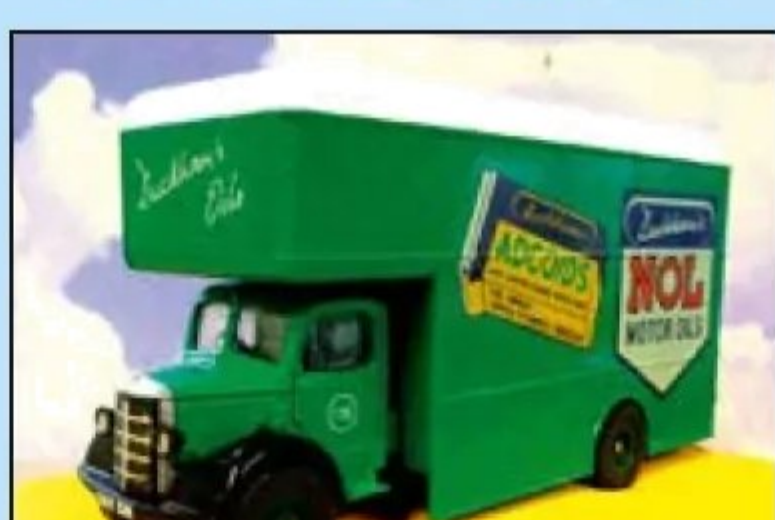
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Getting ready for Christmas

David Wright tells the story of Ben and its Christmas card range...

As many readers will know, I'm a Jensen owner. Many Jensen owners have a strong desire to promote the Jensen Marque far and wide, and classic car magazine features and public car runs are the main vehicles for doing this. So, when another possibility begins to hatch in one's brain, it's quite exciting!

For many years I have purchased a supply of Ben Christmas Cards, (see web address below), as I just adore their artists' illustrations of classic cars in period settings in the UK, at Christmas. Call me corny, even old fashioned if you like, but they have a really warm feel about them!

As most of these are of cars from the 1940s and 50s, some time ago I wrote directly to the main artist, Richard Wheatland, and suggested some cars of the 1960s, and he said that he would think about it. Two years later, I reminded him again, and this time he was interested when I told him about my Jensen C-V8 Mk III. Not living too far away, Richard came to visit, and to see my car, driving his immaculate white Triumph TR4.

I had told him that I could supply numerous

pictures, but he wanted to get aspects of shade in with it, so all angles were covered!

We kept in touch, and some months later he emailed to say he was nearly finished, and that Ben was definitely interested in his proposed design. A first shot image dropped into my inbox, and wow, I was truly impressed. He had given a lot of thought to the period surroundings, and also captured the complex curves of the C-V8 incredibly well.

Needless to say, I was persuaded to buy the original painting from Ben in the end, and received it as my Christmas present from my wife Chris!

THE HISTORY OF BEN

The Ben charity was founded in 1905 by A J Wilson while he was working for Dunlop Tyres, and was originally called the Cycle Trades Benevolent Fund. In 1908 the rise of the car meant that 'Motor' was added to the fund's name, and it became The Motor and Cycle Trades Benevolent Fund in 1924.

The original plan for the fund was to help people who fell on hard times as there was no Welfare State until after WWII. The growth of Ben continued when various other benevolent funds became part of the charity. Ben now supports people from right across automotive and allied trades.

Ben is an independent charity and dedicated partner to the automotive industry, providing support for life to automotive people and their family dependents, focusing on providing care and support to enable total health and wellbeing.

So, whether you want to have a Jensen C-V8 Christmas card in your collection of automobilia or not, do consider supporting this charity as it is supporting those in the motor trade who may need help. I'll certainly be a major customer for some years to come! ■

ABOVE A selection of the Christmas cards available in support of Ben.



FURTHER INFORMATION

More information about Ben as a charity, or how to support the organization can be found at www.ben.org.uk

The Ben 2023 Christmas card range can be ordered via the website www.charitycardshop.com/ben

Reality check

Alwyn Brice considers the compromises and consequences of translating a real car into miniature.



LEFT This is a Series 4 Elan, but differs only in details from the earlier example, as modelled by Corgi.

RIGHT A pity Corgi threw the colour chart out of the window. As with Steed's Bentley, Mrs Peel's Elan was of the incorrect hue – the racing Elan's colour would have been better.



ABOVE The interior of the Elan was surprisingly spacious. Dash was ply with a wood veneer; gearlever short and stubby, in true sports car style.

BELOW Plain steel wheels with spinners visible here; the bonnet bulge betokens Stromberg carburettors.



Welcome to a new series in which I'll chart the journey from 1/1 to 1/43 – or indeed, other scales.

As an inveterate car enthusiast since my formative years (I well recall painstakingly drawing an E-type Jaguar in my school diary around the time of its launch), I've always been fascinated by models of the real thing. Alas, I've never owned an E-type (although I have driven an example), and the plethora of replicas seen at swapmeets merely attests to the car's all-time-great status.

But it didn't matter that Jags were out of my price range, for somewhere along the line I fell in love with Lotus. With hindsight, perhaps I should have stuck with the Coventry product; after all, any owner of Colin Chapman's work will, at some point, explain the company moniker: Lots Of Trouble, Usually Serious.

Part of this epithet stemmed from Chapman's outlook on the world. He was pretty ruthless when it came to road car production and track racing; anything that could bend the rules or make life easier was always open to consideration. His oft-quoted philosophy (simplify – then add lightness) meant that road cars were built to a budget and that any initial owner assumed the unwitting cloak of a test driver. If something fell off or failed, then amendments were accordingly made on the production line, following the report. With track cars, as far as Chapman was

concerned, provided his came across the finishing line in first place, it mattered not that the vehicle's suspension might then collapse.

But Lotus, for all that, has a lure. The cars were hugely innovative, achingly beautiful and looked decades ahead of their peers on the road. And their relative scarcity ensured (and still does) their desirability.

OPEN AND SHUT CASE

For the world of the miniature I'll kick off with the Elan, the sports car to have owned in the sixties and early seventies. Think Emma Peel in *The Avengers*, who probably did more for the model with her Powder Blue drophead than any advertising campaign. Jim Clark, who raced for Lotus, had one, as did jazz musician Chris Barber. Even *Which?* magazine got hold of an example for a road test in 1966 (although its comments, predictably, were not too favourable).

The Elan was an interesting car, since it utilised a simplified, space-saving chassis that was essentially two Y shapes joined by their vertical strokes. A lightweight fibreglass body sat on the structure and a modified Ford 1.6 engine provided plenty in terms of power for this creation.

Corgi's Elan can be found in both coupé and convertible format. Sensibly, perhaps, Corgi opted not to feature opening doors. Working doors present no challenge for the diecast manufacturer per se, it's just



ABOVE Gift Set 37: the Elans have reverted to plain wheels and sit rather high because of their detachable chassis. Cream or red interiors were fanciful (black vinyl was the order of the day).



ABOVE The racing Elan features a pretty decent interior and engine bay – good to see the Lotus script on the twin cam, just like the real thing



ABOVE For all its shortcomings, the racing Elan is quite delightful and probably the best model of the bunch.

that the hinges generally have to be thick, overscale sections of curved metal that anchor the door to the A pillar. As such, they are nothing like the real thing. Especially on the Elan, which relied on two (upper and lower) simple locating metal arms with a nylon bobbin protruding at right angles from one end. This bobbin rotated in a well set in the fibreglass and, over time, that well would become enlarged and the nylon worn, leading to a drooping door. Some degree of adjustment was possible, but there was a limit. This has been the bane of real-life Elan owners, although with drastic surgery, it is curable.

Dropping doors are one thing but the Elan is also notorious for poorly fitting doors, mostly on the passenger side. The story goes that Lotus had multiple body and multiple door moulds; usually body A was teamed with door A, but not always... Protruding passenger doors on the Elan are thus not uncommon – but no replica maker, to my knowledge, has dared to go down that avenue yet!

INNOVATIVE FEATURES

Doors aside, you have to hand it to Corgi for trying, though. Its racing Elan, in metallic blue, is a pretty good representation. Yes, the wheels are simplistic (Elans would have chromed hubcaps at this period) but the retractable windows are a lovely touch. The



real car, in typical Chapman fashion, was ahead of its time and boasted electric windows, albeit powered by Ford window wiper motors. The tipping bucket seats are well modelled but I have reservations about the huge decal on the boot – I'm not sure that any self-respecting Lotus driver would have endorsed Esso to that degree, at least without some sponsorship.

The main gripe with this model is shared with the other Corgi Elans: the bumpers. With the Elan, Lotus pioneered the idea of an aerodynamic foam filled glassfibre bumper that was aesthetically pleasing yet functional. Suddenly, chrome appendages mounted on angle iron brackets were passé. These distinctive bumpers were typically silver or gold in colour, contrasting with the body colour. For a few extra quid spent on the production line, Corgi, one feels, could have enhanced the model's realism with some paint.

The coupé models are interesting too, because here Corgi opted to include a separate chassis. It's a wonderful example of real life imitating the miniature for indeed, the 1/1 Elan bodywork can be detached from the chassis (although it's not the work of a moment, as with the model). Thoughtfully, Corgi decided on a wire wheel effect for this particular iteration's running gear although, paradoxically, you'll be hard pressed to spot an Elan of that era wearing spokes: steel wheels with knock-off spinners were the usual fitment. Strangely (maybe to attract small boys?), the red and blue coupes both feature a white roof; again, cars of the period were typically just a single colour, the contrasting roof treatment being a feature of some of the earlier Elites and Plus 2 Elans.

Finally, we turn to Gift Set 37 – any Lotus lover's dream. This is a repurposing exercise, of course. Our hardtop Elan can still be taken apart but now runs on plain wheels; the metallic blue open car becomes green but benefits from a separate chassis; and there's a spare chassis thrown in for good measure. But... isn't that VW transporter an aberration? Lotus often used a Thames Trader pick-up or a long Bedford pantechnicon, but you will see odd photographs of a VW half cab, albeit with the car mounted behind the cab and benefitting from an extended platform. Of course, it was easier for Corgi to pinch and modify the 409 Breakdown Truck and add the trailer from GS17.

Whoever said recycling was a new idea? ■

The fall & rise of a Corgi MGBGT

David Wright recounts a sad tale of loss and re-birth; how to re-purpose, re-cycle and re-use a well-loved Corgi Toy...



LEFT Corgi Model Club publicity images of the MGBGT.



I still had the dead carcass, not knowing what to do with it! Its baseplate and bumpers were undamaged. A light bulb moment later, I decided that a full restoration was possible



After watching and waiting for some time on the lovely new issues that the Corgi Model Club have been releasing, I finally succumbed and ordered one of the new 327 MGBGT models.

The emails came telling me it was on its way, and finally announced the red-letter day! My wife and I were out for the day but I was comfortable in the knowledge that Royal Mail will handle it.

Oh no! We arrived home in the twilight, and as I swung into my drive, I heard a soft and painful crunch! Chris said “I hope you haven’t driven over any of my plants” – dozens of little packages of tiny plug plants have been arriving, destined for the garden. But no, it was a package with the Corgi Model Club brand name on it!

Tearing it open revealed the carnage inside. The roof entirely crushed into the body, with all windows broken. I began apportioning blame, taking a small amount to myself, but most to Royal Mail. I visited my local Sorting Office – all collectors will know that we have to have a good relationship with our Sorting Office and postman – we had just lost our regular man.

