

SYDNEY MODEL AUTO CLUB

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: THE CLUB MEETINGS FROM NOW ON WILL BE ON THIRD TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH (EXCEPT JANUARY) SAME STARTING TIME, SAME PLACE



The HARS Aviation Museum

Words by Philip Wong &
David Brown
Photos by David Brown

One of the benefits of being a member of SMAC is that the club organises visits to interesting events and museums, and not always with a motoring theme. On Friday 21 March, several members travelled south to Albion Park to tour the displays and facilities of the HARS (Historic Aircraft Restoration Society) Museum. We were divided into 2 groups and given tours by knowledgeable guides. We were overwhelmed with the large number of commercial and military aircraft on display. Highlights of the tour included comprehensive inspections inside a Boeing

747-400, a Lockheed Super Constellation, and a Lockheed AP-3C Orion. Apart from the full-sized aircraft, there were many model aircraft on display as well. After our tours we came together for an enjoyable lunch. I think the consensus of the group was that it was a thoroughly enjoyable day. Thank you to all the volunteers at HARS, and particularly to Paul Heeks for organising the event. If you couldn't make it, then I think everyone who attended would recommend taking a trip down to Albion Park Rail and have a look yourself.

THE JOURNAL OF THE SYDNEY MODEL AUTO CLUB

THINK SMALL!

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As per usual I looked for my previous report on my computer so I could continue a seamless transition to this one. It took a little while to realise why I could not find it. The last report was done on my phone from our hotel room in London where we were on the Monopoly Board in the Strand.

So just to briefly conclude from my last report, I would recommend the Haynes Motor Museum in Somerset for a visit where I also picked up a discounted Bburago Oscar Piastrri McLaren year 2024 before he was hot in 2025.

Also really loved Port Isaac (Portwenn, Doc Martin) however, do expect a long walk from where you can park. This seemed the norm wherever we went even most of our accommodation you had to park up to a mile away from our hotel. I loved following in the footsteps of the Famous Five in and around Dorset, especially Corfu Castle, which has a weird history (look it up) A big thank you to Paul & Robin for helping us plan our visit.

We have just had our annual AGM (a month late) where the same Committee was re-elected with the addition of Philip Wong added to our Editorial Committee and assistant to our Publicity Officer, Danny Draper.

I cannot wait any longer to tell you this! We are about to make a major change to our Club since 1978. Although we have changed our Toy Fair venue several times, we have never changed our monthly meeting from the first Wednesday in every month (except January)

Just to give you some background. On the forced relocation of our Toy & Hobby Fair to the Epping Creative Centre, the only permanent Friday evening available was the first Friday of the month, thus putting the Toy Fair and Club meeting in the same week. Even worse the Toy Fair before the Club meeting so preplanning was not possible.

The club's meetings convene from 7pm on the third Tuesday of each month (except in January) at the Magpie Sports Club, 40 Hampton Street Croydon Park. Unless stated differently in the magazine.

Dinner is provided before the meetings in July and October. The March meeting is set aside for our annual slot car racing championship, at which dinner also is provided.

The Toy & Hobby Fair is held on the first Friday every month at the Epping Creative Centre, 26 Stanley Rd, Epping NSW 2121 from 6.30pm

However, at our meeting place at the Magpie Sports Club we are increasingly having to wait up to an hour for a meal and parking is impossible to find. This is because the club now have their Trivia Challenge on Wednesday evening and training during football season, the venue has become very popular. Add to this, it is garbage night in the area which possibly takes away a quarter of the street parking spaces.

The other important item is that Wednesday evening is the most popular evening for a lot of club meeting nights, meaning that some of our members who would like to come, cannot attend because they are involved with their other club meetings.

We put out an email on the 8th September 2025 to all our regular Club meeting attendees, plus those financial members that do not regularly attend (where we have email addresses, which is most of the members)

"There is a proposal to change the Club Meeting to the Third Tuesday of every month (except January)"

We have received many replies in favour of this and none against.

So, as from November the meeting at the Magpie Sports Club will be on Tuesday 18th November 2025 at 7:00 pm. This will allow our next magazine "Think Small" to get to you announcing the change. The Club is delighted with our change, as they have been having trouble coping with the huge crowds on that first Wednesday of the month.

For October 2025, still the first Wednesday, October 1st before we revert to the new 3rd Tuesday evening meetings in November.

