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# A History of Australia's All-enclosed Coupé

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By Dr. Norm Darwin ©

## FIRST SERIES

While the coupé utility body development has received some comment in automotive circles, the All-enclosed coupé or “sloper” as it’s colloquially known, is largely overlooked. The true coupé style was introduced as an enclosed fixed hooded (roof) vehicle for a driver and one passenger. Some could also carry two passengers in an exposed “rumble or dickey” seat. Holden first built coupé styles in 1928 and from the early 1930s reversed the rumble seat lid hinges to create a “boot or trunk lid”, naming the style a “commercial” model. In early 1934 the Holden designers sought to provide an answer to a demand to:

Provide an intimate personal car with all-weather accommodation for occasional passengers.<sup>1</sup>

The Holden press release noted:

The group of technicians – all of them young Australians, barely past threshold of manhood, were proud of their achievement.<sup>2</sup>

The style made its debut at the Sydney Royal Easter Show in April 1935 on an Oldsmobile chassis as the

## ALL AUSTRALIAN COUPE



*A triumph of workmanship and a tribute to the originality and skill of Australian draughtsmen and engineers—the streamline coupe body, which is discussed in an adjoining column, is the patent of the well-known firm of Holden's*

*From April 6th 1935 Adverts began to appear for the new Oldsmobile All-enclosed coupé, The Chevrolet followed in June.*

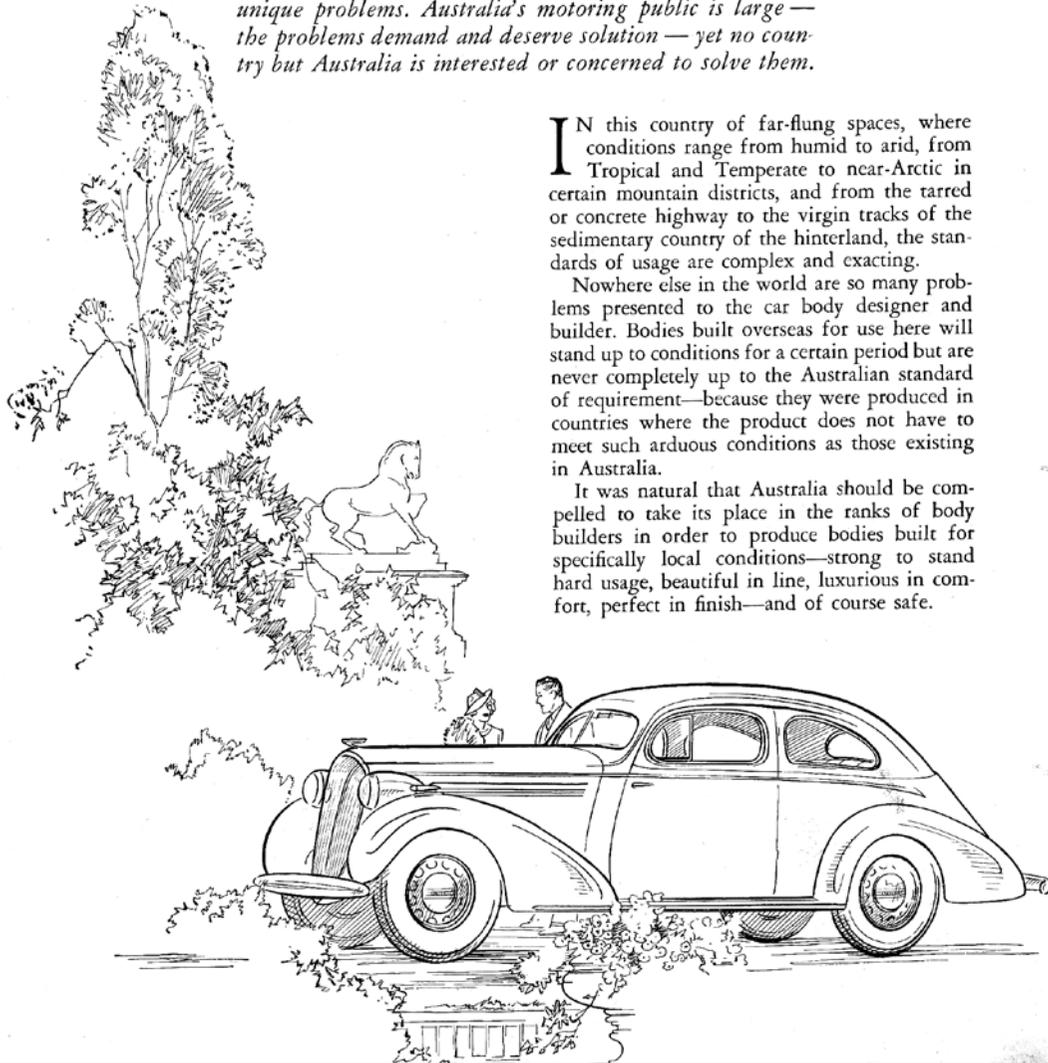
# ORIGINALITY . . . FOR AUSTRALIA'S SAKE

*Without questioning the knowledge and cleverness of other countries, the fact remains that Australia's roads and geographical conditions, and the special tastes, needs, habits and preferences of Australia's public, provide unique problems. Australia's motoring public is large — the problems demand and deserve solution — yet no country but Australia is interested or concerned to solve them.*

**I**N this country of far-flung spaces, where conditions range from humid to arid, from Tropical and Temperate to near-Arctic in certain mountain districts, and from the tarred or concrete highway to the virgin tracks of the sedimentary country of the hinterland, the standards of usage are complex and exacting.

