

Historic Vehicles Website

The *Historic Vehicles* website (<https://historicvehicles.com.au/>) is the brainchild of Jim Gibson and Allan Whiting. Initially the brand, features and restoration content was historic trucks, but subsequent entries included historic cars and motorcycles.

In the 1960s, without knowing each other, both blokes cut their teeth in the road transport business: Jim as a mechanic and then young truck driver and Allan in freight sales. Both men then moved into truck operations roles and ended those career moves as operations managers for large truck fleets.

Again without knowing each other, Jim and Allan scored senior appointments with Australian-market truck importers and manufacturers. Jim stayed in the truck corporate world for some years, while Allan moved into 4WD and road transport journalism. At that point their paths crossed, with Allan reporting on the trucks that Jim was marketing. A firm friendship developed.

Seeing how much fun Allan was having in the writing and photography game, Jim moved that way as well. By the 1990s, both blokes had senior editorial jobs and Allan then started his own truck buyers' guide magazine, *TruckSearch*, while also serving as long-term technical editor of *4x4 Australia* magazine. With the advent of the internet, Allan saw the writing on the wall for magazines, sold off *TruckSearch* and launched the *Outback Travel Australia* website. Jim's magazine career climaxed with the editor's role at *Truckin' Life* magazine, but, after he'd raised its profile way beyond former levels, the mag fell into the post-internet financial doldrums and Jim went freelancing, writing mainly about older cars and trucks for specialist magazines. Red-wine-induced conversations in that post-magazine era led to the idea of the *Historic Vehicles* website that launched in 2020.

After checking out the considerable content on thehistoricvehicles.com.au website, the AHA was interested to find out what cars the Historic Vehicles duo had owned over the past 60-odd years, so here it is.

'Gibbo', as he is known, has had nearly 50 cars since 1960.

Here's the list:

Austin A40, 1949;
Ford Prefect I00E, 1957;
MG TD, 1953;
Ford Customline, 1956;
Ford Zephyr Ute, 1960;
Ford Customline, 1954;
Ford Customline, 1957;

Holden FJ Ute, 1954;
Jaguar MKII, 1964;
Ford Falcon XP, 1964;
Ford Falcon XR, 1967;
Ford Falcon XW GT-HO, 1970;
Ford Falcon XL Station Wagon, 1962 (Gill's car);
Ford Capri, 1970 (Gill's car);
Ford Fairmont XB, 1975;
Ford Mustang, 1967;
Morris Minor 'low light' race car with TR4A engine and gearbox;
Ford Capri V6 GT, 1971;
Ford Falcon XB Ute, 1975;
Morris Mini Moke, 1970;
Suzuki Sierra;
Alfa GTV, 1979;
Puma GTE, 1973;
Rover 3500SE, 1985;
Mazda B2200 Ute;
Rover 827 Sport;
Suzuki Swift GT, 1988;
Falcon XD Ute, 1980;
Volkswagen Scirocco, 1986;
Ford FI00, 1970;
Holden VP Station Wagon, 1992;
Jeep Cherokee, 1995;
Mitsubishi Magna Sports, 2000
;Ford Falcon AU, 2003;
Subaru Outback, 2001;
Jaguar XJS, 1986;
Jaguar S Type, 1965;
Jaguar XJ6, 1981;
MG TD, 1951;
Jaguar MKII 2.4L, 1966;
Karmann Ghia, 1960;
Ford Mustang, 1965;
Formula Vee Mako; Formula Vee Kestrel;
Nissan 300 ZX, 1990;
Suzuki Grand Vitara and Mini Cooper S, 2007.

Phew! Of that lot, here are Gibbo's favourite cars:

"The 1949 Austin A40 was my first car when I was a 16-year-old apprentice motor mechanic," Jim Gibson recalled.



“Working in our family backyard and garage, I put in a three-quarter-race Waggot camshaft and a pair of one-and-a-quarter SU carbies. I fitted front telescopic shock absorbers; a set of Pirelli Cinturatos and a MK1 Sprite muffler, with highly polished copper two-inch tailpipe. Of course, I shortened the gear stick for slicker shifting.”

“I had three Ford Customlines over the years - a '54 side valve, '56 OHV and a '57 that was my absolute favourite,” said Gibbo.



“I bought it from Leo Geoghegan, with a factory-fitted tacho. It also had dual Jack Meyers headers and Len Lukey mufflers. The velvet tone from the dual chrome tipped exhaust pipes would make an angel cry,” Jim Gibson reckoned.

This Ford Capri was a great little package, with dual exhaust system and flexible three-litre V6 engine.



“My 1970 Ford Falcon GT-HO was a cracker – what more can I say?” Jim Gibson recalled fondly. “With my future wife in the passenger’s seat we cracked 140mph on the Hay Plains - thus emulating the photo that Wheels Magazine had taken in a ’71 Phase-III (to the government of the day’s disgust).”



“My 1967 blue Ford Mustang was another gem, with its 289cid V8,” Gibbo recalled. “And here it is, at the dam car park off Picton Road (south-west of Sydney), in response to an advertisement placed in the Sydney Morning Herald in 1982.



“The advert invited Mustang owners, who might be interested in starting a Mustang Club, to meet up the following Sunday at 10am.

“Eight cars turned up and that was the beginning of quite a movement.”

Gibbo’s ultra-rare, VW-based Puma is the subject of a lengthy story on the historicvehicles.com.au website. Check out the history and background of this Brazilian gem.



“I bought this 1985 VW Scirocco from a VW mechanic, who had chipped the computer,” said Jim Gibson.



“It performed and handled like a sports car and certainly looked the part, with a wheel-arch flare kit added and beautiful wide ATS wheels.”

“My Jaguar MKII was a 3.8-litre model with manual overdrive box - a true driver’s car, whose looks turned heads wherever it went.”



“Ah yes, the Jaguar XJS, with a smooth V12 up front that let it cruise effortlessly was without a doubt the most beautiful car I have ever driven,” said Gibbo.“



Jaguar’s motto was ‘Grace, Pace and Space’ and this car certainly had the first two, in spades, but definitely not the third!”

“Our MG TD was a 1951-year model,” said Gibbo. “I reconditioned the engine and changed the crown-wheel and pinion, tol ower engine revs at 100 km/h cruising speed. We both loved open top motoring.”



“The most recent purchase was this Mini Cooper S,” said Jim Gibson. “It’s a turbocharged pocket-rocket from BMW and is a great little car to drive. It came with all the bells and whistles, including a slick six-speed transmission.”



Historic Vehicles isn't sure what the next Gibbo purchase will be, but he and Gill seemed to be missing 'open-top' motoring, so we'll just have to wait and see.

Next issue: Whiting's lesser stable