

Zeitschrift



VW Taigun concept vehicles.

January 2013

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The Toy Department
2012 Car Awards
The VW Rometsch**

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Find-a-Word answers
Plus lots more...**



Club VeeDub Sydney.
www.clubvw.org.au

A member of the NSW Council of Motor Clubs. Now affiliated with CAMS.



Club VeeDub Sydney Committee 2012-13.

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|---------------------------------------|--|--|
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| Motorsport Captain: | Rudi Frank motorsport@clubvw.org.au | 0418 442 953 |
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| General Committee: | Laurie & Gwen Murray Leigh Harris Mark Stevens | Ray & Shirley Pleydon Grace Rosch Quentin Robbins |
| Canberra Committee: | Chairman: Bruce Walker Secretary: Renee Richards Treasurer: Bruce Walker Autofest/Events: Simon Mead Registrar: Iven Laufer | 0400 119 220 0438 113 126 0400 119 220 0411 270 260 (02) 6254 1142 |

Club VeeDub membership.

Membership of Club VeeDub Sydney is open to all Volkswagen owners. The cost is \$45 for 12 months.

Monthly meetings.

Monthly Club VeeDub meetings are held at the Greyhound Social Club Ltd., 140 Rookwood Rd, Yagoona, on the **third Thursday of each month**, from 7:30 pm. All our members, friends and visitors are most welcome.

Correspondence.

| | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| Club VeeDub Sydney PO Box 1135 Parramatta NSW 2124 | or | Club VeeDub (Secretary) 14 Willoughby Cct Grassmere NSW 2570 (02) 9534 4825 |
|--|-----------|--|

Our magazine.

Zeitschrift (German for 'magazine') is published monthly by Club VeeDub Sydney Inc. Members with email details receive Zeitschrift as a full-colour PDF from our website. Printed black and white copies are available in limited numbers at the meetings.

We welcome all letters and contributions of general VW interest. These may be edited for reasons of space, clarity, spelling or grammar. Deadline for all contributions is the first Thursday of each month; late submissions will be held over.

Opinions expressed in Zeitschrift are those of the writers, and do not necessarily represent those of Club VeeDub Sydney. Club VeeDub Sydney, and its members and contributors, cannot be held liable for any consequences arising from any information printed in the magazine.

Back issues are available as full-colour PDFs from the Editor at the monthly meeting - please bring your own USB stick. Old issues (2006-on) are also available at www.clubvw.org.au

Articles may be reproduced with an acknowledgment to *Zeitschrift, Club VeeDub Sydney*.

We thank our VW Nationals sponsors:

25 years.

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*Please have respect for the committee members and their families
by only phoning at reasonable hours.*

SUNDAY JANUARY 20TH 2013



Pics from 2012



Join us for Picnic by the Sea!

Meet at Uncle Leo's Diner, the Crossroads, Liverpool, at 10:00am, departing at 10:30am and finishing at Stanwell Park at 12:30pm. If you're not up for a cruise head straight to Stanwell Park and meet us under the Club VW Marquee.

Families and kids are all invited, with a free BBQ lunch of snags and rolls along with ice cold drinks. There is a great playground and of course the beach. All donations on the day will go to the Cancer Council.

Contact Aaron Hawker – 0413 003 998

VW Pizza and Pasta Restaurant Night

Let's start off 2013 with a Pizza and Pasta night at Monte Carlo's Pizzeria at Riverwood. Great Italian food, best pizzas in southern Sydney.

Bring Your Own Grog.

Don't forget to wear your best Hawaiian shirt!



Saturday 2 February

From 7:00pm

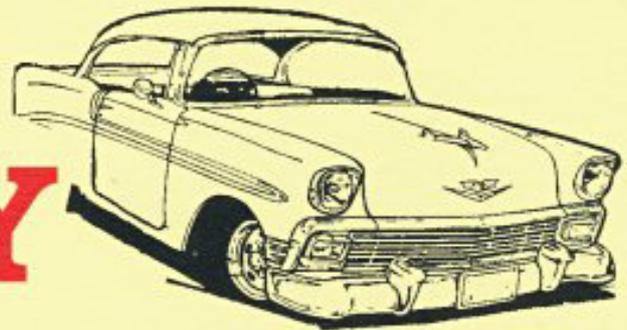


**Monte Carlo Pizzeria
208 Belmore Rd
Riverwood**

(parking in the rear - enter laneway
off Cairns St)

Ring Dave Birchall on 9534-4825 to confirm your booking and numbers - leave a message if no answer. Name and number of people attending! Close-off for booking is Wednesday 30th Jan.

ANNUAL SYDNEY SUPER SWAP



**SUNDAY
17th FEBRUARY
2013
FROM 6AM**

HAWKESBURY SHOWGROUND

Racecourse Rd, Clarendon NSW
opposite Richmond RAAF Base

Car Parts & Collectables

Veteran & Vintage Cars

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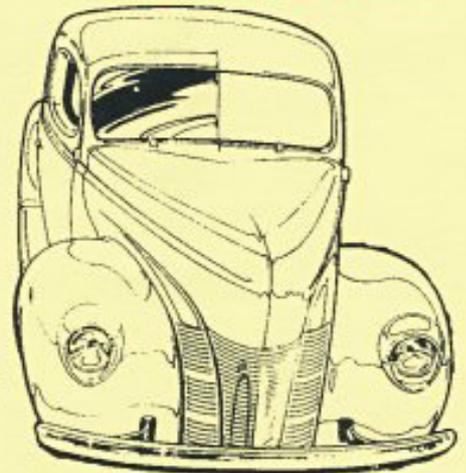
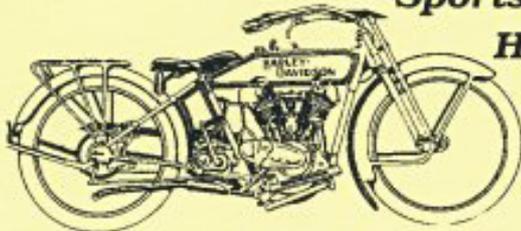
Hot Rods & Customs

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Information:

Ph 0410 44 SWAP
7927

From 17/1/13

Website www.vvcaa.com.au

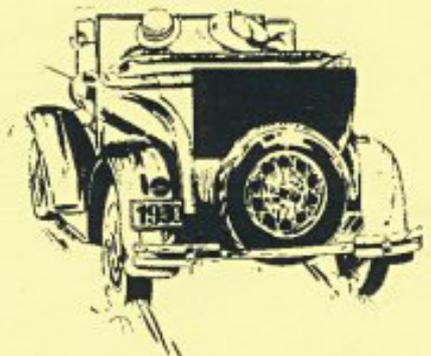


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INCLUDES ONE ADULT \$20
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LOOKERS \$5

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WEEKEND SWAP SITE PASS (1 ADULT)
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VW MAGAZINE SYDNEY VOLKSWAGEN SHOWDOWN 2013
FEBRUARY 23RD



VWMA DRAG RACE SERIES

SYDNEY DRAGWAY

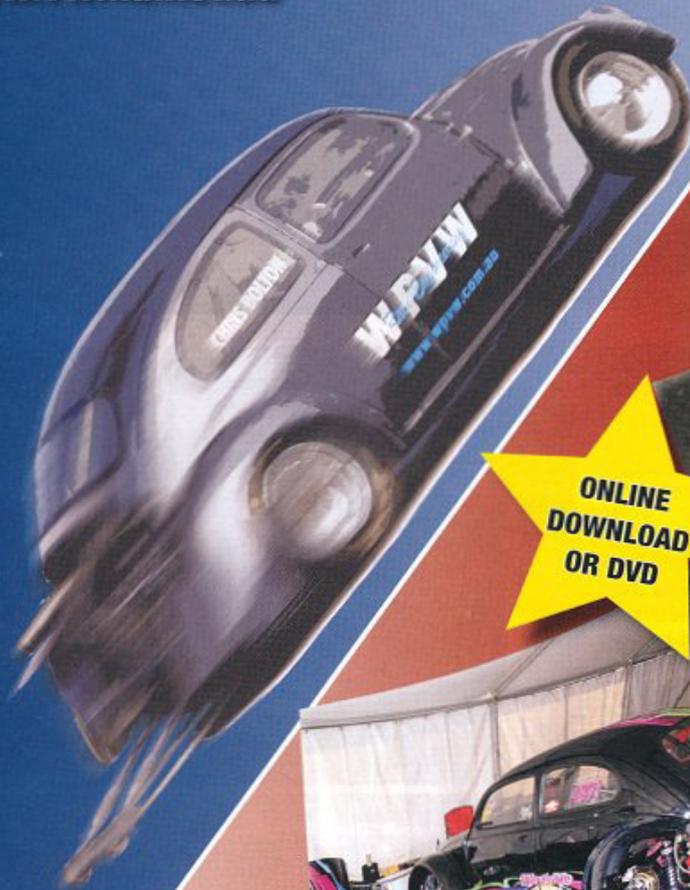
ROUND 1 SATURDAY FEBRUARY 23RD 2013

- DAY/NIGHT 1/4 MILE VW DRAG RACING
- VW RACING BRACKETS STOCK TO PRO
- TOP VW SHOOTOUT • SHOW'N'SHINE
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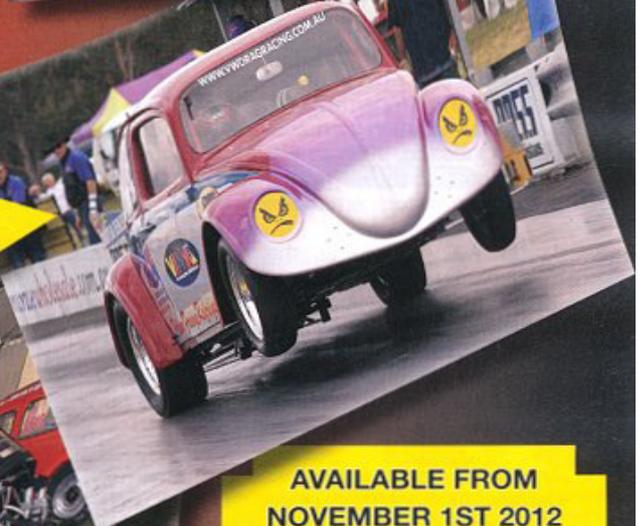
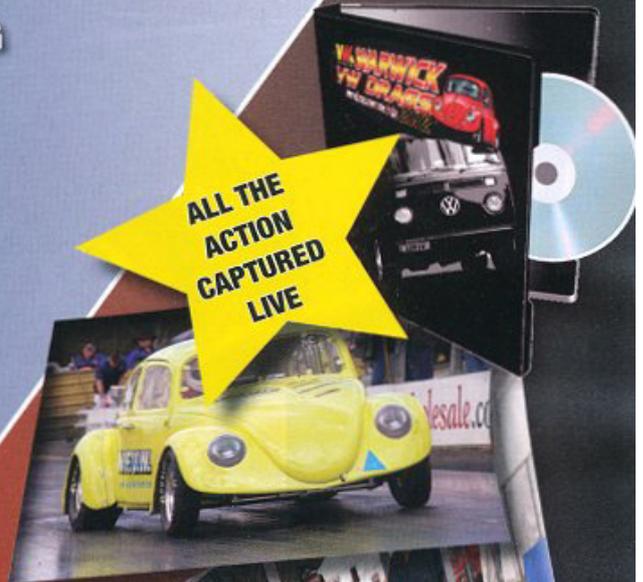
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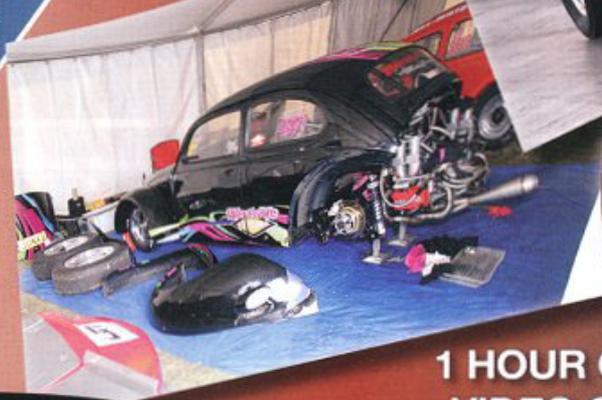
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THIRLMERE FESTIVAL OF STEAM

Sunday 3rd March 2013

The 2013 Thirlmere Festival of Steam is a great escape into our railway past - it's Australia's biggest rail heritage festival, featuring the largest number of steam locomotives to be found anywhere - five steam locomotives in operation!

The Festival is a fantastic day out for all the family, with all the fun of a country fair. Thirlmere village comes alive with a street parade, vintage steam machinery and historic vehicles, food, music, country crafts and displays. Over a hundred market stalls will offer their produce, craftwork, toys, snacks and specialty foods for sale.

The Festival is centred on historic Thirlmere Railway Station and Australia's largest display of historic locomotives, carriages and rail memorabilia at the Rail Heritage Centre, Thirlmere. A popular feature of the Festival is the huge variety of operational steam locomotives, all in operation on the day to provide frequent vintage steam train trips on the Thirlmere Heritage Railway to Buxton and back.

The ever-popular gala parade features bands, floats, performers and displays from local groups, car clubs and businesses, while classic and historic vehicles (including VWs) will line the streets. The parade starts at 1.00 pm. The Steam Festival also has lots of attractions especially for children, including miniature train rides, model train layouts and amusement rides of all kinds.

