

# MINIATURE AUTO

**Issue 228**

*August ~ September  
2007*

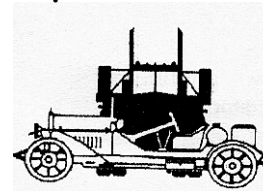
New Zealand

*38th Year of publication*



*Graham White's magnificent scratch built London RL bus*

**A publication for and by collectors and builders of model vehicles**



**Miniature Auto is the bi-monthly newsletter of  
The New Zealand Model Vehicle Club (Inc.)**

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## ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO MA NOW!!

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings to all Members.....

Aaaah! – The wonders of modern technology!! Isn't the Internet a great tool.....It really is the best thing since sliced bread!! By now you've probably already guessed that I've made an online purchase of a model. But not just any model – but one I've been waiting about 2 years for!! Incidentally, this company only sells their products online at the moment anyway, but the point of this wee spiel was to remind you about how easy it is to keep your modeling hobby up to date. This latest purchase was done in the comfort of my home and I only had to let my fingers do all the work, ably assisted by a small red plastic card with 16 numbers and a magnetic stripe on it. I know that many Members also buy a lot of their models in a similar way, but I wonder whether the term 'addiction' should be applied to the collecting hobby or the method of purchase?? – Probably both??

Thanks to Howard for his piece last issue re - the AGM competitions. He made some excellent and valid arguments for introducing some changes to the competitions and I for one have heard several members in the past saying, that they would enter the competitions if they had more relevant classes to choose from. Well now's the time to fix it!! Please – re read Howard's article and please do talk about it at your Branch club nights. Please also remember that there is nothing to stop you from adapting some or all of these changes into your Branch's Competitions to give some fresh scope for all Members to be involved with. Let us know how you get on.

Yours in modeling afflictions

*Shayne Spicer*



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## EDITORIAL:

How time flies when you are trying to get a newsletter out! Things would be a lot easier if I had oodles of contributions to pick from. Yes I know it has been said before, but the contents of *MA* are all up to the Members. I have heard comments that there is too much on diecasts or that the newsletter is only for housekeeping of the Club. That may be so in a certain extent, but the reason it is included is that it would give members from other regions an idea of what the 'others' are up to. Not all our members can get along to local meetings.

To take up the point about what is or isn't covered in *MA*; this issue may help redress the balance. Ex-member Graham White's scratch built London Transport RT bus in 1/24 scale. Surely scratch building is the ultimate in modelling? Granted it is not an original publication and is reproduced with kind permission of the UK magazine, Model Collector. Congratulations to Graham.

Another piece reproduced from another publication is the interview with Paul Thompson first published in the Southland Express, for which permission has been granted also for it to be reproduced in *MA*. Although it may be said that any publicity is good publicity; you can't help wonder if you aren't just sending out a burglar's shopping list....

Back to the subject of contributions. Some ideas that may get you started:

- Kit review ~ tips and hints.
- Book or magazine review
- Model comparison of the same subject by different manufacturers
- What the latest from your favourite makers is like
- Display methods
- Restoring old diecasts.

Don't worry if you think it has been done before; there is always someone who will appreciate it. An instance is an article in a UK magazine covering the basics of diecast restoration; "Ah ha", I thought, there won't be anything useful in this, but when I read it, I realised there was quite a lot that I did not know about.

Any and All contributions most welcome.

*Let's hear from YOU!*

Happy modelling,



## PAUL THOMPSON INTERVIEW

By Hamish McNeilly

When Wyndam man Paul Thompson needed space to house his toy car collection he did what most people do for their cars; he built a garage.

While his mother's Mazda 121 can still fit in the garage if some of the collection are moved. Paul said the garage was built because he was running out of room to house his toy cars. Paul said he has been collecting the miniature cars, which included Fun Ho!, Franklin Mint, Hot Wheels and Matchbox amongst others, ever since he was given a red plastic Corvette car when he turned one, over 40 years ago.

He said his collecting did not become serious until he began work at the Alliance freezing works as a 23-year-old and with some money in his pocket he decided to take his interest in model cars to another level.

Formerly divided into indoor and outdoor toys when he was a child, Paul said when he became a serious collector he began to realise the beauty of the cars and kept them in their boxes.

"When I was a kid I took them out of the box to play with them, but now I only take them out to dust or polish them up for competition."