Nowhere else in the world are so many problems presented to the car body designer and builder. Bodies built overseas for use here will stand up to conditions for a certain period but are never completely up to the Australian standard of requirement—because they were produced in countries where the product does not have to meet such arduous conditions as those existing in Australia.

It was natural that Australia should be compelled to take its place in the ranks of body builders in order to produce bodies built for specifically local conditions—strong to stand hard usage, beautiful in line, luxurious in comfort, perfect in finish—and of course safe.



Chevrolet chassis had yet to be assembled. A trimmed Chevrolet body was also on display and a Pontiac version was later released. The design extended the roof, in a single sweep, over the position of the rumble seat passengers and down, providing a boot and streamlined tail. This was only part of the design; the rear seat was hinged so that it folded down providing a load space from the back of the front seats through to the boot area. The folding seat mechanism was patented and many station wagons produced up to the 1970s adopted the patent. A large rear window had a “flip-out” mechanism to improve air circulation. This feature was dropped in favour of two fixed pieces of glass in early 1936. GM-H marketed the style initially on Oldsmobile, Pontiac and Chevrolet in 1935, then added Buick in 1936. Two versions were made, one for 6-cylinder chassis, and one for 8-cylinder chassis.

Holden announced the new style with flair “Originality ... for Australia's sake” led a two-page feature on the coupé style in a booklet, *The Changing Trend – a story of*



## DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAL COUPE What Local Engineers Have Done

AFTER years of patient research, South Australian engineers at General Motors-Holden's plant at Woodville have developed a coupe model, which still retains the conveniences of the old type of coupe, but is not such a "selfish" model. Previously coupes existed solely for the professional man, or travellers who required a closed body, but who also only required the front compartment. These models were equipped with a "dicky" seat at the rear, which, when not used by passengers, provided ample space for luggage. The "dicky" seat was so designed because it was only on rare occasions that it was required to carry passengers, and was used more for a luggage boot.

The 1935 all enclosed coupe body, which has been fitted to two of General Motors-Holden products—Oldsmobile and Pontiac—is the ideal which has been the aim of engineers the whole world over for many years. It was completely designed by South Australians at Woodville. When a catalogue referring to the evolution of the "all-enclosed coupe" was sent to General Motors works in America, an immediate demand was made for a complete body to be shipped, so that engineers could study it and develop the same body in that country.

This was surely a high tribute for America to pay to South Australians, for America is recognised as being among the leaders of automobile design and construction.

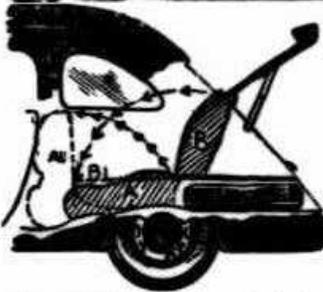
Both England and America have made attempts to develop the perfect coupe, but never have they achieved anything that will provide the luggage space, the improved seating accommodation, and the appearance that this South Australian model does.

While the small volume of sales for the old type of coupe was a problem which confronted every mass production factory, there is every indication that this model will find a very wide appeal, and justify the concentration which has been put into its evolution and design.

From the side elevation the 1935 all-enclosed coupe almost follows the same outline as the sedan—with the exception that there are only two windows and one door. The pleasing aerody-

to break the definite line. Additional space is made available by fundamental re-designing, which has also brought the occasional passengers in out of the rain, sun, or wind. The re-designing has meant that the back seat and squab can be operated to make the back seating accommodation wholly available for carrying luggage. In a recent demonstration it was found that the coupe would carry six large suitcases, a set of golf clubs, fishing tackle and basket, a sun case, two tennis rackets, and a large bundle of rugs.

To operate the mechanism, which will give additional luggage space, all that is required is to place the hand between the squab and the seat and pull the seat forward. The seat will rest horizontally against the front seat, while the squab will provide extra floor space. It is only the one simple movement that is required.



**TOP**—The interior of the all enclosed coupe is comfortable and attractively furnished, and presents the same appearance as the ordinary rear compartment of a sedan. **BOTTOM**—The operation to provide more luggage space. A and B are the seat and squab in

1935 Chevrolet Master All-enclosed Coupe from the sales brochure



Australia's growing industrial independence (1936).

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It was natural that Australia should be compelled to take its place in the ranks of body builders in order to produce bodies built for specifically local conditions – strong to stand hard usage, beautiful in line, luxurious in comfort, perfect in finish – and of course safe.<sup>3</sup>

The self-praise was new to Holden, though as part of the GM empire it was unusual but can perhaps

October 1, 1935. THE AUSTRALIAN MOTORIST. 757

Master De Luxe Sedan.

Every CHEVROLET owner has his or her favourite feature . . . WHAT'S YOURS?

At just the price you wish to pay Chevrolet provides all those topical modern features you have desired. Here, in the low-price class, is a car with refinements previously found only on luxury models. Mechanically, Chevrolet is a perfect performer. In its Holden-built body it has style distinctly fashionable. You should see Chevrolet to-day.