Entertainment through the day will include 'Music in the Park' from 9.30 am. The music program includes jazz, folk, and country music, and features bands and singers from Picton High School, as well as other popular and acclaimed local acts.



It is with great pride that we extend an official invitation to Club Veedub Sydney to join us at the Thirlmere Festival of Steam 2013 at Thirlmere, NSW, on **Sunday 3rd March 2013**.

All of the car clubs will be located together on both sides of Westbourne Avenue. Please enter from the northern end of Westbourne Avenue, as entry from all other locations will be prohibited. Please ensure that all members are in position by **no later than 9:30am**. There will be overflow parking for latecomers, but it will not be near the show cars. The earlier you arrive the better chance of a good spot. **Join the Club Veedub convoy from Uncle Leo's Caltex Servo, Liverpool Crossroads, at 7:15am for a 7:30am departure.**

The festival hours will be from 10:30am through to 5:00pm. Apart from the parade, which starts at 1:00pm sharp (marshalling from 12:30pm), vehicle movements will be kept to a minimum.

While there is no limit on the number of club display cars, we will be restricting parade vehicle numbers to **2 per club** to allow the parade to move freely and to reduce traffic snarls. If your club could select their appropriate vehicles to enter the parade and let the parade manager know on the day, that would be appreciated. The owners would then be required to ensure their vehicles are made available at the marshalling point in Westbourne Ave at the appropriate time (12:30pm). If they are not there on time, they will not be participating in the parade.

Please don't hesitate to contact me by phone (02) 4677 2462, mobile phone 0409 952 874 or email krmodels@gmail.com



Keiran Ryan, Events Manager

www.thirlmerfestivalofsteam.com.au



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VW Nationals 1988-2013
Sydney, Australia.

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VW Nationals 2013.
25th & 26th May.

VW Show Day,
Fairfield City showgrounds
Sunday 26th May 2013

Super Sprint,
Wakefield Park, Goulburn
Saturday 25th May 2013

Contact: David Birchall
(02) 9534-4825



The Legend Never Dies

www.clubvw.org.au

Von dem Herrn Präsident.

Hi all, well, there are two great events to start the new year off. Firstly the VW Water-cooled Summer Cruise on Sunday 20 Jan 2013; see the calendar and flyer inside this issue for more information. Never mind the name; air-cooled cars are most welcome too. Phone Aaron on 0413 003998.

The second event is the Pizza and Pasta Restaurant Night at the excellent Monte Carlo Pizzeria at Riverwood, on Saturday 2 February. Starts at 7pm. You must ring Dave Birchall on 9534-4834 to book – name and number of people – as places are limited. Don't forget to wear your Hawaiian shirt or dress!

Some great news. While we were at the annual club Christmas party on Thursday 20 December, we heard that Belinda and Leigh Harris welcomed a baby boy, Dylan, to their family. His vital statistics are 3.28 kg and 49 cm long. I might be mistaken but I think young Dylan is the first baby to be born whose parents met at a Club VW event and then were later married. They actually met at a Herbie film night at Smithfield Scout Hall in May 1999.

Dylan was born at 8:25pm on 20 December. Here's something interesting – if he had been born just thirteen minutes earlier, at 8:12pm, then he would have been born at 20:12 on 20/12 2012 !!

We were wondering what Belinda and Leigh were going to name their baby. Leigh said he was NOT going to be named 'David'! Due to their VW enthusiasm, some of us thought that 'Herbie' might have been a great choice – Herbie Harris. Another suggestion was that they name him after Vintage Veedub's Boris Orazem – Boris Harris. No, actually Belinda and Leigh have made a much better choice. Congratulations from everyone at Club Veedub.

Coming up in February is the Sydney VW Drag Racing at WSID on the 23 February 2013. This is a great event that brings together lots VW enthusiasts. I'm working on my bug to have it ready for the event and young Dylan's dad has been doing the same to his turbo bug. Go to www.vwma.net.au for entry forms and all info.

There are more great events coming up in February and March, so stay tuned. The VW Nationals will be here again before we know it! Planning is well under way. We will need some help setting up, packing up and during the long day. If you can lend a hand at either the Supersprint or on show day it would be much appreciated. Please let us know.

Speaking of the Supersprint, our club is very short on CAMS-trained officials to help on the day. If you would like gain your CAMS qualifications please contact Rudi 0418 442 953 and he will tell you how to go about it. It's a great way to start in motor sport.

We've just learned that Volkswagen Group Australia has set a new all-time sales record in 2012. Total VW sales for the year were 54,835, some 22.6% more than the 44,740 sold in 2011. What a fantastic result! Congratulations to everyone at VWGA.

See you soon,

Steve



Why the new heading?!?

Some people might be wondering about why we have a new heading style on the cover. Well the reason is that my Dad and I spoke with VW Australia boss Anke Koekler at the recent opening of Northshore Volkswagen at Artarmon (which I have also written about). She is a lovely lady! She said she loved our club website and our magazine, but asked could we please change the heading? She said that the old heading (in olde-English font), that we have used since 2006, reminded some German people about the old Germany, which brought back some unpleasant memories. Could we use a more modern heading, as a special favour to her?

Sure! So, my Dad spent about an hour and a half designing a new heading (with a little bit of help from me!), and eventually we had found one that we both liked. It is the famous 'VAG' font that VW used in their brochures and ads in Germany in the 1980s, although they don't use it any more. We have kept the yellow, red and black, which are the colours on the German flag. I think it looks really nice!

Anke also said that Dad and I could visit her soon at the Volkswagen head office at Chullora, and have a special tour of the site. I am really looking forward to that!

By Lily (assistant Editor!!) ☺



Kanberra Kapitel report.

Happy 2013 to you all, I hope that everyone had a safe and restful holiday season. With any luck we are revitalised and raring to go for another dubbing year?

In December, the local members set off on our annual Christmas Lights Cruise, there is an article elsewhere on our trek. It worked very well and it was great to see the club members out there to enjoy the trip.

At time of writing, 2013 Summernats is about to commence, and the club will have some cars in the Club Display on the Sunday. Hopefully we'll have a story in next months magazine on this one.

In February we'll have our Canberra AGM, date will be in next months magazine, and it will be held in conjunction with an event at a local Go Kart track. More info to come, locals should also watch their emails for details on this. Whilst it would be great to have some hands-up for committee positions, it would also be great just to have some extra members there, giving us some ideas for events and such. More to come. In March we'll have the Wheels carshow (Sunday 17th) which will be another great day.

We are endeavouring to journey further afield with local members to events in our



vicinity this year, meeting up for events that will be occurring within a few hours of our border. We're open to all suggestions of events so please let us know if you have some details. Members have commented that they want to travel further for events, so we'll give that a go.

Catch you all soon.

Bruce

Klub Kalender.

***** All information correct at time of printing but subject to change - events are sometimes altered or cancelled without notice. Check www.clubvw.org.au for the latest information and any changes.**

January.

Thursday 17th:- CLUB VW MONTHLY MEETING at the Greyhound Social Club, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (right next to Potts Park). Get the latest VW news and views, plus VW socialising, drinks, raffles, trivia and plenty of prizes. Lots of fun, all welcome. 8:00pm start.

Sunday 20th:- VW Summer Cruise 2013. Meet at Uncle Leo's Caltex Roadhouse, Liverpool Crossroads, at 10:00am. Cruise departs at 10:30 and finishes at Stanwell Park at 12:30pm. Or just meet us at Stanwell Park if you prefer. Families and kids are all invited, with free BBQ sausage sizzle and drinks. Kids' playground nearby, large grassy park and the beach close by. Bring your own picnic if you wish. All donations to the Cancer Council. All VWs welcome - water and air cooled. Phone Aaron on 0413 003998.

Saturday 26th:- Australia Day Supercar d'Elegance in Macquarie St, Sydney. The NRMA Motorfest is no more but a new agency has taken over the event. It is now for expensive luxury cars, but if you would like to take part, contact Supercar d'Elegance directly on (02) 9646 1005 or go to www.supercardelegance.com.au.

Monday 28th:- Canberra General Meeting at the Canberra Labor Club, 16 Petrie Plaza, Civic, at 7:30pm.

February.

Saturday 2nd:- Pizza and Pasta Restaurant Night at Monte Carlo Pizzeria, 208 Belmore Rd Riverwood, from 7:00pm. Ring Dave Birchall on 9534 4825 to confirm your booking and numbers - leave a message if no answer. Leave your name and number of people attending! Closeoff for booking is Wed 16th Jan. Great Italian food, best pizzas in southern Sydney. BYOG. Don't forget to wear your best Hawaiian shirt!

Thursday 7th:- Magazine Cut-off Date for articles, letters and For-Sales.

Thursday 14th:- Committee Meeting at the Greyhound Social Club, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (next to Potts Park).

Sunday 17th:- Sydney Super Swapmeet at Hawkesbury Showground, racecourse Rd Richmond, from 6:00am. \$20 one-man swap sites, additional adults \$5. Lookers \$5. Free parking. Weekend passes and Saturday setup available for large sites. Car parts and collectables, veteran and vintage cars, customs, classics, street machines. Phone 0410 447927 for more info or visit www.vvcaa.com.au

Thursday 21st:- CLUB VW MONTHLY MEETING at the Greyhound Social Club, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (right next to Potts Park). Get the latest VW news and views, plus VW socialising, drinks, raffles, trivia and plenty of prizes. Lots of fun, all welcome. 8:00pm start.

Sunday 23rd:- Sydney VW Drag Racing at WSID, Eastern Creek. Day/Night 1/4-mile drag racing. VW Bracket Racing, stock to pro. Top VW Shootout, Show n Shine, Twilight Cruise, entertainment, plenty of food and drink. Presented by VW Magazine Australia - visit www.vwma.net.au for more information.

Monday 25th:- Canberra General Meeting at the Canberra Labor Club, 16 Petrie Plaza, Civic, at 7:30pm.

March.

Sunday 3rd:- Thirlmere Festival of Steam 2013 at Thirlmere, NSW. Steam train rides, steam museum (Trainworks), model railways, bands, dancers, food and drink stalls, kids rides, traders, classic car display. **Club VW convoy meets at Uncle Leo's Caltex at Liverpool Crossroads (UBD 288 D6) at 7:30am for a 7:45am departure.** Arrive by 9:30am. Street parade (2 VWs max) at 1pm.

Thursday 7th:- Magazine Cut-off Date for articles, letters and For-Sales.

Saturday 9th:- Tea Gardens Hawks Nest Motorfest, held at Myall Park Sports Reserve, Yamba St Hawks Nest. Exhibits of Veteran, Vintage, Classic and Unique cars and motorcycles, plus displays, stands, music, food and drink. Special VW parking area. \$10 per vehicle. Be there before 9:45am, trophy presentation at 1pm. For more info contact Phil Hoare on (02) 4997 0082.

Thursday 14th:- Committee Meeting at the Greyhound Social Club, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (next to Potts Park).

Sunday 17th:- Old Car Annual Show and Shine at Flower Power, Moorebank. We invite you to bring your classic VW to display. Gates open 8:00am. \$10 entry; \$2 spectators. Trophies will be presented at 1:30pm. Phone Noel on 0409 601827 for more info. **VWs meet first at McDonalds, Revesby**, cnr River and Milperra Rds, at 7:30am. Then we can all arrive (and park) together.

Thursday 21th:- CLUB VW MONTHLY MEETING at the **Greyhound Social Club**, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (right next to Potts Park). Get the latest VW news and views, plus VW socialising, drinks, raffles, trivia and plenty of prizes. Lots of fun, all welcome. 8:00pm start.

Sunday 24th:- Sydney German Autofest, organised by the Mercedes Benz Club of NSW. Will be a new park venue, within easy reach of most Sydneysiders, with plenty of shade and grassed areas, and space for 200 or more cars to be displayed. We will have more info soon. Contact John Assarapin (MBClub) on jassarapin@gmail.com for more info.

Monday 25th:- Canberra General Meeting at the Canberra Labor Club, 16 Petrie Plaza, Civic, at 7:30pm.

April.

Thursday 4th:- Magazine Cut-off Date for articles, letters and For-Sales.

Thursday 11th:- Committee Meeting at the Greyhound Social Club, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (next to Potts Park).

Thursday 18th:- CLUB VW MONTHLY MEETING at the **Greyhound Social Club**, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (right next to Potts Park). Get the latest VW news and views, plus VW socialising, drinks, raffles, trivia and plenty of prizes. Lots of fun, all welcome. 8:00pm start.

Monday 29th:- Canberra General Meeting at the Canberra Labor Club, 16 Petrie Plaza, Civic, at 7:30pm.

May.

Thursday 2nd:- Magazine Cut-off Date for articles, letters and For-Sales.

Thursday 9th:- Committee Meeting at the Greyhound Social Club, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (next to Potts Park).

Thursday 16th:- CLUB VW MONTHLY MEETING at the **Greyhound Social Club**, 140 Rookwood Rd. Yagoona (right next to Potts Park). Get the latest VW news and views, plus VW socialising, drinks, raffles, trivia and plenty of prizes. Lots of fun, all welcome. 8:00pm start.

Saturday 25th:- VW NATIONALS Supersprint at Wakefield Park circuit, near Goulburn. VW racers wanted! CAMS licence required. Phone Rudi Frank on 0418 442 953 for more information.

Sunday 26th:- VW NATIONALS 2013 at Fairfield Showgrounds. Australia's biggest Volkswagen show - 45 show categories, trade

stands, swap meet, new VW display, kids rides, entertainment, great food and drink, VW fun all day. Phone David Birchall on (02) 9534 4825 for more information.

