



THE HOLDEN HERITAGE

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1966 HR HOLDEN

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

April 1966.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

The Cultural Revolution gains momentum in China; Leonid Brezhnev becomes General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party; Jack Nicklaus wins the US Masters golf title for the second year in a row; British novelist Evelyn Waugh dies; Andrew Peacock wins Federal by-election for Robert Menzies' vacated seat of Kooyong; USA recovers hydrogen bomb 'lost' off coast of Spain; Bob Dylan plays Australian concerts, with tickets priced from \$1.55.

POPULAR SONGS:

These Boots Are Made for Walking (Nancy Sinatra); Jake the Peg (Rolf Harris); Groovy Kind of Love (Mindbenders); Nowhere Man (Beatles); Daydream (Lovin' Spoonful).

POPULAR FILMS:

My Fair Lady (Rex Harrison, Audrey Hepburn); The Greatest Story Ever Told (Max Von Sydow, Charlton Heston); Thunderball (Sean Connery); The Great Race (Tony Curtis, Natalie Wood); Zorba the Greek (Anthony Quinn); The Sound Of Music (Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer. Now in its 13th month!).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

British car-maker Rover announces that it is considering assembling cars in Australia; an English survey shows that dark green is the most popular colour for new cars; Nissan releases a new six-cylinder Cedric on the Australian market at \$2950; Ford GT40s set fastest times in early practice for the annual Le Mans 24-Hour race.

When sales of the HD started to wane, Holden hit back hard with the HR. Although the body changes looked mild, they involved reworking the roofline and changing almost all the exterior panels to give a sleeker, more modern profile. Car-buyers responded by making the HR one of the biggest-selling Holdens of all.

Exterior changes were also effected at both ends, with a new grille with squared-off headlight surrounds at the front and 'tower-type' lights at the rear. The Holden's performance was improved by virtue of enlarged versions of the 'red engine' with higher compression ratios. A new version of the twin carburettor 'X2' engine boasted 109 kW (145 bhp), making it the most powerful Holden engine to date.

Other HR changes included a slightly widened track, a wider rear windscreen and plusher cabin trimmings, including a woodgrain finish for the Premier's interior. Options included power steering, front-wheel disc brakes and a limited-slip differential. Six months after the launch, all HRs were given a safety upgrade with the addition of front seat

belts, windscreen washers, reverse lights, sunvisors and a shatterproof interior rear-vision mirror. The fitting of seat belts as standard was the forerunner of many significant safety-related features pioneered by Holden in Australia.

From June 1967, a new '186S' engine became available as an option. Boasting the same output as the X2 engine it replaced, this two-barrel single carburettor engine delivered its power more smoothly and featured Holden's first automatic choke. At the same time a floor-shift four-speed manual gearbox was offered as an \$85 factory option.





1966 HR HOLDEN DATA

ENGINES: 2.65-litre six-cylinder '161' (a low-compression version of this engine was also available), 3.05-litre six-cylinder '186', 3.05-litre six-cylinder 'X2' and 3.05-litre six-cylinder '186S'.

TRANSMISSIONS: Three-speed manual gearbox, four-speed manual gearbox and two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission.

MODELS: Standard sedan, Special sedan, Premier sedan, Standard station wagon, Special station wagon, Premier station wagon, panel van and utility.

PRICE WHEN NEW (INCL/TAX): \$2167 (Standard sedan).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4600 mm; Wheelbase: 2692 mm; Width: 1778 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Revised version of HD body with turn signal lights set within grille and squared-off front guards; headlights have squarish chrome surrounds and grille features horizontal centre bar.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 252,352.



HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1966

- A new assembly plant opens at Acacia Ridge, Queensland.
- Holden is first local manufacturer to fit seat belts on all models.
- Student driver education scheme announced.

1967

- The first small Holden, called Torana, is introduced. Taking its name from an Aboriginal word meaning 'to fly', it is based on the English Vauxhall Viva. Between 1967 and 1969, 36,561 are produced.



1968 HK HOLDEN

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

January 1968.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Government Senate leader John Gorton sworn in as Prime Minister of Australia; unmanned US spaceship *Surveyor* soft-lands on moon; reform-minded politician Alexander Dubcek becomes leader of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party; the Beatles record 'Lady Madonna', then prepare to leave for India to study transcendental meditation; The Seekers named 'Australians of the Year'; the Viet Cong launches the Tet Offensive, a simultaneous assault on all major South Vietnamese cities.

POPULAR SONGS:

Hello, Goodbye (Beatles); Sadie, the Cleaning Lady (Johnny Farnham); Daydream Believer (The Monkees); Chain of Fools (Aretha Franklin); The Rain, the Park and Other Things (The Cowsills).

POPULAR FILMS:

Barefoot in the Park (Robert Redford, Jane Fonda); You Only Live Twice (Sean Connery); Camelot (Richard Harris, Vanessa Redgrave); They're a Weird Mob (Walter Chiari, Chips Rafferty); Dr Dolittle (Rex Harrison); Dr Zhivago (Omar Sharif, Julie Christie).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Sales figures for 1967 are released, showing that 430,379 motor vehicles were sold in Australia; the latest edition of UBD's Sydney street directory shows about 25,000 streets in the city spread over 862 square miles; John Lennon trades in his psychedelic Rolls-Royce Phantom V for a 230 km/h Iso-Rivolta; young Aussie racing drivers Greg Cusack, Leo Geoghegan, Kevin Bartlett and John Harvey are tipped as the stars of the future by the local motoring press.

The all-new Holden HK was the most ambitious series to date, bringing a large array of additional models and new mechanical features including an imported V8 engine. The HK also introduced the soon-to-be famous 'Kingswood' name for the volume-selling model.

The HK was bigger, lower, heavier and more rounded in appearance. The two major model additions were the Brougham luxury variant and the Monaro sports coupe. The V8 engine was available on all models and proved such a success that a significant number of Holden buyers are still

specifying bent iron engines today. The base model HK sedan was called Belmont and the model formerly called 'Special' became 'Kingswood'. The upmarket Premier was retained (and featured a different roofline to lesser models) and, in July 1968, an extended version of the HK sedan, the Brougham, was released. It was over 20 cm longer than the Premier and featured the Chevrolet-built '307' V8 engine, automatic transmission, power steering and the most plush Holden interior yet.

July 1968 also brought the Monaro sports coupe. Based on the HK sedan (and similar in wheelbase and overall length), the pillarless Monaro was the first local vehicle of its type and won Holden a legion of new fans. The three Monaro models included the potent 'Bathurst-bred' GTS 327, fitted with a US-built, 5.3-litre V8 engine.

With the HK, Holden offered a larger choice of models, engines, transmissions and options than had previously been seen in a mass-produced Australian car. Safety features fitted to all models included an energy-absorbing steering column (another local first) and a dual circuit braking system.





1968 HK HOLDEN DATA

ENGINES: 2.65–litre six–cylinder '161', 3.05–litre six–cylinder '186', 3.05–litre six–cylinder '186S', 5–litre V8 '307' & 5.3–litre V8 '327'.

TRANSMISSIONS: Three–speed manual gearbox, four–speed manual gearbox and two–speed Powerglide automatic transmission.

MODELS: Belmont sedan, Belmont station wagon, Belmont panel van, Belmont utility, Kingswood sedan, Kingswood station wagon, Kingswood utility, Premier sedan, Premier station wagon, Brougham sedan, Monaro coupe, Monaro GTS coupe and Monaro GTS 327 coupe.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$2215 (Belmont six–cylinder sedan), \$3021 (Premier six–cylinder wagon), \$2575 (base Monaro six–cylinder); \$3790 (Monaro V8 GTS 327).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4686 mm; Wheelbase: 2819 mm; Width: 1816 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: All–new body with pronounced flaring above the wheel arches; HR–style grille (without inset turn signal lights) featuring the word 'Holden' written in the lower curb–side corner; wraparound front turn indicators mounted under the bumper.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 199,039.



HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1968

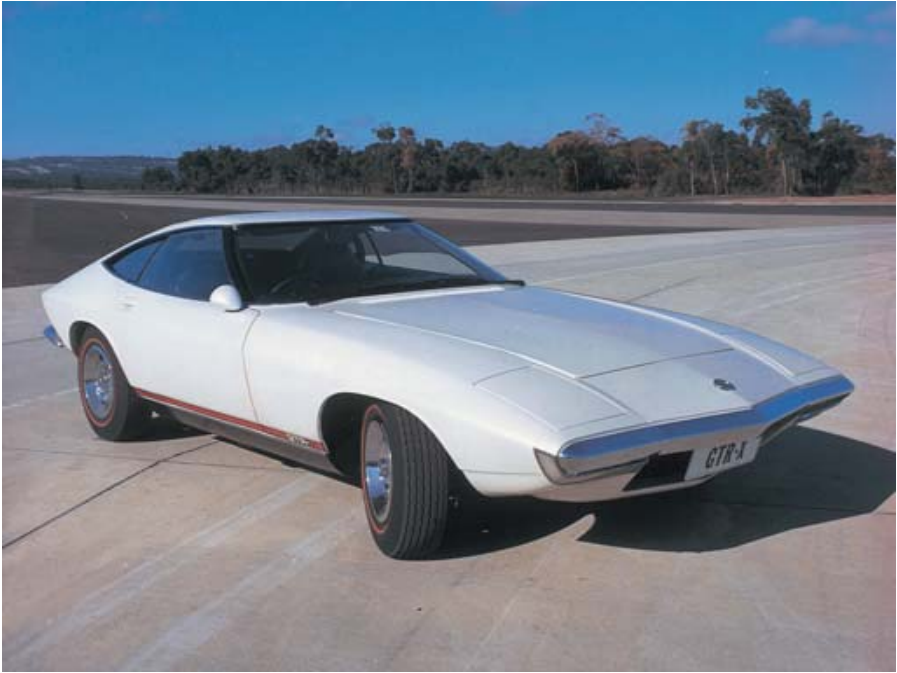
- Torana bodies are made in Australia for the first time and work progresses on a V8 engine plant at Fishermans Bend.
- Bruce McPhee and Barry Mulholland, driving a Monaro GTS 327 V8, win the Hardie–Ferodo 500, giving Holden its first victory in the annual Bathurst production car endurance race.



1968 HK Monaro GTS



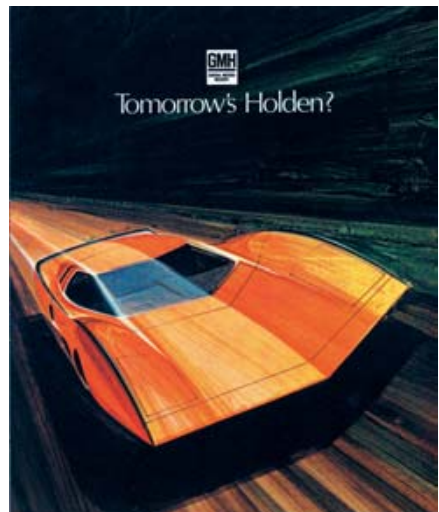
The McPhee/Mulholland Monaro GTS 327, victorious in the 1968 Hardie-Ferodo 500 at Bathurst.



