

Lifestyle

Classic Car: 1951 MG YA Saloon

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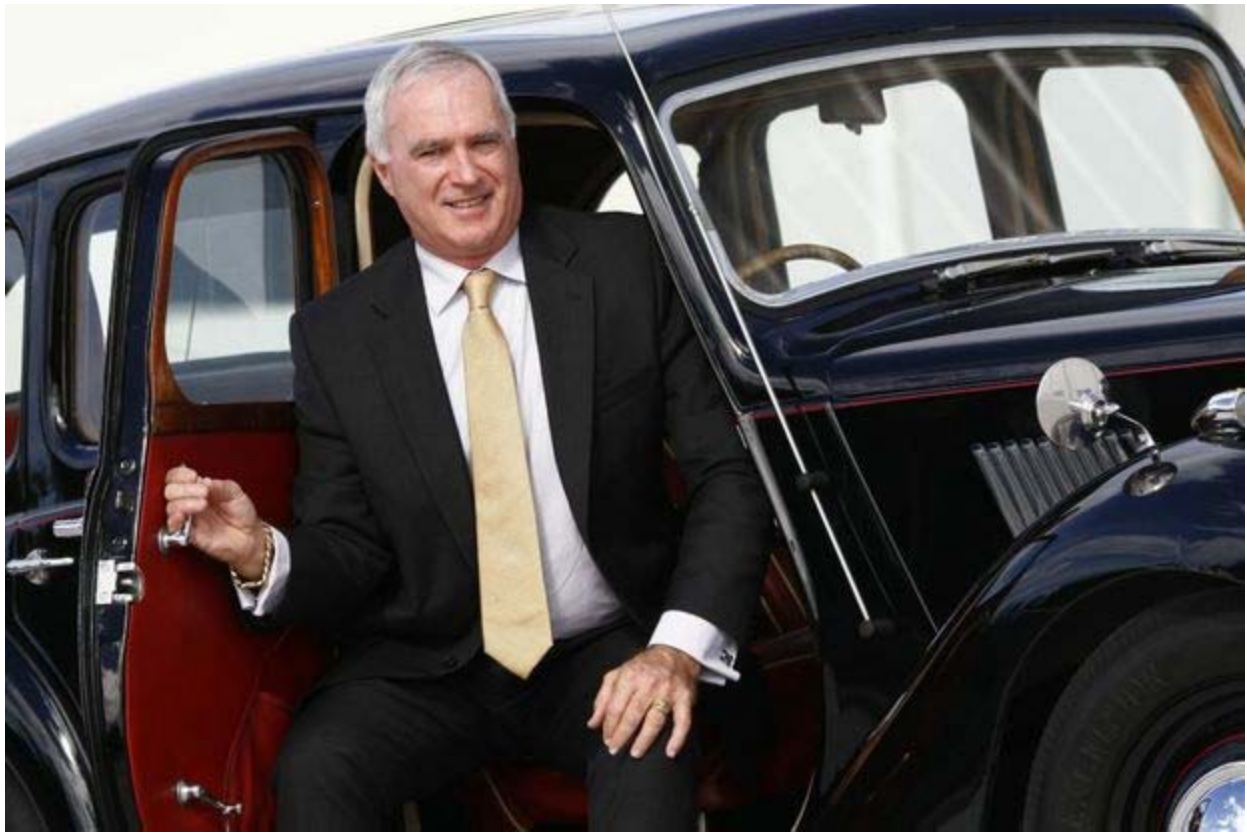


CLASSIC LINES: Delightful 1951 MG YA Saloon is a reasonably simple car to drive with synchro gearbox and a comfortable ride ideal for cruising. Iain Curry

OF all the vices a man can have, car collecting isn't a bad one to be burdened with.

That's not to say it can't lead to problems of course. Maintaining classic vehicles is time consuming and often expensive, and storing them safely is a constant headache.

And once you've got the collecting bug, there's every chance you'll crumble to temptation when the next appealing classified advertisement is spotted.