Monday 27th:- Canberra General Meeting at the Canberra Labor Club, 16 Petrie Plaza, Civic, at 7:30pm.

Marktplatz.

All ads should be emailed to: editor@clubvw.org.au
Classifieds are free for Club Veedub Sydney members, and \$10.00 for non-members. All ads will be published here for two months.

All published ads will also appear on our club website, www.clubvw.org.au Photos can be included on the website but not in Zeitschrift. All ads will appear in Zeitschrift first so our members have first chance to see them. They will then be transferred to the club website on the third Thursday of the month.

Non-members please post us a cheque or money order for \$10.00, payable to: Club Veedub Sydney, c/-
14 Willoughby Cct, Grassmere NSW 2570.

New Ads.

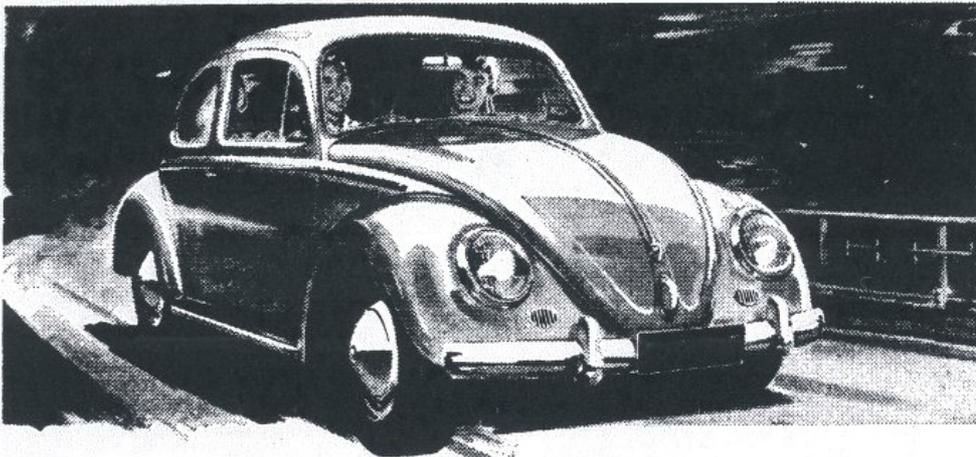
For Sale:- VW Genuine Parts from 1960-1974 model Beetles and Kombis. Engine overhaul parts, main bearings (std and oversize), conrod bearings, cylinder heads, clutch parts, gearbox mountings, tail pipe and damper kits, blinker switches, starter motors, generators, alternators, and many hard-to-get original NOS VW parts. Contact Lorenze on (02) 9630 1048 (Northmead).

For Sale:- 1997 VW Golf VR6. Still a fast and quality car by today's standards. Great fuel economy and performance.





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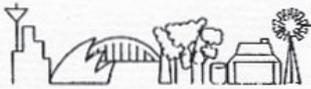
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Volkswagen's record 2012.

Volkswagen has again set a new all-time Australian sales record, in figures for 2012 just released by the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries.

VW sold 54,835 vehicles in Australia in 2012, a 22.6% increase over the 44,740 sold in 2011. It was the third year in a row that Volkswagen has set an all-time record. In 2010 VW sold 38,016, finally beating the long-standing record of 31,419 set way back in 1964 when the range was manufactured in Australia.

VW again outsold Subaru and Honda, to again finish in 8th place overall on the Australian market. VW finished only 4,033 sales behind Mitsubishi.

Overall sales were:

1. Toyota – 218,176 (+20.1 per cent)
2. Holden – 114,665 (-9.1 per cent)
3. Mazda – 103,886 (+17.6 per cent)
4. Hyundai – 91,536 (+5.2 per cent)
5. Ford – 90,408 (-0.9 per cent)
6. Nissan – 79,747 (+17.4 per cent)
7. Mitsubishi – 58,868 (-3.7 per cent)
- 8. Volkswagen – 54,835 (+22.6 per cent)**
9. Subaru – 40,189 (+18.2 per cent)
10. Honda – 35,812 (+18.9 per cent)
11. Kia – 30,758 (+22.4 per cent)
12. Suzuki – 24,057 (+1.2 per cent)
13. Mercedes-Benz – 22,397 (+5.7 per cent)
14. BMW – 18,413 (+5.2 per cent)
15. Jeep – 18,014 (+108.3 per cent)
16. Audi – 14,535 (+0.2 per cent)
17. Great Wall – 11,006 (+27.0 per cent)
18. Land Rover – 7929 (+36.0 per cent)
19. Isuzu Ute – 7782 (+21.7 per cent)
20. Lexus – 6839 (+36.0 per cent)



Volkswagen had only one model in the list of top 20 best selling vehicles for 2012. The Golf finished in 14th place with 17,289 sales. This was a slight 5.9% drop on the record 18,383 Golfs sold in 2011, but a new model Golf 7 is due in 2013. However it was still significant because it was the first time ever that a Volkswagen model has outsold the Ford Falcon (just 14,036 sales) since the big Ford first appeared in Australia in 1961.

In a sign of the times, sales of big cars slumped by 20.4% and the Falcon had its worst ever year. The Commodore slipped to fourth overall with its worst year since the early 1980s. In contrast, sales of compact SUVs soared by 53.5% over 2011, while overall sales of SUVs increased by 25.3% and 4x4 Utes were up by 24.7%. VW sold 6,841 Tiguan in the segment, a record total and VW's second best model after the Golf. Surprisingly, Small/City cars grew by just 3.4%. Australians continue their love affair with SUVs and 4WDs.

The top-selling models of 2012 were:

1. Mazda3 – 44,128
2. Toyota HiLux – 40,646
3. Toyota Corolla – 38,799
4. Holden Commodore – 30,532
5. Holden Cruze – 29,161
6. Hyundai i30 – 28,348
7. Toyota Camry – 27,230
8. Nissan Navara – 26,045
9. Toyota Yaris – 18,808
10. Ford Focus – 18,586
11. Mitsubishi Triton – 18,502
12. Ford Ranger – 18,097
13. Mazda2 – 17,574
- 14. Volkswagen Golf – 17,289**
15. Toyota Prado – 17,045
16. Nissan X-Trail – 16,066
17. Mazda CX-5 – 15,861
18. Mitsubishi Lancer – 15,321
19. Toyota RAV4 – 14,651
20. Ford Territory – 14,646

More details and statistics on individual Volkswagen model sales will appear in a future issue of Zeitschrift, once we access the FCAI's data.

Eos to be replaced.

The current-generation Eos 'hideaway hardtop' convertible is likely to be the last, as Volkswagen admits it is leaning towards a larger soft-top design for its future flagship convertible.

Volkswagen head of design Klaus Bischoff told UK publication Autocar he believed the days of folding hardtops were coming to an end.

"The Eos will not be prolonged when it comes off the market," Bischoff said.

"Retractable hardtops are disappearing from the market now, and to be honest that's not something I mind."

The Eos is the odd one out in Volkswagen's current three-pronged convertible line-up. Unlike the Golf Cabriolet



and Beetle Convertible – spinoffs of hatchbacks that feature soft-tops roofs – the Eos is a standalone model with a five-piece folding hardtop.

The Eos was originally introduced in 2006 as a belated successor to the Golf 4 Cabriolet. At \$49,990, it currently starts \$13,000 higher than the Golf 6 Cab. Sales of the two are roughly neck and neck so far this year, with the Eos trailing the Golf by 28 units (663 to 691).

To October, the Eos has comfortably outsold a number of its key competitors, including the Audi A3 Cabriolet (251), Mazda MX-5 (120), Mini Cabrio (222), Peugeot 308CC (76) and the Renault Megane CC (96).

Bischoff hinted the model that replaces the Eos could be a larger convertible, one that could potentially compete with the upcoming Opel Cascada. A logical Eos replacement could be a new convertible version of the Passat, or Passat CC, suitably restyled and renamed.

“There’s definitely room in our line-up for a larger convertible, so why not do it?”

“The problem with such ambitions is that all our existing factories are at full capacity, so any new additions means building new factories.”

Meanwhile, the Beetle Convertible made its public debut at December’s Los Angeles auto show. The soft-top will hit European showrooms during the second quarter of next year, but is unconfirmed for our market at this stage.

VW Eco Up!

A new natural gas-powered Volkswagen Up! has been launched, with the German powerhouse claiming the Volkswagen Eco Up! is the most fuel-efficient natural gas passenger car in the world.

The enviro-friendly Volkswagen Eco Up! uses a newly developed version of the 1.0-litre three-cylinder engine found in the standard Volkswagen Up!, generating 50 kW of power and 90 Nm of torque, while consuming 2.9 kg of compressed natural gas (CNG) per 100 km – equivalent to emissions of 79 grams of CO₂ per kilometre.

While no speed-demon – the Eco Up! hits 100 km/h from a standstill in 15.8 seconds and has a top speed of 168 km/h – the environmental Up! is no one-trick pony. The Eco Up! not only has the ability to run on natural gas, but can also be powered by alternative fuels such as renewable bio-methane obtained from plant by-products, as well as



conventional petroleum.

Sporting two underfloor natural gas tanks that combine for a total volume of 72 litres (11 kg) of CNG, and a 10-litre petrol reserve tank, the Eco Up! sees CO₂ emissions reduced by 24 per cent compared with petrol engines when run on pure natural gas.

Volkswagen says that when fuelled with pure bio-methane, the Eco Up! emits up to 97 per cent less CO₂, which in a ‘well-to-wheel’ analysis – from raw materials sourced to the final drive unit – is comparable to cars that employ fuel cell technology or pure battery-powered electric vehicles.

The use of natural gas is not a new concept for Volkswagen, which has been equipping vehicles with natural gas drives since the 1990s. 2002 saw the release of VW’s first new car model designed for natural gas, the Golf Estate 2.0 BiFuel.

Due to Australia’s lack of natural gas fueling infrastructure (natural gas is different from LPG), Volkswagen Australia has no plans to bring the Volkswagen Eco Up! to Australia. The conventional petrol Up! will continue flying solo. Since its October launch, 475 Volkswagen Up! models have already been sold locally.

New Cross Up!

A production-ready prototype of the Volkswagen Cross Up! has been spotted in Europe completely undisguised – save for a fresh dumping of snow.



Appearing almost identical to the Volkswagen Cross Up! concept that debuted alongside four other Up!-based creations at the 2011 Frankfurt motor show, the Cross Up! adds a rugged quality to the super-cute five-door city car.

Distinguishing the Cross Up! from the standard sub-light hatchback is a set of matching silver front and rear bumper inserts, a larger front intake with honeycomb grille, and the customary black plastic wheel arch covers, side skirts and lower bumper sills.

The Cross Up! also sits 15mm higher than the five-door Up! and features silver underbody protection panels at the front and rear for those insistent on taking their chunky city car off the beaten track.

Differentiating the prototype from the Frankfurt concept is a new set of alloy wheels, as well as black roof rails instead of the original silver fixtures and silver mirror caps in place of the concept’s body-coloured covers.

Set to launch overseas during the first half of 2013, the Cross Up! will add to the family of off-road-inspired models in Volkswagen's European line-up, joining the CrossPolo, CrossTouran and the recently revealed Cross Caddy – none of which are available in Australia as yet.

New Golf wagon spotted.

The all-new Volkswagen Golf Wagon has been spied undergoing hot-weather testing in Southern Europe, ahead of its 2013 unveiling.



Spy images provide the first look at the more versatile load-lugging version of the new Volkswagen Golf 7, which looks set to grow beyond the current model to offer even more cargo space.

Volkswagen Australia public relations general manager Karl Gehling confirmed the new Golf Wagon would arrive in local showrooms in 2014, following the introduction of the new Golf five-door hatch in the second quarter of 2013 and the sporty Golf GTI variant a few months later in the second half of the year.

International reports suggest the Golf 7 Wagon may make its international premiere at the 2013 Frankfurt motor show in September.

Like the current Golf 6 Wagon, the new model is expected to share its wheelbase with the hatchback while featuring a longer rear overhang and roof and a flatter tailgate for increased load space.

The new wagon's boot volume is tipped to rise above the current car's, which measures 505 litres and grows to 1495 litres with the rear seats folded forward.

The styling is also set to become more cohesive, with higher-mounted dark-tinted horizontal LED tail-lights visible beneath the prototype's psychedelic camouflage. These will replace the 1980s styled pointy wraparound taillights on the current Golf Wagon. The front-end will carry over unchanged from the hatch.

Like the current model, engines, transmissions and trim levels will be shared between the hatch and wagon body styles. A 103 kW/250 Nm 1.4-litre turbo petrol and a 110 kW/320 Nm 2.0-litre turbo diesel should form part of the local powertrain line-up when it launches in a little over 12 month's time.

Polo R WRC for production.

The long-awaited Volkswagen Polo R WRC road car has been unveiled in production form in Monte Carlo, but the news is all bad for Australian fans of the rally-inspired pocket rocket.

Limited to 2,500 units worldwide, the hottest Volkswagen Polo production car in history will be produced in left-hand-drive only, to satisfy homologation regulations for Volkswagen's entry into the 2013 World Rally Championship season. This puts it off the table for Volkswagen Australia.

Powering the front-wheel-drive (it's not AWD like the Golf R) Volkswagen Polo R WRC is an uprated version of the 155 kW/280 Nm 2.0-litre turbocharged engine from the Golf GTI, tuned to produce 162 kW (at 4500-6300rpm) and 350 Nm (at 2500-4400rpm) – a significant 30 kW and 100 Nm boost over the current flagship Polo GTI.