Torana GTR-X



HB Torana.



The Holden Hurricane experimental car introduced the Australian V8.



1969 HT HOLDEN

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

May 1969.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Joh Bjelke-Peterson's conservative government is re-elected in Queensland; Labor loses office in Tasmania after 35 years in government; ocean liner Queen Elizabeth II sets off on maiden voyage; USA launches *Apollo 10* moon flight (as prelude to planned moon landings in July), while unmanned Soviet spacecraft lands on Venus; the casting of Mick Jagger as 'Ned Kelly' in a new film is announced.

POPULAR SONGS:

Where Do You Go To, My Lovely? (Peter Sarstedt); Get Back (Beatles); Pinball Wizard (The Who); The Real Thing (Russell Morris); Bad Moon Rising (Creedence Clearwater Revival); The Boxer (Simon and Garfunkel).

POPULAR FILMS:

Oliver! (Ron Moody, Jack Wild, Mark Lester); Funny Girl (Barbra Streisand); Rosemary's Baby (Mia Farrow); Romeo and Juliet (Olivia Hussey, Michael York); A Man and a Woman (Anouk Aimee); The Graduate (Dustin Hoffman, Anne Bancroft); Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (Dick Van Dyke).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

At \$31,174 the Mercedes-Benz Grand 600 Pullman is the most expensive new car on the Australian market; Formula Ford open-wheeler racing starts to take off downunder; spectator insurance problems cause cancellation of the 1969 Belgian Grand Prix at Spa; Graham Hill wins the Monaco GP for a record fifth time.

The HT series introduced a production version of the Aussie V8, which had earlier been exhibited in the spectacular Holden Hurricane experimental car. The locally designed and built V8 came in two versions: the '253' (4.2-litre) and '308' (5-litre). The '308' was standard on the stretched Brougham but initially the imported '307' was fitted to other 5-litre HT models. Both versions of the Aussie V8 were praised for their low overall weight, compactness and smoothness. Demand was strong.

Although the HT's styling changes were minor, they resulted in a cleaner-looking design. The model brought wraparound rear light clusters and the

redesigned grilles (with different designs for different models) made use of new ABS plastic. There were also flatter rear flanks, which eliminated the 'hip' at the rear roof pillar and resulted in a wider back window. Other features included an increase in track width, improved suspension, a new instrument panel and synchromesh on all forward gears for all manual models.

A new windscreen wiper system with an articulated wiper blade provided greater visibility and all other safety features introduced with the HK — including the telescoping steering column and dual master brake system — were carried over.

The HT model choice included sedans, wagons, Monaro coupes, the Brougham luxury saloon, plus utility and panel van versions. Demand for the Monaro continued to run well ahead of supply. In August 1969, the extremely potent 5.74-litre Chevrolet '350' V8 was offered with the limited-build 'Bathurst Pack' Monaro GTS. A long list of options gave HT buyers a choice of five engines and four gearboxes, a limited-slip differential, 'Superlift' shock absorbers, front-wheel disc brakes, power steering, power windows, bucket seats, reclining seats, refrigerated air-conditioning, 'rally' wheels and a vinyl roof.





1969 HT HOLDEN DATA

ENGINES: 2.65-litre six-cylinder '161', 3.05-litre six-cylinder '186', 3.05-litre six-cylinder '186S', 4.2-litre V8 '253', 5-litre V8 '307', 5-litre V8 '308' and 5.74-litre V8 '350'.

TRANSMISSIONS: Three-speed manual gearbox, four-speed manual gearbox and two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission.

MODELS: Belmont sedan, Belmont station wagon, Belmont panel van, Belmont utility, Kingswood sedan, Kingswood station wagon, Kingswood utility, Premier sedan, Premier station wagon, Brougham sedan, Monaro coupe, Monaro GTS coupe and Monaro GTS 350 coupe.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$2326 (Belmont six-cylinder sedan), \$3988 (Brougham V8).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN):

Length: 4694 mm; Wheelbase: 2819 mm; Width: 1824 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Premier and Brougham have essentially the same body as HK models plus flat grilles with centrally mounted badge; other models have similar body to HK but with smooth rear guard/rear roof pillar junction and wider rear window plus recessed horizontally slatted grille with raised centre featuring lion-and-stone badge.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 183,402.



HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1969

- The Australian-made V8 powerplant is exhibited in the futuristic mid-engined Holden Hurricane experimental car. The engine has been developed at a cost of \$20 million.
- The original Torana HB is replaced by the Australian-designed Torana LC, available with an imported 'four' or locally made six-cylinder engine. Between 1969 and 1972, 74,627 are sold.
- A new Safety Design Centre opens at Lang Lang with an impact sled and a 10-tonne concrete barrier for crash testing.
- The two millionth Holden is produced.
- Colin Bond and Tony Roberts, in a Monaro GTS 350 V8, win the Hardie-Ferodo 500, giving Holden its second consecutive Bathurst victory.



1970 HG HOLDEN

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

July 1970.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Troubled Pakistan is divided into four provinces; Charles Manson goes on trial for murder of actress Sharon Tate; the controversial stage show 'Oh! Calcutta!' opens in London; adventurer Hans Tholstrup completes a circumnavigation of Australia in a 5.2 metre runabout boat; major petrol strikes in Australia; President Richard Nixon launches anti-pollution drive in the USA; Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport is opened; Author George Johnston ('Mr Brother Jack') dies; Time magazine reports that platform shoes are the new vogue in footwear.

POPULAR SONGS:

Let It Be (Beatles); Long and Winding Road (Beatles); ABC (Jackson 5); Rhythm of Life (Diana Ross and The Supremes); Old Man Emu (John Williamson); Woodstock (Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young).

POPULAR FILMS:

Easy Rider (Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper); Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice (Robert Culp, Elliott Gould, Dyan Cannon, Natalie Wood); Midnight Cowboy (Dustin Hoffman); Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid (Paul Newman, Robert Redford); M*A*S*H (Donald Sutherland, Elliott Gould); Airport (Dean Martin, Helen Hayes); 2001: A Space Odyssey (Keir Dullea).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

The McLaren team announces that it will continue competing in Formula One and Can-Am racing despite the death of founder Bruce McLaren the previous month; Mazda pushes ahead with the rotary engine, fitting it to versions of its new Capella model; Austrian racing driver Jochen Rindt wins the British Grand Prix, his third GP victory in a row.

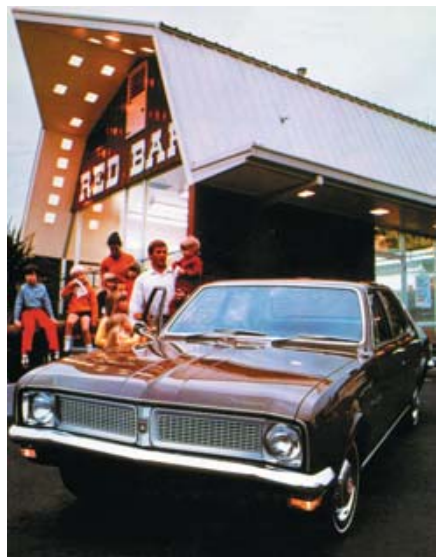
The Holden HG was the final refinement of the HK/HT series and introduced the Australian-built, three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission to the 'full-size' Holden. The model range was as before, with sedans, wagons, Monaro coupes and light commercial models in several levels of specification, plus the Brougham luxury saloon.

The Trimatic transmission was standard on the Brougham and available on all other models, except the Monaro GTS 350, which was offered with four-speed manual or the regular two-speed Powerglide automatic. As well as a more elaborate ABS plastic grille and 'cleaner' body decorations, the HG had new safety features, colours and trim designs.

Improved disc brakes were now fitted to all V8 models. The suspension system of the Monaro GTS was modified for greater comfort. This was possible because race duties had been taken over by the

smaller Torana, so the Monaro was no longer sold in 'Bathurst' trim.

All HG changes, including the optional Trimatic transmission and choice of five locally produced engines, were offered on the big-selling range of Holden passenger car-derived light commercials.





1970 HG HOLDEN DATA

ENGINES: 2.65-litre six-cylinder '161', 3.05-litre six-cylinder '186', 4.2-litre V8 '253', 5-litre V8 '308' and 5.74-litre V8 '350'.

TRANSMISSIONS: Three-speed manual gearbox, two four-speed manual gearboxes, two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission and three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission.

MODELS: Belmont sedan, Belmont station wagon, Belmont panel van, Belmont utility, Kingswood sedan, Kingswood station wagon, Kingswood utility, Premier sedan, Premier station wagon, Brougham sedan, Monaro coupe, Monaro GTS coupe and Monaro GTS 350 coupe.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL/TAX): \$2394 (Belmont six-cylinder sedan), \$3201 (Premier six-cylinder wagon).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4694 mm; Wheelbase: 2819 mm; Width: 1824 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Premier and Brougham continue with essentially the same body as HK/HT models and have flat grilles with centrally mounted badge; other sedan models have 'egg-crate' mesh grille divided by vertical bar bearing Holden badge, plus the HT's smooth rear guard/rear roof pillar junction.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 155,787.



HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1970

- The stunning Torana GTR-X fibreglass-bodied coupe is exhibited to an enthusiastic response, but plans to produce the car for sale are shelved.
- Total Holden vehicle sales for the year top 200,000.
- Norm Beechey drives a Monaro to victory in the Australian Touring Car Championship.



1971 HQ HOLDEN

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

July 1971.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

The legendary jazz musician Louis Armstrong dies; US President Richard Nixon announces he will visit China to seek normalisation of relations between the two countries; protests in Australia's eastern states against the touring South African Springbok rugby team; rock singer Jim Morrison found dead in Paris; Evonne Goolagong, 19, wins the Wimbledon women's singles final while John Newcombe wins his third men's singles final; a Renoir painting bought for \$16.80 in the 1890s sells for a record \$1.159 million.

POPULAR SONGS:

Love Story (Andy Williams); Eagle Rock (Daddy Cool); It's Too Late/I Feel the Earth Move (Carole King); Father and Son (Cat Stevens); Rainy Days and Mondays (Carpenters); How Can You Mend a Broken Heart? (Bee Gees).

POPULAR FILMS: Carry On Again, Doctor (The Carry On Gang); Patton (George C. Scott, Karl Malden); Ryan's Daughter (John Mills, Sarah Miles); There's a Girl in My Soup (Peter Sellers, Goldie Hawn); Soldier Blue (Candice Bergen, Peter Strauss).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Leyland Australia announces plans to build a large family car (the P76); Dunlop releases its first slick racing tyre; British Leyland shows off its electric minicar prototype; Radial tyres tipped to replace all other forms in coming years; *Apollo 15* spaceship lands on moon carrying a \$37.8 million, four-wheel steering lunar buggy, which is driven on the lunar surface.

The HQ Holden series brought about major changes and improvements to all Holden variants. Modern Motor magazine editors said that an 8800 kilometre test of the HQ Kingswood had shown that the new model 'raised the average family man's car to above average status'. In many other quarters, the HQ Holden was hailed as the most significant Holden since the original 48-215.