GENERAL MOTORS-HOLDEN'S LIMITED.

**MASTER DE LUXE COUPE**

This all-enclosed coupe carries all passengers, up to six, inside the car. Luggage and spare are carried in a locked rear compartment. Simple adjustment to rear seat gives tremendously increased luggage space.

**KNEE ACTION SPRINGING**

Front wheels on the Master Chevrolet are individually sprung, with soft coil springs working in a constant bath of oil. All road shocks are absorbed and steering is shockless—giving a perfect, smooth and level ride.

**MASTER DE LUXE**

**CHEVROLET**

"The Fashion Car of the Low Price Field"

**Preston Motors Pty. Ltd.**

Cor. Russell and Little Collins Streets, Melbourne, C.I.

Standard Price Range	Business Roadster - £255
£255	Sports Roadster - £270
	Tourer - £285
	Business Coupe - £275
	Sports Coupe - £290
	Sedan - £310
	All Prices Plus Tax.

Sports Roadster - £310	MASTER PRICE FROM
Tourer - £285	£310
Coupe - £290	
Sedan - £310	
All Prices Plus Tax.	

Left: Advert from The Australian Motorist for the new 1935 Chevrolet models, 1 October 1935, page 757.

Right: Same issue ran a full description

THE AUSTRALIAN MOTORIST October 1, 1935

## New Chevrolet

### Attractive Models of 1935

The 1935 lines of Chevrolet, now on display at Preston Motors Pty. Ltd. showrooms, Russell Street, Melbourne, are entirely new. They represent thoughtful effort on the part of Chevrolet engineers to meet what is believed are 1935 requirements. The new in appearance, the Master De Luxe cars are entirely those features of streamlining that have been found most effective. The new standard line for 1935, while not differing radically in appearance from its predecessor, features Chevrolet's and many other improvements and refinements. The Standard line has been designed to fit the 1935 purse, and to provide what is known to be the most economical transportation. Tests have proved that the new Standard Six is the most economically-operated car in Chevrolet's history.

including the radiator grill, the ornament that supplants the radiator filler-cap (now under the bonnet), the horizontal hornet louvers, the streamlined door handles, concealed spare tyre mountings, tail lamp, and rear bumper. Aside from appearance, there are important improvements in body comfort and spaciousness, and especially in the ride. The chassis is one inch longer than last year (now 113-inch wheelbase), and an even greater increase in body space has been gained by moving the engine forward. The appearance of great length has been

efficiency and to improve the ride. Better ride control is effected by changes in the shock absorber valve orifices, and by increased spring pressures, allowing the wheel to follow the road surface. The inner end of the wheel spindle arm shaft is increased in diameter and provided with a larger bearing containing 42 rollers, five more than last year; the wheel is better supported, and the maintenance of alignment is promoted. The attachment of the wheel spindle to the wheel hub arm is by a new method of fitting, giving a 30 per cent. increase in

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**Chevrolet's New Models for 1935.**

Master De Luxe models, strongly emphasising beauty and style, and the new Standard models, featuring high-powered performance, with economy, comprise the Chevrolet line of passenger cars for 1935. Whereas last year the two chassis models were nearly identical in appearance, but differed greatly in power and performance, this year the New Standard has been given virtually the same performance ability as the Master De Luxe, which, however, departs distinctly from previous Chevrolets in striking advances in design of body and upholstery. The engines incorporate many improvements over the 1934 Master motor, while in the chassis the chief difference is the presence in the Master De Luxe of Chevrolet enclosed knee-action suspension, new entering its second year improved in construction and operation.

Mechanically, the two models have in common numerous important improvements in construction and design. Both engines have an original system of high pressure jets supplying oil to connecting rod bearings, and tin-plated pistons, heavier crankshafts, and other new features that contribute to better performance, smoothness and economy. In both chassis, newly designed clutches, more effective braking systems, stiffer frames, and other advances in design give greater ease of operation, increased durability, and a better ride.

**Master De Luxe Appearance.**

By means of an entirely new body design, Chevrolet has attained a sleekness formerly impossible. Its highly-crowned roof sweeping from the windshield in a continuously graceful curve—an effect heightened by the continuity of body colour over the entire top.

Every detail of the car is new, starting with the front bumper, and

enhanced by lowering the floor level, dropping it one inch nearer the ground by lowering the chassis side rails.

Master De Luxe body models are the Sedan, £380; Holden Coupe, £365, with patented luggage compartment; Tourer, £320; and sports roadster, £310 (plus sales tax). The Sedan, Tourer and Coupe have integral trunks embodied in the rear panels, with compartments for the spare wheel.

**Knee-Action Improvements in Master De Luxe.**

Knee-action, in the Master De Luxe

strength, precluding any possibility of wheel wobble.

The Master De Luxe steering gear has been redesigned for more uniform operation, longer life, and greater strength. The pitman shaft and tie bushings are 1-inch larger in diameter, and each bushing is 1-inch longer, giving 20 per cent. more bearing surface. The bushings are lubricated from the gear housing by a low cost, costly grease. A cork seal at the end of the shaft housing prevents leakage and excludes dirt. One lubrication is sufficient for 2000 miles.

THE AUSTRALIAN COUPE.

Sample Body Sent Overseas.