Now with 9053 cars all meticulously logged in books, Paul was initially hesitant when asked how much he has spent on a collection, which is one of the largest in New Zealand, but he reveals it would be in the vicinity of \$400,000.

While he wasn't sure of the collection's value, he said it would be enough for him to retire on, if he can bring himself to sell his pride and joy.

"I would like to get up to 10,000 or so until I turn 50 and then maybe sell them. I have been offered big money for a few separate items, but I don't like the idea of selling the collection individually or even selling it and it went overseas."

He said one possible option would be for the collection to be housed in a museum so it would be open for people to see it.

With most of the cars now produced in China, Paul said "if you spend big money you get the collector ones from England."

A keen motorsport fan, Paul said he loves the look of the miniature cars which nowadays are incredibly detailed, compared to the toys when he was growing up.

A member of the New Zealand Model Vehicle Club Southland Branch for 20 years, Paul said he regularly enters competitions where the trophies are awarded at the end of the year for the most points, which he has won four times.

With no particular favourite, Paul said he likes all the cars in his collection, but showed the *Southland Express* a couple of rare cars, including an in-the-box original Kojak car from the



television series.

Paul said he loves the public viewing his cars “because they come in thinking I have a couple of hundred and when I open the garage door I watch their jaws drop.”

Paul said the public can view his collection by ringing him on (03) 206 4613 to arrange an appointment and a donation would be appreciated.

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## PRINCE REGENT

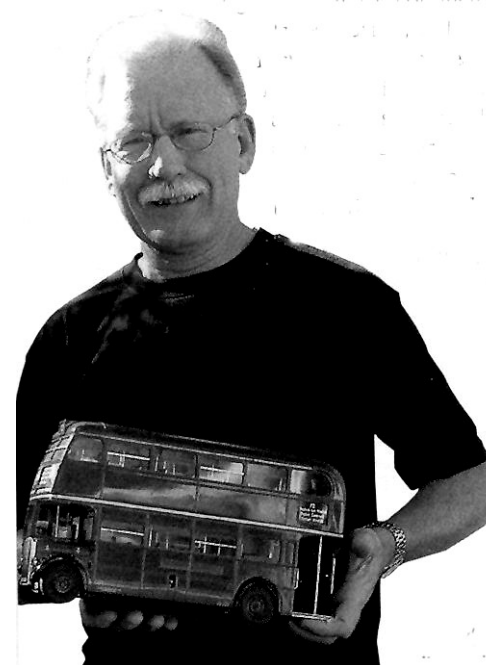
**Ex-patriot Graham White, now living in New Zealand, shows off the 1/24th scale RT he's built from scratch!**

My 1/24th scale scratch-built model depicts a post-war RT from 1948. It measures 13 inches in length, with aluminium bodywork and fibreglass roofing. The interior is fully detailed right down to the conductor's bell press button and includes patterned seating made from timber, with all the necessary handrails attached. Similar treatment has been given to the driver's cab, which includes the pre-selector gear control lever and a brass fire extinguisher. The model has taken two years to complete and I hope I've managed to capture all the charm of a London bus of this period.

### CATCHING THE BUG

I've been collecting model buses since the 1970s, many of them in white metal form. As I was born in the London red route region, the theme soon became London Transport. A couple of years ago I decided I needed a project that was more challenging than kit building, something to flex my moderate handyman skills and enable me to wake up the basic tools in my workshop.

Sun Star had just released the Routemaster in 1/24<sup>th</sup> scale. At that time there'd been no mention of the following up with the RT, so I decided to give it a go myself. Obtaining plans of the real vehicle was the starting point. I enlarged some 1/72<sup>nd</sup> scale drawings I'd managed to get hold of. Studying these, I soon realized that the RT was not just a 'biscuit tin' but a construction of subtle curves, tapers and corners.



I felt that the wheels would kill the model if they were not spot on, so I took impressions from a similar scale model with resin casting. The chassis work was straightforward once the small quantities of brass and metal had been sourced. I decided to construct the model in a way that enabled it to be dismantled again; this was essential as it enabled me access to paint and add the interior detailing. Then I fixed the roof on permanently.