As well as introducing new versions of the previous Holden sedans, wagons and coupes, the range included a new long wheelbase luxury model called Statesman. The HQ's six-cylinder engines were carried over from the HG, but with a longer stroke to increase the capacity. Two versions of the local V8 were offered with the imported Chevrolet

'350' still available in the Monaro. The HQ was the first Holden built with a semi-chassis frame (to improve rigidity and reduce noise and vibration) and it introduced other new features including flowthrough ventilation and four-wheel coil springing.

During the three years the HQ series stayed in production, various 'specials', such as the 'Vacationer' option package, were announced. The sporty Holden SS V8 sedan featured a four-speed manual gearbox and many Monaro details.

In March 1973, a four-door Monaro GTS sedan, with virtually the same specifications as the GTS coupe, was released. That same year, a silver Holden Premier went on sale to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Holden car.

The Statesman, which replaced the

Brougham, was built on the extended wagon wheelbase and was 26 cm longer than the other sedans. It was available in Custom and De Ville versions. The HQ range also





included utilities, panel vans and Holden's first cab/chassis truck.

The HQ design placed a considerable emphasis on safety. Nearly half a million HQs were sold. That made it easily the biggest-selling single Holden model range, although the sales were made over a longer period than previous models.



1971 HQ HOLDEN DATA

ENGINES: 2.84-litre six-cylinder '173', 3.3-litre six-cylinder '202', 4.2-litre V8 '253', 5-litre V8 '308' and 5.74-litre V8 '350'.

TRANSMISSIONS: Three-speed manual gearbox, four-speed manual gearbox, three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission and three-speed Turbohydramatic 400 automatic transmission (only with the '350' V8).

MODELS: Belmont sedan, Belmont station wagon, Belmont panel van, Belmont utility, Kingswood sedan, Kingswood station wagon, Kingswood utility, Sandman panel van, Sandman utility, SS sedan, Premier sedan, Premier station wagon, Holden cab/chassis truck, Monaro coupe, Monaro GTS coupe, Monaro GTS 350 coupe, Monaro LS ('Luxury Sports') coupe, Monaro GTS sedan, Statesman sedan and Statesman De Ville sedan.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$2730 (Belmont six-cylinder sedan), \$3255 (Kingswood Vacationer six-cylinder sedan), \$4630 (Monaro V8 GTS 350), \$4660 (Statesman De Ville).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4762 mm; Wheelbase: 2819 mm; Width: 1880 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: All-new body with 'creased' side panels; grille separated from headlights; recessed grille featuring horizontal bar with central Holden (or GTS) badge; Premier has four headlights, Kingswood two; front turn and rear turn indicators and stop-lights are incorporated into bumpers.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 485,650.

HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1971

- The first long wheelbase luxury Holden derivative, the Statesman, goes on sale in six-cylinder and eight-cylinder versions.
- The first car-based Holden 'Cab and Chassis' light truck is announced as part of the HQ range. These vehicles have a full chassis frame.
- A De Luxe version of the four-cylinder LC Torana is released, powered by a 1.6-litre engine.
- Holden produces its 100,000th Trimatic transmission. These have been produced in 18 versions and 15,000 units have been exported.
- Colin Bond drives a Torana to victory in the Australian Rally Championship.

1972

- The LJ Torana, the third small Holden, is launched. Between 1972 and 1974, 81,453 are built.
- Colin Bond drives a Torana to victory in the Australian Rally Championship.
- Peter Brock tastes his first victory in the annual Bathurst enduro, winning the Hardie-Ferodo 500 in a six-cylinder Torana LJ GTR XU-1.

1973

- Holden celebrates the 25th anniversary of Holden manufacture in Australia.
- Peter Lang drives a Torana to victory in the Australian Rally Championship.



HQ sedans



HQ Statesman De Ville



HQ One Tonner



LC Torana XU-1



HX Sandman Panel Van



LJ Torana GTR XU-1



1974 HJ HOLDEN

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

October 1974.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Labour wins General Election in Britain; the first trial colour television broadcasts are made in Australia; Muhammed Ali knocks out George Foreman to regain World Heavyweight Boxing Championship; Australian Labor Government's approval rating falls to lowest to date; the first film directed by Peter Weir, *The Cars That Ate Paris*, premieres; Australia's annual beer consumption is estimated at 140 litres per person; British report claims South Africa has capacity to produce a nuclear bomb; Australian Bankcard introduced.

POPULAR SONGS:

Sugar Baby Love (The Rubettes); The Night Chicago Died (Paper Lace); I Honestly Love You (Olivia Newton-John); Hey Paula (Ernie Sigley and Denise Drysdale); It's Only Rock and Roll (Rolling Stones); I Shot the Sheriff (Eric Clapton).

POPULAR FILMS:

The Exocist (Linda Blair, Max Von Sydow); The Great Gatsby (Robert Redford, Mia Farrow); Alvin Purple (Graham Blundell); A Touch of Class (George Segal, Glenda Jackson); The Sting (Robert Redford, Paul Newman); Blazing Saddles (Mel Brooks, Gene Wilder); The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man in the Moon Marigolds (Joanne Woodward).

MOTORIZING HIGHLIGHTS:

John Goss and Kevin Bartlett win the Hardie-Ferodo 1000 at Bathurst in a Falcon; Emerson Fittipaldi's fourth place in the US Grand Prix is enough to clinch him the World Formula One Drivers Championship; the Toyota Corona station wagon is released at the Melbourne Motor Show; New Zealand's ex-World Formula One Champion Denis Hulme, 38, announces his retirement from motor racing; the ailing Leyland Australia company appeals for government aid after its market share drops to 4.8 per cent.

The facelifted HJ was an improved and updated version of the long-running and very successful HQ. It was distinguished by different grilles, wraparound front and rear lights, larger bumper bars and slight revisions to the front-end sheet metal. Interior changes included full-foam seats, a new instrument panel, a revised ventilation system and upgraded equipment levels.

The biggest-selling variant, the Kingswood, now had a 3.3-litre engine and power-assisted disc brakes as standard equipment. A 'Kingswood Deluxe' package in-

cluded the most commonly specified options while keeping the total price under \$5000. Later in the year, the 'HJ' version of the Statesman (a Holden-based extended wheelbase luxury sedan) was announced. The De Ville became the base Statesman, and an even more upmarket Caprice version was announced. This boasted more luxury equipment than any car Holden had previously produced.

'Sandman' versions of the panel van and utility were strongly marketed to increase Holden's presence in the fast-expanding recreational market (a small number of HQ Sandmans had been built earlier in 1974 but the variant was not produced in large volumes until the HJ series).

In an interesting move, HJ Premier bodysells were exported to Mazda in Japan where they were fitted with 13B Wankel rotary engines. This hybrid became Mazda's top-of-the-line domestic market model, the Roadpacer.





1974 HJ HOLDEN DATA

ENGINES: 2.84-litre six-cylinder '173', 3.3-litre six-cylinder '202', 4.2-litre V8 '253' and 5-litre V8 '308'.

TRANSMISSIONS: Three-speed manual gearbox, four-speed manual gearbox, three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission and three-speed Turbohydramatic 400 automatic transmission (only with 5-litre '350' V8).

MODELS: Belmont sedan, Belmont station wagon, Kingswood sedan, Kingswood station wagon, Kingswood utility, Kingswood Sandman utility, Kingswood Deluxe sedan, Premier sedan, Premier station wagon, Holden cab/chassis truck, Holden panel van, Sandman panel van, Holden utility, Sandman utility, Monaro coupe, Monaro GTS coupe, Monaro GTS sedan, Monaro LS ('Luxury Sports') coupe, Statesman De Ville sedan and Statesman Caprice sedan.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$3594 (Belmont six-cylinder sedan), \$4748 (Statesman).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4834 mm; Wheelbase: 2819 mm; Width: 1874 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Similar body to HQ; Kingswood still has separate grille and headlights but grille is raised rather than recessed; vertical front wraparound turn indicators are now mounted above bumper bar and wraparound rear tail-lights are fitted; Premier has quad headlights fitted in surrounds which span indicators and grille.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 176,202.



HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1974

- The three millionth Holden is produced.
- A more upmarket Statesman luxury car, available in De Ville and Caprice variants, joins the Holden stable.
- The fourth Torana - the bigger LH model - is announced. Available only in four-door form, it is one of the few cars ever offered with a choice of four-cylinder, six-cylinder and eight-cylinder engines. Between 1974 and 1976, 71,408 are built.
- The TA Torana - basically a facelifted LC - is offered with a choice of 1.3-litre and 1.76-litre four-cylinder engines. By year's end, 9288 are sold.
- Peter Brock drives a Torana to victory in the Australian Touring Car Championship.

1975

- The Holden Gemini TX - a version of GM's first world car - is announced in two-door and four-door versions. Designed in Germany, it is assembled in Australia from local and Japanese components. The Gemini soon becomes Australia's most popular small four-cylinder car and 42,792 TX models are built.
- Peter Brock and Brian Sampson win the Hardie-Ferodo 1000 (formerly Hardie-Ferodo 500) in a Torana LH V8.



1976 HX HOLDEN

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

July 1976.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Israeli special forces raid Entebbe Airport (Uganda) and free Jewish hijack hostages; Jimmy Carter wins Democrat Party presidential nomination for US elections in November; major earthquake in China; the ACTU calls a national strike to protest the Fraser government's changes to Medibank health care system; 14-year-old Rumanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci emerges as star of Montreal Olympic games after she achieves the first perfect ten score.

POPULAR SONGS:

Howzat (Sherbet); Fernando (Abba); Movie Star (Harpo); SSSSSSingle Bed (Fox); Jailbreak (AC-DC); Rhiannon (Fleetwood Mac); Tonight's the Night (Rod Stewart); I Like It Both Ways (Supernaut); Don't Go Breaking My Heart (Elton John and Kiki Dee).

POPULAR FILMS:

Babe (Susan Clark, Alex Karras); All the President's Men (Dustin Hoffman, Robert Redford); The Tall Blonde Man with the One Black Shoe (Pierre Richard); Picnic at Hanging Rock (Helen Morse, Anne Lambert); Jaws (Richard Dreyfuss, Robert Shaw); One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (Jack Nicholson, Louise Fletcher).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Victoria introduces random breath tests for motorists; the first of 25 special Ford RS2000 Escorts arrives in Australia; Jack Brabham's eldest son, Geoff, qualifies on the front row of the grid in his first European Formula Three race; US driver Mario Andretti commits himself to his first full-time Formula One contract by signing with Lotus.

The Holden HX was a further refinement of the HQ/HJ series, the major change being a low-emission version of each Holden engine. These modified engines, which were notably less powerful, were fitted to ensure all Holdens met strict new anti-pollution standards required by Australian Design Rule 27A.

Externally the HX had a new grille, revised hubcaps and other minor modifications. The biggest improvement from a driver's viewpoint was a steering column stalk in all models giving fingertip control of the wipers, washers, turn signals and headlight beam control.