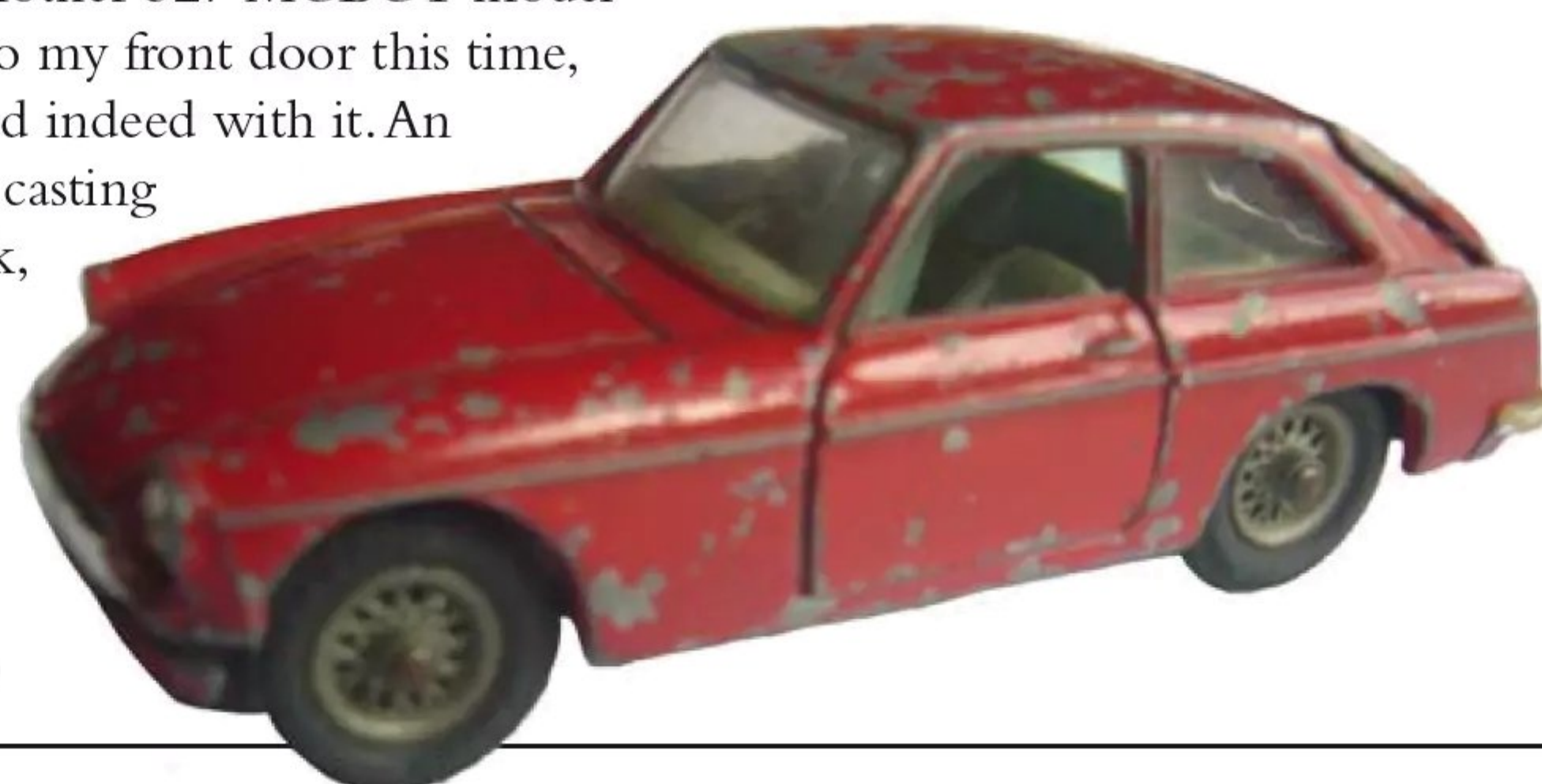
But I had lost a pristine model!

The manager agreed it was their responsibility, as the package should have been returned to the Sorting Office and a card left for me to collect it later. A claim for compensation was sent in – we wait up to 90 days!

With further thought, I had so many good reports from fellow collectors about the Corgi Model Club that I decided to drop them an email telling the whole story, including my part in it. To my pleasant surprise, Claudia said “Oh dear, that is terrible, would you like a replacement?” I was overcome with joy, and went to tell Chris about this turnaround in my fortunes. As good as her word, another 327 MGBGT model arrived safely right to my front door this time, and I am very pleased indeed with it. An improvement in the casting definition, paintwork, and chrome parts make it a faithful replica.

I still had the dead carcass, not knowing what to do

BELOW The donor car.





ABOVE The crushed box, and the write off for spares.



ABOVE The eBay example project car.

with it! Its baseplate and bumpers were undamaged. A light bulb moment later, I decided that a full restoration was possible using a “heritage” shell – in other words, a played with example with no bumpers, and very little paint, but a sound shell.

Ebay produced such a volunteer donor, and once the rivets were drilled out, a range of possibilities presented itself. Should I get a British Leyland colour card for the MGBGT, and create a one-off?

The parts were compared, and all seemed to fit – the Corgi Model Club example being a fully faithful replica of the original toy.

I canvassed my friends in my local MG Owners Club, and it was agreed that after Tartan Red, Mineral blue was a good second. An aerosol can was obtained, the body subjected to a full strip, fettling, then primer, and finally topcoat. The interior was given a coat of tan paint, and the dashboard some black, with instruments picked out in white, to give it that more authentic look. New windows and rear badge were obtained from Model Supplies, and then came the build. Could I remember the order of rear screen, other windows, dash, front grille/door spring assembly, and then the bumper casting, a one-piece installation? Not first time, no!

Rear window and hatch were re-united, and sat waiting the windscreen and rear window moulding, which holds the hatch in place.

The chrome moulding for the bumpers, which also provides the sprung positioning of the doors, lays on the up turned casting next, followed by base and wheels. After much thought, these require careful placing altogether, then a spacer placed on the



Primed parts all ready to go.



ABOVE All the parts available.

baseplate to enable a rubber band to hold them all on tight, while 2 pack Araldite is setting between the base and chrome, with additional placed under the chrome – wow, what a complex process!

So now, a spare Corgi 327 MGBGT in mineral blue stands proudly on my display shelves, to prove that re-cycling and re-purposing can take many forms in the model car field. ■



LEFT The finished model and box looking good.

Acknowledgements

Corgi Model Club – for their courtesy, and generosity.

Sorting Office Manager – for her understanding and admission of guilt.



Corgi through the years

Rick Wilson continues his series of year-by-year articles from the beginning of the brand in 1956. We continue the series with the models released during the second half of 1970.

**1970
PART 2**

As we move into the second half of 1970, there was still an exciting batch of new models to be released, many of which I fondly remember having in my toy box back then – probably the most notable, for me, of these were the two commercial vehicles and a certain Le Mans racer.

So, we start off this instalment with the releases from July 1970, including one of those wonderful commercials that impressed me so much – No.406 Mercedes-Benz Unimog 406. How neat that Corgi's numbering reflected the model type of the real vehicle! Remember the awesome No.1154 Mercedes-Benz Unimog with Gooseneck Dumper, released in 1969? Corgi had taken the cab unit from that and added a rear deck that was topped with an olive green tilt in moulded plastic. It was to be the first of many variations released over the coming years. Again at

1/48 scale, of course, these wonderful trucks matched almost perfectly with the other vehicles that Corgi made and were not too big as to be difficult to cope with for young hands. It lasted for two years in this form and over 400,000 were sold over the period.

Also launched in July 1970, was No.301 Iso Grifo 7-Litre – a rather fabulous supercar that had proved very popular in the Matchbox 1-75 range (both as a Regular Wheels and Superfast release). It is a great model, with opening doors, lift-up bonnet and tipping seats. Surprisingly, sales were relatively disappointing for such a stunning car, with just over 250,000 sold during its three-year production run. A few sneaked out of the factory fitted with Red Spot wheels, but these were very quickly swapped for Whizzwheels. Early examples feature a pale blue interior (later examples are white) and the silver-painted roll-over bar was eventually left the same colour as the body paint.

ABOVE No.1146 Scammell Handyman MkIII & Tri-Deck Transporter with No.381 GP Beach Buggy, No.383 Volkswagen 1200 'Flower Power' and No.372 Lancia Fulvia Sport Zagato on its top deck, and No 3.13 Ford Cortina GXL, complete with Graham Hill figurine. *Image: Rick Wilson*



ABOVE No.806 Lunar Bug. Image: Rick Wilson

As had become the norm by now, nothing new was released during August, but September more than made up for this with three brand new models plus four reworkings. The first two covered here were actually the same casting, and technically were a sort of reworking too. Based on the No.256 East African Safari Beetle, this new 1/44 scale 'Volkswagen 1200' version now had all parts cast shut and were both fitted with the new Whizzwheels. No.373 Volkswagen 1200 Police Car was painted white and featured a roof beacon, plus the panels on the bonnet were painted black. This would vary during its six-year production run and various European versions would be released for their respective home markets. It was a popular model, with over 650,000 made. No.383 Volkswagen 1200 'Flower Power' was painted red with a green chassis and bumpers, and was adorned by some funky stickers. This would later be painted just orange, with a white chassis part.

Keeping the VW-based theme going, the other newly-tooled release for September was No.381 GP Beach Buggy. This cute little model, officially noted as being 1/45 scale, proved to be a big hit, with its moulded-plastic roof and removable surf boards. The body was either blue or red and the nose was usually stickered up with a floral motif. Approaching 900,000 were produced until 1976.

The first of the four reworkings that we will cover here was No.513 Citroën Safari Alpine Rescue Car. This was the No.499 Olympics Special, still fitted with the roof rack and toboggan, and came with a new 'rescuer' figurine, plus his trusty St Bernard dog. The model also featured new side and bonnet graphics, of course.

The remaining three releases for September were all Whizzwheel upgrades of earlier models. No.372 Lancia Fulvia Sport Zagato replaced No.332 and was now painted orange with a black bonnet, No.376 Chevrolet Stingray Stock Car was now painted silver and replaced No.337, and No.378 MGC GT took over from No.345 and now sported red paintwork and a black bonnet.

Moving onto October and my life would literally be



ABOVE No.301 Iso Grifo 7-Litre and No.372 Lancia Fulvia Sport Zagato. Image: Vectis



ABOVE No.406 Mercedes-Benz Unimog 406. Image: Rick Wilson



ABOVE No.203 Mangusta De Tomaso. Image: Vectis



ABOVE No.373 Volkswagen 1200 Police Car. Image: Vectis



ABOVE No.385 Porsche 917. Image: Rick Wilson

CORGI TOYS 1970 RELEASES – JULY TO DECEMBER

No	Title	Scale	Released	Withdrawn	Sales
203	Mangusta De Tomaso	1/44	October	1972	167,000
274	Bentley T Series HJ Mulliner Park Ward	1/43	December	1973	139,000
280	Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow	1/43	October	1978	492,000
301	Iso Grifo 7-Litre	-	July	1973	253,000
313	Ford Cortina GXL	1/43	November	1973	314,000
372	Lancia Fulvia Sport Zagato	-	September	1972	182,000
373	Volkswagen 1200 Police Car	1/44	September	1976	655,000
376	Chevrolet Stingray Stock Car	-	September	1972	228,000
378	MGC GT	1/44	September	1972	118,000
381	GP Beach Buggy	1/45	September	1976	879,000
383	Volkswagen 1200 'Flower Power'	1/44	September	1971	197,000
384	Adams Brothers Probe 15	-	December	1973	368,000
385	Porsche 917	1/43	October	1976	703,000
406	Mercedes-Benz Unimog 406	1/48	July	1972	413,000
513	Citroën Safari Alpine Rescue Car	1/48	September	1972	124,000
806	Lunar Bug	-	November	1972	209,000
1146	Scammell Handyman MkIII & Tri-Deck Transporter	1/48	October	1973	202,000
GS20	Tri-Deck Car Transporter Set	-	October	1973	not known

Source: The Great Book of Corgi 1956-1983



ABOVE No.384 Adams Bros Probe 15. Image: Rick Wilson



ABOVE No.GS20 Car Transporter Gift Set. Image: Vectis

changed forever. I still remember the day that I bought No.385 Porsche 917 in Marks & Spencers in Bromley, Kent. It was the red version (also released in metallic blue) and it set off a lifelong fascination with the Le Mans 24 Hours motor race, for which the real car was built. It proved to be a popular release by Corgi and lasted in the range until 1976, long after the real cars had stopped racing (they were so dominant, the 917s and their counterparts from other manufacturers were outlawed at the end of the 1971 season). Another significant release, in my eyes, was also launched at the same time – No.1146 Scammell Handyman MkIII & Tri-Deck Transporter. This amazing Corgi Majors release (the only new Major in 1970) featured the attractive Sammell Handyman cab and this was coupled to a rather fanciful three-deck trailer. Taking over from the ageing Carrimore MkIV, this new release was literally on another level. At 1/48 scale, this was hugely impressive, and easily coped with carrying several slightly larger scale cars. Painted orange white and blue, it certainly made a big impact. Just over 200,000 were made, until 1973, but many survive today – and they are great for displaying too, as anyone who visits my studio will see. As well as being sold as a standalone release, the unit also appeared over the same time period in Gift Set 20, accompanied by an assortment of six of Corgi’s then current cars, which could vary according the range availability at the time.