Built by Holdens, a sample body was sent overseas to the home of mass production in body building—the U.S.A. There was nothing furtive about its despatch. It was sent as a demonstration of what Australian designers and Australian artisans could produce. And this is what has been said.

Mr. E. C. Riley, General Manager of the Export Division, writing to Mr. L. J. Hartnett, Managing Director of G.M.-H. states:—"The job has apparently made a great hit at Detroit—a very excellent idea. I do think the idea possess outstanding merit, and can be used to advantage in domestic design."

But that it not all. Inter-organization managers writing one to the other regarding the arrival of the All-Australian Coupe state—

"Mr. A. J. Fisher (Fisher Body Plant) has the job and wishes to keep it to show his entire organization. The construction and workmanship of the body throughout are excellent. As a matter of fact, I would say that they are superior to the domestic jobs. The entire organization was very favourably impressed with the appearance of the body and commercial opportunities of the rear seat construction principally from the standpoint of having satis-

factory four passenger coupe job, which moves the passengers from the dicky seat to the inside of the car, under cover, and at the same time permits the job to be used for commercial purposes."

For an immense host of motorists, especially those whose cars are part of the working equipment of their lives, this is by far the finest car body that has ever been designed. It does so much. It so greatly increases the car's usefulness. Yet it is easily one of the most beautiful bodies ever seen.

Business men who travel with heavy luggage . . . Commercial travellers . . . Civil Engineers, surveyors, and other professional men whose special tools and equipment are ponderous . . . Men on the land and their wives, who sometimes need to load up with heavy supplies . . . are some of the

who sometimes need to load up with heavy supplies . . . are some of the obvious users for whom the Chevrolet, Pontiac and Oldsmobile Coupe gives astonishingly baggage space yet delightful passenger accommodation, too.

Country doctors, needing stretcher space, in their cars . . . Holiday tourists carrying bulky camping kit . . . Day-in-the-country city folk with a taste for buying fruit and produce. For all sorts of special and general users this Coupe is marvellous.

GM-H were proud of the All-enclosed Coupé, despatching one to Detroit in Nov 1935.



**THE ORDER and the RESULT**

**BeamWireless**  
SMALL ARMED WIRELESS (AUSTRALIA) LIMITED  
47 YORK ST. SYDNEY

**Via Beam TO HOLDENS WOODVILLE**

VERY INTERESTED NEW DESIGN COUPE BODIES WHICH YOU PRODUCING . . . PLEASE SHIP SAMPLE NEW YORK IMMEDIATELY

GENERAL MOTORS

*Every Holden Employee has a right to feel proud of this overseas order which is a tribute to Australian engineering & workmanship*

**Congratulations**  
COUPE IS GREAT SUCCESS

GENERAL MOTORS EXPORT DIVISION  
NEW YORK  
Sept 24th 1935

Mr. L. J. Hartnett  
Managing Director  
General Motors Holden Ltd.  
Melbourne  
Australian All-enclosed Coupe

Dear Sir:

Our Export Organisation here is very much impressed with your Coupe from the standpoint of appearance of the body and rear seat construction . . . the construction and workmanship throughout are excellent.

At the present time Mr. A. J. Fisher of Fisher Body Corporation has the job and wishes to keep it to show to his entire Organisation.

The job has apparently made a great hit in Detroit and we must congratulate you.

Very truly yours  
E. C. Riley  
General Manager

**WE SHOULD ALL FEEL PROUD OF THIS ACKNOWLEDGMENT**



*1936 Chevrolet Standard All-enclosed coupé. Note single rear boot handle. Early 1936 bodies retained the single flip-out rear window. Later cars (see right) had a two-piece fixed rear window*

be traced to Hartnett’s brash management style. Biographer, Joe Rich, called Hartnett a “technocratic brigand” suggesting he had “an immoderate hunger for attention and recognition.”<sup>4</sup> Prof Harry Irwin recognises Hartnett’s contribution:

One of Hartnett’s achievements was realization that Australia was different from other countries.....(and responded) to differences in operating conditions and market nuances and opportunities.<sup>5</sup>

Irwin cites both the coupé utility and All-enclosed coupé as examples of Hartnett’s “opportunities”. Social commentator, Clinton Walker, praises the All-enclosed coupé, suggesting that as:

Australia was tucked away down here at the bottom of the world, almost beyond Detroit’s



view, both Ford and GM-H were able to get away with innovative design variations that might have been stymied by corporate politics closer to home.<sup>6</sup>

Walker also suggests the All-enclosed coupé could be called the Monaro’s grandfather; “the sloper even showed the way internationally” according to Walker.

Holden produced two versions of the coupe body, one for Chev standard, Pontiac 6 and Oldsmobile 6 and a second for the Chev Master, Pontiac 8, Oldsmobile 8 and Buick 8. The differences were in the door panel width.