Toward the middle of 1976, a run of 600 Monaro 'LE' (Limited Edition) luxury two-

doors wrapped up eight years of Monaro coupe production. Powered by the 5-litre V8, the LE was fitted with air-conditioning, a quadraphonic cartridge tape player, power windows, automatic transmission, front and rear spoilers, metallic paint with gold pinstriping, honeycomb-style cast wheels and other special features.

The Sandman recreational versions of the panel van and utility continued to sell well, mainly because of their strong appeal to younger Holden buyers. In late 1976, a limited edition HX sedan was sold to mark 50 years of General Motors operation in Australia.





1976 HX HOLDEN DATA

ENGINES: 2.84-litre six-cylinder '173', 3.3-litre six-cylinder '202', 4.2-litre V8 '253' & 5-litre V8 '308'.

TRANSMISSIONS: Three-speed manual gearbox, four-speed manual gearbox, three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission and three-speed Turbohydramatic 400 automatic transmission.

MODELS: Belmont sedan, Belmont station wagon, Kingswood sedan, Kingswood station wagon, Kingswood utility, Kingswood panel van, Premier sedan, Premier station wagon, Holden cab/chassis truck, Holden panel van, Sandman panel van, Holden utility, Holden Sandman utility, Monaro GTS sedan, Monaro LE coupe, Statesman De Ville sedan and Statesman Caprice sedan.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$5186 (Belmont six-cylinder sedan), \$5322 (Kingswood six-cylinder sedan), \$8554 (Statesman).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4834 mm; Wheelbase: 2819 mm; Width: 1887 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Similar body to HQ and HJ with separate grille and headlights on models other than Premier; wider protruding vertically slatted grille featuring Holden badge in centre; model name on rear of front quarter panel above protector strip.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 110,669.





HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1976

- General Motors celebrates its 50th anniversary in Australia.
- The HX series Statesman luxury sedan, available in De Ville and Caprice versions, is announced.
- The LX Torana range is unveiled, with choice between a sedan body and the first locally produced hatchback. There is also the option of four-cylinder, six-cylinder and eight-cylinder engines. Just under 50,000 LX Toranas are produced, including 8527 hatchbacks.
- Production of Monaro coupes is wound up with 600 highly specified 'LE' (Limited Edition) models.
- Late in the year the four-cylinder LX Torana is revised and relaunched as the Holden Sunbird. Sedan and hatchback variants are offered, both equipped with the new Radial Tuned Suspension (RTS) system.
- Bob Morris and John Fitzpatrick win the Hardie-Ferodo 1000 in a Torana.



HX Statesman De Ville



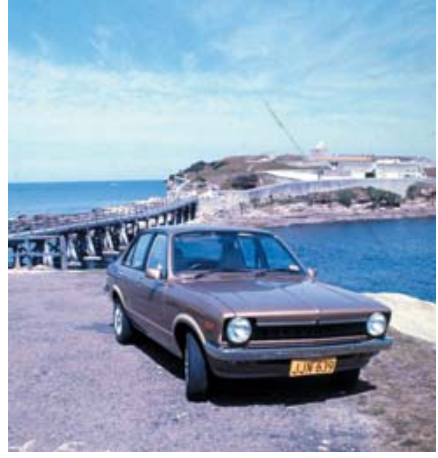
LX Torana hatch



LX Torana A9X



TX Gemini



TC Gemini Sandpiper



Holden's Lang Lang Proving Ground



1977 HZ HOLDEN

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

October 1977.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Major crackdown launched on black press and political organisations in South Africa; police in the north of England intensify their search for the 'Yorkshire Ripper'; Australia's Catholic Church head, Cardinal Sir Norman Gilroy, dies; Soviet Union announces new constitution; former Indian PM Indira Gandhi is arrested on corruption charges but released a day later; American singer Bing Crosby dies at 76.

POPULAR SONGS:

I Just Want to Be Your Everything (Andy Gibb); Star Wars Disco Theme (Meco); You're in My Heart (Rod Stewart); Silver Lady (David Soul); In the Flesh (Blondie).

POPULAR FILMS:

Rocky (Sylvester Stallone, Talia Shire); The Deep (Jacqueline Bissett, Robert Shaw); Annie Hall (Woody Allen, Diane Keaton); A Bridge Too Far (Michael Caine, Gene Hackman, Ryan O'Neal); Don's Party (Graham Kennedy, Ray Barratt, John Hargreaves); The Getting of Wisdom (Susannah Fowle, John Waters).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Niki Lauda's fourth place in the US East Grand Prix clinches him his second World Formula One Drivers Championship; BMW announces a planned production run of 800 examples of its M1 supercar; Nissan releases the Datsun 200B in Australia; Allan Moffat and Jacky Ickx win the Hardie-Ferodo 1000 in a Falcon.

The HZ was the final revision of the HQ series and the first full-sized Holden to be fitted with Holden's acclaimed Radial Tuned Suspension (RTS) and four-wheel disc brakes. RTS, which was fitted to all models in the range, made such a dramatic improvement to handling that it forced Holden's competitors to introduce their own improved suspension systems. The result was that the primary safety of locally built cars was improved.

Aside from RTS, the new Holdens incorporated minor exterior changes, including a revised grille and higher bootlid. The interior received upgraded trim and improved instrumentation. The Belmont sedan was dropped from the range and the Kingswood SL added. As well as sedan and wagon versions of the Kingswood, Kingswood SL and Premier, there was an HZ GTS sports sedan. The light commercial range featured Sandman van and utility variants, both with 'GTS' trim and a 4.2-litre V8 as standard. New Statesman sedans were announced shortly after the rest of the HZ range, also equipped with RTS and four-wheel disc brakes.

As the name implied, the RTS system was designed to tune the suspension to the characteristics of radial tyres, which were now fitted to all HZ Holden passenger cars. By relocating control arms and changing castor, camber, spring rates, bushes, shock absorbers and steering components, Holden engineers produced a car with less body roll and better tyre adhesion. Most importantly, RTS gave the driver a dramatically improved ability to recover from a slide and to remain in control after a violent swerve or under heavy braking.

The HZ stayed in production until 1980 and was the last traditional-sized Holden until the 1988 release of the VN. In late 1978, the HZ range was supplemented — and then replaced — by the smaller and lighter Commodore.





1977 HZ HOLDEN DATA

ENGINES: 3.3-litre six-cylinder '202', 4.2-litre V8 '253' and 5-litre V8 '308'.

TRANSMISSIONS: Three-speed manual gearbox, four-speed manual gearbox, three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission, three-speed Turbo-hydramatic 350 (later 400) automatic transmission.

MODELS: Kingswood sedan, Kingswood station wagon, Kingswood SL sedan, Kingswood SL station wagon, Kingswood panel van, Kingswood utility, Premier sedan, Premier station wagon, Holden cab/chassis truck, Holden panel van, Sandman panel van, Holden utility, Sandman utility, Monaro GTS sedan, Statesman De Ville sedan, Statesman Caprice sedan and Statesman SL/E sedan.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$6377 (Kingswood SL six-cylinder sedan), \$7783 (Premier six-cylinder wagon), \$6867 (Sandman V8 van).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4844 mm; Wheelbase: 2819 mm; Width: 1892 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Similar body to HQ/HJ/HX with separate grille and headlights on models other than Premier; 'egg-crate' grille featuring Holden badge top centre; Kingswood SL and Premier have model names in lower curb-side corner of grille; all models have slightly raised bootlid.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 154,155.



HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1977

- Holden's acclaimed Radial Tuned Suspension (RTS) system is added to the Torana and then to full-sized Holdens.
- The TC Gemini is announced. During 1977 and 1978, 17,257 are built.
- The Torana range is expanded with the release of the A9X performance equipment package. Available with sedan and hatchback bodies, this turns the 5-litre V8 Torana into one of the most potent road cars ever built in Australia. It also has four-wheel disc brakes — a Holden first.
- The HZ Statesman is released.
- Holden maintains market leadership for 25th consecutive year.



1978 VB COMMODORE

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

October 1978.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Polish Pope, John Paul II, becomes first non-Italian Catholic Pope in 450 years; Australian singer Johnny O'Keefe dies aged 43; the Wran Labor government is re-elected in NSW; Nobel Peace Prize goes to Israeli and Egyptian leaders Begin and Sadat following the signing of Camp David peace treaty; former Sex Pistols bass-player Sid Vicious is charged with murder of girlfriend Nancy Spungen.

POPULAR SONGS:

Three Times a Lady (Commodores); Summer Nights (John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John); Rasputin (Boney M); You Needed Me (Anne Murray); Who Are You? (The Who).

POPULAR FILMS:

The Goodbye Girl (Richard Dreyfuss, Marsha Mason); Saturday Night Fever (John Travolta); The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith (Jack Thompson); The Last Waltz (The Band, Bob Dylan); Pretty Baby (Brooke Shields).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

The Lotus Esprit S2 is released in England; after seeing his Puerto Rican manufacturing plans fall through, car-maker John DeLorean claims to have support from the Government of Northern Ireland; Chrysler announces the sale of its European operations to Peugeot; Allan Moffat is tipped to retire from motor racing; Harry J. Butler, the father of the disc brake, dies; production of the Leyland Mini winds up in Australia but continues in the UK; America's Mario Andretti becomes World Formula One Champion.

The original Holden Commodore sedan was a major change of direction for Holden. But it quickly became Australia's top-selling car and its media awards included the coveted 'Wheels' magazine's 'Car of the Year'. Launched after Holden had spent more than \$110 million on development, the Commodore combined a German body design with an Australian engine and local mechanical components. Importantly, it was significantly shorter and narrower than previous Holdens and showed Holden following the trend toward smaller cars sparked by the fuel crises of the 1970s.

The GM Corporation had started work

on the Commodore in 1971. It was the second vehicle in the GM world car program (the first being the Gemini) and variations were sold in Continental Europe, England and South Africa. In its Australian form — with locally developed drivetrain, steering, suspension, body strengthening and dust sealing — it became the 18th new family Holden. The Commodore was generally judged to have brought a new level of sophistication to the market with efficient space packaging, high levels of comfort, generous equipment levels and excellent handling (due to the latest development of Holden's highly successful Radial Tuned Suspension).

In addition to the base Commodore, there were SL and upmarket SL/E derivatives. These were sold alongside a wide array of locally produced Holdens including seven Gemini models, six Sunbirds, three Toranas, five HZ Holdens, two Statesman variants and six car-based light commercial vehicles. Even when the Commodore was established as a sales success, the HZ Holden range of sedans, wagons, utilities, vans, trucks and Statesman saloons continued to sell strongly. A Commodore wagon appeared eight months after the sedan.





1978 VB COMMODORE DATA

ENGINES: 2.85-litre six-cylinder, 3.3-litre six-cylinder, 4.2-litre V8 and 5-litre V8.

TRANSMISSIONS: Four-speed manual gearbox, three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission, three-speed Turbohydramatic 350/400 automatic transmission.