Two more releases in October 1970 were Whizzwheels reworkings, with No.203 Mangusta De Tomaso replacing No.271 (now painted green and with a fixed chassis, sadly) and No.280 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow taking over from No.273, which lost its Take-Off Wheels of course.

November brought us two more newbies, and

CORGI TOYS 1970 JULY TO DECEMBER RELEASES PRODUCTION COLOURS		
No	Title	Colours produced
203	Mangusta De Tomaso	Green/gold
274	Bentley T Series HJ Mulliner Park Ward	Pink
280	Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow	Silver/blue
301	Iso Grifo 7-Litre	Blue
313	Ford Cortina GXL	Bronze/black or blue/black
372	Lancia Fulvia Sport Zagato	Orange/black
373	Volkswagen 1200 Police Car	White/black
376	Chevrolet Stingray Stock Car	Silver/black
378	MGC GT	Red/black
381	GP Beach Buggy	Blue/white or red/white
383	Volkswagen 1200 'Flower Power'	Red/green or (later) orange/white
384	Adams Brothers Probe 15	Metallic red or gold
385	Porsche 917	Red or metallic blue
406	Mercedes-Benz Unimog 406	Yellow /red
513	Citroën Safari Alpine Rescue Car	White/red
806	Lunar Bug	Red/white/blue
1146	Scammell Handyman MkIII & Tri-Deck Transporter	Orange/white/blue
GS20	Tri-Deck Car Tranporter Set	As per constituent parts

Source: The Great Book of Corgi 1956-1983

very different they were too! No.313 Ford Cortina GXL was developed in conjunction with the Ford Motor Company and launched to coincide with the real car going on sale. Interestingly, these were produced and marketed with Graham Hill, the famous motor racing driver, and the car came with a plastic figurine depicting our hero leaning on the car’s bonnet. The model came in two colourways, either a metallic bronze or blue, both with a black ‘vinyl’ roof. November’s other, very different release was No.806 Lunar Bug.

Produced off the back of all the interest at the time in the moon landing missions, this fabulous fantasy vehicle demonstrated the talents of Corgi’s design team and looked like it could truly be a vehicle of the future, although it did seem to take some styling cues from Dinky’s No.102 Joe’s Car from the *Joe 90* TV series – the twin jet engines and ‘sit down’ wheelsets for starters. The main body is white with red roof and underside, the cockpit interior is light blue moulded plastic and is clearly visible through the wide bubble windscreen. The tailgate drops down, allowing vehicular access to the spacious rear compartment and this is perfect for most of the Corgi Juniors or Rockets range to fit inside. Corgi also added fold-out wings these were moulded in the same blue plastic as the interior.

The final two new releases for 1970 were No.274 Bentley T Series HJ Mulliner Park Ward (a very slightly modified version of the No.280 Rolls-Royce described earlier, now painted Hot Pink) and a bit of a film star – the Durango 95 from Stanley Kubrick’s *A Clockwork Orange*, otherwise known as the Adams Brothers Probe 15. Corgi’s version of the car was painted either metallic gold or dark red and was produced as No.384. The car also featured as one of two packaged with the short-lived Power Blasters track set. ■



ABOVE No.376 Chevrolet Stingray Stock Car with rare Red Spot wheels. Image: Vectis



ABOVE No.378 MGC GT. Image: Vectis

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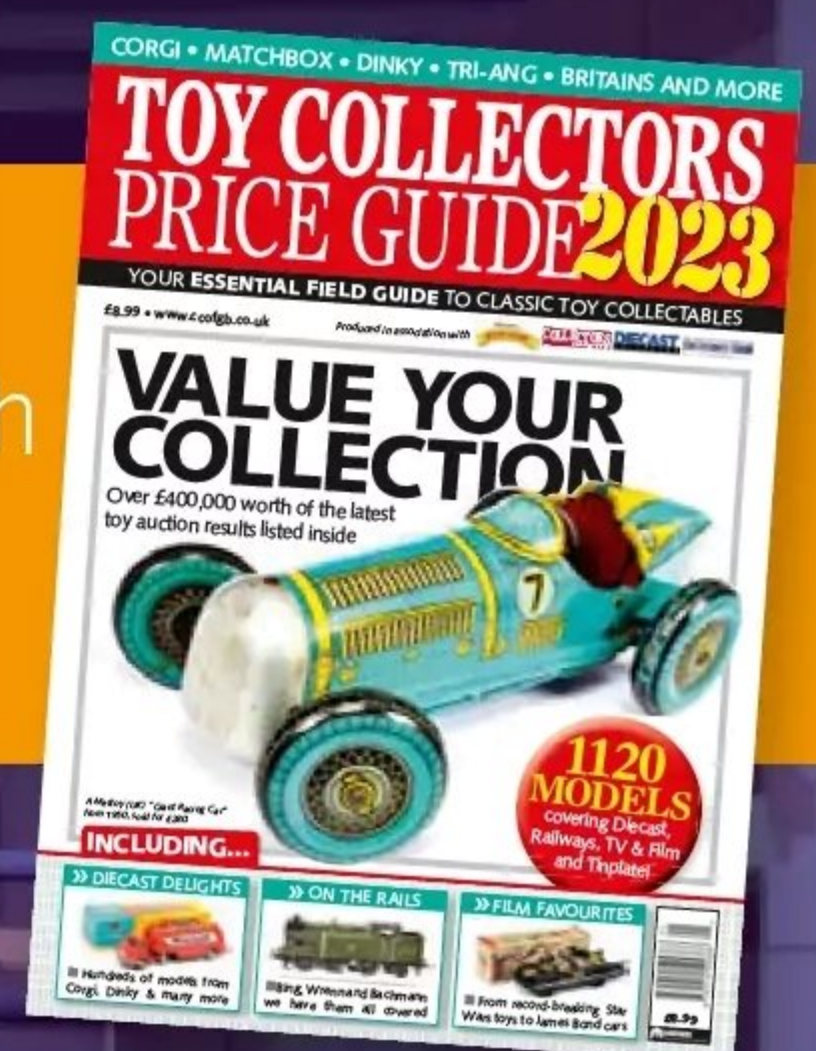


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OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Andrew Ralston investigates...

PART ONE

The home of French Dinky Toys

As well as the famous factory in Binns Road, Liverpool, Meccano Limited had a French factory in Avenue Henri Barbusse in Bobigny on the outskirts of Paris where a separate range of Dinky Toys was made. Inevitably, many of the same marketing approaches were used in both countries. There was a French *Meccano Magazine* just as there was a British one, and in both countries the back page carried a colour advertisement for the latest Dinky Toy releases. The UK issue had a monthly *Dinky Toys News* section while the equivalent page in the French edition was entitled *De la Réalité à la Miniature*.

Thus, when Liverpool launched a Dinky Toys Club on 1st January 1957 it was only to be expected that a French version would follow. This happened six months later, on 1st July. As in the UK, members received a certificate and a pin badge though in France there was an additional incentive in the form of a small discount on the cost of a subscription to the *Meccano Magazine*.

However, it seems that the club developed in rather different ways on the two side of the Channel. When setting up the club, Liverpool suggested that wearing your club badge would lead you to meet other Dinky collectors and

BELOW As in the UK, the French *Meccano Magazine* is a useful source of information on Dinky Toys.



ABOVE Club members file past a line of workers concentrating intently on assembling Dinky Toys.

from there it would be “but a step to the formation, with other members, of small local clubs, on the lines of the Meccano Clubs”. This may have happened in some places, but most references to club members in the British magazine took the form of pictures sent in by individuals with a display of their collections. By contrast, in France the initiative came from Monsieur Roger Goulon, proprietor of B. B. Lorrain, a toy shop in Lyon which had close links to the French Meccano company. As is well-known, a special model was produced for Monsieur Goulon yellow stickers reading ‘Dinky Toys Club B. B. Lorrain’. (This is available as an Atlas Dinky and Dan Toys reproduction).

In October 1957, Monsieur Goulon convened the inaugural meeting of the Lyon branch, attended by 300 people including a representative of the local mayor and the head teacher of a local secondary school.

Before long the membership soared to 700 and the French *Meccano Magazine* for June 1958 describes a fascinating outing that took place on 31st March when some lucky members of the Dinky Club from Lyon, Le Mans and Laval were selected to

visit the factory. As Lyon is nearly 300 miles from the Bobigny site this took considerable organisation and much travelling. Two coaches met the visitors at railway stations and they were shown round the factory in two groups, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. While one party was at Bobigny the other was taken to Le Bourget airport and shown round a DC 6B plane belonging to the French airline UAT (L’Union Aero-Maritime de Tansport).

Photos in the magazine show the visitors trooping through the Dinky factory and watching the female workforce assembling their favourite toys. The group appears to have been made up not only of younger children (mostly boys, but some girls) but teenagers (who with the hairstyles and raincoats of the day look older than their years). Thanks to the research of the French Dinky expert Jean-Michel Roulet, it has come to light that a special treat on these tours was that visitors would be presented with a Dinky Toy finished in a non-standard colour, and some examples of these have surfaced in recent years at the French Collectoys auction house where they have sold for thousands of euros. For more information about the French Dinky Toys Club: <http://www.filrouge-automobile.fr/2013/03/21/le-club-dinky-toys/#more-6957>.

As we shall see next time, club members weren’t the only people who got to visit French Dinky factory. ■



A-Z of diecasts

In which **Alwyn Brice** concludes his survey of manufacturers falling under the letter B.

As I finish the survey of B, I have to admit that some manufacturers (for example Brimtoy, Bradscars and Brighton Manufacturing) have been omitted. Little information is available on these companies but I shall endeavour to revisit these, and doubtless others, in a concluding round-up. So stay with me!

SUPERSIZED

I can't quite recall who was first to enter the big model car stakes, but I suspect that Bburago was amongst the harbingers. For a world brought up on 1/43 (or close) scales, along with the ubiquitous HO/OO size of the railway modelling scene, the advent of the large model diecast was something of a revolution. Although Bburago actually began manufacturing back in 1974, the company was born out of another venture, one called Martoys. Early production focussed on the familiar 1/43 scale, but 1/24 and 1/18 scales were also introduced, this latter size coming into its own during the late 1980s and the early 1990s.

Bburago's models were of popular and easily recognisable classics; were satisfyingly hefty; and usually featured steerable front wheels, as well as opening doors, bonnets and boots, thus endearing

BELOW One of the very small range of models from the cosily-named British Home Life.