There was also a 1936 Hudson Terraplane produced by Ruskin motor bodies that featured the Holden folding rear seat and a body very similar to the Holden. It is possible, but unlikely, that Holden sold sets of coupé panels and these were then assembled, a practice that



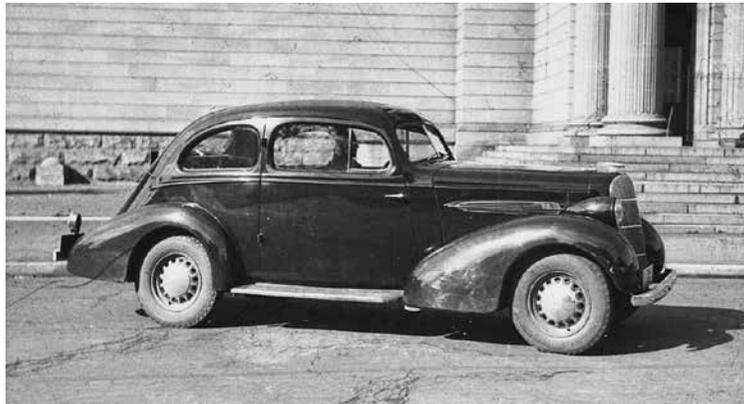
*1935 Holden tags from pass side cowl.. K5 = May 1935. CNTL = Bancroft Blue LH = paint batch.*



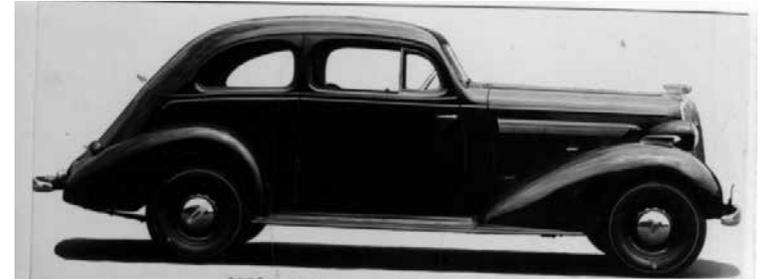
**Left:** 1936 Chevrolet standard coupe. Note black painted grille schell and single boot handle. Wheelbase difference between Master and standard removed from the door.



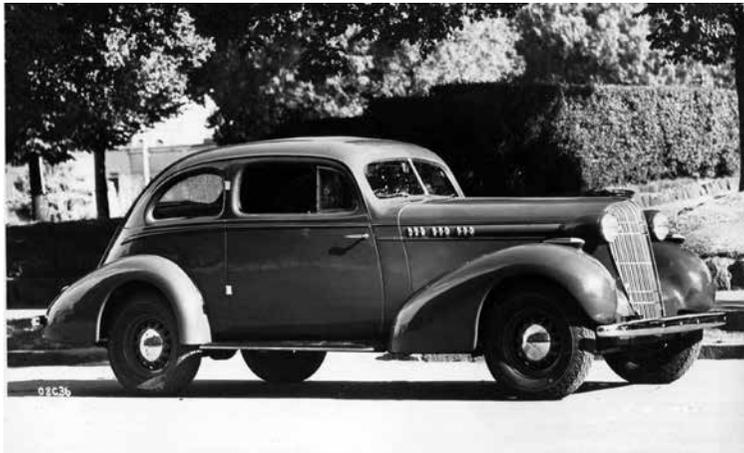
**Right:** 1935 Pontiac All-Enclosed coupé. Note tail lamp is unique and the same as the 35 Chevrolet and Pontiac.



**Right:** 1936 Buick 8/40.



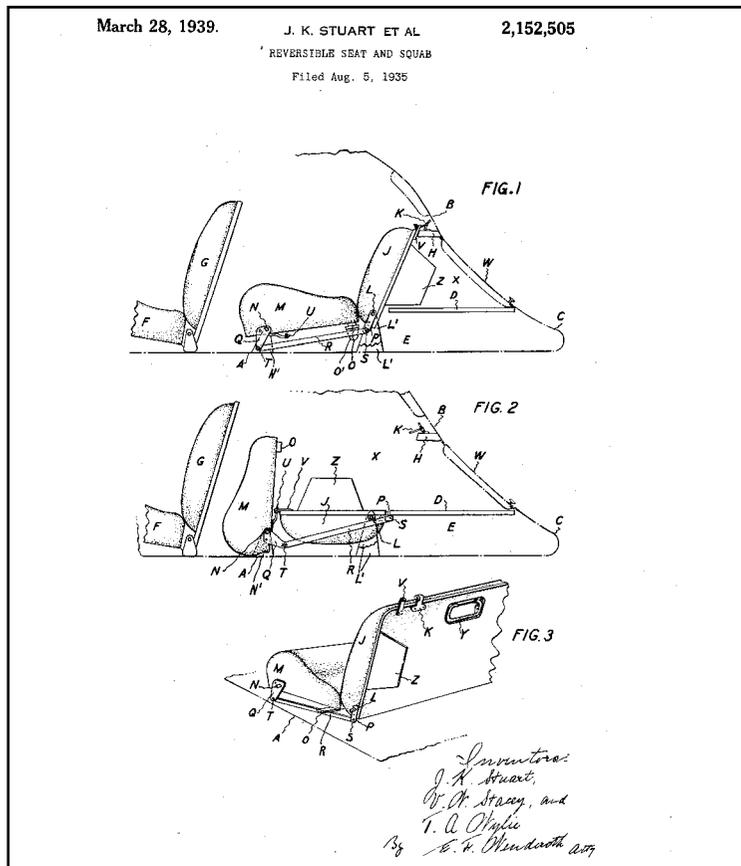
**Left:** 1935 Oldsmobile. NSW Library image



**Left:** 1936 Oldsmobile.



**Right:** 1936 interior Oldsmobile



Two-tone paint schemes were available on some makes in 1935/6. This is possibly an 8-cylinder Pontiac coupé at the new Fishermans Bend assembly plant.