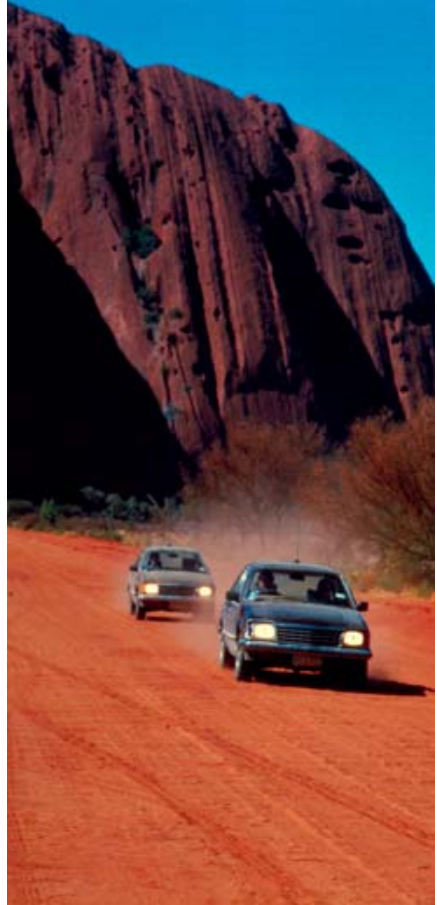
MODELS: Commodore sedan, Commodore station wagon, Commodore SL sedan, Commodore SL station wagon and Commodore SL/E sedan.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$6513 (Commodore six-cylinder sedan), \$7813 (Commodore SL six-cylinder sedan), \$10,513 (Commodore SL/E six-cylinder sedan).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4705 mm; Wheelbase: 2668 mm; Width: 1722 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: All-new smaller body; centrally mounted square Holden badge at top of hatched front grille; side badging mounted on bodywork above protector strip.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 95,906.





HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1978

- The six-cylinder UC Torana and four-cylinder UC Sunbird are released, both built with a choice of sedan and hatchback body styles. Later in the year, the Opel-built four-cylinder Sunbird engine is replaced by the Australian-made Starfire 1.9-litre 'four'. A total of 53,007 UC Toranas and Sunbirds are sold.
- The Gemini TD is announced with sedan, coupe, three-door station wagon and panel van variants. During the model's life, 42,396 TDs are sold.
- The Holden production tally (at release of VB Commodore) stands at 3.6 million.
- Peter Brock drives a Torana to victory in the Australian Touring Car Championship.
- Peter Brock and Jim Richards win the Hardie-Ferodo 1000 in a Torana.

1979

- A \$300 million Holden expansion program, which includes a new engine plant for Fishermans Bend, is announced.
- The TE Gemini goes on sale.
- A 'De Luxe' version of the UC Sunbird sedan is unveiled. The hatchback body style is discontinued.
- The last Torana is sold after 12 years of production, six series of models and more than 390,000 sales.
- The HZ series Statesman 'SL/E' is announced.
- Bob Morris drives a Torana to victory in the Australian Touring Car Championship.
- Peter Brock and Jim Richards win the Hardie-Ferodo 1000 in a Torana.
- Peter Brock is nominated as lead driver for a team of three 'works' six-cylinder Commodore VBs competing in the Repco Round Australia Reliability Trial. The trial turns out to be a virtual race over Australia's worst roads but the Commodores achieve a one-two-three clean sweep of the outright placings.





UC Sunbird



TE Gemini



WB Statesman Caprice

HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1980

- 'WB' versions of the Statesman De Ville, Statesman Caprice and Holden's car-based commercial vehicles are launched. Plans for a WB series sedan and wagon — a bigger family Holden to complement the Commodore — reach advanced stages but are not pursued.
- A high-performance version of the Commodore VC V8 is produced by Holden in partnership with HDT Special Vehicles. The car is quickly dubbed the 'Brock' Commodore, after the managing director of HDT, racing driver Peter Brock.
- The Holden Rodeo light commercial range goes on sale with two-wheel drive and four-wheel drive cab/chassis models and a choice of petrol and diesel engines. The Rodeo is sourced from Isuzu in Japan.
- Peter Brock drives a Commodore to victory in the Australian Touring Car Championship.
- Peter Brock and Jim Richards complete a hat-trick of Hardie-Ferodo 1000 victories. This time they drive a Commodore.



1980 VC COMMODORE

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

March 1980.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Former resistance leader Robert Mugabe wins the first free elections in Zimbabwe (previously Rhodesia); imprisonment of US Embassy staff in Iran continues; British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher announces £1000 million government expenditure cuts; US athlete Jesse Owens dies; several countries vote on whether to attend Moscow Olympics in light of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan — the US decides to boycott the games.

POPULAR SONGS:

I Got You (Split Enz); Crazy Little Thing Called Love (Queen); London Calling (The Clash); Coward of the County (Kenny Rogers); Another Brick in the Wall, Part 2 (Pink Floyd); Always Look on the Bright Side of Life (Monty Python); Brass in Pocket (The Pretenders).

POPULAR FILMS:

Kramer vs. Kramer (Dustin Hoffman, Meryl Streep); Apocalypse Now (Marlon Brando, Martin Sheen, Robert Duvall); Manhattan (Woody Allen, Diane Keaton); The China Syndrome (Jane Fonda, Michael Douglas); 10 (Dudley Moore, Bo Derek); Life of Brian (Monty Python); My Brilliant Career (Judy Davis, Sam Neill).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Ford announces it will build a new small four-cylinder car in Australia (the Laser); Stirling Moss announces a comeback to racing, driving an Audi 80 in the British Saloon Car Championship; a NRMA report shows that bad roads waste fuel; Promising young French Formula One driver Alain Prost crashes and fractures his wrist in the South African Grand Prix, while in the same race, Australia's Alan Jones is sidelined with gearbox problems.

Distinguished by an 'egg-crate' style grille, the VC Commodore was a refinement of the 1978 VB model. Wheels magazine heralded the launch with the statement: 'The new VC Commodore isn't perfect ... but that doesn't stop us declaring that it is easily the best Australian car ever'.

As well as refining the Commodore concept, the VC offered buyers a four-

cylinder engine in addition to the 'six' and V8. The four-cylinder model, launched four months after the rest of the range, was powered by a 1.9-litre unit based on the Starfire engine fitted to the Holden Sunbird. The six-cylinder and eight-cylinder engines fitted to the VC were revised 'XT5' versions, which were up to 25 per cent more powerful and 15 per cent more economical than before. This was achieved by redesigning the cylinder head, camshaft, carburettor, inlet manifold and exhaust manifold. Electronic ignition was fitted.

Another plus was an upgrade of the suspension system, resulting in further improved ride and handling characteristics. The VC range also reintroduced 'shadow tone' (two-colour) exterior paintwork, a feature not seen on a new Holden for 20 years. Another new Commodore option was cruise control.

The VC kept Commodore in its place as Australia's top-selling car. Soon after its launch, production of the Holden HZ range, which had continued alongside the Commodore, was discontinued. A new range of 'WB' light commercials and Statesman sedans was announced at the same time.





1980 VC COMMODORE DATA

ENGINES: 1.9-litre four-cylinder, 2.85-litre six-cylinder, 3.3-litre six-cylinder, 4.2-litre V8 and 5-litre V8.

TRANSMISSIONS: Four-speed manual gearbox, three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission and three-speed Turbohydramatic 350 automatic transmission.

MODELS: Commodore L sedan, Commodore L station wagon, Commodore SL sedan, Commodore SL station wagon and Commodore SL/E sedan plus WB Statesman sedans and WB light commercials.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$7903 (Commodore L six-cylinder sedan), \$9421 (Commodore SL six-cylinder sedan), \$12,737 (Commodore SL/E six-cylinder sedan).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4706 mm; Wheelbase: 2668 mm; Width: 1722 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Similar body to VB but with new 'egg-crate' hatched grille; Holden badge mounted centre of grille and centre of boot; the word 'Commodore' on curb-side of grille and curb-side of boot; model name set into rubber protector strip on front doors.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 121,807.





1981 VH COMMODORE

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

October 1981.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Egypt's President Anwar Sadat is assassinated and Hosni Mubarak sworn in as replacement; the South Melbourne 'Swans' Victorian Football League team announces it will move to Sydney for 1982; US President Ronald Reagan announces plans to increase US nuclear forces; Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings held in Australia; Food riots in Poland; Soviet submarine runs aground in Swedish waters; IRA hunger strike in British prisons ends after ten strikers have starved to death.

POPULAR SONGS:

Endless Love (Lionel Richie and Diana Ross); You Weren't in Love with Me (Billy Field); Hooked On Classics (Royal Philharmonic Orchestra); Chariots Of Fire (Vangelis); Physical (Olivia Newton-John); Wired for Sound (Cliff Richard).

POPULAR FILMS:

9 to 5 (Jane Fonda, Dolly Parton, Lily Tomlin); Atlantic City (Burt Lancaster, Susan Sarandon); The Elephant Man (John Hurt); Chariots of Fire (Ben Cross, Ian Charleson); Stir Crazy (Gene Wilder, Richard Pryor).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Renault holds its position as Europe's number one car-maker with 13.9 per cent of the market; the James Hardie 1000 is stopped on lap 120 after a multi-car pile up (Dick Johnson, who was leading at the time, is declared the winner); Alan Jones wins the US Grand Prix but the World Formula One Drivers Championship goes to Nelson Piquet; Ford Australia's new Laser hatchback (released earlier in the year) continues to sell strongly; British Leyland announces the closure of three plants in the UK.

The third Commodore series in four years, the VH came with the choice of five engines and, for the first time, a five-speed manual gearbox. The VB/VC/VH transition was one of regular refinement rather than drastic change. A subtle re-working at the front gave the VH

Commodore a longer and lower appearance. A choice of seven new exterior colours was offered and a newly designed leather interior was added to the options list.

The four-cylinder version was retained, alongside the six-cylinder and eight-cylinder models. Engine improvements were directed at the 1.9-litre four and 2.85-litre six with the major aim to improve city cycle fuel economy. Gains of 12.5 and 14 per cent respectively were achieved. A lot of work was also put into further improving the Commodore's outstanding NVH (noise, vibration and harshness) characteristics.

Creature comforts and convenience items including central locking, seat height adjustment and cruise control were offered. The VH brought about the first local fitment of advanced computer electronics to a mass-produced passenger car, including the Electronic Spark Selection black box on the four-cylinder engine and the SL/E model's seven-function trip computer.





1981 VH COMMODORE DATA

ENGINES: 1.9-litre four-cylinder, 2.85-litre six-cylinder, 3.3-litre six-cylinder, 4.2-litre V8 and 5-litre V8.

TRANSMISSIONS: Four-speed manual gearbox, five-speed manual gearbox, three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission and three-speed Turbohydramatic 350 automatic transmission.

MODELS: Commodore SL sedan, Commodore SL station wagon, Commodore SL/X sedan, Commodore SL/X station wagon, Commodore SS sedan and Commodore SL/E sedan plus WB Statesman sedans and WB light commercials.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$8366 (Commodore SL four-cylinder sedan), \$9066 (Commodore SL six-cylinder sedan), \$14,861 (Commodore SL/E six-cylinder sedan).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4706 mm; Wheelbase: 2668 mm; Width: 1722 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Similar body to VB and VC but with lower front-end bodywork and horizontally slatted grille; Holden badge mounted centre of grille and centre of boot; the word 'Commodore' written on rubber bumper insert on side of car forward of front wheel arch.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 141,018.



