

1936 Chevrolet Standard Commercial Roadster

Owner: Bruce Watt, Cronulla

This vehicle has an all - Australian body by Holden. Holden had been a fully owned subsidiary of General Motors since 1931. Holden's produced bodies for General Motor's vehicles as well as some other makes from about 1918 to avoid tariffs.

The body number is 398. Only 444 were made and the body style was unique to Australia. Running gear is American. It has a 6 cylinder engine of 206.8 cubic inches. This motor, dubbed the 'stove bolt six' ran largely unchanged from 1929 to 1953. 1936 was the first year that hydraulic brakes were introduced. It still has some wood in the doors and body frame. The doors are front opening and known as 'suicide doors' for the tendency to spring open at speed. Anecdotally, gangsters were known to push victims out of them.

This is effectively a 2 owner car. It was driven by the original owner until 1961 when it was garaged. A cosmetic restoration was carried out in the 1970s by the original owner's nephew though it wasn't driven. It was purchased in April 1976. An original owner's log book showing repairs and some basic tools were received with the car.

It was garaged in the Parkes Motor Museum while the owner travelled overseas. It was driven as daily transport in the 1980s and deregistered in 1991. It remained in storage until 2017 when a slow restoration began. To complete the restoration to a more professional standard, Southside Restorations at Kirrawee was engaged. This began in February 2021.

The body was taken back to bare metal and a Canadian General Motor's colour, Blue-bell – Blue seen on a 1934 Buick 96C was chosen after an internet search for a suitable colour scheme. This replaced a more traditional navy blue colour. Its original 1930s colour was called 'cigarette cream'. The chassis was painted, chrome work redone, brakes and master cylinder overhauled, radiator repaired, new carburettor fitted and upholstery and carpet redone. 17 inch white wall tyres and tubes were sourced from the US along with new hub caps. The wire wheels were sandblasted and painted a contrasting colour. A replacement running board was manufactured and new rubbers fitted. A new windscreen replaced the original plate glass variety. The petrol tank was flushed many times to remove the sludge following years left standing.

Apart from timing and repairs to electrics, grease and oil change, the running gear is original. A pink slip and MEG Club accreditation was obtained and conditional Historic vehicle registration was obtained on 30 December 2021. Shannon's full comprehensive insurance for an agreed value of \$60,000 was obtained. Lap seat belts have since been fitted with blinkers to follow. The original hood will be replaced in the future.

The car is now 86 years old. I have owned it for 46 of those years. It has been satisfying to breathe new life into this appealing icon of the 1930s.

Bruce Watt