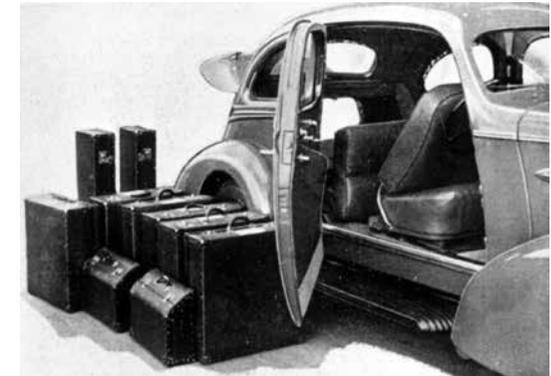
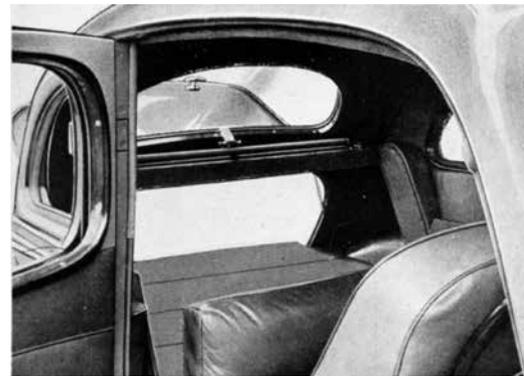
builders.<sup>7</sup>

For some time the designers of the All-enclosed coupé have remained unknown. A search of the American Patent register shows a patent, lodged on 1 May 1935, in the name of Kingston Stuart (chief engineer), Thomas Wylie (draftsman) and Valentine Stacey (stylist). An interview with George Wallis reveals the body engineering was performed by Chaplin.<sup>8</sup>

The style arose following the loss of Plymouth roadster bodies to Richards in 1935. Hartnett met with Jim Holden, King Stuart, Tom Wylie and Roy Rainsford in Adelaide to discuss the matter. The Holden coupé bodies were all produced from the roadster tooling as roadsters had the highest volume. The idea of bringing the dickie seat passengers under cover was suggested and immediately adopted, Hartnett calling it a “fast run back” model, Hartnett said of the style:

Nothing in GM or any other manufacturer at

Patent drawing lodged by Tom Wylie, J K Stuart and Val Stacey and approved in 1935. This style of mechanism was used in Holdens.



that time known to us had anything like this styling which later years became so popular and readily accepted.<sup>9</sup>

Later Hartnett was advised the style, "would not be acceptable in the U.S."

The styling was not revolutionary, Paul Jaray's sketch from 1922 showed the way to streamlined rear ends and the 1933 Silver Arrow by Philip O Wright, despite being a 4-door car, displayed an intelligent masterful sweeping body.<sup>10</sup> At Cadillac, Harley Earl's team designed a one-off demonstration car in 1933 that shows a remarkable similarity to the Holden body, Hartnett, in *Big Wheels and Little Wheels*, assures us that this car, or any other, influenced the Holden designers. While the Cadillac is claimed to have prompted Gordon Behring's Cord design, the 1935-1936 Holden body was less influential with only the Bishop Brothers providing a drawing based on the style for coach builders in 1935.<sup>11</sup>

The first series cars are hard to find, I have about 6 Chevs on a list and 2 of these have been rodded. Two Pontiacs exist and Oldsmobile is unknown.

1935 Oldsmobile advert sheet released with the car in April 1935.

Gallery



**Right:** Fully restored 35 Master All-enclosed Coupe owned by John Hayman

**Left:** Author's 35 Chev Master coupé, project started around 1982. First body (see above) too far gone. This car acquired in 1990 with 6-wheel equipment, originally sold in Victoria's Western district.

**Right:** An original 1935 Pontiac 6 coupe owned by John Nealey



## SECOND SERIES

The new All-enclosed coupé body was released on Chevrolet and Vauxhall chassis in March 1937, the Chev Standard costing £342, the Master £380 and the Vauxhall £415. Other brands followed, the Oldsmobile and Buick in April and Pontiac in May. The Pontiac 6 costing £405, Pontiac 8 £440, Oldsmobile 6 £420, 8 £470 and Buick 8/40 £510.<sup>12</sup>

The release coincided with Holden's new all-steel turret top that ran with slight revisions through 1940. The second design showed some styling flair, made possible by the all-steel construction. The door frame was thinned down and the centre pillar reduced to provide less bulky side view.

Leo Pruneau, Holden's Director of Design (1975-1983) comments that the first coupé body was done by a draftsman, but the 1937 body was done by a stylist.<sup>13</sup> Again two body styles were built, one for 6-cylinder chassis and a second for 8-cylinder. The 6-cylinder body's rear end panel swept under the body while the 8-cylinder swept out. The 6-cylinder body was also fitted to Vauxhall 25hp chassis and a unique convertible coupé version made with a patented opening roof.