RIGHT Lamborghini Miura was, and is, the dream for every petrol head. Rod Stewart owned one...



them to those who liked to display their vehicles in cabinets. Quite often the same model was available in different colours, which was something of a red rag to the collector.

At one time, Bburago models were to be encountered pretty much everywhere: in the shops, online and at swapmeets. In fact, Bburago was almost in danger of becoming a household word for any large diecast car. Indeed, anyone who collected diecast cars probably had an example, simply to satisfy their curiosity. They were not expensive, came in attractive, sturdy window boxes and looked the business (generally); and once the Lamborghinis and Ferraris were available, penniless wannabees were immediately queuing up.

Predictably, Bburago's success was also partly to blame for its demise. Before the new millennium got into its swing, the Italian company came under

BELOW RIGHT Lovely little Fiat 500 could not be overlooked by Brumm.





increasing pressure from other makers, who were shrewd enough to outsource manufacture to cheaper geographies. Its demise came about in 2005, although its assets were bought by a key competitor, Maisto.

Today, you can fork out a couple of hundred pounds for one of these models; but equally, there are plenty of cheap examples about. After all, they were made in their tens of thousands.

NOT BIRMINGHAM

If memory serves, Brumm was arguably at its height in the 1980s, a decade when any self-respecting toy shop had loads of these models for sale. And I use the word “model” advisedly: on the packaging, the company saw fit to emphasise the fact that these vehicles were not toys and, as such, not intended for those under 14 years of age.

Brumm was thus positioning itself as a purveyor of high end miniatures and indeed, it was an open secret that it saw Rio as its main (Italian) rival. Taking on a giant (if not in terms of quantity of output at least in quality of product) was Brumm’s *raison d’être*, and to do so required some shrewd business decisions.

Ensnared in good quality plastic cases, themselves encapsulated within a card window box framework, the Brumm vehicle lent itself to visual appreciation as well as being amply protected. Early output looked at steam powered transport but Brumm moved on through the vintage years, all the way to about 1970 in terms of historical representations. Race cars, of all ages, in correct livery, was a feature of the range; a range that also included some oddball transport, it has to be said. Eschewing opening doors and the like made for a cheaper production process, which in turn allowed Brumm’s models to retail at a very attractive price point. A Rio model, in contrast, would sell for twice or even three times the cost of a Brumm replica.

As for build and finish, these miniatures were well executed – and looking back, represented excellent value for money. There was a definite leaning towards Italian car manufacturers (a familiar story with Italian miniature suppliers, one feels) but here, though, it

ABOVE Easily the most expensive Budgie collectable, Gerry Anderson’s Supercar marked a unique milestone for the British company in terms of sci-fi.



ABOVE Two classic three-wheelers from Brumm give an indication of the breadth of the range.



ABOVE Thornycroft Salvage Crane wasn’t a model unique to Budgie but it was a great casting nonetheless.



ABOVE Commercial Fodens were modelled by many diecast manufacturers.

wasn’t the usual Ferrari and other Italian exotics. Several types of Fiat were modelled, for example, including vans – and Brumm was always happy to oblige with more utilitarian transport, which was refreshing.

If the Golden Years may have passed, at least the company is still around today, and remains active.

LIFE AT HOME

British Home Life was the unlikely moniker for a very small range of lead, to wit a police motor cyclist, cyclist and sidecar and some street furniture. Virtually nothing is known about the company – although maybe some *Diecast Collector* reader can shed more light on this enterprise, which I assume dates back to the late 1940s/early 1950s.

CHEEP FARE

We finish the B section with our homegrown Budgie, the company itself born out of Morestone and Modern Products.

Dating from 1959, this company’s interesting range of diecasts has arguably remained something of a backwater in collecting terms. Whilst the range is documented (a little under 100 true Budgie models were produced, although the overall number is open to conjecture because of the supply from Morestone and Modern Products), and there is even awareness over some (thankfully few) model variations, general availability of the toys has contributed in part to this manufacturer’s lesser popularity when compared with, say, Dinky or Corgi. A shorter manufacturing lifespan and undoubtedly a smaller output compared with its rivals are significant factors in the mix.

All this is not to say that you cannot form a collection of Budgie Toys; they are definitely about, although certain models remain somewhat elusive. Most are quite affordable, though, and will include a box or blister, according to the date of packaging. As is so often the case today with out-of-production models, the Internet becomes the principal hunting ground for the collector.

Aimed primarily at taking some market share away from both Dinky and Corgi, not to mention Lesney, Budgie had a troubled existence, which culminated in bankruptcy in the mid-1960s. The Budgie name was subsequently revived by Modern Products but the range was never relaunched, since a fire destroyed the majority of the dies around this time. A couple of models designed for the tourist trade became Budgie’s stock-in-trade thereafter.

The earlier diecasts are certainly worth looking out for, since they were well made and in many respects imitate the earlier Lesney offerings. Thus vehicles run on metal wheels, have no interiors and are bereft of glazing. Needless to say, there were some interesting creations: a low loader with a drum cable load, a motorcycle with a delivery sidecar and an overhead maintenance vehicle are just some innovative examples that you might come across; indeed, Budgie seems to have actively sought to tool up for models that its rivals did not make. And... it even managed to broker a deal with Gerry Anderson: its sought-after Supercar model was Budgie’s sole nod to the burgeoning world of sci-fi. ■

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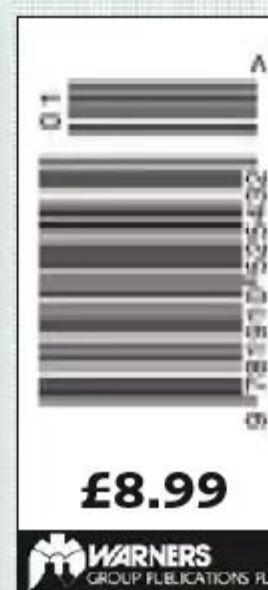


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Superfast 1969-1982

Charting the evolution of the Matchbox Superfast range during the Lesney years, from 1969 to 1982.

Number 42 during the Lesney-era Superfast range comprises quite the eclectic selection of models. We start with a popular crane replica, which is followed closely by a fictitious dragster. We round off with a container truck and a classic T-Bird... like you do!

IRON FAIRY CRANE

Production: 1970-72

Catalogue: 1971-72

Box Styles: G

Iron Fairy Crane, a good replication of a real vehicle, had been a regular wheels favourite for some time and was an interesting choice to receive the Superfast upgrade but had great play value.

Despite being in the range up to and including 1972, surprisingly small quantities have survived in good condition as very many of them that are still around wear varying degrees of evidence that they were worked hard back in the day.

The colours changed slightly when the new wheels were fitted with the body changing from red to an orangey-red and the crane boom going from yellow to a metallic slightly greeny-gold.

TYRE FRYER

Production: 1972-77

Catalogue: 1973-77

Box Styles: I

Tyre Fryer was a completely fictitious vehicle. It was a weird, wedge-shaped dragster with possibly the largest engine-to-body ratio of any Matchbox car! The body was painted metallic blue, the chassis and grille were black, and the single seat and steering wheel were in yellow plastic. The unbelievably large engine – which has a Ford logo on it – was in chromed plastic with a black insert on the top.

There were no variations, other than a run of promotional models made for McVities Jaffa Cakes. These were painted orange with a "Jaffa Mobile" label on the nose.

MERCEDES CONTAINER TRUCK

Production: 1977-82

Catalogue: 1978-82

Box Styles: K, L

Mercedes Container Truck was the first entry to the Matchbox intermodal freight system. It was a big, three-axle Mercedes cabover truck with a skeletal frame body, and a removable plastic container. The container had opening rear doors and two slots along



No.
42

its base to allow it to be lifted by Fork Lift Truck or Sambron Jacklift.

The first release had a red cab and chassis, black base and blue tinted-windows. The container was cream, with a red top and doors, and usually featured 'Sea-Land' labels on the sides. However, there were several versions made for export markets, including three for Germany.

For the American market, it was released in a very attractive metallic green colour. The container was green with yellow roof and doors, and carried the logo of moving firm "Mayflower".

For the British range, there was a second version; again in red and cream, but with Matchbox decals on the container. This container casting was also used on the Flat Car wagon.

57 T-BIRD

Production: 1982

Catalogue: 1982

Box Styles: L

Lesney added another classic car to the 1-75 range in 1982, this time the popular 1957 Thunderbird. It was an excellent model of the big Ford two-seater convertible, with a detailed interior and a spare tyre mounted at the rear. Initially painted bright red, with a silver-painted metal base and grille, a white interior and clear windscreen. This was later changed to a two-tone scheme, with cream upper and red lower body and red interior.

Surprisingly, it had a very short, two-year lifespan in the British and European ranges, but longer in the USA line-up, most commonly in black. ■

TOP VINTAGE MODEL

DTCA Chairman, **Michael Driver**, picks another vintage favourite from Dinky...

Sea King Helicopter

Helicopters are very common today but not so when I was younger. There were Dinky Toys models of the Bristol 173 Helicopter, the Sikorsky one (No.716). And the earlier pre-war Cierva Auto Giro number 60f – as an early form of helicopter. Helicopters are now regularly used for military missions, rescue work, accident assistance and civilian travel. I suppose they came into their own during the Vietnam War and subsequent conflicts. I have flown in a helicopter in Australia at the Great Barrier Reef and in Madeira while on holidays. It is a very interesting flying experience!

The Dinky Toys Sea King Helicopter No.724 landed in June 1971 and was reviewed in the *Meccano Magazine* that month. The *Dinky Toys News* says 'The unique range of Dinky Toy aircraft already has a high reputation in the model world, but the new Sea King should really make it soar! In our opinion, it is the best die-cast model of its type in production, anywhere, and must prove one of the smash hits of 1971'. The model is in two-tone white and blue with a detailed red plastic interior plus black rotor blades. There are transfers for the 'US emblem', 'NAVY' and '66' on the sides of the fuselage. The model comes with a white plastic Apollo space capsule with three astronauts in side and can be winched up using the knurled disc on the right side of the fuselage. The blue rotor is battery powered with an on-off switch under the fuselage but switches off automatically when the rotor is stationary and by flicking the blades starts rotating again. The model comes in an illustrated card end flap box with an illustrated card display inside to hold the helicopter and module plus an instruction sheet. Later models are in blister packs and it was deleted in 1979.

In October 1973 a German Navy version was introduced as the Dinky Toys Bundesmarine Sea King Helicopter number



Dinky Toys Sea King Helicopter (No.724) with the white plastic Appollo space capsule and transfers.



Dinky Toys Military Sea King Helicopter (set No.618) with its camouflage net and transfers.

736. This is in grey with a red engine housing and comes with a set of waterslide transfers for self-application. Included with it was a yellow plastic sonar device for use with the winch. It had all the features of the other model and came in a blister pack before its deletion in 1978.

A further variation was a Military Sea King helicopter on an A.E.C. Artic

The Dinky Toys Collectors' Association

The more unusual Dinky Toys have always been fascinating to collectors and occasionally feature in the DTCA Journal with pictures. You can find out more about the DTCA and join by visiting the website www.dtcawebsite.com.

Transporter No.618 in July 1976. It is in service green and has an 'ARMY' label on the sides of the fuselage. Like the other helicopters it has the lifting winch window glazing, a camouflage net and transfers, but no battery operation. The model was sold in a large illustrated card end flap box and was deleted in 1980.