Labouring late into the night, I drilled 1,800 1/8<sup>th</sup> holes on the drill press and filed out the window apertures. These had to be duplicated on the inner panels, as the body is double skinned to take the window glazing. I got stuck on the rear section, being insufficiently skilled to form the three dimensional curve needed for the rear dome. Fibreglass was an ideal solution to this problem. Instead of scribing panel lines into the body, I applied Evergreen plastic strip prior to painting and used a similar technique to achieve the interior floor patterns. I struggled with the decoration but had fun printing the destination blinds, having purchased the Johnson fonts from the London Transport Museum.

Had I known the RT was coming along in this scale, I may not have given myself the satisfaction of building this model and the rewards that have followed. I'm so glad I did. Every time I look at the finished product I have to remind myself I actually made it.



Mock up at earlier stage—note the fibreglass roof

Left: This model depicts one of the earlier versions of the RT bus and is 1/24th scale, measuring 13 inches in length.



Platform entrance includes passenger and conductor bell push buttons



*Reproduced by kind permission of Model Collector, an IPC/INSPIRE magazine.  
Originally published in the September 2007 issue.*



## RESTORATION OF A CORGI MERCEDES 600 PULLMAN

Corgi first issued this model in 1964. The model came with working windscreen wipers, dappled front windscreen (to represent rain) and rear passenger windows that slid up and down. The model remained in the Corgi Toys range until 1969 and appears to have only been issued in a metallic maroon colour with the usual plastic interior and chrome plated parts.



I have several of these models in various states of repair from poor to excellent – almost every model I have seen has chipping to the maroon colour scheme and most have been missing their Mercedes bonnet emblem. Even the so-called “mint” models on eBay all seem to have flaws and/or missing emblems.... So a non-chipped, fully chromed and “emblemmed” model seems to be a rarity indeed!

In a fit of enthusiasm in July of last year (I decided it was too wet and cold to work on the house, the garage was “reasonably tidy” and any way, I was bored with surfing the Net) I took up the challenge of restoring one of these models. This soon became an exercise in rebuilding the model when I discovered just how difficult it was to match the paint!

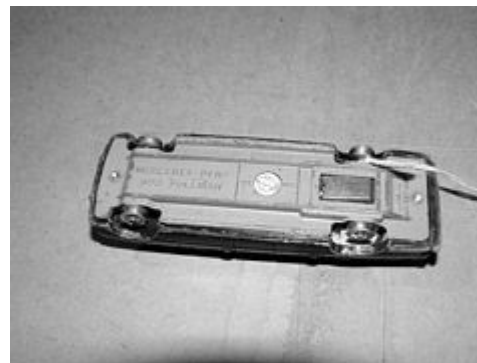
Let me digress here to explain that the metallic maroon used on these models is:

>Darn hard to get off due to it being what appears to be three different layers of paint that make up the metallic maroon, and

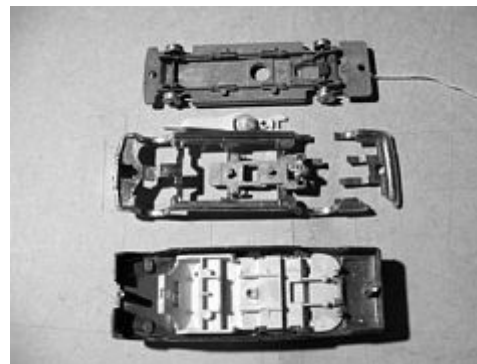
>It has so far proven very difficult to reproduce a colour close to the original due to the mix of these layers.

Layer one appears to be a top coat of clear lacquer; layer two appears to be a sort of “candy apple red” and layer three appears to be a metallic undercoat of gold. I came to this conclusion due to the fact that my commercial paint stripper took 4-5 coats to get down through to the bare metal! The first coat didn’t seem to do much... but I suspect it took off the clear coat... the second and third coats ate through the red and it took two more coats of stripper to remove the gold. I continue to experiment with mixing to try and get a match but decided, in the interests of actually achieving something, to paint the model metallic silver.

