

Old Holden just keeps rollin'



Early days at The Sisters: Russell Attrill off to football training in his beloved 1966 Holden HR and carrying his Gladstone bag.

[box] There is nothing like a classic car to stir up memories of youth, simpler days and early romance – we talk to **Russell Attrill**, of Warrnambool, about his treasured HR Holden that captures all three... [/box]

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color:#A5CECD;"]W[/dropcap]hen it came to finding and buying a car that mirrored that of his younger years, Russell Attrill was a very patient man.

Russell, who now lives in Warrnambool but who grew up at The

Sisters, had always hankered to replace the HR Holden that he had bought as a 21-year-old for \$2600 from the Christian's Motors showroom in 1966.

Like for most young men at that time (and perhaps still), Russell's car was his pride and joy and he drove it everywhere: to football training and matches, to the beach at Port Campbell with his mates, and to woo the young woman who would later become his wife, Fay Lilley.

Russell sold his original HR Holden in 1974, but, like Fay, the car was forever in his heart.

"That car was very special to me and you never forget a car like that," he said.



Russell today with the same Gladstone bag from football training and the 1966 Holden HR that mirrors his original.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] I [/dropcap]t was not until decades years later, however, that Russell had the opportunity to reclaim a little of that lost youth when he and Fay were farming at Taroon and learned that Merv McDowell, who lived at nearby Laang, had a 1966 Holden HR Special Sedan in Minerva blue duco.

"I knew about this car and I really wanted this car," Russell laughed.

"So I kept saying to Merv, when you are ready to sell the car, be sure to let me know...that took about 15 years," he said.

Finally, in 2007, Merv's daughter contacted Russell to say that her father had not taken the car out of the shed for about three years and perhaps it was time to sell. Was he still interested?

It took Russell a nano-second to say "yes!".



The pristine Holden came complete with its original owner's manual and service books.

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This car was immaculate," Russell said.

"It had been stored under cover its whole life. It had never been driven in the rain and it had never been washed – only wiped down with a cloth – so there was virtually no rust at all in the body and all of the rubbers are original," he said.

The interior upholstery, seats, steering wheel, boot, instrument panel and 98 per cent of the dashboard are also in pristine, original condition. The 2 per cent of the dashboard that is not original is where Russell added a stereo unit so he could play his beloved jazz.

The car had 99,000 miles on the clock when Russell bought it and has since clocked up another 24,000 miles from trips to, among other places, Victoria's Alpine area, Broken Hill, Adelaide, Philip Island, Mildura and Temora, NSW.

To date, it has never had a breakdown and cruises along easily at 110 kph.

"I like to drive it around as much as I can; it is a very comfortable drive," Russell said.

Given its age, it is also not too bad on fuel economy – around 10l/per 100km – but when a car looks and feels as good as Russell's HR, who is counting?



The car on one of its many journeys – this time to Taillem Bend – since Russell bought it in 2007.



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