

*A Supplement to
Australian Coach-Built Riley
Cars*



Photo: John Mole Collection

By David Trunfull
(with the help of many Others)



**With thanks for the help and support of The Riley Cars Heritage Trust
and The Riley Motor Club of Victoria, Australia.**

Introduction

It is now a few years since I published the booklet on Australian coach-built Rileys.

To re-cap, the majority of cars, including Rileys, delivered to Australia in the inter-war years were delivered in chassis form and were bodied by various local coach-builders. World War 1 had demonstrated Australia's deficiency in manufacturing, so the Australian Federal Government in 1917, imposed a punitive tariff on fully up built cars in order to encourage the establishment of a viable manufacturing industry.

Since publishing, I have collected more photographs, so for this reason, I have decided to create this supplement. It also gives me the opportunity to correct some errors that unfortunately appeared in the version of the booklet that was published.

Corrections to the printed version.

Page 11. Diskon and Molyneux. The sentence about the D&M Speed Six Bentley should read: "The Speed Six Bentley was re-bodied for Richard Casey, who was later to become our Governor General.

Page 27 James Flood. The sentence starting about Harold (Paynting) and Les (Mills) should read that "they were a regular sight at Motor Shows for several years."

Page 36. The chassis number listed for this car should read:"607570"

Page 37 Should read 1930 Melbourne Motor Show

Page 88 Two-Seaters The caption should read: These two-seaters are from Queensland and appear to have similar windscreens.

Page 102. The chassis number listed for this car should read: "14L902"

We do not know the coach-builders for most of these cars, which poses the question: Why do so few of the surviving cars have a coach-builder's plate? We will probably never know, but some of the possible answers are:

1. The coach-builder might have been a very small concern, and they didn't make a badge This is more likely in the vintage era, where I have heard that some of the larger companies sold the more complex panels such as guards etc. to smaller companies who constructed very simple body shapes.

2. A Riley Distributor who often commissioned the body, may not

have wanted to advertise the body's Australian origins. I have seen contemporary advertisements where both English and Australian bodied Rileys are advertised with a price premium charged for the English built cars. I have seen other ads and articles for 1930s cars which clearly depict Australian bodied cars, where there is no mention of the origins of the bodywork, and others where the coach-builder is named.

I have on occasion been asked, what the differences between Australian and English bodied Rileys. Very few English bodied Rileys were exported to Australia in the 20s and the earlier part of the 30s. Some Australian coach-builders attempted to copy the English style, (some more successfully than others), while others had a unique style. A few differences are: The Australian built vintage era two-seaters have a swage that continues from the rear of the car to the firewall or radiator, that the English built cars lack. English built sedans (Monaco, Mentone, Kestrel etc.,) mostly had sun-roofs, whereas Australian built bodies appear not to. Riley had mainly aluminium bodywork from the early 30s, and although Australian coach-builders did body some cars in aluminium, steel was most commonly used. This cannot have helped the performance of the Nine.

Finally, the car on the cover appeared at the bottom of page 99 in the booklet. John Mole has recently given me a colour photo of it, which I thought was too good not to include in this supplement. Thanks John.

None of the solid roof coupes are known to have survived, so we don't know who built them. If I had to have a guess of the coach-builder of the ones built in the 1930s, it would be Ruskin of Melbourne as I have seen similar shaped bodies built by them on other British built marques.



Riley 12 Side-Valve 3683 bodied by Jones & Levy. (Vic.)





Photo: J.McNair

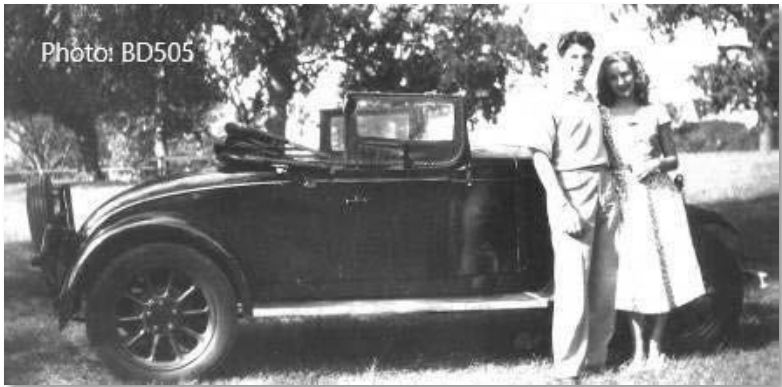
We are not sure if the car above still exists, but the one below has been saved by Phil Evans



607177 Photo: Phil Evans



A couple of photos of Australian bodied 9s from the pages of "The Blue Diamond".