The Westland WS-61 Sea King helicopter was the British built version of the American Sikorsky S-61 helicopter which was developed during the late 1950s with Rolls-Royce engines. Its roles included anti-submarine work and a variety of other roles, both military and civilian over many years and they finally ceased operations in 2018. ■

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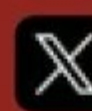


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AUCTION NEWS

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MATCHBOX SALES EXCEL AT VECTIS

With the Danny James collection in September and several other specialist diecast sales recently, Vectis has seen some impressive results over the last few months.

A Matchbox Superfast 56a BMC Pininfarina factory pre-production colour trial with a metallic kingfisher blue body, low arches, clear windows and ivory interior raced away with a hammer price of £1,100.

A Superfast 9c Ford Escort 2000 pre-production trial in red with light amber windows and a dark tan base made £2,817; it came with a Type K box. The Superfast 12d Citroen CX Estate didn't hang about, either; again, a pre-production example in metallic emerald green with a black plastic tailgate, clear windows and a dark yellow interior, its base had not been zinc plated. With an L type box, it was bid to £2,327. As for the Superfast 67b Ford Capri Hot Rocker, this was a Brazilian issue and finished in pink with clear windows, an ivory interior and a bare metal base. Billed as excellent plus (with just a couple of chips to the boot and some chrome loss to the engine air intake), it came in a type J box. This South American oddball closed on £1,837.

A Dinky 280e (Type 3) Delivery Van (from 1939/40), finished in cream with silver trim and black smooth hubs raised £808 while a Corgi Whizzwheels 313 Ford Cortina GXL "Graham Hill" export issue hit £637. ■



CUTTING EDGE

A sale at Excalibur featured something a little different recently. A group of beautifully painted Aeroart diecast mounted Crusaders soldiers, comprising G128, 231 and G168, produced by Grudsky/Grenada Studios, raised £200, while other lots containing Greek and Roman figures sold for between £130 and £170.

A Corgi Ecurie Ecosse car transporter gift set with its (correct) complement of three racing cars wasn't mint but was very presentable nonetheless: this sold for £250.

Bond devotees didn't miss out, either. It took a bid of £220 to secure the Danbury Mint 1/24 scale limited edition 22 carat gold plated James Bond Aston Martin DB5. This was complete with a

removable roof panel, display case, stand and certificate, but missing its original box.

Other offbeat items included the fascinating lots relating to paperwork for Palitoy, General Mills and Airfix: these included notes, drawings and photographs for reference purposes. Some 20 lots went under the hammer and the archive material lots that did sell made around £25-70 each.

Hornby, Wrenn, Trix and Lima kept the railway contingent happy: there were no prominent models but a Wrenn OO gauge W2212 Class A4 steam loco and tender (Sir Nigel Gresley) made £60, with a companion loco, a W2226 OO gauge Duchess Class locomotive in BR maroon "City of London" livery selling for £65. ■



DIECAST DOES WELL IN WARWICK

Warwick and Warwick's auction hosted in November was, by all accounts, a very successful sale.

The Corgi section always attracts buyers, and this sale was no exception. Lot 447 included a range of diecast vehicles, generally excellent in very good to excellent plus boxes, with No.420 Ford Thames Airborne Caravan, No.438 Land Rover (109 W.B.), No.465 Commer Pick-Up Truck and No.1131 Carrimore Detachable Axle Machinery Carrier and sold for £120.

Lot 450 featured a Chrysler Imperial Convertible No.246, red body, pale blue interior, detailed cast hubs, figures (2), golf trolley was estimated at £100 and sold for £130. Lot 451, a Chitty Chitty Bang Bank No.266 sold for £110 and was estimated at £100. Lot 452 had a Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Open Roadster No. 303S, with suspension, blue body, yellow interior, red, white and black racing number 7 bonnet decal, spun hubs, white driver figure. This lot was estimated at £100 and sold for £110.

Many of the Dinky mixed lots caught the eyes of the buyers with lot 469 selling for £360, over an estimate of £320. Included was Dinky Way set No.237, Hesketh Racing Car No.222, Plymouth yellow cab No.278 and Police Land Rover No.277. ■

SALE RESULTS

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From collectables of the future to old favourites, online auctions will always manage to produce some interesting finds... and occasionally, even more amazing prices! We visit auction houses and sites for this month's results.



- **Item:** Dinky Toys 28b Pickfords Delivery Van
Condition: minimal playwear, wheels lightly cracked with metal fatigue, tyres show some ageing
Sold for: £1850 (39 bids)



- **Item:** Exoto 1/18 Alfa Romeo 159M Juan Manuel Fangio 1951 World Champion
Condition: mint complete with original box, packaging and instructions
Sold for: £1090 (11 bids)



- **Item:** Model Workshop 1/18 Ferrari Enzo FXX GTC 2008
Condition: mint on original display board, with limited edition certificate
Sold for: £1000 (2 bids)



- **Item:** NZG 155 Broyt X4 Front Shovel 1/50 Construction Digger Dozer
Condition: very good with minimal wear or age, the front wheels were melted though
Sold for: £999 (2 bids)



- **Item:** CMC Ferrari 250 GTO Schwetzingen Gala M-259
Condition: mint, sealed in its delivery box from CMC Germany, limited edition model
Sold for: £820 (8 bids)



- **Item:** Corgi Toys Gift Set 21 Chipperfields Circus
Condition: near mint with all original box, vehicles, club leaflet and animal stickers
Sold for: £663 (40 bids)



- **Item:** Corgi Gift Set 3 GS3 Batmobile and Batboat
Condition: very near mint, with original purple screens, tow hook and figures
Sold for: £620 (37 bids)



- **Item:** Dinky Toy 28G Kodak Delivery Van
Condition: good type 3 version with smooth hubs and open rear windows, would benefit from some cleaning
Sold for: £600 (33 bids)



- **Item:** 1968 Hot Wheels Redline Custom Camaro
Condition: paint, castings, base, wheels and axles all near mint to excellent
Sold for: £560 (54 bids)

SALE RESULTS

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■ **Dinky Toys No.234 Ferrari Racing Car**, blue body with yellow nose cone, yellow racing number 5 with yellow cast hubs, mottled base, in the original all card picture sided box. Excellent to near mint, box is excellent to near mint. **Sold for £70, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.233 Cooper Bristol Racing Car**, green body with green hubs, racing number 6 in white, with driver in white slight wear to the decals, sold in the original yellow picture sided box. Very good to excellent, box very good. **Sold for £45, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.230 Talbot Lago Racing Car**, comprising blue body with white driver and racing No. 4, with spun hubs, and fitted with grey rubber tyres, housed in the original yellow all-card box, the box has had one end flap taped back on. Excellent, box good. **Sold for £55, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.160 Austin A30 saloon**, comprising of turquoise body with grey plastic wheels in the original all-card picture sided box with correct colour spot, box creased to one large panel. Excellent in a good box. **Sold for £45, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.165 Humber Hawk**, maroon lower body and roof, with light beige upper body, spun hubs, sold in the original all card box. Near mint in an excellent box. **Sold for £80, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.256 Police Patrol Car**, black body, with a cream interior, 2 figures, and spun hubs, sold in the original all card box, small pen mark to one box side. Very good to near mint in an excellent box. **Sold for £75, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **South African Dinky Toys No.194 Bentley Coupe**, lime green body, with a red interior, black tonneau, spun hubs, and driver figure, sold in the original and correct Arthur E Harris yellow card box, the box has 2 inner end flaps missing, a rare model in super condition. Near mint to mint in a good box. **Sold for £620, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.148 Ford Fairlane**, light green body and spun hubs, small mark of silver trim to the boot lid which could be polished out, sold in the original yellow card picture box, box is taped up and in poor condition. Near mint in a poor box. **Sold for £110, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.796 Healey sports boat on trailer**, orange trailer, GPW, green deck and cream hull, small paint chips. Good in a fair box. **Sold for £40, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.246 International GT Gift Set**, contains 3 racing cars - a Ford GT in metallic blue, a Ferrari Dino in white, and a De Tomaso Mangusta 5000 in white and dayglow pink, sold in the original sliding card window box. Near mint, box very good. **Sold for £140, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.343 Farm Produce Wagon**, cherry red cab and chassis, blue back and matching hubs, sold in the original correct colour spot box. Very good to excellent, box good. **Sold for £50, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.465 Morris Commercial delivery van in "Capstan" livery**, comprising a two-tone blue body with mid-blue hubs in the original colour picture box. Excellent to near mint, box very good. **Sold for £75, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.280 Observation Coach**, cream body, with red flashes & wheel hubs, a very bright clean example, sold in the original dual numbered pictorial box. Excellent to neat mint, box very good. **Sold for £60, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys pre-war 28 Series type 2 Van**, comprising a blue body, smooth black hubs with white tyres, silver trim, and 'OXO' 'Beef in Brief' livery to the sides, some losses to the paintwork, the model has minimal fatigue that normally affects this casting. **Sold for £230, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.503 Foden Flat Truck with Tailboard 1st issue cab**, blue cab and chassis, orange back and side flashes with mid-blue ridged hubs, silver trim, metal tow hook in, some chips. **Sold for £30, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No.975 Ruston Bucyrus Excavator**, of usual colourway and housed in the original outer box, missing tracks metal swivel at junction of crane jib & bucket boom – not damaged. **Sold for £80, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No. 914 AEC articulated lorry**, comprising of red cab and chassis with grey trailer and green rear plastic canopy fitted with red plastic hubs and housed in the original 360° window box. Near mint in a good box. **Sold for £45, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **Dinky Toys No. 925 Leyland Sand Ballast Gravel dump truck with tilt cab**, comprising white and blue cab with white chassis, light blue interior with medium blue plastic hubs, orange back, in the original lift-off lid all card box, some playwear. Very good to excellent, box very good. **Sold for £75, Lacy, Scott & Knight, October.**



■ **A rare boxed Matchbox Dennis Fire Escape No.9**, with grey plastic wheels, domed / crimped axles, gold trim on the front bumper, radiator and hose reel. The model appears near mint in a very good box. **Sold for £25, British Toy Auctions, October.**



■ **A boxed Matchbox Superfast Land Rover Fire Truck # No.57**. This one has silver front bumper trim with blue glazing and square cut Kent Fire Brigade labels. The model appears near mint in a near mint box. **Sold for £40, British Toy Auctions, October.**



■ **A rare un numbered Tri-ang Spot-On Roadway Set**, with 12 sections of roadway, 7 x road signs and 4 x cars, MGA Roadster # 104, Rolls Royce Silver Wraith # 103, Ford Zodiac # 100 and Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire # 113. The items show signs of play use and appear mostly in good condition overall, the windscreen is loose on the MGA, the box has tape repairs to the lid and appears in fair condition. **Sold for £380, British Toy Auctions, October.**



■ **A rare Tri-ang Spot-On No.1 Presentation Set**, A rare No.1 Presentation Set with 12 x sections of roadway, 6 x road signs and 4 x cars, a Rolls Royce Silver Wraith # 103, Ford Zodiac # 100 and Austin Healey # 105 and an incorrect Corgi MGA. The items show signs of play use and appear mostly in good condition overall, the windscreen is missing from the Healey, the box lid has no sides, the bottom half appears in fair condition. **Sold for £240, British Toy Auctions, October.**



■ **A boxed limited edition Corgi Aviation Archive Supermarine Spitfire MkIIA - P7966, D-B O/C Tangmere (Wing Commander Douglas Bader)**, in 1/32 scale # AA33903. The model appears undisturbed and mint in a very good box with certificate. **Sold for £40, British Toy Auctions, October.**