VH Commodore SL Wagon



HDT VH Group 3 Commodore

HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1981

- The four millionth Holden, a VC Commodore, is produced. It is driven off the line by Sir Laurence Hartnett, who was Holden's managing director from 1934 until the end of 1946, and is recognised as the father of the Holden car project.
- A new version of the Gemini TE sedan, with a 1.8-litre diesel engine, reaches the market. It is the first diesel passenger car manufactured locally.
- The Holden Jackaroo wagon, Holden's first four-wheel drive passenger vehicle, is announced with a choice of petrol and diesel engines. Like the Rodeo, the Jackaroo is built to Holden's specifications by Isuzu in Japan.
- The new engine plant at Fishermans Bend, announced in 1979, is commissioned and starts producing 'Family II' four-cylinder engines.
- Holden exports the first batch of Family II engines to England for use in the Vauxhall Cavalier.

1982

- The Holden Shuttle, Holden's entry into the forward-control van market, is unveiled. Built in Japan, it offers a choice between petrol and diesel engines and long and short wheelbase models.
- The Camira JB sedan, Holden's version of GM's new international 'J-car', is released with a 1.6-litre engine. The first front-wheel drive car produced by Holden, it is powered by the local Family II 'four'.
- The TF Gemini goes on sale with a choice of 1.6-litre petrol and 1.8-litre diesel engines.
- A nine-seater 'LS' coach version of the Holden Shuttle van follows the Shuttle models released earlier in the year.
- Peter Brock and Larry Perkins win the James Hardie 1000 (formerly Hardie-Ferodo 1000) in a Commodore.

1983

- The Statesman Series II is released in De Ville and Caprice versions.
- An upgraded Holden Rodeo range includes new utilities and crew cabs.
- The 4WD Jackaroo wagon is upgraded.
- The TG Gemini is announced with 1.6-litre petrol and 1.8-litre diesel variants.
- Production at the Fishermans Bend engine plant reaches 1000 units a day. A milestone is passed when the 200,000th engine is built at the new plant; by year's end the 250,000th engine is exported.
- An Australian-developed station wagon joins the JB Camira range. Component sets for this wagon are exported for use in several overseas 'J-cars'.
- The Holden Shuttle forward-control van is updated with the LT model.
- Peter Brock, Larry Perkins and John Harvey join forces to win the James Hardie 1000 in a Commodore.



The VH Commodore of Peter Brock and Larry Perkins - Bathurst winners in 1982.



*JB Camira sedan
and wagon*





1984 VK COMMODORE

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

February 1984.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke sets off on Asian tour; US President Ronald Reagan announces he will run for re-election in November; Space Shuttle *Challenger* loses a \$75 million communications satellite; High Court of Australia dismisses Lindy Chamberlain's appeal against her conviction for murder of daughter Azaria; Soviet leader Yuri Andropov, 69, dies and is replaced by Konstantin Chernenko, 72; West Indies cricket team beats Australia in World Series Cup decider at MCG; Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau quits; Elton John weds Renata Blauel in Sydney.

POPULAR SONGS:

Islands in the Streams (Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton); Kiss The Bride (Elton John); Relax (Frankie Goes To Hollywood); Girls Just Want to Have Fun (Cyndi Lauper); Jump (Van Halen).

POPULAR FILMS:

The Day After (Jason Robards, Jo Beth Williams); Careful, He Might Hear You (Wendy Hughes, John Hargreaves); Class (Rob Lowe, Jacqueline Bissett); Educating Rita (Michael Caine, Julie Walters); Gorky Park (William Hurt).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

A panel of 38 Aussie motoring journalists vote Toyota's imported Camry hatchback as Car of the Year for 1983 in 'Modern Motor' magazine poll; The Fiat Uno is voted 'Car of the Year' in European poll; motor sport legend 'Gignite' Jack Murray dies; Brazilian Formula Three sensation Ayrton Senna signs for the Toleman Formula One team; Henry Seagrave's 1929 World Land Speed Record breaker, the 'Golden Arrow', tours Australia.

The new look VK Commodore brought significant changes in styling and mechanical specifications and upped the ante in the good value stakes. Although equipment levels were greatly increased, the VK was actually cheaper than the last VH models.

New features included an advanced computerised engine management system and optional electronic fuel-injection. This locally developed EFI system lifted the

six-cylinder Commodore's power output to 106 kW without loss of fuel economy. Although little of the bodywork was changed, the designers managed to give the car a substantially new look. The model introduced six-window styling (adding an extra rear window at the rear roof pillar) and enhanced the longer, lower look introduced with the VH. A new louvered grille was integrated with a polypropylene bumper and wraparound side body mouldings. Other changes included upgraded sound systems and further improvements to the NVH (noise, vibration, harshness) characteristics.

The VK series introduced new model names: SL, Berlina and Calais. The Calais, which was top-of-the-line, was fitted with an Australian-made digital/analogue electronic instrument panel claimed to be the most advanced in the world. It incorporated an electronic odometer and tripmeter. During the time the VH Commodore was being built, a swing back to big cars had caused the Commodore to lose its position as Australia's best-selling car. The VK didn't win back total market leadership for 1984 but made strong gains, and in some months, was the top seller.





1984 VK COMMODORE DATA

ENGINES: 3.3-litre EST six-cylinder (86kW); 3.3-litre EFI six-cylinder (109kW); 5.0-litre V8 (117kW auto, 121kW manual).

TRANSMISSIONS: Four-speed manual gearbox, five-speed manual gearbox and three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission.

MODELS: Commodore SL sedan, Commodore SL station wagon, Commodore Berlina sedan, Commodore Berlina station wagon, Commodore SS sedan and Calais sedan plus WB Statesman sedans and WB light commercials (the WB series continued until the end of 1984).

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX):

\$11,152 (Commodore SL six-cylinder sedan), \$13,994 (Berlina six-cylinder sedan), \$19,315 (Calais six-cylinder sedan).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4714 mm; Wheelbase: 2668 mm; Width: 1722 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Similar to VB/VC/VH models but with additional side window near each rear roof pillar and a grille composed of three horizontal louvres merging into a polypropylene bumper; lower front panel integrated with bumper and includes air intake; the word 'Holden' is written on curb-side of central grille louvre (depending on model).

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 135,705.





HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1984

- The four-door Holden Astra hatchback - Holden's first hatchback since the Torana/Sunbird UC - is launched with a 1.5-litre, four-cylinder engine. Built for Holden by Nissan Australia with some components manufactured by Holden, it represents the first example of local model-sharing.
- As with the VC and VH series Commodores, racing driver Peter Brock develops high-performance versions of the Commodore VK. The HDT range of VKs includes the SS Commodore Group 3 and is produced by Brock's HDT Special Vehicles organisation in conjunction with Holden.
- The half-millionth Family II four-cylinder engine comes off the Fishermens Bend line.
- Holden's exports for the year exceed \$200 million.
- Peter Brock and Larry Perkins (Commodore) win the James Hardie 1000. The victory gives Brock his second 'Holden hat-trick', his sixth win in seven consecutive Bathurst enduros and his eighth Bathurst victory in total.
- The JD Camira introduces distinctive front-end styling and is offered with a 1.8-litre fuel-injected engine.
- Holden announces that Statesman models and Holden car-based light commercials will be discontinued.

1985

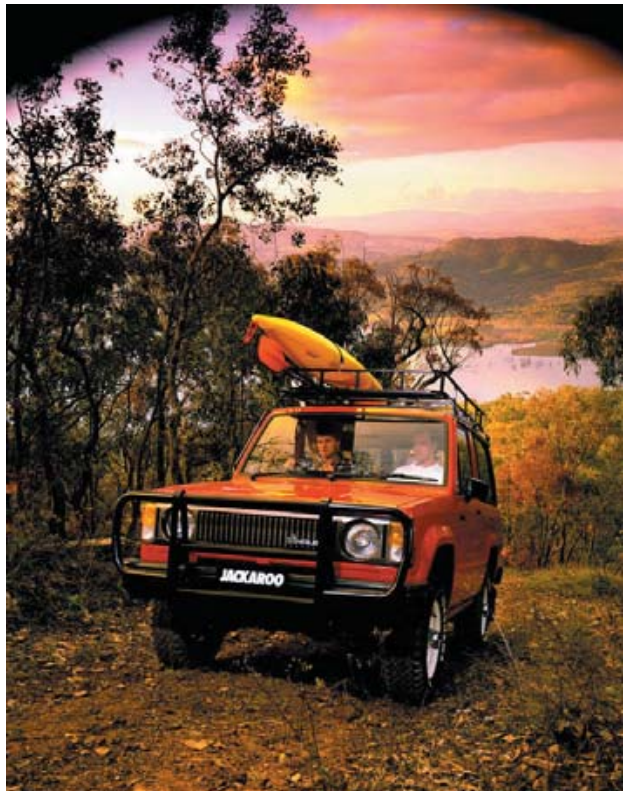
- The five-door Holden Barina hatchback, 4WD Holden Drover off-roader and Holden Scurry delivery van are announced. These small four-cylinder models are imported from Suzuki in Japan (a company in which GM Corporation has a shareholding).
- A single-point tool body assembly shuttle is introduced at Holden's Elizabeth plant.
- The all-new front-drive Gemini RB sedan rolls off the line at Elizabeth. It is the first completely new Gemini since 1975.
- New Jackaroo 4WD wagon and Rodeo light commercial models are introduced.
- The high-performance 'Brock' Commodore Group A V8 is unveiled.
- The Acacia Ridge plant closes.



JD Camira



MB Barina



1984 UBS Jackaroo



1986 VL COMMODORE

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

February 1986.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Memorial services held for the seven astronauts killed in explosion of space shuttle *Challenger*; Halley's Comet is visible in night sky; Mikhail Gorbachev and 'new generation' of Soviet leaders prepare for their first Communist Party Conference (the 27th CPC); Ferdinand Marcos claims victory in controversial Phillipine election but army rebellion and 'people power' campaign sweeps opposition leader Cory Aquino to power; *Voyager 2* sends back photos from Uranus; Lindy Chamberlain released from prison unconditionally by Northern Territory government.

POPULAR SONGS:

A Good Heart (Feargal Sharkey); The Power of Love (Jennifer Rush); Working Class Man (Jimmy Barnes); You Belong to the City (Glenn Frey).

POPULAR FILMS:

Witness (Harrison Ford, Kelly McGillis); Kiss of the Spiderwoman (William Hurt, Raul Julia); Prizzi's Honor (Jack Nicholson, Kathleen Turner); Plenty (Meryl Streep, Tracey Ullman, Charles Dance); Bliss (Barry Otto); Back to the Future (Michael J Fox).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Korean industrial giant Hyundai releases its Excel car for sale in Australia; Ford Australia announces it will build a two-seater sports car (the Capri) for the US market; Toyota's plans for Australian production of the Camry are well advanced; Alfa Romeo withdraws from Formula One; demand for Mitsubishi's Australian Magna (released early 1985) remains strong and MMAL expands its Tonsley Park factory; the 500,000th Mercedes-Benz 190 is built.