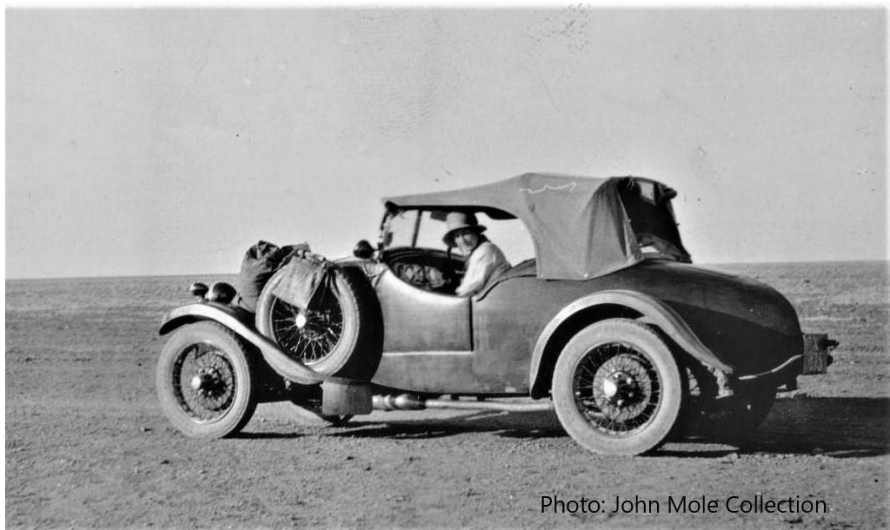




Norman J. Hooton competing in the Victorian L.C.C. 24 hour reliability test. This car was also raced by Jack Day.



This is the only six-wheel equipped Nine I have seen



The Robertson & Howell, Flood bodied 9 on the way to the 1932 Monte Carlo Rally. Below is a reproduction of the car.





6021560 Photo: J.Keane

This car was originally the four-door tourer seen below, but was modified by its owner to create this two-door car.





607575 Photo: D.Titcombe

This car's body is believed to have been built by Holden Motor Body Works. It is now in the U.K.



608645 Photo: A.Alphonso

This Australian built car spent some time in Hong Kong, before being returned to Australia.



607570 Martin & King.
(Photo: G.McInnes)

The car was on the 1930 Riley stand at the Melbourne Motor Show. The bodywork is by Martin & King.



Photo: J.Runciman

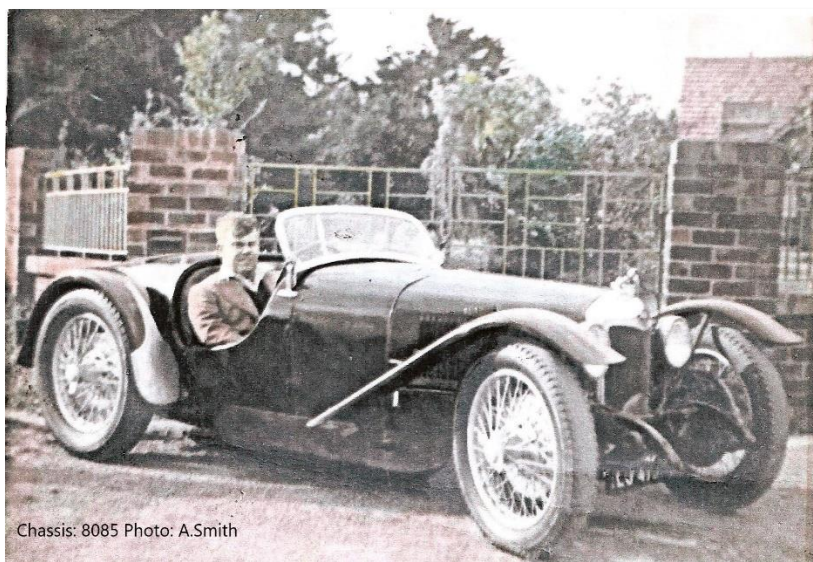


Photo: P.Evans

This car has had much work done on it, from when it was in the condition that it was in the photo below.



Photo: P.Wyllie



The Brooklands above was re- bodied by James Flood, & the one below is by an unknown coach-builder from N.S.W.





This car was owned by Geoffrey Luck. Going for a swim wouldn't have done it any good.





Photo: John Mole

A six-cylinder Australian bodied saloon nearing the end of its life. Below is an Australian "Monaco".



Photo: D.Jordan

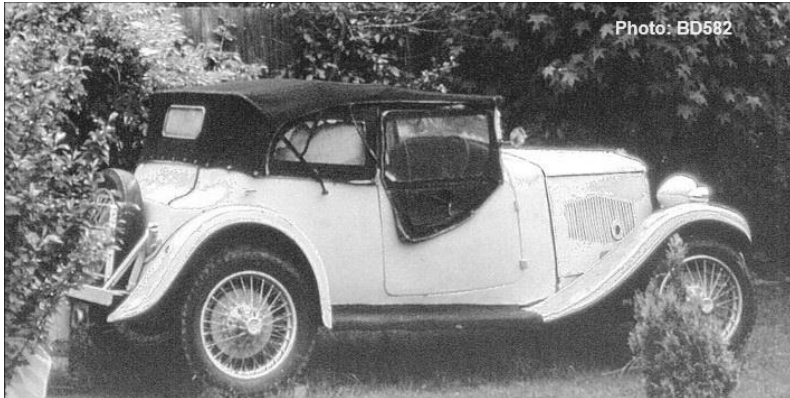


A couple of Australian bodied coupes





This is the only Riley that I know of that was built in Australia after the Nuffield take-over.



A previous owner of this car appeared at a 2014 club event.



In conclusion, I have included this lovely photo of this Le Mans Sport Tourer. If Colin Dennis and I had not discovered several advertisements for this previously unheard-of Australian model, the idea of documenting Australian coach-built Rileys probably would not have entered my mind.

It is also gives me some satisfaction, that since publication, several cars have come out of the woodwork, and have either been put back on the road, or are in the process of being so.

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