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry

Frank Carroll has amassed an impressive haul in recent years, favouring the elegance of the Rolls-Royce and Bentley brands, but he hasn't been able to resist the graceful charms of another British export.

This is his recently acquired 1951 MG YA saloon (sedan), spotted in a club magazine looking the bit worse for wear, which now joins his Rolls Royce collection including a 1927 Phantom 1, 1979 Silver Shadow II, 1987 Silver Spur and colossal 2007 Phantom Pearl.



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry

"I was attracted by the MG's appearance in the photos; it has lovely proportions and exudes style," the Sunshine Coast solicitor said. "I'd not really considered an MG up to buying this, but am now considering more MGs of this series."

Frank paid \$5500 for the 65-year-old four-door sedan earlier this year, saying it was in neglected but running condition. He reckons he's spent about the same again tidying the MG up and bringing it to roadworthy standard, but Frank's a known perfectionist who spots even the most minor of blemishes, so it's certain there's more work in the pipeline.



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry

As it is, the 1951 YA presents beautifully. Its striking black paintwork with subtle red detailing is tastefully set against re-chromed body parts, all done locally on the Sunshine Coast.

"The parts I've sourced locally and overseas," Frank said. "They're easy to get hold of, and up to now I've fitted a new radiator, new front wheel bearings, hoses, pipes, water pump, battery and front and rear indicators."



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA speedometer Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry
Ever the enthusiast historian, Frank has also researched the story behind his MG. It was exported to Melbourne in the year of its build, was constantly registered and on the road, and underwent restoration in 1998. A previous owner sourced an original owner's handbook, maintenance manual, sales brochure and tool kit, before it became a daily driver in Brisbane from 2006 for the most recent past owner.



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry

The cabin is certainly a squeeze for front seat passengers, but it is delightfully appointed in red leather with wooden dashboard, burr walnut for window and screen surrounds, and MG-specific octagonal dials. There are some quirky touches too. The windscreen opens at its base, it has a rear window blind, while rare for the period are a sliding steel sunroof and adjustable telescopic steering column. It also features lovely old "trafficators" - illuminated signals popping out from the door frame which served as indicators back in the day.



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry

Powering the classic MG is a 1250cc four-cylinder with single carburettor, meaning progress is tardy. The YA sedan model was more of a cruiser than sports car however - hence the well-appointed cabin - and Frank said it's a very simple and comfortable old thing to steer.

"It drives really nicely thanks to the synchro gearbox and rack and pinion steering, while the suspension is good and it doesn't pitch or roll."



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry
Motoring for pleasure is what a car like this is all about, and in his short ownership Frank has already completed some lengthy trips, including a lunch jaunt with four adults inside.
"The engine is nice and tight, it sits at about 90kmh and I just love driving it," he said. "I'm keen to drive it at least once a week locally, and I've already got my eye on another MG, probably a tourer."



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry

The comparatively small MG is clearly flavour of the month in Frank's garage, and even though his first affection will remain for his Rolls-Royces, the elegant post-war YA is proving a delight. If nothing else, it's a lot easier to park than its giant stablemates.



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry

Vital statistics

Model: 1951 MG YA Saloon.

Details: Four door sedan produced in England between 1947 and 1953.

Owner: Frank Carroll, Sunshine Coast, Queensland.

Number produced: 6158.

Engine: 1250cc in-line pushrod four-cylinder with single SU 1W carburettor.

Transmission: Four-speed manual with synchro on 2nd, 3rd and top.

Performance: 0-60mph (97kmh) in 29.3 seconds.

Did you know? To help wheel changes and maintenance these cars featured a Smiths "Jackall" four-wheel hydraulic jacking system where four jacks could be lowered at each corner at the same time to support the car completely off the ground.



Frank Carroll's 1951 MG YA. Photo: Iain Curry / Sunshine Coast Daily Iain Curry

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