Equipped with a six-speed manual transmission, the Polo R WRC sprints from 0-100 km/h in 6.4 seconds before kicking on to a top speed of 243 km/h. Fuel-wise, it consumes 7.4 litres per 100 km on the combined cycle and emits an average of 174 g/km CO₂.



Appearing almost identical to the Volkswagen Polo R WRC Street concept that debuted at Worthersee tuning show in May, the limited edition three-door-only production car sports 18-inch alloy wheels, a revised front bumper with larger intakes and a lower front spoiler, white/blue/grey livery with black mirror caps and rear spoiler, and a rear diffuser with twin chrome exhaust outlets.

Like the concept, the cabin features an alcantara-covered steering wheel, racing pedals, black roof liner and WRC-embroidered partial leather seats.

Priced from 33,900 euros (\$41,800), the Volkswagen Polo R WRC will be available to order in select markets from tomorrow ahead of the first deliveries in September 2013.

Up! servicing capped.

Volkswagen Australia is offering capped-price servicing on its newly launched Up micro-car as a toe-in-the-water exercise ahead of a potential roll-out across its entire range.

The scheme follows the trend set by several fellow top-ten brands including Toyota, Holden, Hyundai, Ford, Nissan and Mitsubishi, who all offer similar plans in order to alleviate a lack of transparency in the servicing process,



where many dealers quote disparate service prices.

The plan will be available at all Volkswagen Australia dealerships, and VW Australia managing director Anke Koeckler said it was designed to change the perception that the German brand's cars were too expensive to service.

"It was important first for us to get our partners (dealers) behind our ideas, and everybody is convinced it is the right approach," she said.

"We are looking into the other product as well... sometimes it is all about the perception (that we are expensive) and unfortunately perception isn't reality, so we have to convince our customers that we are not that expensive.

"These are our true costs, but we want to make sure our customers get the transparency."

The scheme applies for the first six years or 90,000 km (whichever comes first) with annual service intervals. The first service on the Up – which retails from \$13,990 plus on-road costs – is due after 12 months/15,000 km and 24 months/30,000 km respectively, costs \$280.

The 36 month/45,000 km service costs \$332.50, the 48 month/60,000 km will set buyers back \$369.50, the 75,000 km/60 month service is priced at \$280 and the final 90 month/72,000 km service will cost \$332.50.

The price of each service may be higher than many other brands, but several of these companies also have shorter, six month intervals between services.

Every two years buyers will also have to fork out extra for new brake fluid (\$83.70) and a new pollen filter (\$40.50).

More Golfs in future.

Volkswagen will grow its small-car range in Australia when the seventh-generation Golf arrives mid-2013, rather than limit the number of variants as it has done with a string of recent releases.

The current Golf range consists of 22 variants across hatches, wagons, manuals, automatics, and the three-door and five-door GTI body styles.

But VW Group Australia managing director Anke Koeckler has said there is room for more.

"When it comes to the new Golf, you might actually see more variations," she said, agreeing that a volume-seller can justify a broad range.

"It always depends on the volume, and the Golf is that kind of model – we will see more variations of the Golf."

The current-generation Polo light-car range was the first to be trimmed back, with three engine choices plus the

hot GTI flagship, and deletion of the entry-level three-door early this year.

Since then, the Golf Cabriolet, Up city hatch and Passat Alltrack crossover have all been launched with single engines and specifications. The second-generation New Beetle will follow suit when it launches in February.

"We are looking into that; we are not making our model range more complex, said Ms Koeckler.

"One of the big things when I arrived (in Australia) three years ago was that our range seemed a little too vast.

"So every time since – as you have seen with the Polo in 2010 – we have tried to look into that (so) we are not having small mixes and all the different variations.

"We did it with the Golf Cabriolet – there is only one engine – we will do it with the Beetle, which also has only one engine, and now the Passat Alltrack as well.

"In those small segments, there is no need to offer all the engines because we always want to make sure that we are not making the life of the dealers more difficult."



The Passat Alltrack is a raised, ruggedised all-wheel-drive crossover version of VW's mid-size family wagon and in 2007 the German firm launched the conceptually similar but front-drive CrossGolf in Europe. It actually has a different body shell from the normal Golf, taller and wider, and sits halfway between the Golf and the Tiguan SUV.

However, Ms Koeckler said such a version of the Golf 7 was not currently in the pipeline as one of the potential extra variants, but did not rule out future crossovers.

"I guess once the Passat Alltrack is also a very big success around the world, our engineers will take it on board and look into (crossover versions) for other cars as well."

VW Phaeton successor?

A successor to Volkswagen's slow-selling Phaeton limousine is in the works, VW development boss Dr Ulrich Hackenberg has confirmed in Paris this week. Hackenberg did not reveal any details, and only confirmed that development is under way. And unlike the current model, the US market will be a focus for the next one.

The news follows reports over the past year that had pointed to a 2015 debut for the next generation of the big saloon.

While it has been available across Europe since it first appeared in 2002, the Phaeton was offered in the US market only until 2006 before being pulled. Volkswagen of America



blamed a poor image and high pricing for its poor sales performance. Only 1,430 Phaetons were sold in the USA in 2004 and just 820 in 2005. The ultra-modern 'Gläserne Manufaktur' factory in Dresden has a capacity of 20,000 Phaetons a year but production averages around 6,000 a year.

In the US the Phaeton was comprehensively outsold by its blood brother the Audi A8, as well as established rivals from BMW and Mercedes. VWoA had pitched the car as a low-key alternative to the competition, but US buyers weren't convinced of the value of flying under the radar. A typical sales line was "First You Thought Small. Now Think A Little Bigger." The Beetle connection didn't work.

A new Phaeton will most likely be built on the VW Group's MLM/MLB architecture. The 'longitudinal' MLM platform underpins most Audis, from the A4 through to the aluminium-intensive A8, although the next A8 is expected to move to the rear-drive biased MSB.

The next Phaeton will feature extensive use of aluminium to keep weight down on the super luxury sedan. The current car is steel-bodied and considered too heavy.

The new car is expected to take on Jaguar's XJ luxury sedan as well as the usual competition from Audi, Mercedes and BMW, so it has its work cut out.

The current Phaeton has never been sold in Australia, and this isn't likely to change for the 2015 model.

VW Taigun concept.

Volkswagen's new Taigun concept is not a typo, but it could just be a preview of a new sub-Tiguan compact SUV VW is planning.

Revealed at last month's Sao Paulo Moto Show in Brazil, the Taigun is built on the same New Small Family platform that underpins VW's tiny Up! city car - and it's not a great deal bigger.

Measuring 3859 mm long and 1728 mm wide, with a 2470 mm wheelbase, the Taigun is 300mm longer than the Up!, but less than 100 mm wider and rides on a wheelbase only 50 mm longer.

Those dimensions mean the Taigun is also a good bit smaller than the 4125 mm-long Australia-bound Nissan Juke and Holden's upcoming Trax, at 4258 mm.

Despite its larger footprint, Volkswagen says the Taigun weighs just 985 kg, giving away just 56 kg to the smaller Up! five-door.

The cabin offers room for four, but rear cargo storage is listed at a relatively capacious 280 litres with the back seats up, and 987 litres when folded flat.

In concept form, the heftier Taigun is powered by an 80 kW and 175 Nm version of the Up's 1.0 litre three-cylinder engine - likely the same souped-up engine driving the Up! GT concept.

The little engine is mated to a six-speed manual transmission, sending power to the front wheels only. (This is no off-road weekend warrior.)



Volkswagen has yet to confirm a production debut for the Taigun, but the carmaker is known to be considering a new compact crossover to enter below the small Tiguan SUV.

SEMA Beetle.

A selection of customised Volkswagen Beetles rolled into last month's Specialty Equipment Market Association show in Las Vegas. Headlined by the 'Ultimate Super Beetle' concept, they were tuned together with APR Performance.

Overhauling the new bug's 2.0 litre TFSI petrol engine, APR boosted output from 150 to a whopping 372 kW, achieved through the addition of a new turbocharger and intercooler setup, a high-flow cylinder head and intake manifold, an ECU tune, and stronger pistons.



The Ultimate Super Beetle also picks up Volkswagen's 4Motion all-wheel-drive, taken from the Golf R.

There's also a new clutch, new suspension, six-piston brakes, 19-inch wheels and a sports body kit.

The Toy Department.

Happy New year to all as we embark on the 15th year and over 165 editions of The Toy Department.

Who would have thought there was so much in VW models to write about? And it still keeps going on. with Volkswagen continuing to be a nostalgic icon now and in the years to come.

To kick off 2013 something very new to look out for on the pegs and down at the local shops will be this Hot Wheels custom Kool Kombi which is part of the Hot Wheels show room edition.



I can only imagine it will be highly sought after being the first tooling of this series since the release of the VW drag bus back in 1996.

Lucky models of Hong Kong were known for their plastic toys of the 1970s and here we feature some fine

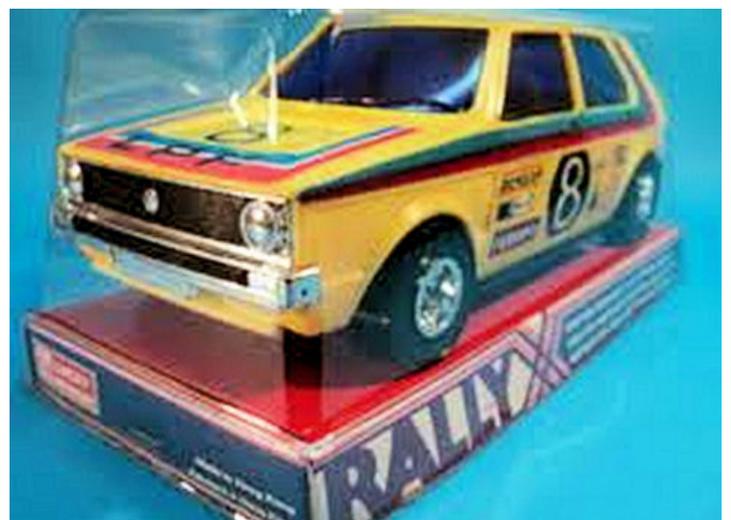


examples the 1/24 scale 'low light' Kombi with opening rear luggage door.

Both the white and green are my favourite plastic friction toys of the era.

Some other fine examples of Lucky toys were the Beetle and popular Golf models which can still be found today on eBay all around the world.

Anyway as always if you have anything interesting to



share or questions to ask feel free to drop me line on the below email address.

Tony Bezzina
Kbezzina@bigpond.com

Canberra Christmas Lights Cruise 2012.

During December, the Canberra members embarked on our Christmas Lights Cruise, where we meet for a picnic dinner and then set off on a preset route to view the local lighting displays, whilst conveying with our Volkswagens. The event isn't easy to plan and each year we have volunteer member/s who run the event. 2012's event was organised by Chris and Jay, who did a sterling job. Our picnic dinner was held in a park in Kingston, with looming storm clouds, and we stopped for a quick group photo before setting off on the trek. Attendance was OK at 2 Golfs, a Jetta (plus a Jetta to farewell us), a Beetle, a Buggy, and 3 Kombis.



Heading through the Belconnen area of Canberra, we viewed many excellent lighting displays, stopping at some of the larger ones for photos and generally checking out the arrangements. Some of the displays were huge - they must start setting up in winter! Due to event timeframes and threatening weather, we had a few locals breaking off towards the end of the trip, however I think everyone had a good



night. This year we had no mechanical issues, but the lead car did lose an antler along the way..

A big thanks to everyone who came along, its great to see some new faces out there with us, and we hoped you enjoyed your trip. A big thumbs-up to Jay and Chris, for running the event this year – well done.

Bruce





Northshore Volkswagen.

Our club was recently invited to show off some of our classic Volkswagens at the opening of Sydney's newest Volkswagen dealer, Northshore Volkswagen at Artarmon.

The previous dealer on Sydney's north shore was Chatswood Classic Cars, located further north on the Pacific Highway on the corner of William St. Until recently Chatswood Classic were, in fact, Australia's oldest existing Volkswagen dealer, established back in 1989 and taking over that title when Muller and Muller at Lakemba (formed 1968) lost their 'official VW dealer' franchise in 1995.

Chatswood Classic were owned by Inchcape, the British-owned corporation who also own the Denlo Group at Parramatta. From 1992 until 2001 they also controlled the Australian Volkswagen importing licence, having purchased previous importers TKM. In 1989, when Chatswood Classic was first set up, only 1,097 VWs were sold in Australia and sales would drop back to just 418 in 1992 before recovering to 3,640 in 1995. Hence the name 'Classic Cars' – Volkswagens were just one possible franchise for the dealership at the time.

Since then, however, Australian Volkswagen sales have boomed. In 2011 the total was 44,740 and in 2012 it will be



over 50,000, by far the highest ever. Chatswood Classic were now Volkswagen-only and had outgrown their old premises. It was time to start afresh. It was time to bring their passenger and commercial vehicle VW business under one big roof in a ground-up retail site development.

The newly-named and built North Shore Volkswagen – the business formerly called Chatswood Classic Cars – can now display up to 45 vehicles in their new purpose-built showroom in Artarmon.

It was built on the site of a previous Officeworks, according to VW's new Module Concept design rules. The Officeworks foundations

and basic shell remain but were completely stripped out and totally rebuilt. The new dealership is still owned by Inchcape Automotive Retail, part of the giant British-owned Inchcape group. It is now the largest Volkswagen dealership in Australia. About 20 more VW retail sites are set to get the Module Concept treatment in 2013.