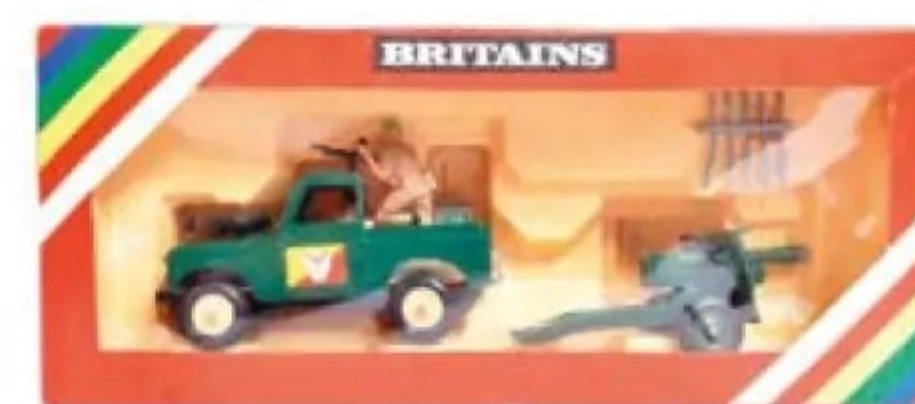
■ **A boxed limited edition Corgi Aviation Archive Battle Of Britain Memorial Flight**, in 1/72 scale # AA32602. The models appear undisturbed and mint in a very good box with certificate. **Sold for £45, British Toy Auctions, October.**



■ **Dinky No.22G Streamlined Tourer**, early c1930s pre-war diecast Dinky Toy model in red, with silver grille and white rubber tyres. Steering wheel to the dash and hollow based. Original, generally good to good plus example. **Sold for £100, East Bristol Auctions, October.**



■ **An original Gilbow made 1/24 scale diecast model No. 99101 Daimler DMS Bus London Transport**. Model appears mint within original box. **Sold for £200, East Bristol Auctions, October.**



■ **An original vintage Britains Military diecast model No. 9787 Army Land Rover and Gun**. The model appearing unused, with missiles still intact and attached to spues. **Sold for £45, East Bristol Auctions, October.**



■ **An original vintage Dinky Supertoys boxed diecast model No. 918 Guy Van 'Ever Ready'**. Rear opening doors with Ever Ready Batteries For Life decals to each side. Model appears very good within original box. **Sold for £55, East Bristol Auctions, October.**



■ **A limited edition Britains made 1/32 scale diecast model set of 2 gold coloured John Deere tractors**. The set titled 'Then & Now' appearing mint and unused, within original box. **Sold for £40, East Bristol Auctions, October.**



■ **A vintage Dinky No. 359 Eagle Transporter from Gerry Anderson's Space: 1999**. Housed within its original box. **Sold for £85, East Bristol Auctions, October.**



■ **A collection of vintage Lesney made Matchbox Series / Matchbox Superfast diecast model cars housed within a 1970s vinyl carry case**. Examples to include; No. 34 Volkswagen Camper, No. 68 Porsche 910, No. 9 AMX Javelin and more. Some Corgi Whizwheels also present. **Sold for £50, East Bristol Auctions, October.**



■ **An original vintage 1980s Britains 'Autoway' 1/32 scale boxed diecast model No. 9820 Land Rover**. Model appears unused with original packaging and construction worker figure. **Sold for £40, East Bristol Auctions, October.**



■ 1/32 Farming Models (Code 3) 1/32 farm model issue comprising Wiking John Deere 6125R Tractor with special metallic green finish. **Sold for £80, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ 1/32 Farming Models (Code 3) 1/32 farm model issue comprising Wiking John Deere 7530R Tractor with black finish. Produced in low numbers. Excellent without fault, comes with original Wiking box. **Sold for £120, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ 1/32 Farming Models (Code 3) 1/32 farm model issue comprising Wiking John Deere 6125M Tractor with YFC special finish. Produced in low numbers. Excellent without fault, comes with original Wiking box. **Sold for £85, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ 1/32 Farming Models (Code 3) 1/32 farm model issue comprising Wiking John Deere 6210R Tractor with metallic green finish. **Sold for £90, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ Code 3 1/32 farm model issue comprising Wiking John Deere 6210R Tractor with Rear duals and 2WD front axle. Produced in low numbers. Excellent without fault, comes with original Wiking box. **Sold for £100, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ Code 3 1/32 farm model issue comprising Wiking John Deere 6210R Tractor with black 50 Years of John Deere finish. Produced in low numbers, only 20 pcs. Excellent without fault, comes with original Wiking box. **Sold for £120, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ Code 3 1/32 farm model issue comprising Wiking John Deere 6210R Tractor black edition. Produced in low numbers. Excellent without fault, comes with original Wiking box. **Sold for £90, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ Conrad 1/50 diecast construction issue comprising No. 2732 Liebherr HS843HD Hydraulic Crawler Crane. Likely not displayed, box does have some minor storage wear. **Sold for £80, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ Conrad 1/50 diecast construction issue comprising Liebherr R954BV Demolition Excavator. Complete and Likely not displayed, box does have some minor storage wear. **Sold for £120, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ Bami Model 1/50 diecast construction issue comprising Liebherr PR734XL Crawler Tractor. Complete and Likely not displayed, box does have some minor storage wear. **Sold for £40, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ NZG 1/50 diecast model construction issue comprising No. 405 CAT M318 Wheeled Excavator. Special Edition. Looks to be without obvious sign of fault in original box. Box has some storage minor wear. **Sold for 540, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, October.**



■ Corgi Rockets a boxed 906 Jenson Interceptor, Conditions generally appear near mint in ood plus box. **Sold for £40, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Max's Models (Max Kernick - Top Marques) 1955 Rolls Royce Silver Cloud Sedan, yellow, green interior, chrome trim. Limited Edition 1/4. Front windscreen loose, otherwise near mint in a near mint blue lift off lid box. **Sold for £150, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Max's Models (Max Kernick - Top Marques) 1932 Rolls Royce PII Fastback Sedan by Brewster, two tone blue, brown interior, chrome trim. Limited Edition 7/8. Near mint in a near mint blue lift off lid box. **Sold for £170, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Kyosho (Danbury Mint) a boxed 1/12 scale Ferrari F40. Conditions generally appear near mint to mint in generally excellent box and good outer box. **Sold for £190, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Exoto Grand Prix Classics a boxed 1/18 scale Ferrari 614/2 'Nigel Mansell' (No2), with display case. Conditions generally appear near mint in generally excellent box and good plus outer box. **Sold for £260, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Exoto Grand Prix Classics a boxed 1/18 scale Lotus Ford Type 49B 'Graham Hill' (No10). Conditions generally appear excellent in generally excellent boxes. **Sold for £100, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Danbury Mint a boxed 1/24 scale 1960's Comic Book Batmobile. Conditions generally appear near mint to mint in generally excellent box. **Sold for £140, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Danbury Mint a boxed 1/24 scale James Bond 007 Aston Martin DB5 (Chrome). Conditions generally appear near mint to mint in generally good plus box. **Sold for £110, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Danbury Mint a boxed 1/24 scale James Bond Aston Martin DB5 (Gold). Conditions generally appear near mint to mint in generally good plus box. **Sold for £160, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Kyosho (Danbury Mint) a boxed 1/12 scale James Bond Aston Martin V12 Vanquish. Conditions generally appear near mint to mint in generally excellent box and good plus outer box. **Sold for £150, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Franklin Mint a boxed 1910 Rolls Royce Silver Ghost (Red/Black/Gold). Conditions generally appear near mint in generally good box. **Sold for £30, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Franklin Mint a boxed Bentley 4.5 Litre Blower (British Racing Green). Conditions generally appear near mint in generally good plus box. **Sold for £70, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Franklin Mint a boxed Duesenberg J Victoria (blue/black). Conditions generally appear Near Mint in generally Good box. **Sold for £45, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Franklin Mint a boxed 1/24 scale pair to include 1948 MG TC (red) & 1929 Bentley 4.5 Litre Blower (British Racing Green). Conditions generally appear good plus to excellent in generally good polystyrene inner boxes. **Sold for £50, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Corgi a boxed 479 Commer Mobile Camera Van. Conditions generally appear excellent in generally good plus box. **Sold for £110, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Corgi a boxed GS48 Jean Richard Circus Set. Conditions generally appear excellent in generally fair box. **Sold for £40, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Brooklin Models BC007 Buick 1939 Century 4-door Sedan, black, mint in near mint presentation lift off lid box. **Sold for £40, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Corgi (Heavy Haulage) a boxed 18005 "Pickford's Industrial Ltd" set, comprising of Scammell x2, Nicolas Trailer, Bogies & Generator. Condition is generally excellent (unchecked for completeness but does appear to be complete) in good box. **Sold for £70, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Corgi (Heavy Haulage) a boxed 18003 "Wynns(GEC)" set, comprising of Scammell Contractor x2, Nicolas Trailer, Bogies and Stator Core. Condition is generally excellent (unchecked for completeness) in fair to good box. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Corgi (Heavy Haulage) a boxed CC12403 "Heanor Haulage" set, comprising of Volvo FH 4 axle Ballasted Tractor x2, Nicolas Bogies & Fertiliser Dryer Load. Condition is generally excellent to near mint (unchecked for completeness but does appear complete) in fair to good box. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ NZG Models a boxed No.647 Luffing Jib Crane in yellow finish. scale is 1/87. Condition is excellent plus to near mint (unchecked for completeness but appears complete) in good polystyrene case and box. **Sold for £90, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ Conrad No.2094 Liebherr LTM1060/2 Mobile Crane in yellow and grey finish. Scale is 1/50. Condition is excellent plus to near mint (unchecked for completeness but appears complete) in good to excellent polystyrene case and sleeve. **Sold for £70, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ **NZG Models a boxed No.152 TM 1500 "Grove" in yellow finish.** Scale is 1/55. Condition is excellent (unchecked for completeness but appears complete) but does need a clean in good polystyrene case and sleeve. **Sold for £45, Vectis Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Kyosho 1/18 scale Ferrari 250 GTO 1962 Le Mans No.19 car # 08432A.** The model is very dusty from being out on display and requires cleaning also the rear windscreen is loose, it appears otherwise in very good condition. The box is fair to good with some storage wear. **Sold for £140, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed limited edition Acme 1/18 scale 1970 Pontiac GTO Judge # A1801203.** This is one of only 870 produced. The car appears near mint with some discolouration of the chrome window trims. The box is good but sun faded on one side. **Sold for £45, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed limited edition Acme 1/18 scale 1932 Ford Five Window Coupe Hot Rod #A1805009.** This is one of only 996 produced. The model appears mint with unfitted accessories still in the packaging. The box is fair with some storage wear. **Sold for £35, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Dinky Toys #485 'Merry Christmas Model T Ford'.** The model with Father Christmas figure appears to be in mint condition, and is housed within a relatively good window box with clear cellophane but with unglued side. **Sold for £25, British Toy Auctions, November.**