The G series Vauxhall was released in Australia on Wednesday 10th March 1937, with the first display advertising appearing in the newspapers the preceding day. The All-enclosed coupé and the seven-seater GL



*Second series body on a 1938 Chevrolet Standard Chassis. Image from the sale brochure.*

were also available from the release date and the early series cars ran until July 1938, up to chassis number G4863. A series of updates were introduced over a period of 4 months. The convertible coupé was on the drawing board from the very early days of the model's inception. The body style number was added at the last moment on the January 1937 GMH Specification sheet, and the model added to the range in mid 1938 costing £430.<sup>14</sup>

An image of the convertible appeared in *The Australian Motorist* September issue but then nothing appeared.<sup>15</sup> Although introduced just after the changes were released the GY series, early built convertibles still had some of the earlier models features such as the earlier bumpers, overriders, bonnet mouldings, etc. The GMH photos of the day clearly show cars with these early features. The external features of the updated model were introduced at chassis number G6410.



*Second series body in Holden's experimental workshop*

There are several pictures also of the later G series convertible coupés with these easily seen later bumpers. The number of convertible Vauxhall 25s produced is unclear but certainly more than the 6 in the Woodville body production chart. A 1939 GMH sales sheet shows 11 sold and body No 36 was produced in August 1938, interestingly this body was not fitted to a chassis until January 1940 leading to speculation this body was one of the 6 as built in 1940.

In late 1938 the All-enclosed coupé body was discontinued on the Vauxhall chassis but according to production records two were produced in 1939. There are only 3-4 known surviving All-enclosed coupés and two surviving convertibles.<sup>16</sup>

Charlie Phillips said the design of the convertible roof car was a "guinea pig" for any potential car make.<sup>17</sup> The second version was produced in greater numbers but over five years. T J Richards built their own body for Dodge and Plymouth for 1937-38 and Ford Australia made a V8 Standard and DeLuxe for 1939-40.

On rare occasions Holden departed from the American styling, one example being the 1937 Chevrolet body. The Chevrolet design ran a swage line from the bottom of the bonnet side panel through the cowl side

into the front door panel. Holden eliminated the swage in the door and modified the cowl side to suit. Holden also redesigned Chevrolet's bonnet side, eliminating the louvres and replacing them with a stylised design. This was the first time Holden had pressed any sheetmetal forward of the firewall.

Fitting the various body styles to the different GM chassis was simplified by Holden having two basic bodies. A COP (Chevrolet - Oldsmobile - Pontiac) and a BOP (Buick - Oldsmobile - Pontiac) body. The COP accommodated 6-cylinder chassis and the BOP the 8-cylinder chassis. All coupe bodies could then be



*1937 Oldsmobile 6 (117" wheelbase) vrs 1937 Chevrolet 6 (112.25" wheelbase). Note how the rear wheel sits further forward in the mudguard.*

## CHEVROLET



*Second series body on a Chevrolet Chassis. Images from a GMH PR photo album. Top to bottom 1937, 1938, 1939 and 1940.*



**OLDSMOBILE**

**Right:** Oldsmobile 1939 Oldsmobile 60 coupé from the sales brochure.



**Left:** Oldsmobile Chassis. Images from 1937 sales brochure. Top L37 8-cylinder coupé and below F37 6-cylinder coupe.



**Right:** 40 Oldsmobile 6-cylinder coupé from GMH PR photo album.



**Left:** 1937 F37 Oldsmobile coupé from GMH PR photo album.



## PONTIAC

**Left:** 1938 Pontiac 6-cylinder coupé from GMH PR photo album.

**Right:** Bob Bennett's 1938 Pontiac coupé.



1939 Pontiac 6-cylinder Silver Arrow coupé from GMH PR photo album.



1940 Pontiac Silver Streak coupé from GMH PR photo album.





**BUICK**

**Left:** 1938 Buick 8/40 coupe from the sales brochure.

**Right above:** 1937 Buick Series 40 coupé from the sales brochure.

**Right:** 1938 Buick 40 coupé from the GMA PR Photo album.



produced using common BOP-COP parts, specific BOP or COP parts and tooling inserts. Insert tools were used where different makes could be distinguished by inserting a smaller tool into a larger press tool to achieve different styling. The dash panel was an example of this innovation.

Vauxhall arrived after this designation was conceived and used the COP body. They still had to make adjustments for wheelbase variations. For example the 1935/6 chassis on Chevrolet varied as follows 1935 standard 107", 1936 standard 109" and the Master was 113", the adjustment was made in the door width. Wheelbase variations were as follows:

Chevrolet	112 - 113"	
Pontiac 6	112 - 117"	8 120 - 122"
Oldsmobile 6	115"	8 121 - 124"
Buick		8 118 - 122"
Vauxhall	114"	

The minor wheelbase variations could be adjusted in the wheel arch location, cowl or door width (see below).

*Item from the September 1<sup>st</sup> issue of The Australian Motorist.*

**NEW VAUXHALL CONVERTIBLE CABRIOLET**



Recent letters and articles in the motor magazines have stressed the demand for a body design that would combine the safety and comfort of a sedan with the fresh air and sunshine of an open touring model. To meet this demand, Messrs. S. A. Cheney Pty. Ltd., of 22 Flinders St., have just released the Vauxhall 25 h.p. Cabriolet.

This model has been expressly designed for Australian conditions in Holden's Body Works at Woodville, S.A., and the whole of the hood folds back, leaving the side windows and windscreen firmly mounted in the steel body. The operation of folding back the hood is easily made by one person, as there are only two folding brackets to be released and the

hood supports automatically fold themselves as the hood cover is pushed back to allow full sunshine and fresh air to all of the six passengers.