VW Group Australia managing director Anke Koeckler said the big new facility reflected the demand for VW products in Sydney's north.

"The Volkswagen brand has been very popular on the Northern Beaches, so it was a logical decision to show our continued commitment to our loyal customer base with our largest showroom yet," Ms Koeckler said.



In October our Club received an invitation from Chatswood Classic Cars' Amy Iles, which Bob Hickman read out at the October meeting. She was looking for earlier VWs of all models and types for the grand opening of their new showroom, located at 355 Pacific Highway at Artarmon on the 29th of November 2012. Our cars would be on display with current models.

Amy proved difficult to reach as she only works two days a week at Chatswood, but eventually we got in touch. We were limited to around 8 classic VWs due to space, so it



was first-in first-served. The date had now been moved to Tuesday 11 December, with our cars to be on-site by 4:30pm ready for the grand opening at 6pm. Partners were welcome and there would be lovely food and wine and great entertainment to launch the brand new showroom.

Lily was already on school holidays, so there was no problem in washing and detailing our Kombi and driving over to Artarmon by 4pm. The shiny new dealership faces the Pacific Highway on the corner of Whiting St, with the entrance off the side. The site slopes, so that the Whiting St entry is into the 'basement' carpark with the showroom above. We drove into the underground carpark, parked the Kombi and wandered upstairs to say hello. Numerous staff were still sweeping, cleaning, polishing and organising in readiness for the coming party. We met up with Amy and some of her staff, and also said hello to our fellow club members Wayne and Jeff who were already there.

The dealership had a big new car lift to bring vehicles from the basement carpark to the showroom above, so we were told to drive to the lift entry at the left rear corner and wait for the dealer staff to direct us in. Neither Lily or I had ever been in a car lift before, so it was quite an adventure. Just like a normal lift but bigger! We had to reverse in, with the Kombi easily fitting with a metre to spare front and back. We remained in our front seats with the engine off.

The doors closed and up we went, but at the showroom level the doors wouldn't open. The staff reset the lift and down we went again. Back at the bottom the doors were opened and closed to recycle the system, then after a minute up we went again. Same problem – the doors wouldn't open at the top. We went up and down four times without luck; the



staff told us the lift was new and had a few teething problems! Lily was excited about having several rides but it was frustrating. By this time Joe and a few other members had arrived and were also waiting to use the lift. Eventually a service call was placed and we were offered drinks and coffee while we waited.

Eventually the lift worked and we parked the Kombi in the shiny new showroom, alongside the other classic VWs and the full range of North Shore's new Volkswagen models. A stage had been set up with a starry background, ready for the festivities, and we now had time to mingle and talk with our friends, as well as the North Shore dealer staff and the VIPs as they arrived. They were all interested in our classic old VWs.



Waiters circulated with plates of finger food – expensive-looking vol au vents and canapés, and then offered us frosty glasses of beer, wine or champagne. Lily enjoyed a tall glass of frosty Coke and had her photo taken on the red VIP carpet! It was a pleasure to feel like a VIP, enjoying the food and drink as we chatted with everyone as they circulated. We also wandered about the dealership showroom, looking at all the fantastic new cars and collecting the brochures. Lily again loved the Up! But was too shy to sit behind the wheel and have her photo taken.

There were a few short speeches of welcome and official business, with Volkswagen Group Australia boss Anke Koeckler saying a few words. She was especially complimentary of Club VeeDub for our support, which was very pleasing. I made a point of chatting to Anke at some





length later, and was thrilled to hear how much she and the other VIPs at VWGA enjoy our magazine and our website. We talked about what VWGA has planned for VW's 60th Birthday in Australia, which will be late 2013 or early 2014. Our Club will be invited to anything that happens, so stay tuned!



There were also wandering entertainers such as the String Angels with their electric violins, and an English magician who amazed us with his tricks, right up close. I saw Lily's eyes boggle a couple of times as he made cards and coins disappear and reappear right in front of her. We talked



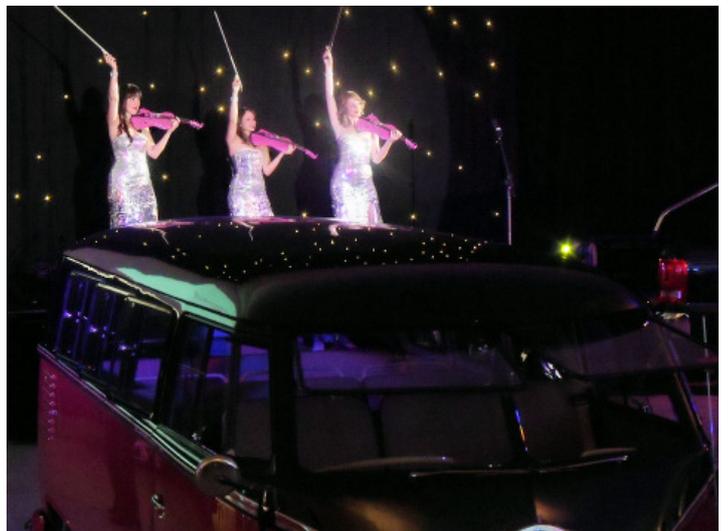
VWs with everyone for hours, and enjoyed wandering about. We were all having a fantastic time, and in no time it was after 9pm and people were heading off home.

Eventually there were only a few late stayers left and Lily was getting very tired. As the staff started to clean up and put away, we were directed back to the car lift and lowered one by one back to the basement and the exit. We were all given some fantastic VW showbags as a souvenir, which contained a VW notebook, brochure, a blue VW macaroon and a voucher for family photos.



Thankyou to Amy and everyone at Northshore Volkswagen for inviting us to such a fantastic night. I wish the new Artarmon Volkswagen dealership every success in future. Hope to see you at the VW Nationals in May!

Phil Matthews



PS. In case you are wondering, with the closure of the old Chatswood Classic Cars, Sydney's oldest existing Volkswagen dealer is now Denlo at Parramatta, which started in 1993. In NSW country it's Tweed Heads European Cars, which started in 1997. Geoff King's Autocare at Coffs Harbour started in 1994 (and began under a different name in 1989) but moved to new premises in 2002. Lennox Volkswagen in Canberra started in 1993; Austral Motors in Newstead (Brisbane) started in 1996 and Gold Coast Classic



started in 1997. Adelaide's Solitaire Motors started in 1989 but they gave up the VW franchise in 1999 and only regained it in 2005. In Melbourne Burwin Motors started in 1978 but have been renamed twice and have moved three times over the years since.

Lily's Artarmon story.

On Tuesday the 11th of December 2012 my Dad and I went to the Northshore Volkswagen opening at Artarmon. We had to get dressed up. I wore a nice purple dress with a bow as you can see below. Dad wore nice pants, a collared shirt and a navy blue suit jacket.

We got to go in a car elevator!! We had to go in it about 6 times!! And might have broken it! Oooooopsies! ☺



There was also a few other people from our club; Wayne with his single cab pickup, Jeff and his Superbug, Joe with his Superbug and a few other really nice and shiny looking cars. There was an orange open top car that Dad told me was called a VW Thing – what a funny name! I think you also call it a 181. There was also a beautiful red and black old Kombi with a split windscreen.

There were three girls with pink violins called the String Angels. They were our entertainment. They were very loud and you couldn't really socialise with any one whilst they were playing. I got very hungry and there was no food in sight as it was only early.

Finally when the food came, they were canapés and vol au vents. I was still very hungry. Luckily a nice gnocchi which is potato based pasta came out and it filled me up a lot; especially with the mushrooms! They were yummy.

There were a few speeches when everything started, and Dad showed me who Anke Koeckler was. While I was eating my gnocchi, Dad had gone and introduced himself to Anke!! When I finished my gnocchi, I went over to see what my Dad and Anke were talking about. I went over and Dad introduced me to Anke. She told me that I am very lucky to have such a clever Dad, and asked if we were enjoying the night. Of course we both said yes!

Everyone was looking at our Kombi, asking lots of questions and ooh ahing. I felt like a movie star!! ☺

By Lily ☺

Lily's Xmas Find-a-Word answer.

Here is the answer for my special Christmas find-a-word from last month.

I hope you had fun finding all the words!

By Lily ☺



2012 Car Awards.

The new year brings the many announcements of the different Australian Car of the Year awards. From the 1960s and 70s when the Wheels Car of the Year was the only award, today there are many – every major motoring organization has their own. Some have numerous category awards; some just an overall winner; some have both. It's actually a bit difficult to keep track of them all.

While there is usually little agreement between the different organizations, sometimes they do follow the lead set by the World Car of the Year Awards, held in Europe mid-year. In 2009 and 2010 this was won by the VW Golf and VW Polo, and sure enough the Australian Awards were swept by the Golf and Polo in 2009 and 2010.

In 2012 the VW Up! won the World Car of the Year Award. Would the Aussie awards follow?

CarsGuide COTY

A single award, given to the best new car in the opinion of a panel of News Ltd motoring journalists. There are no category awards; just the best overall. The first award was given in 1997. Volkswagen has won twice – the Golf in 2009, and the Polo in 2010.

The only Volkswagen in the 2012 awards final list was the Up!, but it did not make the final four. It was eliminated due to “air conditioning not meeting Australian conditions” and a “lack of an automatic transmission option.” However the Up! “looks nice enough and the first impression is good.”



Designed for European cities but right at home in Australia, the Up is a great first car or second commuter runabout. “The three-cylinder engine is why we call it the giddy-Up,” James Stanford said at the COTY judging.

The doors shut with a thunk, the turning circle is tiny, but the boot is surprisingly roomy. It's not a particularly brisk drive, but it gets along well in traffic and - provided you're prepared to use the gearbox - is quick enough for suburban roads and highway cruising at 110 km/h.

The braking is solid, it grips pretty well in corners, and all the controls and light and easy to find. There is some suspension clunky over low-speed potholes, and it's never going to win a cornering contest, but the ride smoothes over 80km/h and it's fairly quiet.

We'd much prefer to have the choice of an automatic, but the Up! is what it is. That means it has to be compared

against its size and price rivals, where it comes up a winner. You can say that it will cost \$17,000 to put a fully-loaded Up! on the road, but that would be a tasty little car with equipment you cannot get in something like an Alto or a Spark.

It feels more substantial - read that as safer - than an Alto, Spark or Micra, as well as having parts and assembly work that lives up to the Volkswagen badge. It's not a Polo or a Golf, but it's impossible to build that sort of car for \$13,990.

So what you get is an Up! that resets the bar for the smallest cars sold in Australia today, and in a good way. It deserves four CarsGuide stars, not when you think about cars as classy as a Benz C or a Porsche 911, but because of how it relates to its direct rivals, and the way it beats them.

“The Up is a great city car. But there is no auto and you really can't drive it with any comfort beyond the city,” says Paul Pottinger (the CarsGuide team drove all the finalists out as far as Mt Victoria).

This year's joint overall winner was the Toyota 86 / Subaru BRZ.

Drive COTY

A series of category awards and an overall winner, as judged by a panel of Fairfax journalists. Volkswagen has won the overall award twice – the Golf in 2009, and the Polo in 2010. VW has also won numerous category awards over the years.

In 2012 Volkswagen won two category awards. The **Drive Best City Car for 2012** was won by the **VW Polo 77TSI**, and the **Best Convertible** was won by the **VW Golf Cabriolet**. VW also won the Best Safety Innovation Award for the Up!

The Polo has now won its class for three straight years – and in 2012 it didn't garner even one vote against it, with all nine Drive Car of the Year expert judges voting for the Polo over the Ford Fiesta.

The Polo was described by one judge as being “the benchmark setter in this category – if not the one above,” while one judge found it “hard to fault anything about it,” pointing to the refined and confident nature of the car during cornering and highway cruising.

The Polo's dynamic prowess was one of its most obvious positive points, with judges labelling the car “delightfully competent” and “a great little car to drive.”

Its turbocharged 1.2-litre four-cylinder engine was also described as “benchmark-setting” for this type of car, but it wasn't all sweetness and light for the Polo.

While it is claimed to be more efficient, the Polo's preference for premium (95) unleaded was noted as a potential negative for some coin-conscious buyers.

Despite VW having cut the asking price of the Polo by \$1000 for the 77TSI variant, some judges felt it could be cheaper still. The model we tested, fitted with Volkswagen's high-tech DSG dual-clutch automatic transmission and coated in metallic paint, had a recommended price tag of \$21,990 plus on-road costs.

One judge was “saddened by the price” and found the interior “bland” and “in need of a rethink in terms of storage.” Others agreed.

But they also agreed that the digital speedometer was a

big plus, as was the full-size spare wheel and easy-to-use Bluetooth hands-free unit (though some found that system a tad too aftermarket-looking).

The dual-clutch DSG transmission also had its detractors, showing an inconsistent hesitation at low speeds which may become frustrating during stop-start city driving.

The Ford Fiesta had made the cut in 2010 but was beaten by the Polo that year. It was returned to the fray this year after the Blue Oval brand cut prices across the range.

The model we were testing, the LX automatic, was priced considerably lower than the Polo at \$19,790 plus on-road costs (including the \$2000 option cost for automatic). But while it is cheaper on paper, judges found the Fiesta felt “significantly cheaper overall.”

The interior fit and finish was described by one judge as “woeful,” with large, inconsistent gaps across the dash and several loud creaks and rattles. The contrasting plastics colours over the dash and doors were found to “look cheap,” while the seats were also criticised for not offering enough support.