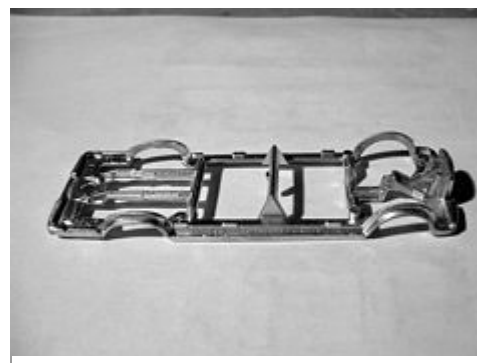
**So here we go with a run down of the steps I took to rebuild the model...**



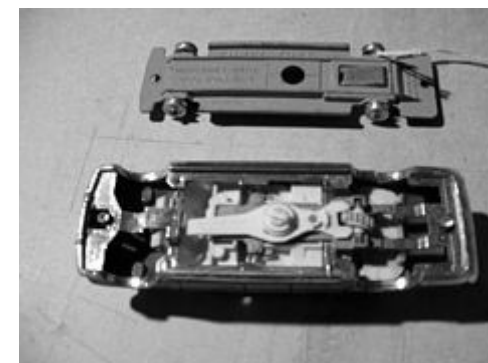
1. Drill out the base-plate rivets to enable removal of components.



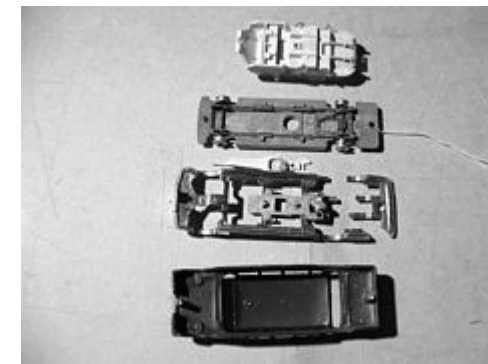
3. Remove the plastic chromed parts (bumpers and side trim) and wiper mechanism.



5. Strip, re-glue and repair the components, then re-spray the parts with primer/undercoat (grey) and chrome – I used stripper obtained from the SuperCheap Auto store.



2. Remove the base plate to expose the internal components



4. Remove the interior and windscreens to facilitate cleaning of the parts and



6. Next clean and make any necessary repairs to the body. Re-spray with primer/undercoat, sand where necessary, then re-spray (in this case in metallic silver).



7. Take the cleaned interior components and re-assemble, taking care to position the windscreen wipers properly and ensuring the rear passenger windows are fitted back properly.



8. The tricky part is now to re-fit the interior and glazing into the body shell without the passenger side windows dropping out of place during the fitting process.



13. Then insert the metal driving cam into its central position.



14. Carefully place the plastic switch over the cam.



9. Carefully replace the chrome trim component



10. Now fit the wiper driving mechanism ensuring it is up the right way.



15. Pop the baseplate back and ensure everything fits together properly. At this stage you have to decide whether to re-rivet the base or use small screws to fix it in place.



11. Locate the hole in the wiper housing at the dashboard end of the car.



12. Carefully fit the plastic pin into this hole and fit the component into place.

16. Since I have not fixed the base plate you'll have to do with this "finished" shot! Reproduction tyres still to go on.

So there we have it – relatively easy to rebuild the model and my next attempt will be a two-tone mask sprayed version in gloss maroon and silver, followed by versions in black and maroon, maroon and gold and hopefully, at some stage in the future, a metallic maroon version!



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## SNIPPETS

### Caught out!

Apparently the so called 1/76 scale models produced by Corgi in their Trackside Series aren't that scale at all but 1/72. Okay, that does not sound much of an 'error' and I assume it only applies to the smaller models such as the Bedford, Austin and Ford vans, but in model railway terms, it is significant. The reasoning by Corgi is that they would 'look better' to the slightly bigger scale (that is perceived value) and is quite a common ploy amongst the toy makers, but these are not sold as toys but models. It is going to be interesting to see the models made by Oxford Diecast who are virtually duplicating the Corgi products as far as the small vans and cars goes.

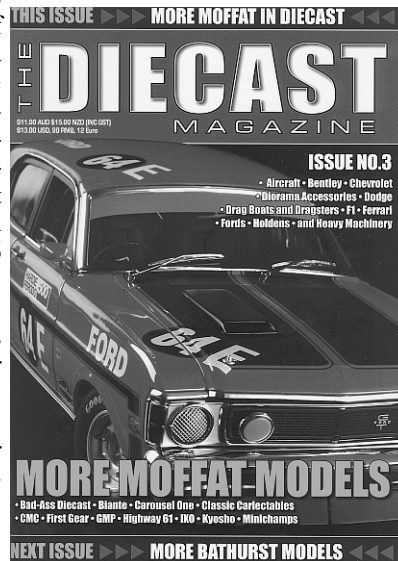
Jack Odell, the legend of Matchbox Toys died on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2007 at the age of 87. Jack Odell's skills as an engineer were pivotal in the success of the brand.