Although described in some quarters as a facelift, the VL series Commodore brought about more changes than many so-called all-new models. As well as major exterior and interior improvements, it introduced a completely new imported six-cylinder engine and an electronically controlled four-speed automatic transmission.

The sheet metal changes included a new lowered front-end appearance and integral air foil at the rear. The remodelled interior had a new binnacle-style instrument panel. The top-of-the-line Holden, the Calais, had significantly different front-end styling to the rest of the range with semiconcealed headlights and a transparent grille.

The use of a Japanese engine (from Nissan) made the VL a controversial model at first, but when the fuss died, the public discovered not only a more refined and much improved Commodore but a sensational drivetrain. In spite of the 1986 switch to lower octane unleaded fuel, the high-tech 3-litre engine

gave the base model 33 per cent more power and 15 per cent better fuel economy than previously. Under the heading 'Better than Ever', 'Motor Manual' magazine said: 'The new engine transforms the Commodore. [It] is smoother, quieter, more responsive and has more power at the top end. We found both automatic and manual Commodores would reach an indicated 200 km/h'.





The VL was the model which enabled Holden to regain its former position as the number one choice of private buyers, although Holden was still being outsold by Falcon in the fleet market. In July 1986 the VL received an optional turbocharger which lifted output to 150 kW, making the already quick Commodore even more lively. Several months later an unleaded fuel version of Holden's carburettored V8 was announced. Two interesting low-volume variations were a Calais wagon and a fuel-injected V8 'Group A' sedan. Both were built in 1988, the latter produced by the newly-formed Holden Special Vehicles and designed to make the EFI V8 eligible for Touring Car racing.



1986 VL COMMODORE DATA

ENGINES: 3.0-litre six-cylinder (114kW); 3.0-litre turbocharged six-cylinder (150kW); 5.0-litre V8 (122kW).

TRANSMISSIONS: Five-speed manual gearbox, four-speed automatic transmission and three-speed Trimatic automatic transmission (for V8).

MODELS: Commodore SL sedan, Commodore SL station wagon, Commodore Berlina sedan, Commodore Berlina station wagon, Commodore SS sedan, Calais sedan and Calais wagon.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$13,830 (SL six-cylinder manual sedan), \$15,150 (Executive six-cylinder automatic sedan), \$18,381 (SL six-cylinder turbo manual sedan), \$23,540 (Calais automatic sedan).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4766 mm; Wheelbase: 2668 mm; Width: 1722 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Substantial reworking of previous Commodore bodysell with new lowered front-end bodywork featuring wide slim headlights and a small louvred grille; Holden badge front centre between bonnet and grille; Calais has transparent grille and semiconcealed headlights; all models have integral plastic front bumper/spoiler/air intake and raised lip at the rear of the bootlid.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 151,801.





HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1986

- The original Holden Astra is replaced by the updated Astra LC hatchback with a 1.6-litre, four-cylinder engine.
- The sveltely styled Piazza sports coupe goes on sale with a 2-litre, four-cylinder turbocharged engine and 'two-plus-two' seating arrangements. It is fully imported from Isuzu in Japan.
- The small Barina hatchback is updated with the ML model, powered by a 1.3-litre, four-cylinder engine.
- A limited edition, high-performance Group A version of the VL Commodore V8 is announced with a five-speed manual gearbox. Eagerly snapped up, it is to be the last official product of the six-year collaboration between Holden and Peter Brock's HDT.
- Allan Grice and Graham Bailey win the James Hardie 1000 in a Commodore.
- Sir Laurence Hartnett dies.
- Holden is restructured into two companies: Holden's Motor Company (HMC) and Holden's Engine Company (HEC).

1987

- The Camira is updated with the JE model, featuring a fuel-injected 2-litre engine.
- A completely new, 1.8-litre Astra hatchback joins the Holden range. It is the result of a historic joint development program with Nissan Australia, with both companies contributing to the car's design, engineering and testing. Nissan also markets a version called Pulsar. Both are powered by the Holden Family II four-cylinder engine. Sedan versions of both cars follow.
- Holden's Motor Company severs its links with Peter Brock's HDT organisation.
- A revised Jackaroo 4WD wagon is announced.
- GM's 'SunRaycer' wins the world's first cross-continental solar race, run from Darwin to Adelaide. The event is a triumph in technological and marketing terms with Holden making a significant contribution to SunRaycer's success. Racing champion John Harvey is the lead driver.
- Peter Brock, driving a Commodore, is third across the line in the James Hardie 1000 but is later declared the winner when the first and second competitors are disqualified. Although by default, it is Brock's ninth Bathurst victory and Holden's 13th in 20 years.
- The pending formation of a new joint venture company is announced by Holden's Motor Company Ltd, AMI/Toyota Ltd and Toyota Manufacturing Australia Ltd. The new company is to coordinate the design, engineering and product-sharing strategies for locally-produced Holden and Toyota passenger cars, to ensure the most efficient use of existing production facilities.



JE Camira



LD Astra



VL Calais



VL Commodore Group A



1988 VN COMMODORE

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

August 1988.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Soviet troops leave Afghanistan after nearly a decade of war; the Fitzgerald Inquiry into corruption in Queensland hears evidence from 'bagman' Jack Herbert; IRA kills Irish family of three near Dublin with bomb intended for judge; the film 'The Last Temptation of Christ' opens to large protests in the USA; Pakistan's President Zia and 29 others killed in suspicious plane crash; US presidential candidate George Bush announces Dan Quayle as his running mate; British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher tours Australia; Seoul, capital of South Korea, gears up for start of Olympics.

POPULAR SONGS:

Age of Reason (John Farnham); Perfect (Fairground Attraction); Simply Irresistable (Robert Palmer); Better Be Home Soon (Crowded House); Fast Car (Tracy Chapman); Hole in My Heart/All the Way to China (Cyndi Lauper).

POPULAR FILMS:

Cane Toads (documentary); Coming to America (Eddie Murphy); The Unbearable Lightness of Being (Daniel Day Lewis); Good Morning Vietnam (Robin Williams); Cry Freedom (Kevin Kline, Denzel Washington); Fatal Attraction (Michael Douglas, Glenn Close); Frantic (Harrison Ford).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Enzo Ferrari, 90, dies; General Motors SunRaycer solar car sets a world ten kilometre speed record for an electric-powered car with an average speed of 120.044 km/h; Volkswagen manufactures its ten millionth Golf; Racing driver Peter Brock sells the HDT Special Vehicles operation to concentrate on his dealings with Russian car-maker Lada; more than 9.3 million cars are estimated to be on Australian roads.

The VN Commodore proved a major success from day one. It took a clean sweep of the annual motor magazine 'Car of the Year' awards ('Wheels', 'Modern Motor' and 'Car Australia') and returned Holden to the top of the Australia's best-selling car list for 1989: an honour relinquished in 1982 after 29 straight years on top.

The VN was a return to the 'full-sized' family car after a decade with the smaller VB-VL models. 'Aero' in style, the VN Holden was based on a German Opel design but was widened and substantially restyled for Australia. It featured flush-fitting

glass for reduced wind drag, low-profile headlights and other advanced features.

Equipped with a torquey 3.8-litre, electronically fuel-injected V6 engine as standard, the base Commodore VN boasted as much power as the old carburettored V8. The new V6 was a localised version of a US design, fitted with an Australian-developed electronic engine management system. The four-speed automatic transmission was imported from the USA. The VN wagon was built on a longer wheelbase than the sedan and could be bought with an additional rear bench seat which turned it into a seven-seater (a later bench seat option made it an eight seater!). Launched shortly after the rest of the range was the most powerful mass-produced Australian engine to date: the locally designed and built fuel-injected 5-litre V8. This smooth and torquey 165 kW powerplant was available as an option on the entire range. A V8-powered SS sports sedan was sold alongside the V6-powered S model.





The VN success story didn't stop with the sedans and wagons. In 1990 the Statesman and Caprice luxury models were introduced to widespread acclaim. Built on the wagon's extended platform and powered by the fuel-injected V8 engine, the models enabled Holden to make a bigger impact on the luxury market than ever before, in some months outselling the well-entrenched Ford Fairlane/LTD. A major feature was a newly developed independent rear suspension system. Later in 1990 the Holden passenger car-derived ute made a comeback with an all-new VN-based 'VG' version, while a limited edition 'Group A' performance sedan (developed in conjunction with HSV and Holden Motor Sport) introduced the company's first six-speed manual gearbox.

1988 VN COMMODORE DATA

ENGINES: 3.8-litre V6 (127kW), 5.0-litre EFI V8 (165kW).

TRANSMISSIONS: Five-speed manual gearbox, four-speed Turbohydramatic 700 automatic.

MODELS: Commodore Executive sedan, Commodore Executive station wagon, Commodore Berlina sedan, Commodore Berlina station wagon, Commodore S sedan, Commodore S station wagon, Commodore SS sedan, Calais sedan, VG utility, VG 'S' utility, VQ Statesman saloon, VQ Caprice saloon.

PRICES WHEN NEW (INCL S/TAX): \$20,014 (Commodore Executive six-cylinder manual sedan), \$21,665

(Commodore S six-cylinder manual sedan), \$25,375

(Commodore SS V8 manual sedan), \$31,265 (Calais six-cylinder sedan), \$39,950 (Statesman), \$61,861 (Caprice, including short-lived 50 per cent luxury car sales tax).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4850 mm;

Wheelbase: 2731 mm; Width: 1794 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: All-new rounded body with slim rectangular headlights; different louvred grilles for Executive/Berlina and Calais versions; Holden badge in centre of grille except on Calais which has separate badge on bonnet.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 215,180, including the 5 millionth Holden.



HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1988

- The fuel-injected V8 Holden VL Group A supercar is announced following joint development by Holden and Tom Walkinshaw's TWR operation. It is built by the newly formed Holden Special Vehicles operation. Other HSV vehicles follow including the and SV5000 VN Commodore.
- Agreements are signed to create United Australian Automotive Industries Ltd (UAAI), the controlling company for the Holden-Toyota joint venture. The General Motors arm of the new company is to be known as General Motors-Holden's Automotive Ltd (GMHA).
- The one millionth Holden Family II four-cylinder engine is exported.
- Upgraded and more powerful Jackaroo and Rodeo ranges are introduced.
- The MF Barina is released with a completely new 'aero' body.
- Plans for GM/Isuzu truck joint venture operation are announced.