Yours in Collecting
Dennis Mitchell

November

Friday 7th Toy & Hobby Fair
Epping Creative Centre - 6.30pm

Tuesday 18th Club Meeting
'Vehicles with a driver figure'
Magpie Sports Club - 7pm

December

Friday 5th Toy & Hobby Fair
Epping Creative Centre - 6.30pm

Saturday 6th Christmas Party
Club Condell Park
178 Eldridge Road, Bankstown NSW
contact PH Cheah 0406 015 068 or
02 9837 1071 for bookings
and details

Tuesday 16th Club Meeting
'Orange Vehicles'
Magpie Sports Club - 7pm

January

Friday 2nd Toy & Hobby Fair
Epping Creative Centre - 6.30pm

February

Friday 6th Toy & Hobby Fair
Epping Creative Centre - 6.30pm

Tuesday 17th Club Meeting
'Great European Stylists/Coach
Builders'
Magpie Sports Club - 7pm

March

Friday 6th Toy & Hobby Fair
Epping Creative Centre - 6.30pm

**Tuesday 17th Annual Slot Car
Championship (Note New Address)**
Slot Shop 144 Tower Street Panania
NSW 2213. Dinner Provided

April

Tuesday 21st Club Meeting
'3 wheels or less'
Magpie Sports Club - 7pm

NO TOY FAIR Due to Good Friday

May

Friday 1st Toy & Hobby Fair
Epping Creative Centre - 6.30pm

Tuesday 19th Club Meeting
'The Iron Curtain'
Magpie Sports Club - 7pm

June

Friday 5th Toy & Hobby Fair
Epping Creative Centre - 6.30pm

Tuesday 16th Club Meeting
'Extinct US manufacturers'
Magpie Sports Club - 7pm



1/43 Gordon Keeble
resin cast made by
Bos (Best of Show) Models

Many sports cars have a tendency to have somewhat aggressive emblems or logos. Ferrari has a prancing horse, Lamborghini uses a charging bull, Ford has a galloping mustang, Sunbeam had a Tiger while Triumph's Spitfire echoed a WW2 fighter aircraft.

So it would be somewhat surprising to find one tiny British sports car manufacturer using a tortoise. A tortoise?

The story of Gordon Keeble using a tortoise is interesting in itself but first, let's look at this small manufacturer as it dipped its toes into entering the GT (Grand Tourer) field.

And in Britain at the time, there were rivals aplenty, Jensen Motors, Bristol, Morgan, Marcos, Aston Martin and Alvis.

John Gordon (of struggling Peerless Cars) and Jim Keeble got together in 1959 to make the Gordon GT. Initially fitting a Corvette V8 onto a Peerless chassis on the behest of USAF pilot named Neilsen.

It was an impressive concept so the duo fitted a 4.6 litre Chevrolet V8 to a specially-designed square tube steel space-frame chassis.

Drive was to the rear wheels and independent suspension was contained up front with a DeDion-tube fitted aft. The completed chassis was sent to Bertone in Turin where Giogetto Giugiaro - regarded as one of the best designers of the 20th Century - penned the handsome body for a not inconsiderable sum. The early car had a steel body but this was later replaced by a glass-fibre shell.

Once production began in 1964, the engine had grown to a 5.4 litre 224kW bent-eight from Chevrolet. It was considered the fastest British-made four-seater in production. It was able to get from rest to 60 mph in six seconds, quite impressive in its day.

The body was typical of the era with a design that was clean and attractive with twin slanted headlights flanked by a grille in-between. It gave the GK a more distinctive nose, and landed it its somewhat distinctive front-end. Slanted headlights were also used in a Rolls-Royce coupe and the Triumph Vitesse.

Interest was high at its launch with generally positive reports from the motoring media, praising ride and handling and the quality of its build and its finish.

However, the company had problems with its suppliers; the production delays resulting in money running out after just 90 cars were made.

A year later in 1965, Harold Smith and Geoffrey West bought the company and renamed it Keeble Cars but it didn't last, finally shutting down in 1966. In 1967, the last car was built from spare parts rounding the total to 100.

Perhaps the cars were priced too low at GBP 2798.00 when an Aston Martin cost GBP 1400.00 more and the cheapest Ferrari was more than twice the price. Maybe its low price contributed to the eventual closure as there couldn't be much profit in making the Gordon Keeble.

The story on how a tortoise became its symbol was this. During a publicity photo shoot, an engineer thought it would be amusing to place a pet tortoise on the yellow car's bonnet at which time it chose to relieve itself.

Thus, a tortoise on a yellow background was humorously chosen as the Gordon Keeble's emblem. The humour was obvious, shame it was reflected in its sales.



Member's News

The new editorial committee would like you to contribute to your magazine. If you have a story regarding a project or a visit to a museum that you think will be of interest to other readers please write a story of between 250 and 500 words (for the 'My favourite model' section around 60 words) and send it to david@davidabrown.com.au along with a few photos.