The Australian The Diecast Magazine has been in production for some time now. It has had several names starting with Diecast Downunder (I think), and the 1:18 Diecast Magazine.. There have been several attempts at getting a model magazine off the ground, but this one seems to have stayed the distance. One thing that could be said about it was the excellent photography and these are further enhanced by the top line heavy grade gloss paper it is printed on. A lot of the magazine is concerned with reviews of models with a minimum of text to accompany the photos. Much of the content still concentrates on 1/18 scale, especially Classic Carlectables, Bianta and GMP (Georgia Model Products). The Diecast Magazine is available in New Zealand at \$15 per copy and is issued bi-monthly. Not Just Toys and Trains of Lower Hutt stock the magazine if you can't find it locally. Their phone number is 0800 026 520 (free calling)

Talking of Not Just Toys and Trains, their Website has just been updated and has many articles for the collector on it. Check out [www.notjusttoys.co.nz](http://www.notjusttoys.co.nz)

Whatevernext? Mattel have put out Hot Wheel cars for girls ~ well sort of. They do have the track and are encouraged to race them....

Have you anything for 'Snippets'? Forward it to **MA!!**



## THAT'S NEWS? - THAT'S NEWS!

### Oxford Diecast UK;

- 1/43 Bedford CA vans
- 1/43 Bedford HA vans
- 1/76 Bedford TK circus artics
- 1/76 Scania Modern rigs
- 1/43 TX4 London Taxi
- 1/76 TX4 London Taxi
- 1/43 FX4 London Taxi
- 1/76 FX4 London Taxi
- 1/43 Land Rover series 1 80" wb
- 1/43 Land Rover series 1 88" wb
- 1/43 Land Rover series 1 109" wb
- 1/76 Land Rover series 1 80" wb
- 1/76 Land Rover series 1 88" wb
- 1/76 Land Rover series 1 109" wb
- 1/76 Morris Minor Traveller
- 1/76 Morris Minor open convertible
- 1/76 Morris Minor closed convertible
- 1/76 Ford Cortina mk.1
- 1/76 Ford Cortina mk.2



### Pocket Bond Classix, UK:

- 1/76 Morris J van 10cwt
- 1/76 Austin 101 van (as per Morris J)
- 1/76 Ford E83W 10cwt van
- 1/76 Ford Zephyr 6 mk.1
- 1/76 Austin Devon saloon





### **Classic Carlectables, Australia:**

1/18 and 1/43 2007 Ford V8 Supercars 888 Racing, Craig Lowndes or Jamie Whincup  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Ford V8 Supercars FPR, Winterbottom or Jason Richards  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Ford V8 Supercars Stone Brothers Racing, Courtenay or Ingall  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Ford V8 Supercars Dick Johnson Racing, Steve Johnson or Davison  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Ford V8 Supercars Britek Racing, Jason Bright or Gurr  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Holden V8 Supercars HRT, Mark Skaife or Todd Kelly  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Holden V8 Supercars Total HSV, Rick Kelly or Garth Tander  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Holden V8 Supercars Tasman Motorsports, Richards or Murphy  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Holden V8 Supercars Perkins Jack Daniels, Perkins or Price  
1/18 and 1/43 2007 Holden V8 Supercars Supecheap Auto, Dunrell or McConville

### **Cooee Concepts, Australia:**

1/76 Melbourne W7 Tram  
1/64 Ford XY taxi 'Silver Top', Melbourne      1/64 Ford XY taxi 'Yellow Cab' Brisbane  
1/64 Ford XY taxi 'RSL' Sydney.

### **GPM (Georgia Model Products), USA:**

1/6 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air dashboard      1/6 1965 Ford Mustang dashboard  
1/6 1967 Chevrolet Corvette dashboard.

### **Highway 61, USA:**

1/6 1957 Chevrolet Corvette.  
*Yes, that is right, 1/6 scale. It is 70cm long and weighs 9kg and will cost \$A1,600!*

### **True Scale Miniatures, USA:**

1/18 and 1/43 'Snap On' Garage Tool Sets

Wanted Wanted Wanted wanted Wanted wanted

Kitset News,  
Diecast News.  
Any Hobby News whatsoever!