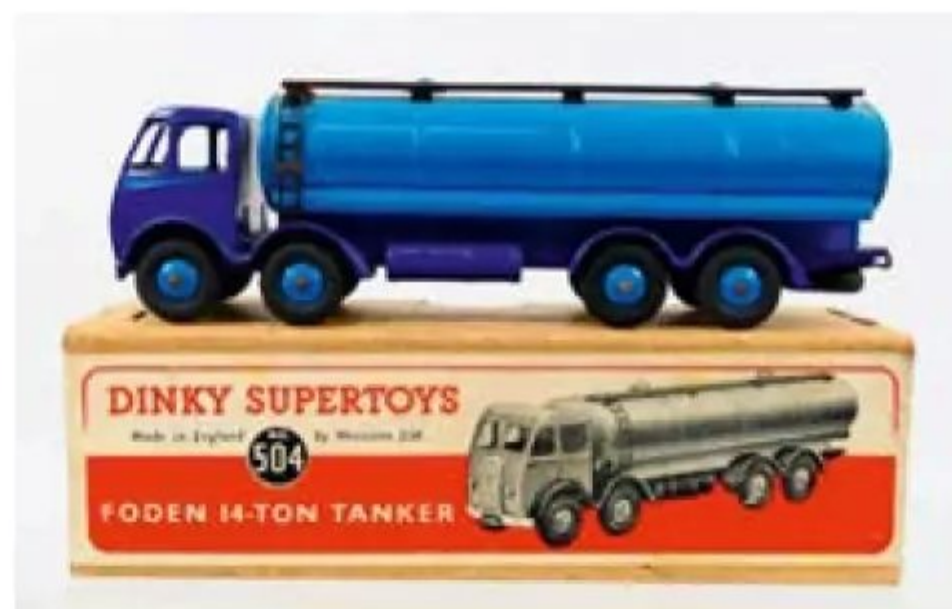
■ **A boxed Dinky Dublo #070 AEC Mercury Tanker Shell / BP.** The model with green cab and windows with red tanker, has a slight rub on decals to one side, and appears to be in excellent plus slightly dusty condition. Box has a pencil price annotation to one end, otherwise appears to be in very good condition. **Sold for £35, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Dinky Dublo #060 Bedford Flat Truck.** The model in grey appears to be in excellent plus slightly dusty condition. Box has a pencil price annotation to one end, otherwise appears to be in very good condition. **Sold for £35, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Dinky Toys #511 Guy 4-ton Lorry.** The model with 1st type cab in fawn with red chassis appears to be in excellent dusty condition and would benefit from cleaning. The model is housed in a fair plus plain brown card lift off lid box with some general age and storage wear with one loose side to base. **Sold for £35, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Dinky Toys #504 Foden 14 Ton Tanker.** The model with 1st type cab with dark blue cab /chassis, silver flash, light blue tank and hubs appears to be in very good dusty condition with some age signs. Condition would be enhanced with cleaning. The model is housed in a good plain brown card lift off lid box with some general age and storage wear. **Sold for £55, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Dinky Toys #514 Guy Van 'Slumberland'.** The model in red with 1st type cab and 'Slumberland' decals has a couple of small nicks otherwise appears to be in excellent dusty condition and would be enhanced by cleaning. The model is housed in a very good plus blue lift off lid box with some general age and storage wear. **Sold for £85, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Dinky Toys #571 Coles Mobile Crane.** The model in yellow and black with tan driver appears to be in excellent dusty condition and would benefit from cleaning. The model is presented within a very good blue lift off lid with a scuff to one side plus a pencil price annotation at one end. The model has the benefit of having its three internal packing pieces which also appear very good. **Sold for £25, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Dinky Toys #5561 Blaw Knox Bulldozer.** The model with red body, green rubber tracks, and tan driver appears to be in excellent albeit dusty condition which would be enhanced with cleaning. The model is housed in a good buff card lift off lid box with some general age and storage wear and comes with its internal buff packing piece which appears fair plus. **Sold for £22, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Dinky Toys #998 Bristol Britannia Airliner 'Canadian Pacific'.** The model in white, silver and blue with red propellers has a couple of small nicks otherwise appears to be in excellent condition, and comes housed in a very good blue and white striped lift off lid box with pencil price annotation to lid, and comes with internal blue packing piece which appears also appears very good. **Sold for £45, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Pre-War Dinky Toys #49 Petrol Pumps and oil Bin Set.** 7 Road Signs Set. The set which dates 1935-41 contains 4 petrol pumps with yellow plastic hoses (one is missing its nozzle) plus a yellow oil bin. The items appear to be in near mint condition. The set is housed within a very good white carded base with yellow label and Excellent yellow insert, all contained within a very good outer buff coloured sleeve. **Sold for £55, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A boxed Pre-War Dinky Toys #47 Road Signs Set.** The set which dates 1935-41 contains 12 road signs, some of which feature some corrosion / 'white rust' to the base, otherwise appear to be in very good condition overall. The set is housed within a relatively good yellow box with some marks to lid, with very good yellow inner. **Sold for £35, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **A 1/24 scale Sun Star model of a Routemaster double decker London Transport bus,** issued in a limited edition with certificate, appears near mint or better in original box with internal poly packing pieces. **Sold for £80, British Toy Auctions, November.**



■ **Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Avro Vulcan,** boxed AA27201 (minus inner polystyrene lid), Avro Vulcan Return to Flight 2007, very good to excellent, box fair to good. **Sold for £90, Special Auction Services, November.**



■ **Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Short Sunderland,** boxed AA27503 Short Sunderland RAF Mountbatten, Plymouth Sound, 1942, 527/1100. Very good to excellent, box very good. **Sold for £100, Special Auction Services, November.**



■ **Corgi Aviation Archive 1/72 Scale Consolidated Catalina,** boxed AA36107 Consolidated Catalina IVA, 117 Sqdn, Royal Canadian Airforce, Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada 1942. Very good to excellent, box very good. **Sold for £80, Special Auction Services, November.**



■ **Corgi Aviation Archive Sights & Sounds 1/72 Scale Boeing B17 The Zoot Suiters,** boxed AA33310, Boeing B17-F The Zoot Suiters Horsham 1943, untested. Very good to excellent, box fair. **Sold for £90, Special Auction Services, November.**



■ **Corgi #27902 The Aviation Archive 1/48 scale diecast McDonnell Douglas F.4 Phantom FG.1,** XV592/L, RAF No.171 Squadron Leuchars, Fife, Scotland, late 1970's, certified No. 0715 of 1500, boxed. **Sold for £60, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **Corgi #AA2840 The Aviation Archive 1/48 scale diecast model English Electric Lightning F.6,** XR728/JS, RAF No.11 Squadron Binbrook, certified No.65 of 2000, boxed. **Sold for £65, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **Corgi #AA99134 The Aviation Archive 1/144 scale Avro Vulcan B.2 and Handley Page Victor B.2 V-Bomber Force,** 1963, 2 plane set. Certified No. 0652 of 2100, boxed, slight damage to box noted. **Sold for £40, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **Corgi #AA36909 The Aviation Archive 1:72 scale diecast model Junkers JU52/3M D-2600 'Immelmann II',** Adolf Hitler's personal transport aircraft, Berlin Tempelhof airport, circa 1936, boxed. **Sold for £95, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **A boxed Corgi No.261 Special Agent 007 James Bond Aston Martin DBS,** roof/ejector seat not latching, otherwise good condition, box fair/poor, papers present and two villains present. **Sold for £50, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **A Matchbox Garage Showroom & Service Station #MG1,** the set comprises of garage roof mounted sign and clock, boxed Esso petrol pumps and Esso sign, box missing one flap. **Sold for £60, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **A boxed Corgi No.1505 Vanwall Formula 1 Grand Prix car,** slight paint losses, box very good. **Sold for £35, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **A boxed Corgi 307 E type Jaguar,** detachable hard top present, slight paint losses, box very good. **Sold for £40, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **A boxed Corgi 1101 Carrimore car transport EV,** overall good condition, box good. **Sold for £40, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**



■ **A boxed Matchbox Series No.4 Triumph motorcycle and sidecar,** overall good, box fair/good. **Sold for £50, Sheffield Auction Gallery, November.**

Dear Editor

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CALL THE AMBULANCE

■ In the article *Call the ambulance!* (December 2023 issue) on emergency vehicles, the Matchbox No.3 Mercedes Binz Ambulance is mentioned, but not the excellent 1/45 scale Matchbox King-Size Binz (in bizarrely “Kent” livery although left-hand-drive) which heralded a few other larger car models to rival Corgi and Dinky. The larger Mercedes-Benz Binz Ambulance (or Binz 1100 Europ Lang 230 in full) appeared as K6 in 1965 and challenged the other diecast makers’ ambulances, with steering and opening front doors and tailgate, as well as suspension and stretched patient.

Subsequently appearing as K26 with Speedwheels and K63 as a Super King, colours varied from cream to white with even a red overseas version. Another favourite in the article is the Corgi 223 Chevrolet Impala Police Car, described incorrectly

in the text as having a red interior (probably as the photo titles for the Olds and Chevy are transposed – *Yes that was our error, Ed*). Like the photo in the article, I have only ever seen 223 with a yellow interior never red, although red or yellow can be found in some civilian versions. The later 481 Chevrolet Police can be found with shaped hubs or cast spoked, just as 223 can be flat hubbed or shaped and with different baseplates. One enduring Corgi disappointment was the 1968 506 Sunbeam Imp Police first issued in white with blue doors, with the front police sign stuck mediocly on a repurposed Monte-Carlo plaque shaped holder, and as mentioned in the article poorly engineered rear suspension. On Dinky the fine Daimler Ambulance (a 1949 Majestic DC 27 by Barker) number 253 appeared finally, in 1962, not in cream



but in white, with windows and with red plastic wheels. Last but not least the Dinky Pontiac Superior Criterion Ambulances. The flashing light version 277 did contrary to the article have an opening rear hatch, as that is where the battery goes in. The eagle-eyed will have noticed that the catalogue illustration shown was different to the issued model 263, in that the former is a standard headroom vehicle but 263/277 is a high-top, giving

typically at extra 6 inches in reality. No. 263 incidentally can be found in various cream or white colour shades, differing red side lining, and interior colours with light green the most common, but red, mid-green, yellow and white too, and maybe others.

Patrick Hogan, email

ED Thank you for taking the time to write in with all this additional information.

ALTIYA CITROËN DS19 CONTINUED

■ Thank you very much for printing my letter in the November issue of *Diecast Collector* (commenting on *A-Z of Diecasts*, October 2023). However, not wishing to drag this on further than is appropriate, I feel I must respond to Brian Gower’s letter in the subsequent issue in which he states that I had left out “one detail – the choice of orange ‘balls’ was dictated by the car’s innovative hydro-pneumatic system...”. I know that Brian is a regular contributor to the magazine so I wonder if I might impose upon you to draw his attention to the first sentence in the second paragraph of my letter which states that “DS sur ballons” featured a Goddess “floating” on a lake atop four large, red balloons to demonstrate the car’s unique hydropneumatic suspension. I did not go into the detail of how the system operated as I did not deem it pertinent (and believe me, as a retired professional engineer who used to own a Citroën BX with this system, I could have given chapter and verse): I just didn’t want it to appear that I’d left out something so important. So perhaps you would be so kind as to pass this on to him.

And by the way, Brian’s statement that the spheres contained a mixture of gas and fluid is incorrect: gases are fluids as much as liquids are. What he is referring to is that the spheres contained a gas on one side of a membrane to provide the springing and a liquid on

the other which pressurised it from the car’s high-pressure system that also powered the brakes (slightly frighteningly!) and adjusted its ride height. The two fluids, the liquid and the gas, were not mixed.

Bob Allen, email

ED Much appreciated Bob, consider it passed along!



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OR WRITE TO US: The Editor, Diecast Collector, Warners Group Publications plc, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincs, PE10 9PH.



AUSTRALIAN TAXIS

■ Congratulations on taking on the role of Editor of *Diecast Collector* magazine and I wish you well in the role. Such an interesting magazine, every issue of which is eagerly anticipated. I am writing in reference to the article *Australian Taxis* (Issue 309 – July 2023) and *Aussie Aussie Aussie* (Rob Kaczmarek's letter to the Editor in Issue 310 – August 2023).

I'm one more Aussie reader who also enjoyed Mike Pigott's article on *Australian Taxis* in the July 2023 issue. My Majorette 13CABS models arrived this week – 1 set to show, 1 set to stow – and I'm absolutely delighted with the models. Living in Tamworth (NSW, Australia) does have

its advantages, but not for our hobby as most dealers/hobby shops are some 450kms away. Yes, we have toy shops but not hobby shops, so I more often than not do my hunting on the internet. I found a shop in Newcastle (Australia) with very obliging staff and bingo, a few days later my 13CABS sets arrived. Like (former Editor) Rick Wilson, I too have quite a selection of Majorette models (especially Morgan cars, Code 1 and 3) and agree with Rob regarding the high quality produced by the brand these days. Via this magazine, we have our hobby in our hands, so thank you.