Christmas is almost here!

Sydney Model Auto Club Christmas Party
Saturday 6th December 2025
Club Condell Park
178 Eldridge Road, Bankstown NSW

contact PH Cheah 0406 015 068 or 02 9837 1071
 for bookings and details

Show and Tell Gallery Photos David Brown

1st Rob Bender



PQR
 Theme
 October 2024

Sydney TOY & HOBBY FAIR

ENTRY
 \$5



Epping Creative Centre
 26 Stanley Road, Epping

1st Friday of each month from 6.30pm

- Canteen
- Stallholders setup from 4.30pm
- Tables \$20 each
- New Stallholders Welcome!
- Stallholders inquiries: Bruce (bookings & cancellations) 0425 327 472
- General inquiries: P.H Cheah (Secretary) 0406 015 068

Dates for 2026

- 2nd January
- 6th February
- 6th March
- No Toy Fair Good Friday
- 1st May
- 5th June
- 3rd July
- 7th August
- 4th September
- 2nd October
- 6th November
- 4th December



2nd Philip Wong

3rd Robin Aston



PQR
Theme
October 2024



David Brown

PQR
Theme
October 2024

Bruce Cook



Dennis Mitchell

PH Cheah



One Off Specials Concept Cars

Theme
February 2025



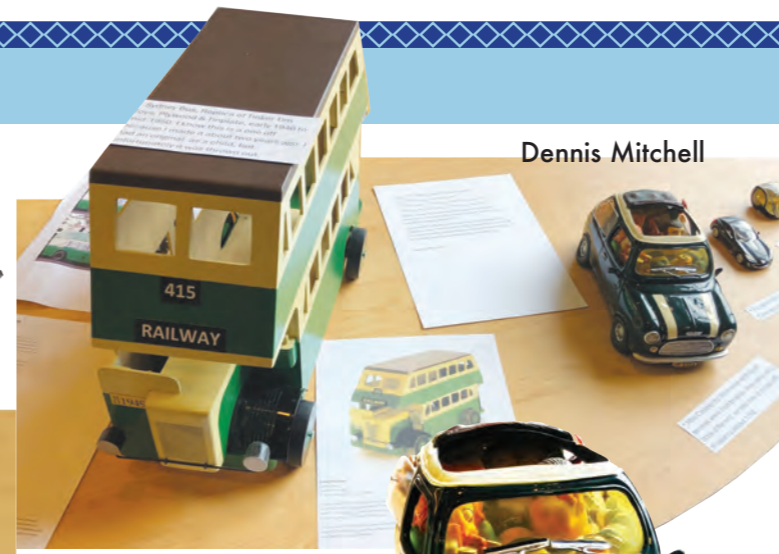
1st Paul Heeks



2nd John Russell



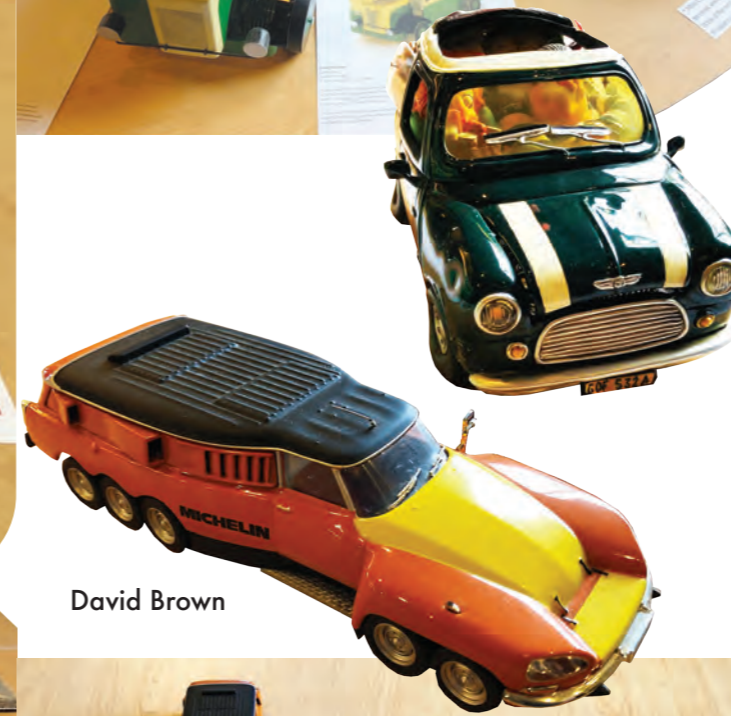
3rd PH Cheah



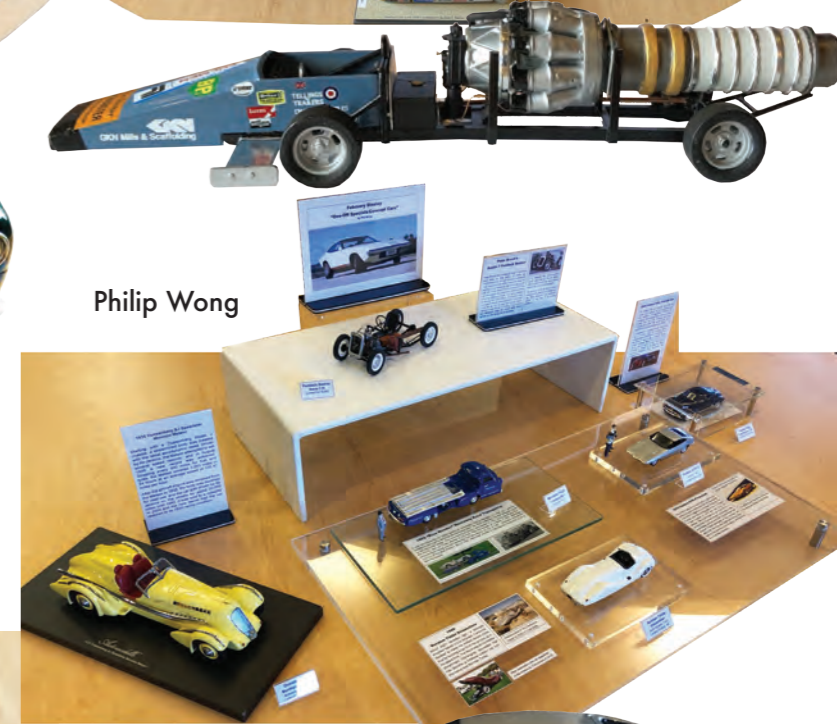
Dennis Mitchell



Robin Aston



David Brown



Philip Wong



Bruce Cook

August 2025 'White'
 1st PH Cheah 4 points
 2nd Paul Heeks 3 points
 3rd Dennis Mitchell 2 points
 1 point each to David Brown, Bruce Cook, Michael Rowles, John Russell, Phillip Wong

September 2025 'Blue'
 1st Robin Aston 4 points
 2nd Dennis Mitchell 3 points
 3rd John Russell 2 points
 1 point each to Paul Heeks, PH Cheah, Phillip Wong

October 2025 ''
 1st Robin Aston 4 points
 2nd Dennis Mitchell 3 points
 3rd PH Cheah 2 points
 1 point each to Michael Rowles, Phillip Wong, John Russell