“This is a car that doesn’t feel like it will age well,” one judge said.

The Fiesta’s 1.6-litre four-cylinder felt lethargic compared with the Polo, and as one judge put it: “You’ve really got to blitz this thing to get anything out of it.” The dual-clutch automatic, however, was praised for being better in stop-start traffic than the Polo’s.

In the end, though, all nine judges agreed the Polo was the top pick for Drive’s Car of the Year awards as the best city car because of its supreme interior quality, above-average driving experience and punchy little turbocharged engine.

The Volkswagen Polo can’t be beaten. No other car offers the class, refinement, quality and all-round ability for this sort of money, and there’s a good chance none will for quite some time.



The reigning champion in the convertible category, the Golf Cabriolet, is also a tough package to beat, offering room for a family, stellar fuel economy, gritty performance and competitive pricing. As one judge said, it’s “a hot hatch with a convertible roof”.

So – what could possibly threaten such a stellar all-round performer? What could thunder into the picture, overturn and then trample the DCOTY Best Convertible apple cart?

Only the other-worldly brilliance of the Porsche

Boxster. Faced with two terrific vehicles and no easy choice, judges waded into a week of testing that challenged the convertibles in hurling rain, sunshine, across pockmarked country roads and on a twisting, tight race track.

The Golf Cabriolet 118TSI DSG sported a DSG dual-clutch gearbox, with the starting price a low \$39,490. Fired along by a turbocharged, supercharged, 1.4-litre 4-cylinder engine that felt bigger than the sum of its parts (more than one judge assumed it was a 2.0-litre) the Golf handled itself well on road and track. While it lacked a few of the mod cons, including heated seats, reversing sensors and cameras, there was generally a lot of love for the clever convertible, and unanimous respect for its value proposition.



A degree of Teutonic blandness sapped some fun out of the interior, which one judge reckoned was “classy five years ago”, and another thought was “slab-like”. If you’re after a competent, four-seater convertible for a competitive price, the Golf has it nailed, and with a comprehensive airbag package it’s a safe option all around.

But the challenger was formidable: the Porsche Boxster, a vehicle so finely honed in the comfort and performance stakes that the judges were comparing it favourably against the twice-the-price 911.

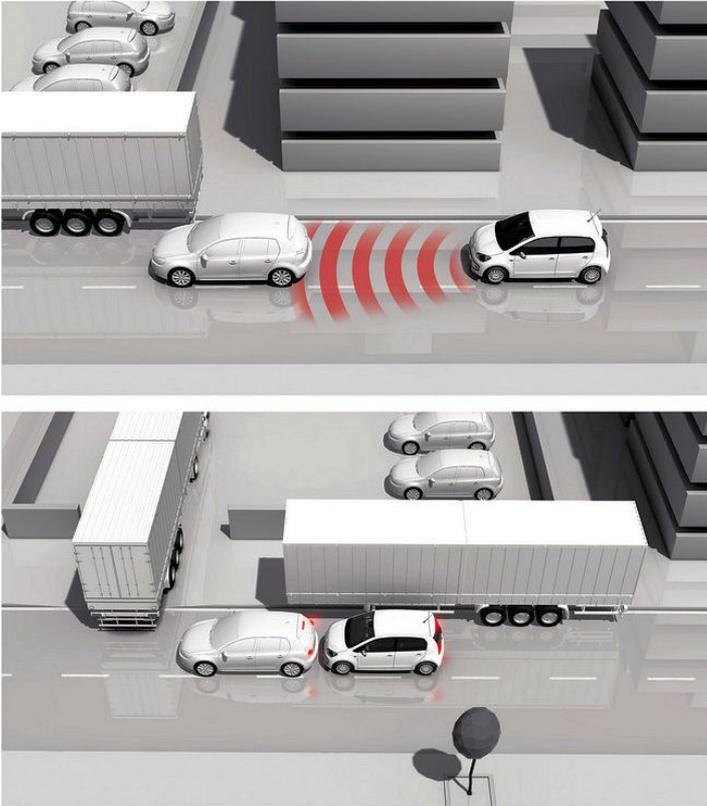
The beauty of the Boxster is its ability to make the most average driver feel like a rock star, using agility rather than raw speed and power. It’s a car that can be flogged on the track and back up for a serene drive through the countryside.

Our tested model came with numerous options including natural leather, 20-inch wheels, BOSE sound, sports steering wheel and metallic paint, all of which increased the base price of \$107,000 by almost \$22,000. While some took umbrage at the bordello-esque, blood-red interior, others loved it, but all agreed that the base-model Porsche is a benchmark for sporty convertibles.

Emotions were with the Boxster, but the Golf convertible delivers a healthy reality check with great bang for buck, fuel economy and the fact that four people get to enjoy it at once. That combination was enough for six votes to the Boxster’s three, and the second win in a row for the topless Golf.

The Volkswagen Up’s clever crash-avoidance technology has seen the diminutive runabout top the **Drive Safety Innovation** class awards.

The City Emergency Braking system is available on the VW Up city car as standard, despite the Up’s tiny price-tag of \$13,990 (plus on-road and dealer costs).



The advanced automated braking system is usually seen in cars several times its price, and even then it can be an added-cost optional extra.

The City Emergency Braking system uses a lidar sensor to read the road in front of the Up. If it detects the Up driver is not going to stop in time, it will apply the car's brakes and – hopefully – avoid a collision.

The system operates at between 5 and 30 km/h and can help pull the car up in time to either avoid or reduce the severity of a front-end crash.

It's not new, but its fitment in such a cheap car is certainly innovative.

The Up was voted a unanimous winner, with all judges applauding its inclusion in a model in such a price-sensitive segment of the market, where most car makers do everything they can to cut the price and often lop safety equipment.

The overall Drive COTY winner was the Toyota 86.

Best Car Awards

The Best Car Awards are collectively decided by Australia's state motoring organisations – the NRMA, the RACV, RACQ, RAC and AA. There is no 'overall' winner; only numerous category winners. Volkswagen has won numerous category awards in the past.

In 2012 VW won two awards – the **Polo 66TDI** won **Best Light Car over \$20,000**; and the **Touareg V6 TDI** won the **Best Luxury SUV Over \$60,000**.

It's now three in a row for the Volkswagen Polo 66TDI Comfortline.

It's not surprising really, as the Polo 66TDI punches above its weight in many of the important Best Cars criteria, like Safety, Cost of depreciation and Fuel consumption where for 2012 it received a series of ten out of tens. So good, the Comfortline would give many cars in the next class up, the Small Car Under \$35,000 a serious run for their money. Back

in 2010 the Polo 66TDI redefined the class with the German car maker adding a touch of class and luxury to a sector of the market not traditionally known for high levels of quality and refinement, and in 2012 it's still a standout, scoring well above average for Build and finish quality. While many pundits scratched their heads and wondered how Volkswagen could build a quality car with such a low asking price, this year the Polo 66TDI received a price drop making the purchase price even more attractive at \$21,490. The German car maker is certainly not resting on its laurels.

From the moment you step in, and hear the reassuring thud when you close the door you know you're in a special vehicle, and first impressions are important in such a competitive class where buyers are looking for more than just value for money. The detail finish on the dash and surrounding surface areas impresses, and whilst there are new entrants in this class for 2012 the Polo still rates highly. Features like the audio system come from the Golf and Passat range, reinforcing the quality feel.



The sense of strength that comes from a solidly constructed small car continues through in areas that you can't see, like safety and importantly the Polo scores a five-star ANCAP safety rating courtesy of six airbags, electronic stability control, and anti-lock brakes.

Volkswagen is amongst the best in the world when it comes to diesel engine technology, and powering the Polo 66TDI Comfortline is a 1.6-litre turbocharged diesel engine delivering 66 kW of power and, 230 Nm of engine torque. The engine's torque builds from low engine RPM levels, making it one of the best performers in this class. If you need to overtake or pass another vehicle the 1.6 litre turbo diesel engine spins up sweetly without becoming breathless and noisy and it's definitely no slouch out on the open road. All this performance doesn't come at a cost at the bowser and the fuel consumption for this engine is a standout as well. The Polo's diesel engine is matched to a slick shifting five-speed manual transmission, and for an additional \$2,500 there's an excellent seven-speed automatic DSG available.

On the road the Polo continues to be a standout. It boasts a nicely sorted chassis which gives the Polo the ability to handle just about any scenario. On winding sections of road, the Polo is nimble and fleet footed, thanks in part to well weighted, precise steering and taut springs and dampers ensures that the Polo handles as well as anything in the Small Car Class.

Australian roads, with their myriad of road surfaces

testing the boundaries of suspension design doesn't worry or upset the Polo, and you will find the ride quality is as supple as a car twice its price.

The new entrants in this class have moved the goals somewhat in terms of interior space, however clever interior packaging makes the most of the Polo's compact size, with above average legroom and headroom for passengers and a wide opening rear hatch to make loading and unloading bulky items a breeze.

The Australian automotive landscape is changing at a faster pace than ever before and winning a category three times in a row is a special feat. A feat made even harder with a couple of new entrants in the class for 2012, the Polo 66TDI Comfortline though has taken everything in its stride to comfortable win its third trophy.

Last year's winner the Volkswagen Touareg has done it again and with a country mile between it and the rest of the field. The Touareg out did the other finalist in most areas and put in a well-rounded performance in all areas but the standout reason for the win was what you get for your dollar. It was \$13,000 cheaper than the BMW X5 and over \$20,000 cheaper than the Range Rover Sports but had similar equipment levels to the Rangie.



From the moment you slip behind the wheel there is a high quality look and soft touch feel to the Touareg interior and a particularly smart dash presentation. This plush cabin will comfortably seat five adults while drivers get comfort seats with 12-way electric adjustment and electro pneumatic side bolsters. The current Touareg is the second iteration of the model and has a longer wheelbase which has given it the extra legroom. Versatility has also been improved with the introduction of a rear seat that can slide backward or forward by 160mm to give additional rear cabin or boot space, and the rear squab can also be reclined in three stages. A comprehensive range of features, like touch-screen technology, in addition to the impressive fundamental design makes the Touareg a class leader in both comfort and ergonomics.

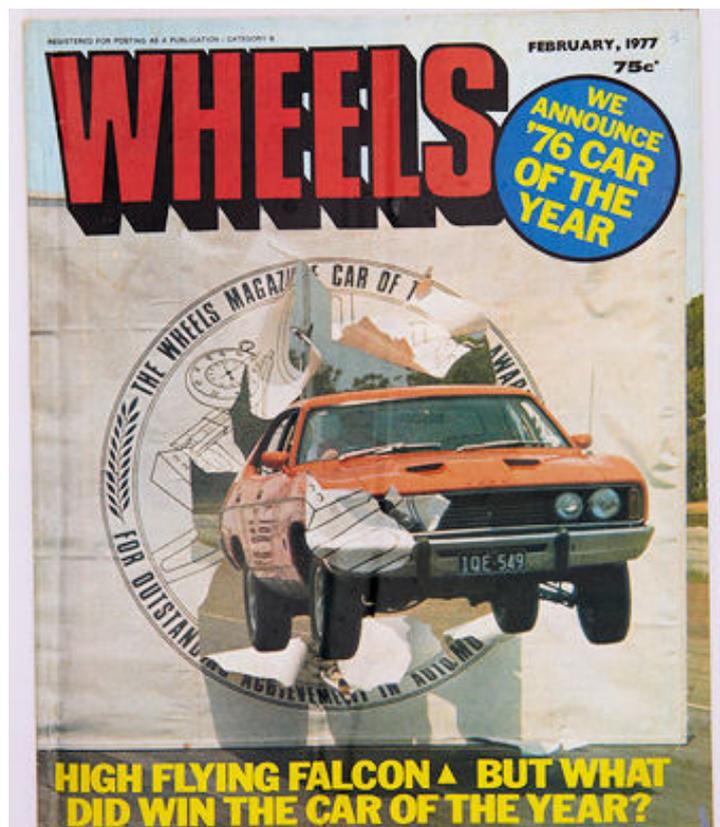
All models of the Touareg come with a comprehensive safety package that includes nine airbags, ABS braking with off road function, ESC with active rollover function, hill hold starting assist and hill decent control. Power comes from a 3.0-litre turbo diesel engine delivering 180 kW and an impressive 550 Nm of torque from around 2,000rpm. BlueMotion technologies, which include faster engine and