Steve Gill, Tamworth NSW, Australia

CORRECTION

■ Interesting read about the Morris J and I was especially interested in the new JE van due to be launched in 2024.

However, I'm wondering if in the final sentence of the article if the word "tachometer" should have been "tachograph". I believe a tachometer is a speedometer and I'm pretty certain that the JE would not be excused from having one due to its gross weight. A tachograph records driver's hours, etc on heavier goods vehicles which have a gross legal weight of 3.5 tonnes or over.

Thanks for a good and interesting magazine.

Peter Elliott email

ED I think you might well be correct Peter! Thank you.



BEST BOX CONTINUED

■ I have been very interested by Alwyn Brice's article about Best Box (November 2023 issue) and the history of this manufacturer. I only knew part of the history but this is not the whole story.

In 1968, Meccano launched a series of 1/64 models of poor quality, most of them were made in Hong-Kong, they were cast with low pressure but two came from Best Box.

These two models are #60 – Cooper F1 and #61 – Lotus F1, they are exactly identical to the original Best Box versions except for the base which had been modified to read "N° 60 or N° 61 MINI DINKY TOYS" on a raised cartouche which hides the original marking.

All the models of this series were packed in plastic boxes looking like garages and fitted with a folding plastic door. Twelve of these garages were packed in an outer (a type of trade box) to be shipped to the dealers.

Both the Best Box / Mini Dinky can be found with a STEMM label stuck on the underside.

These models were certainly promotional models given away by the French STEMM socks manufacturer. Any information about this will be most welcomed.

The idea of employing disabled persons to make toys was not new. A building had been erected in the Meccano Binns Road factory to provide work for disabled ex-servicemen. It was the last of the Binns Road factory buildings to have been demolished.

This workshop has been named in honour of Field Marshal Frederick Sleight Roberts. Little more is known about what went on in this workshop.

Jacques Dujardin, email

ED Thank you for all this Jacques, it certainly adds to Alwyn's original feature.

TOYFAIR TIMES

FAIRS

2 DECEMBER

- **Maidstone**, Mike Spencer, 01622 298159

3 DECEMBER

- **Shepton Mallet**, Bulldog Fairs, 07379 578083
- **Kempton Park**, RM Toys, 023 92 262446 / 07957 823507
- **Spalding**, J & J Webb, 01522 880383

7 DECEMBER

- **Theydon Bois**, Joe Lock, 07866 641215

10 DECEMBER

- **Newton Abbot**, Ray Heard Train & Toy Fairs, 01823 480097
- **Lincolnshire**, J & J Webb, 01522 880383
- **Gateshead**, Jim Corr, 07504 035955
- **Orpington**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012 / 07498 912091
- **Wimborne**, Steve Clements Toy Fairs, 01380 725322 or 07732 330305

16 DECEMBER

- **Herne Bay**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012 / 07498 912091

17 DECEMBER

- **Bowburn**, Bowburn Toy & Train Collectors Fair

27 DECEMBER

- **Ditton**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012 / 07498 912091
- **Llandudno**, Llandudno Toy & Train Fair, 01492 517004

28 DECEMBER

- **Rayleigh**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012 / 07498 912091

1 JANUARY

- **East Midlands (Newark)**, J & J Webb, 01522 880383

7 JANUARY

- **Midhurst**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012 / 07498 912091

13 JANUARY

- **Brentwood**, J & J Webb, 01522 880383

14 JANUARY

- **Ditton**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012 / 07498 912091

21 JANUARY

- **Wickham**, Steve Clements Toy Fairs, 01380 725322 or 07732 330305
- **Orpington**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012 / 07498 912091

4 FEBRUARY

- **Rayleigh**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012 / 07498 912091

11 FEBRUARY

- **Bowburn**, Bowburn Toy & Train Collectors Fair

AUCTIONS

4-6 DECEMBER

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

7 DECEMBER

- **Sheffield**, Sheffield Auction Galleries, 0114 281 6161
- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

8 DECEMBER

- **Taunton**, Greenslade Taylor Hunt, 01823 332525

11-14 DECEMBER

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

12-13 DECEMBER

- **Newbury**, Special Auction Services, 01635 580595

15 DECEMBER

- **Bury St Edmunds**, Lacy Scott & Knight, 01284 748625

24 JANUARY

- **Warwick**, Warwick & Warwick, 01926 499031

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TOY TALES...

Ed Karswell ponders the wonderful world of model collecting.

Christmas morning nostalgia

What is the best Christmas present you ever received as a kid? It's a leading question, isn't it? It's also one that's guaranteed to get both collectors and non-collectors alike dewy-eyed and reminiscing.

It also doesn't always follow that we'll go on to collect what fired those childhood imaginations either. Nowadays my collecting interests encompass pre-War and early post-War diecast and tinplate, however my childhood preferences bore little resemblance to these toys as I'll illustrate. Now, I have to say here that memory, or lack of it, dictates that these are not necessarily in chronological order.

The first Christmas present I was in awe of was my Marx Chief Cherokee doll from the excellent Johnny West series. A cherished toy, he sat astride his horse, on my bedroom window sill for many years, hence he alone survives.

Next up was a Corgi Scammell tri-deck car transporter. What a toy and packed with a seemingly random selection of cars. Mine included a Ford Capri, Cortina, MGC GT, Jaguar E-Type, Marcos 1800 and a Lancia Fulvia. There's nothing quite like a gift set to get the blood racing and I seem to recall the box was as big as me. As I said, what a toy!

Then followed my first Action Man. You knew you had joined a very special club when you got one of these especially if you'd previously been fobbed off with the cheap copies. The routine opening up of the Hoover to retrieve either a pistol or a hand grenade made my mother aware that she too had joined this club. Of course, once the initial purchase was made a complete wish list of uniforms, vehicles and the like would follow.

Then there was the usual drawn-out

procrastination by which was invariably preceded by a time sensitive ultimatum from the powers that be. Mine, I believe came out of a Debenhams bargain bin and turned out to be a lucky choice. As they were cheap, I was allowed both the Denys Fisher Muton and Cyborg dolls. There isn't space here to describe them in any detail but it's enough to say that these two toys dominated my whole Christmas. In fact, I only remember surfacing for a Cadbury's stocking and the *Muppets Christmas Special*.

These were tough acts to follow but it was the Bionic Man that stepped in to the breach. If I'm honest though, I only asked for this out of sheer peer pressure. I loved watching the TV series but the toys didn't

It is one of those indelible memories of childhood, Christmas morning. In our house, it was waking everyone up at 4am in a frenzy of unwrapping only to crash and burn, and then wake up around 7am to start some serious play.

Now we need to talk about the elephant in the room, the ones that got away. One year I asked for a Palitoy talking Dalek to which Dad carefully informed me had sadly sold out everywhere. I'll leave out the part about my infant meltdown (...in the shop) as no one comes out of it looking good, except maybe my father, the shop assistant and the other startled bystanders.

In recent years, I have acquired a few of these things again out of pure nostalgia. The Action Man who perished in the

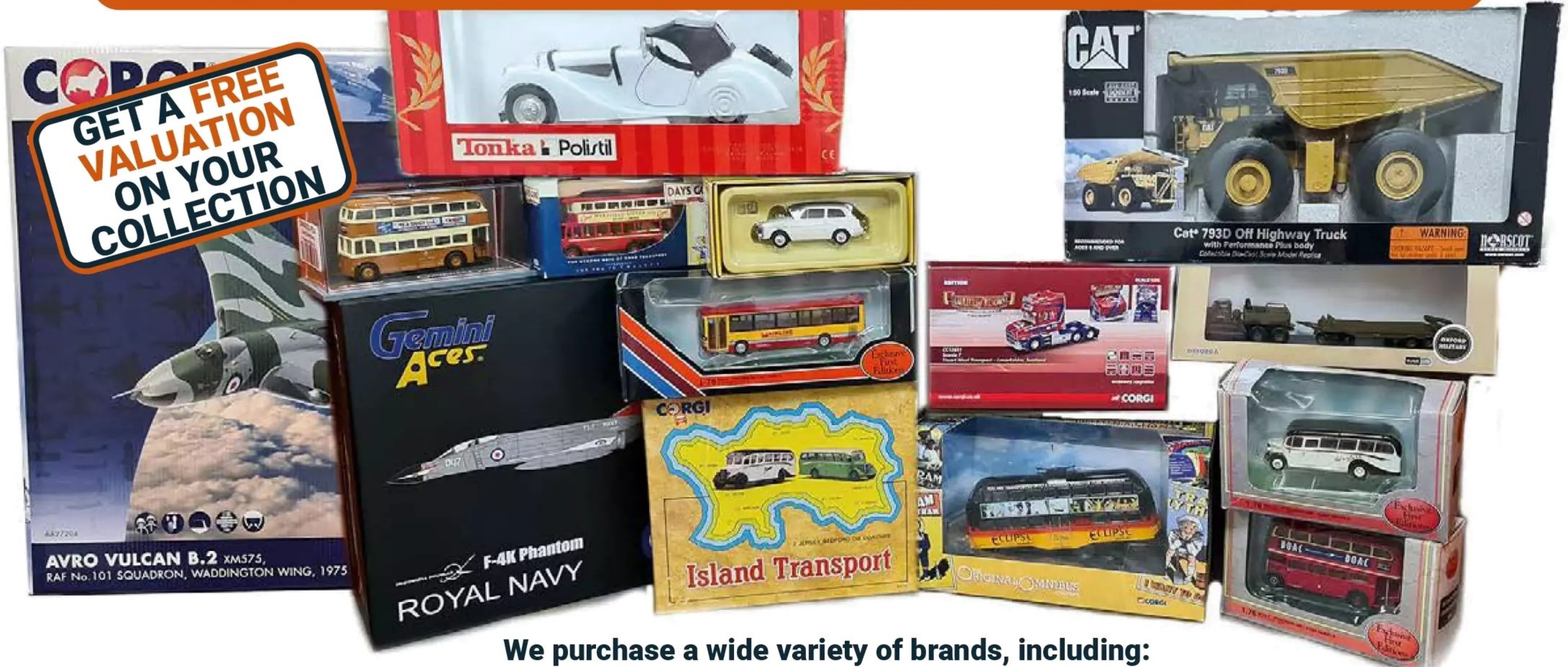
What a toy and packed with a seemingly random selection of cars. Mine included a Ford Capri, Cortina, MGC GT, Jaguar E-Type, Marcos 1800 and a Lancia Fulvia. There's nothing quite like a gift set to get the blood racing...

really conjure up the same excitement for me, *Six Million Dollar Man* or not. He was good, but not that good.

Lastly, and by no means least, was the *Star Wars* Christmas, which pretty much says it all. I recall a C3-PO kit, a blaster, various diecast space ships and the obligatory afterthought - the annual, with artwork that only bore a passing resemblance to the film. Annual withstanding, I was a true disciple, laying out my Topps *Star Wars* trading cards for all to admire and only stopping to check how long it would be until dinner...on my *Star Wars* watch.

cold winter of '79 now stands proudly on guard. The *Star Wars* figures I sold are now resting in a carrycase looking just like they did in 1978. I resisted trying to locate a Corgi Scammell car transporter with exactly the same cars, as finding Lord Lucan seemed to be an easier option. As for the Denys Fisher Muton and Cyborg dolls, well they've become a bit of a cult toy with prices to match. And for some strange reason that eludes me I'm rather pleased. As for the Palitoy talking Dalek? Well, there's one sitting on the shelf of my office right now...and he can talk! ■

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