VG Utility



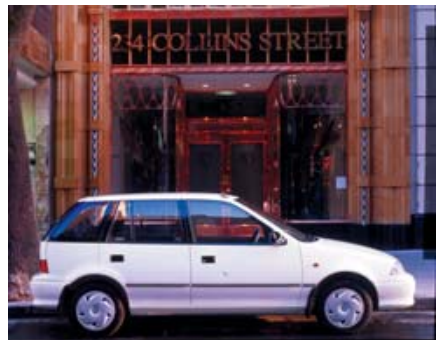
VN Commodore Group A



VQ Statesman



The 100,000th VN Commodore rolls off the production line



MF Barina



HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1989

- The VN Commodore range is announced as the winner of the 'Wheels', 'Car Australia' and 'Modern Motor' magazine 'Car of the Year' awards for 1988.
- The LD Astra wins 'Car Australia' magazine's Best Small Car award.
- Model sharing with Toyota starts, leading to the Toyota Lexcen (Commodore), Holden Nova (Toyota Corolla) and Holden Apollo (Toyota Camry). The 1.6-litre Nova 'LE' and 2-litre Apollo 'JK' models replace the Astra and Camira ranges and are powered by multivalve four-cylinder engines.
- The Holden Commodore is Australia's best-selling car for 1989, selling 70,831 units against Ford Falcon's 64,281 and Mitsubishi Magna's 36,423.
- Holden declares an operating profit of \$157.3 million after tax and extraordinary items, on sales of \$2178 million during 1989.

1990

- Holden rejoins the big car field with a long wheelbase saloon. The new model — available in Statesman and upmarket Caprice versions — is fitted with the fuel-injected 5.0-litre V8 and the first independent rear suspension fitted to a locally designed-and-built mass-produced car. The Caprice cabin is finished with blackbean wood strips on the doors and instrument panel and the stereo features 14 speakers. As well as IRS, the 1990 Statesman has a wider front track. In a comment typical of the media response, 'The New Car Buyers Guide' magazine calls it Australia's: '...smoothest riding, securest handling and best performing big car ever'.
- The SV90, a sporty version of the new Statesman, is launched by Holden Special Vehicles.
- The Holden ute returns to a big media fanfare. Derived from the Commodore VN passenger car range but designated 'VG', it features an optional bench front seat and column change automatic transmission to increase versatility. At first only a V6 engine is offered but a V8 version later joins the range. A more upmarket S utility is sold alongside the basic 'ute'.
- The 1990 Group A Commodore is launched after joint development by Holden, Holden Motor Sport and Holden Special Vehicles. Built to homologate the VN Commodore for Group A touring car racing, it features the first six-speed gearbox fitted to an Australian car and a 210 kW V8 engine. Independent performance tests show it is capable of 0–100 km/h in 6.26 seconds and can complete the standing 400 metres in under 14.5 seconds.
- The five millionth Holden rolls down the production line, highlighting that more than twice as many Holden cars have been built in Australia as any other model.
- A three-door sporty version of the MF Barina is released.
- A fuel-injected V8 Commodore is driven by Allan Grice and Win Percy to a hard-fought victory in the annual Tooheys 1000 production car enduro at Bathurst.



A VN Commodore comes through the mud bath at the Lang Lang Proving Ground.



1991 VP COMMODORE

MONTH OF LAUNCH:

October 1991.

MAJOR EVENTS DURING MONTH OF LAUNCH:

Australia's economic recession continues with predictions that unemployment will hit 11 per cent in the new year; Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen stands trial for perjury but the jury fails to reach a unanimous decision and is dismissed; a general strike in NSW is organised by the Labor Council to protest the state government's industrial relations bill; George Jo Hennard kills 22 people during a ten-minute massacre with two semiautomatic pistols in Killeen, Texas, before turning a gun on himself; fighting between rebel Serbs, Federal troops and Croats continues in Croatia.

POPULAR SONGS:

Everything I Do, I Do It For You (Bryan Adams); Love... Thy Will Be Done (Martika); You Could Be Mine (Guns n' Roses); I Gotcha (Jimmy Barnes); Unforgettable (Natalie Cole with the voice of Nat 'King' Cole); Treaty (Yothu Yindi).

POPULAR FILMS:

Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves (Kevin Costner); Thelma & Louise (Susan Sarandon, Geena Davis); Terminator 2: Judgment Day (Arnold Schwarzenegger); The Naked Gun 2½ (Leslie Nielsen, Priscilla Presley).

MOTORING HIGHLIGHTS:

Formula One driver Ayrton Senna clinches his third World Championship in four years with a second place in the Japanese Grand Prix; the Australian International Motor Show at Sydney hosts the world premiere of the 1992 Honda Prelude and attracts a massive crowd despite the depressed state of the car market; Jim Richards and Mark Skaife win the Tooheys 1000 in a Nissan GT-R, the first 'Great Race' victory for a Japanese car; Nissan Australia launches its new locally developed four-cylinder Pulsar model.

The first facelift of the brilliantly successful VN model came with the launch of the VP in October 1991. The visual changes were subtle, but the engineering refinements and equipment upgradings were substantial. Holden's independent rear suspension (IRS) system, which was introduced on the long wheelbase Statesman/Caprice models in 1990, became standard on the VP Calais and SS models and was offered as an option on Commodore Executive and Berlina. The VP engines were carryover units but progressive changes introduced during VN production had greatly reduced

vibration and harshness. The most notable results of the VP changes were improved ride quality, better handling, improved smoothness and markedly reduced cabin noise.

All VP Commodore sedans and wagons were fitted with remote central locking and a sophisticated antitheft system. This system included an engine management system disabling device, ignition cut-out and key-operated driver's door 'deadlock'.

All VP Commodores also had power-adjusted mirrors. Additional Berlina features included a tachometer, cruise control and passenger seat adjustable lumbar support, while the Calais benefited from a new Variotronic vehicle speed sensitive power steering system and a body computer.

This computer controlled many things including the power steering system, variable instrument dimming and an automatic 'lights out' feature activated when the key was removed and the door opened. Holden engineers noted at the time that this computer would give them the capacity to install highly sophisticated equipment, including multiplex wiring and





navigation systems, in future models.

A HSV-enhanced 180kW V8 engine became optional across the range in early 1992. Further models included the luxurious limited edition Calais International, Berlina LX sedans and wagons and value-added pack Vacationer sedans and wagons. The VP range also saw the introduction of the Series II concept and a no-cost, three-year roadside service package, with Calais models.



1991 VP COMMODORE DATA

ENGINES: 3.8-litre V6 (127kW); 5.0-litre V8 (165kW, 180kW option).

TRANSMISSIONS: Five-speed manual gearbox, four-speed Turbohydramatic 700 automatic transmission.

MODELS: Commodore Executive sedan, Commodore Executive station wagon, Commodore Berlina sedan, Commodore Berlina station wagon, Commodore S sedan, Commodore S wagon, Commodore SS sedan, Calais sedan, Calais International (from late 1992) plus VQ Series II Statesman and Caprice saloons (from November 1991) and VP utility and VP 'S' utility (from early 1992).

From early 1993 VP models were designated 'Series II'.
PRICES AT INTRODUCTION (INCL S/TAX): \$23,992 (Commodore Executive six-cylinder manual sedan), \$26,992 (Commodore S six-cylinder manual sedan), \$32,492 (Commodore SS V8 manual sedan with IRS), \$37,892 (Calais six-cylinder sedan with IRS).

DIMENSIONS (BASIC SEDAN): Length: 4891 mm; Wheelbase: 2731 mm; Width: 1812 mm.

IDENTIFICATION: Revision of VN body, with headlights and turn lenses wrapping deep into the front guards; full-width acrylic grille with low air intake (semitransparent grille on Executive and Berlina until January 1993, body colour on S and SS throughout model run); formal grille on Calais; all models have central circular badge on leading edge of bonnet and rear of bootlid; body-coloured front and rear bumpers on all versions except ute.

TOTAL NUMBER BUILT: 111,770.





HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1991

- The VN Commodore enters its fourth year, having achieved 64,494 sales during 1990 to remain Australia's best-selling car.
- Holden's Engine Company (HEC) marks 10 years of manufacturing the Family II four-cylinder engine with its 1.5 millionth export example (in addition to nearly 300,000 units produced for local Holden and Nissan products). Total export earnings reach \$1.9 billion, making HEC one of Australia's foremost exporters of value-added goods. As well as fours for export, HEC continues to produce a V6 for local Holdens and Toyotas, plus a V8 for Commodore/Statesman/HSV.
- Aussie touring car legend Peter Brock returns to racing Holden products, competing in production and touring car events in V6 and V8 Commodores.
- The new JL series Apollo is launched with electronic fuel-injection on all models. A sporty GS version joins the range.
- The Barina is updated: the new MH series offers three and five-door bodies.
- The four-cylinder Nova is facelifted to become the LF series and a sports-oriented GS version is added to the line-up. Fuel-injection is fitted to most models, giving a 12 per cent power boost without sacrificing fuel economy.
- The high-tech, windcheating Holden Calibra coupe is released to an enthusiastic response. This is the first German-built car sold by Holden and the first to offer 'ABS' antilock brakes.
- The 1990 Bathurst winners — Allan Grice and Win Percy — score a hard-fought second place in the 1991 event. Driving a Commodore VN Group A, they are the first local car home.
- Holden introduces a major advancement on Ford Falcon by making independent rear suspension standard on Calais and SS Commodore and optional on all other VP sedans.
- The Commodore utility is updated, and given the same VP model designation as the rest of the range (the previous version was known as the VG series).
- The VQ Series II Statesman and Caprice long wheelbase models are unveiled. They introduce a range of improvements and bring 'ABS' antilock brakes to the locally built Holden range. A V6 Statesman joins the line-up alongside the V8.
- Holden Special Vehicles unveils the HSV Sports Wagon, based on the Commodore V6. This follows a string of acclaimed performance models released during the year, including the Statesman 5000i V8. The 5000th HSV-modified car is sold.
- The Commodore again finishes the year as Australia's best-selling model.



VP Commodore Series II



VQ Statesman Series II

HOLDEN HIGHLIGHTS

1992

- Electronic antilock brakes (ABS) become available on IRS-equipped Commodore, Berlina and Calais sedans, reinforcing Holden's commitment to safety.
- Holden announces a no-cost, three year roadside service package for its Calais, Statesman, Caprice and Calibra models. This is followed by an initiative which sees all new Holden passenger cars receiving an extended 50,000km/24 month warranty plus a 100,000km/36 month coverage on the powertrain.
- An HSV-developed 180 kW V8 becomes optional on Commodore, Calais, Statesman and Caprice models.
- Holden Special Vehicles releases the superquick Commodore VP-based Senator and Senator 5000i models, with distinctive 17 inch road wheels. Late in the year the GTS muscle car is announced to take on the 25th Anniversary Ford Falcon GT.
- Young motor sport sensation Mark Skaife wins the Gold Star (Australian Drivers Championship) for the second year in a row in his Spa-Holden 'Formula Brabham' open-wheeler. All Formula Brabham cars are powered by a modified version of Holden's Australian V6; the series is designed to provide top-level open-wheeler racing at a reasonable cost.
- The four-cylinder Nova is offered with an optional 1.8-litre engine; a lower cost version of the smallest Holden — the Barina hatch — is released.
- Australia's 1987 500cc GP motorcycle world champion, Wayne Gardner, switches to four wheels, driving a Holden Commodore in the annual Bathurst 1000 enduro race.
- A fleet of Holden Novas is used for the 'celebrity race' at the 1992 Australian Formula One Grand Prix meeting in Adelaide.
- An all-new Holden Jackaroo goes on sale with a choice between a 3.2-litre, V6 petrol engine and a 3.1-litre, four-cylinder intercooled turbo diesel.



UBS Jackaroo



YE Calibra