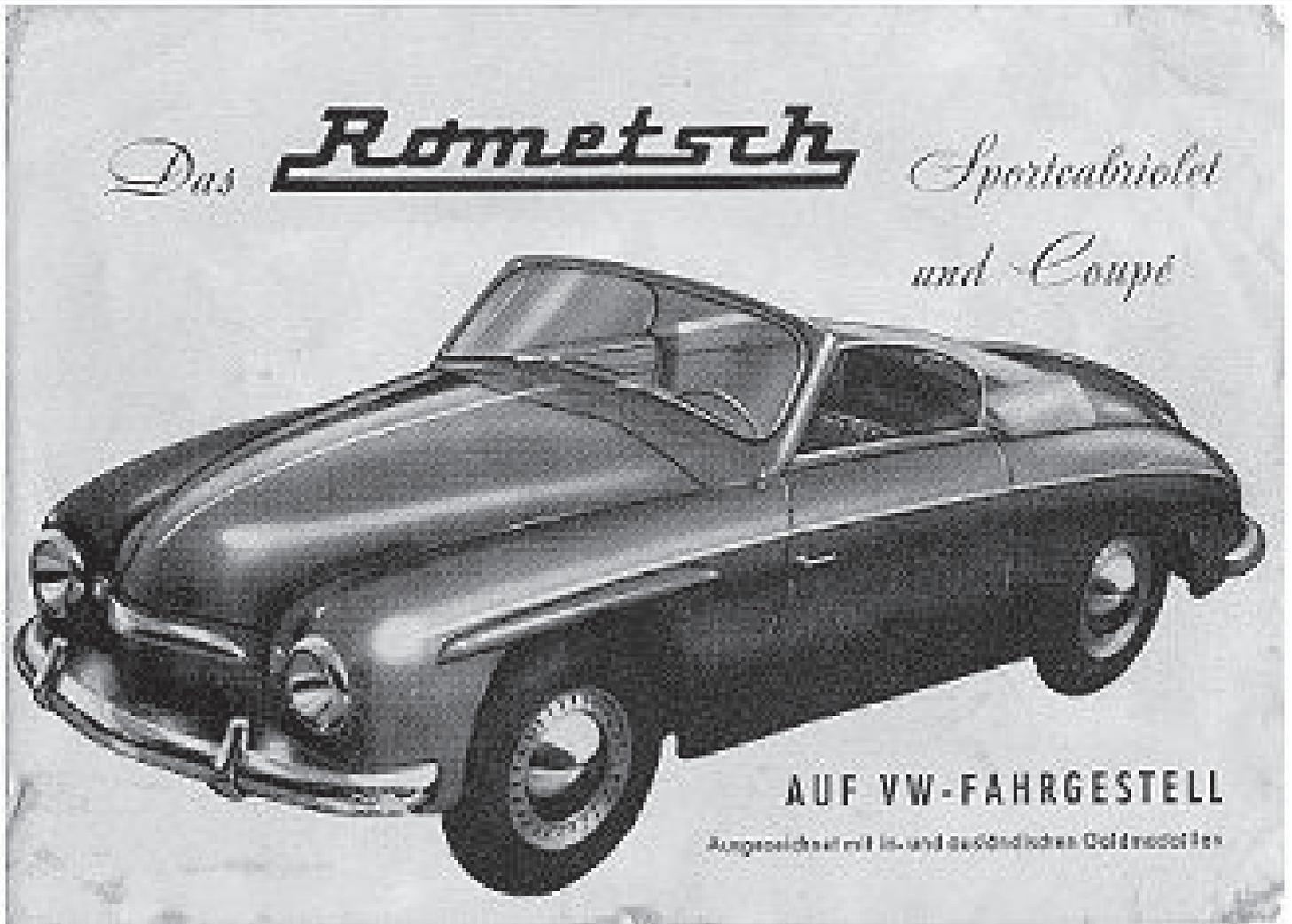
gearbox warm up, engine stop-start and regenerative braking result in a significant reduction in fuel consumption and emissions. The new diesel returned a remarkable 7.4 L/100 km. This figure has of course been assisted by the ultra modern and outstanding in operation, 8-speed auto which not only allows the engine to operate more responsively across the range but more efficiently thanks to reduced friction and overdrive ratios on seventh and eighth.

Touareg's All Wheel Drive setup called 4MOTION, has a Torsen limited slip differential suitable for maximum grades of 31-degrees and a simple to use two position rotary switch, which tunes ABS, ESC, hill decent and auto shift points for off road driving. For those more adventurous, the \$5,000 optional 4XMOTION has a five position off road function with a more rugged transfer case including reduction gearing, centre and rear electric differential lock with up to 100 percent locking and maximum gradability of 45 degrees. The Touareg's air suspension with adaptive dampening control is well executed and the ride quality and handling for either twisting roads, unsealed surfaces or long distance touring is second to none in this category.

A winner in this luxury category has to epitomise the balanced vales of capability and luxury and the Touareg is a genuine all rounder on and off the road which will carry you in insulated comfort on either the bitumen of the city or the graded roads of the country.

The Wheels Car of the Year award is due next month. It is the longest running and still the most prestigious of the Australian Car Awards (despite being won in previous years by the Leyland P76, Holden Camira, Mitsubishi Nimbus and Ford Telstar). VW has won the award four times – the Passat (1974), Golf (1976), Golf (2009) and Polo (2010). We hope the Up! will win but suspect the Toyota 86/Subaru BRZ will probably succeed.





The VW Rometsch

The story of the rare and distinctive Rometsch VWs begins with the birth of Friedrich Rometsch in Mobile, Alabama, on November 23, 1880, the son of German immigrant parents. Three years later, his parents returned home to Germany with their young son, and he grew up in the Fatherland.

He learned his trade initially as a wheelwright apprentice, but with another 20 years coach-building experience working with Kellner, Erdmann and Rossi, Voll and Ruhrbeck, and Glaser, he was ready to start his own business in Berlin. Beginning with 14 employees in 1924, the production of limousines, taxis, and custom coachwork lasted until the war years. In 1936, Friedrich turned control of the prospering company over to his son Fritz. During the war, Rometsch Karosserie, (Rometsch Coachbuilders), were forced to produce field kitchens and operations wagons for the Wehrmacht.

After the severe bombings of Berlin in 1945, times were very harsh, and working on a few cars for the occupying Russian forces after the German surrender meant survival. The Rometsch works were located in the

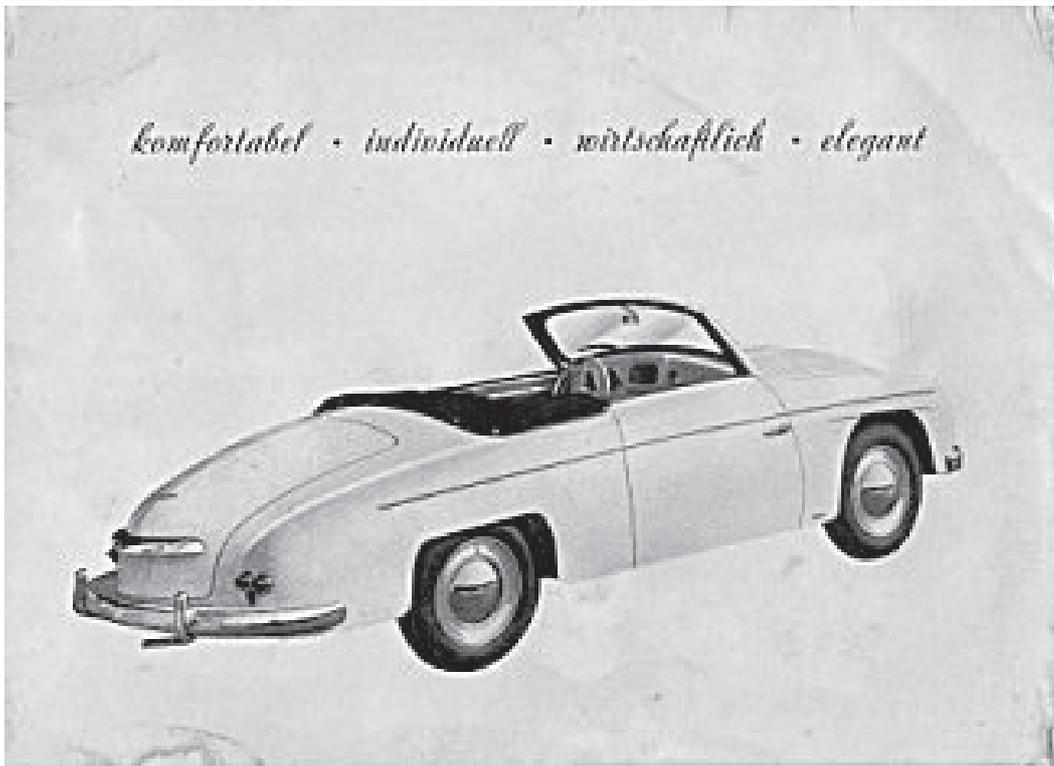
eastern sector of Berlin, which came under Russian control. They were isolated from the West in the immediate post-war years, especially during the Berlin Airlift, but after West Germany was created from the French, American and British zones in 1949, some trade with the West could restart.

In 1949, Fritz Rometsch, with the help of Johannes Beeshow, secretly designed and constructed a prototype VW sport cabriolet. First shown at the Berlin Auto Exposition in

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Alongside the chassis and running gear, other parts borrowed from VW included Karmann Ghia headlights, ashtray and mirrors, along with Beetle sun visors. Fredrich Rometsch also utilised existing parts from other European automotive manufacturers, including Fiat 1959 1100 D taillights, Ferrari 375 Mille Miglia front indicators and the lesser-known Borgward for its chrome 1959 Isabella door handles. However, various items such as the Beetle hubcaps were slightly different, featuring a smooth finish, void of the VW logo.

By 1952, when production of the coupe and cabrio was well under way, most customers were turning in their complete VW Beetles to Rometsch and picking

up their hand-made coupe or cabrio some six weeks later as ordered. Other customers paid 9,500 DM outright for the VW based Rometsch when a regular VW Beetle was 6,950 DM and a VW Cabriolet by Karmann was 8,000 DM.

1950, it became an overnight sensation and orders soon followed. The 'Beeskow' model, or 'Banana Car,' as it was called, was built in the classic style - a hand-formed aluminium body, luxurious leather interior, and a choice of colours and personal appointments. There was a coupe with a rear set of jump seats offered and the cabrio had a 'disappearing' top. Each had a dashboard that had a large clock, speedo, cigarette lighter, and lots of knobs for the lights. With a production rate of one per week, each car took more than 1000 man-hours to complete. The labour intense process included hand hammering each small section into shape, which was then test fitted to a full-scale wooden model. Then each of the dozen or so pieces were gas welded together to form a mudguard, hood, or door. By contrast, today's production cars are stamped out by huge presses, making each one exactly the same as the last one.

As their popularity soared, the Rometsch 'Batiazias' also won numerous awards for excellence in coach-building, including the very-prestigious Golden Rose Award of Geneva in 1954, 1955, and 1956. As if that wasn't wonderful enough, Rometsch VWs were becoming the darling of the Hollywood set, gracing the driveways of stars such as Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck. One special Rometsch was also built for the Swedish Royal Family, featuring an ivory dash and steering wheel.

Not all Rometsches were flamboyant; in fact one of the

The Rometsch was based on a normal VW Type 1 chassis, and used a VW gearbox and slightly modified Okrasa 1200cc VW engine with 50-bhp. The body was completely hand-made, with a steel inner body frame supported by hardwood pillars and support beams, while the outer body was made of smooth, lightweight aluminium. Each coach-built car was a little different; the door or guard from one may or may not fit another car of the same model. The rarity of the Rometsch today is partially due to its construction – the hardwood frame was subject to rot, and the aluminium body was easily damaged and expensive to repair.



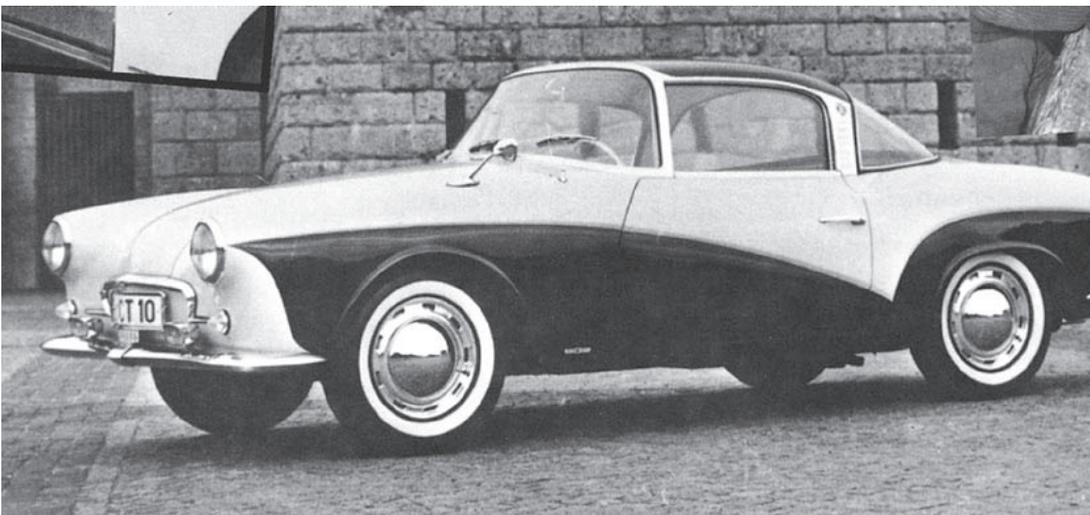


rarest is the VW Beetle taxi built on a stretched VW chassis with four doors: the narrowed front two doors opened normally, and the custom-made rear doors opened suicide-style. There were around 20 or so produced, with around half a dozen known to remain.

This brings us to the point in time when VW's Director Heinz Nordhoff and Fritz Rometsch clashed. Herr Rometsch recalled how he was invited by Heinz Nordhoff to the factory for lunch and to please bring a 'four door.' Upon returning to Berlin, they discovered that their 'four door' had undergone an intensive inspection during lunch. Furthermore, Nordhoff strictly refused to sell Rometsch a single VW chassis, and eventually even a complete car. Herr Rometsch recalls his employees ordering cars privately in order to maintain supply, and still he was unable to fulfil an order for 150 cars to Sweden.