2025 Results

PH Cheah	21 points	Michael Rowles	2 points
Robin Aston	20 points	Lester Gough	2 points
Dennis Mitchell	16 points	Bruce Cook	2 point
Paul Heeks	14 points	Danny Draper	1 point
John Russell	12 points	Paul Donnelly	1 point
Philip Wong	11 points		
David Brown	8 points		

The Committee Members

President / Public Officer	Dennis Mitchell	0419 750 875 dennis.mitchell@live.com.au
Vice-President	David Brown	0417 464 928 david@davidabrown.com.au
Secretary	PH Cheah	0406 015 068 / 9837 1071 pheeuhatcheah@gmail.com
Treasurer	Paul Heeks	0418 257 957 paulh@pacecranes.com.au
Librarian	Robin Aston	0418 418 089 r.aston@optusnet.com.au
Publicity	Danny Draper	0418471806 danny@utma.com.au
	David Brown	0417 464 928 david@davidabrown.com.au
	Philip Wong	0417 428 668 info@f1scalemodels.com
Editorial Committee	Paul Heeks, Danny Draper, David Brown, Philip Wong and PH Cheah	
CoOrdinator, Toy & Hobby Fair	Bruce Cook	0425 327 472

1958 Edsel Corsair Ambulance

Who would have thought that anyone would have made ambulances based on the car whose name is synonymous with one of the biggest flops in automotive history but the Memphian Coachwork Company in Memphis, USA.

The company specialized in conversions regardless of body style to emergency vehicles.

At least two, possibly a third Edsel Corsair Memphian ambulances were made making them very rare conversions.

I saw this 1/43 scale model of the Edsel Corsair Memphian #091 of 100 online and when one seller offered it for \$79.00 rather than the \$ 105.00, I had to have it.

This is a beautiful rendition of the ambulance, finished in four colours, a red interior and white wall tyres. The finish is flawless and it makes a fine addition to my collection of emergency vehicles based on Ford products.