The front seat is adjustable, and there is ample room for six passengers. A spacious luggage boot and full equipment, including no-draught ventilation, makes this an ideal car for the motorist desiring this type of body.

These cabriolets, in the latest color combinations, can be inspected at the showrooms of S. A. Cheney Pty. Ltd., 22 Flinders Street, Melbourne.



## VAUXHALL

**Right:** 1937 Vauxhall 25 GY coupe with Chev size body. Note body tucks in whereas the larger body the rear swept out. **Left:** is the convertible roof version.

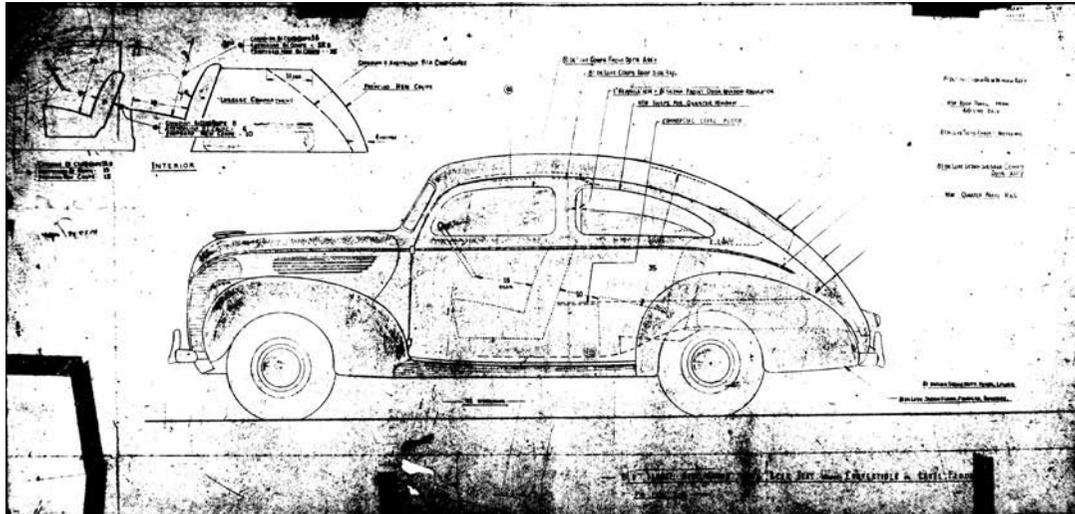


Les Power image

### NOTES

- 1 "Body by Holden," GM-H Engineering, 1944, 10.
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More second series cars exist than the first with a number of Chevrolets identified. Fewer than 8 Pontiacs. A few Buicks Oldsmobiles and at least 3 Vauxhalls, one being a convertible.



## OTHER MAKES



**Above:** 1939 Ford coupe drawing an illustration.

**Right:** 1937 Plymouth coupe with body by T J Richards..

**Left:** 1936 Hudson Terraplane with a body possibly made by Ruskin Body works..



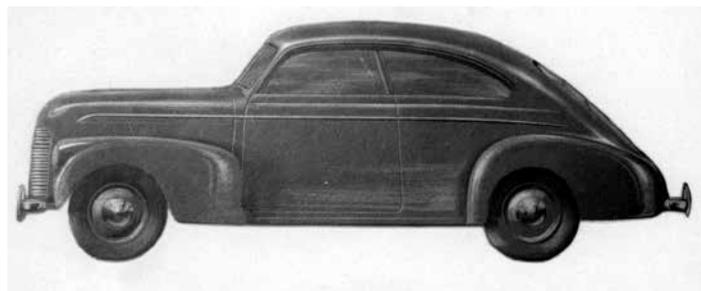
## WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN



There is evidence of Holden preparing for two different coupe styles for 1942 production. The sketch above was prepared in 1938 and shows a continuation of the second design type continuing. The image above from 1939 shows a wooden buck in Holden's Experimental workshop with a styling similar to the Fisher Body Aero body. This differs in that the 'B' pillar is vertical whereas the Fisher body used a sloping 'B' pillar.

### Acknowledgements

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 Leigh Whitfield - Vauxhall



### Woodville production notes

1935 - Calendar year  
 1936 - Jan - Oct.  
 1937 - Nov 36 - Oct 37  
 1938 - Nov 37 - Oct 38  
 1939 - Nov 38 - Jan 40  
 1940 - Feb 40 - Dec 40  
 1941 - Calendar year

	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
Buick Coupé 8/40		121	114	43			
Buick Coupé 8/50, 8/60		35	12				
Chevrolet Coupé Master	180	290	207	128	33	149	32
Chevrolet Coupé Std		1,209	834	587	588	132	30
Chevrolet Coupé Business		320	212	105	83		
Oldsmobile Coupé 6	90	284	197	135	91	29	6
Oldsmobile Coupé 8	20	16	12				
Pontiac Coupé 6	60	184	166	138	85	36	4
Pontiac Coupé 8		21	23				
Vauxhall Coupé 25			61	30			
Vauxhall Drophead 25							6*
Totals	350	2,480	1,838	1,166	880	352	72

1935 figures Estimated. Woodville numbers include both American and Aust style coupés. Recorded in 1941 but produced in 1938.

Norm Darwin



# Early Australian Automotive Design

The first fifty years

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