By 1954, several styling changes included a one-piece windscreen, a wrap around rear window, Beetle-like bumpers and an oval-window style dash. In a world of rapidly changing auto styles, the timeless design of the Rometsch 'banana' with its quaint forward opening doors would soon yield to international tastes.

By 1957, Berliner Bert Lawrence designed an all new car for Rometsch, its notable features being Buick-like grille and sweep spear body lines down the sides of the cars, a wrap-around windscreen and conventional opening doors. The top



of the cabrio again disappeared in the body, and the coupes offered a rear seat. Most were done in two-tone paint schemes to show off the body lines, and the upholstery was available in leather. Again the engines were VW, Porsche, or the much requested Okrasa equipped engine.

Unfortunately, this new model wasn't as popular as the Beeskow on the continent, but several dozen were shipped to the United States. This model was available in the US through a few VW dealers and specially cars dealers for

about \$3395.00. Of all the remaining Rometsch VWs, the 1958 model appears most often. The very last cars seem to be as rare as the early cars, due to the limited production numbers. In fact, only about 500 VW-based cars were



produced. Also some 25 cars were based on Fiat and Borgward chassis, and a handful of Goliath GP 700s.

In 1961, the building of the Berlin Wall signalled the end of production because of the 99 employees, only 40 remained on the west side of Berlin, not nearly enough to continue the hand fabrication of aluminium bodies. East Berlin was forcibly cut off from the West for nearly thirty more years, until the fall of the Wall and German reunification in 1990.

While the Rometsch coupe was produced for roughly 10 years, there were significantly more cabriolets produced than coupes. Out of the estimated 500 Rometsch built, only around 50 are



an early cabriolet in concours condition.

If anyone out there has one of these Rometsch beauties and wants support on their restorations or has any info to share, The Rometsch Registry would love to hear from you at 2510 N. Larchmont Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92706, USA. Or check out the website, www.rometschregistry.org

By Nick Leadley



known to have survived, and out of this 35 or so are cabriolets. Perhaps half a dozen 4-door taxis are believed to have survived. The VW Museum in Wolfsburg has pristine examples of several Rometsch coupes, cabriolets and a 4-door taxi.

Obviously the Rometsch was never sold in Australia, so you will have to source one from Europe or the USA. If you wish to add a Rometsch to your collection you will have to dig deep into your bank balance, as collectors are willing to pay well to own one. Prices for those that come onto the open market can range from US\$35,000 for little more than a shell requiring full restoration, to upwards of US\$55 - 80,000 for



Leaky oil seal.

Kid comes in the shop wringing his hands, all upset. He's just paid a lot of money for someone to rebuild the engine in his Bug and it's leaking oil from the front seal. The guy who did the engine sez it's not his fault, it must be coming from the rear tranny seal, wants to sell the kid a rebuilt tranny. And besides, all VWs drip oil; no big deal. But the kid is sure it's leaking more than it did before it was overhauled and he's never had his tranny leak and the leaky stuff doesn't have that thick sulphury smell like tranny lube. And his mum is all upset about the gunk on the driveway.

That last is the real reason he's here :-)

So you drop the engine, pull the old seal, check the end-play ('way off), clean the oil drain drilling, put in a new shim stack and a new oil seal. To further the kid's education you show him how the seal has been ruined; whoever installed it used a hammer.

Hammer = Drips.

At least half the drippy oil seals I see are caused by improper installation of the seal. A few are due to improper engine assembly. The remainder are from excessive end-float; the thrust face of the #1 bearing is simply worn out, allowing the crankshaft to move back & forth. When it does, it acts as a nice oil pump, defeating the purpose of the lip-type seal.

The #1 main bearing oil seal is neoprene or silicone rubber bonded to a metal ring with a circular coiled spring inside to maintain a leak-free sliding fit around the centre boss of the flywheel. The oil seal fits into a recess cast into the crankcase; it's a tight fit. Properly installed, the oil seal ends up slightly below the level of the casting.

The factory manual shows the seal being pressed into place using a screw-type fixture, but an experienced mechanic can install one using repeated light taps from a plastic mallet. An unskilled mechanic will try to do it with a hammer and while it might look okay, about half the time the hammer blows cut the silicone rubber where it's molded over the invisible metal ring inside of the oil seal. Oil quickly discovers the cuts and you've got a leaker on your hands.

Too Much Sealant = Drips.

A leaky seal due to improper engine assembly is a bit more subtle.

Like all of the main bearings, #1 is generously supplied with pressured oil from the main oil gallery. In normal operation the oil lubricates the journal and escapes from both sides of the bearing. On the flywheel-side of the bearing the oil collects between the bearing and oil seal, flowing back to the sump via a drilling in the left half of the crankcase. Want to guess what happens if that drilling gets blocked? (Be careful, it's a trick question.)

When the #1 main bearing oil return is blocked, oil pressure will build up behind the seal and the thing will eventually leak. That's the obvious answer. But a blocked oil return port also results in accelerated wear since the thrust face of the bearing and the associated shim stack is not being provided with a circulating supply of oil.

Most often, the oil return passage is blocked by an over zealous application of sealant when the crankcase halves are joined. Here's how it happens: The left half of the crankcase is in the fixture, parting line up, the guy swabs on about four times more sealant than needed and when he drops the right half of the crankcase into place it squeezes the sealant out,

which flows downhill into the oil return passage from the #1 main bearing. And that's just on the inside of the crankcase. Outside, the sealant is oozing all over, including down into the recess for the oil seal. Being in the 'corner' of the recess, the oil return passage gets more than its share when it shouldn't have gotten any at all. (Hint: After closing the crankcase for the last time, check the oil return drilling with a cotton bud to ensure it is clear.)

I've also seen engines with sealant deliberately painted into the oil seal seat, apparently hoping to stave off leaks. In those cases the oil seal itself was always damaged by hammer blows.

Think about that for a minute. The guy builds an engine, hammers in the oil seal and sure enough, the puppy leaks like a sieve. So the next time he globs on a lot of sealant, hammers in another oil seal and this time it leaks even worse, convincing him it's impossible to keep a VW engine from leaking. (And besides, everyone sez VWs leak. Conventional Wisdom wins again.)

Indeed, when you combine an improperly installed oil seal with an improperly assembled engine (ie, the blocked drain hole) the engine doesn't just leak, it gushes. In effect, the builder has just created a direct path from the oil pump to the ground under the engine.

So why do people install oil seals with a hammer? First, because they see a real mechanic do it successfully and never understand that it takes considerable skill to do it right. Secondly, they do it because most of the manuals say it's okay to hammer it in - and about half the manuals show the seal installed incorrectly, flush to the outside of the crankcase. Correctly installed, the seal will be slightly below that level.

But the most common reason for all those drippy engines is the fact everyone assumes that hammering requires no skill.

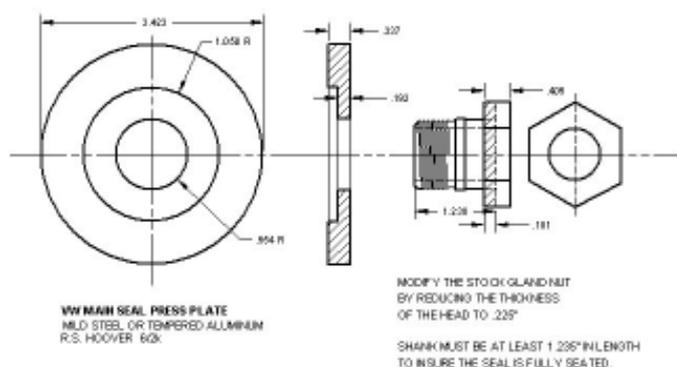
Push or Pull = No Drips.

Oil seals are designed to be pressed or pulled into their seats. It's possible for an experienced mechanic to install them with a plastic mallet, or even a hammer in the case of some axle seals, but it's also possible for a skilled surgeon to do an appendectomy with a pocket-knife. The emphasis here is on the skill, not the tools.

Oil seals aren't expensive and they don't look very sophisticated but there's more to them than meets the eye. If you toss an old one on the barby and wait for a while you'll be able to examine what's under the rubber. You'll see that most of them start out as a segmented ring of thin sharp steel. Cover that with rubber, tap on it with a hammer and it cuts the rubber as neatly as a knife.

So press them in. Or pull them. You can make a dandy puller-presser for your front brake drums (the seals you'll replace most often) using nothing more than a length of all-thread, some washers and three nuts. And you can buy a screw-type pressor for the #1 main bearing seal, although it's easy enough to make one, assuming you have a lathe. (See the drawing on the next page.)

Or you may drive them in with a 'seal-seater,' if the seal is small. By distributing the force of the hammer blows uniformly, a seal driver lets you pop the things into place with one or two well placed blows of a hammer. If you've a lathe, making oil seal drivers is a spare-time sorta thing; all are simple turnings, and aluminium or even hardwood works as well as steel.



Big seals are different. Because of their tendency to cock in the bore, large-diameter seals are best installed with a press or fixture. Rear axle seals are especially troublesome due to their deeply recessed position in the seal cover. Because of their proximity to the brakes and the fact that any leak could leave you without brakes, the wiser course is to always press-in rear axle seals.

With the exception of the Muir manual, books on maintaining your Volkswagen assume a certain level of competence. Learning to tap a seal into place with a plastic mallet isn't difficult; it's one of the many minor skills acquired during the apprenticeship all mechanics must endure. It is also one of the minor skills many self-taught mechanics never bother to master. (Hint: Start with an old seal. And an old engine case. When you can tap the thing in a dozen times in a row without damaging either the case or the seal you're probably ready to try it with a new seal on a good case. Along the way, you will have learned how to remove the thing as well.) But installing a seal with a hammer falls into the category of 'Field Repairs;' things a skilled mechanic must do when the proper tools are not available. Pressing the seal into place is not only safer, it's usually faster. And a pressed-into-place seal is cheap insurance against oil leaks.

Brake grease.

In 1957 I had a part-time job doing brake jobs at Pep Boys in Hayward, California. It was an after-hours sort of thing, six pm until ten or eleven, whenever I finished; two to four jobs a night. You had to provide your own tools, and as a part-timer I didn't have a regular bench or locker. Haul them in when I started, haul them home when I was done. I used Pep Boys parts of course, and whatever consumables I needed were provided by the store. One of those consumable supplies was brake grease.

I quickly used up the tube of brake grease I had in my kit and replaced it with what the store carried, a fair sized can with a fitted top like a coffee can; you opened it with a key. I don't recall the brand name, maybe 'Whitmore' but that's just a guess.

That can held four ounces (112 grams), and since you only use a dab here and there, a can that large was just about a life-time supply. It was hard, yellowish stuff with the consistency of saddle soap. The last time I saw the can was before we took off for a month-long trip down to Baja in 1991 to observe the eclipse.

About a year after the eclipse trip I was doing a brake job, went looking for the brake grease and couldn't find it. No problem; there's two proper parts-houses in the town I live in,

plus three or four of the fast-food variety. Next time I was downtown I stopped at the biggest parts-house, and asked for can of brake grease.

There were four guys working the counter and I knew three of them, having done business there for nearly twenty years. They all thought I was joking, including one old fart who's been around since Henry was making T's. But not a one of them had ever heard of brake grease; swore they had never carried it, hinted that there wasn't such a thing. Ditto with the other parts-house. And ditto on the humour, too. They were convinced I was pulling their leg - like asking for a left-handed screwdriver or a can of striped paint.

I had to drive twenty kays to another town, go to a Chevy dealer and pay a ridiculous amount for a tiny plastic tube of 'High Temperature Grease' and the gratuitous comment from the parts-guy, "Nobody calls it brake grease any more." Sorry, I do.

If the counter-men at two parts-house had never even heard of brake grease it's a fair bet they haven't been selling much of it, which gives me a hunch a lot of you may not of heard of it either. And don't go a'waving St. Muir at me. Mr. Muir was a writer and a publisher; my grandmother was a better mechanic.

Before writing this I dug through a stack of shop manuals to see when brake grease lost its honest name. A couple of recent Haynes manuals still call it brake grease. Toyota calls it 'Special High Temperature Lubricant (Brake)'. The Bentley VW manual ('66-'69 Sedans) doesn't show you where to apply brake grease, although they offer a cryptic 'Use lubricants sparingly,' as if you'd been born knowing what, where & how.

Here's the where: On the threads of your adjusters. Take them apart, clean them, apply a dab of brake grease, reassemble them and wipe off any excess. Then put a dab at any point on the backing plate touched by the shoes; I think the bugs have four such places, two per shoe (most cars have three, a few have four). Then you put four other dabs on the ends of the shoes, where they contact the pivot, adjuster or wheel cylinder piston. When you assemble the rear shoes, put a dab on the link pin before you install a new Circlip. Put a dab where the parking brake cable fits to the lever.

Here's the how: A dab means just the lightest smearing of grease; use your finger. A 50-gram tube of brake grease should be enough for 25-30 brake jobs, mebbe more.

Here's the what: Ask for 'High Temperature Lubricant.' (Even then I'd be wary if it didn't mention 'suitable for brakes' or something similar.) And don't be surprised if you have to go to a dealer to find it.

The geezer behind the parts-counter had been selling parts for forty years and swore he'd never heard of brake grease. That told me he hadn't done too many brake jobs; from the look of his hands, he may not have done any at all. But he knew all about it and was quick to share his perception of reality.

On the other hand, when it comes to brakes, no grease at all is better than one dab in the wrong place. Your brakes won't work as well but the wiser course is to know what you're doing before you do it. Hanging around a professional brake shop and keeping your eyes open wouldn't be a bad idea.

Bob Hoover

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