



Natal Diecast Model Collectors

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Newsletter May 2014

Hi Folks,

Our March meeting was well attended, and with the theme of British Sports Cars, many members displayed a good selection of their models.

Also at the meeting, there were several lots of models for sale - with some model lots sold by closed auction. These closed auction models will be ready for collection at our May meeting, and those members who were successful will have heard by now - however, if you cannot attend this meeting, please make arrangements upfront for another member to collect and pay for these models on your behalf.

Richard Hebbon is planning to hold another Annual Hobbies Fair on 5th July 2014. His contact Nos are at the end of this newsletter, and once arrangements are confirmed and finalised, he will try and keep the costs the same as previously - i.e. tables are free if you display, and R100.00 for sellers. This hobbies fair is well-worthwhile attending, and I encourage members to make every effort to attend the fair and support Richard.

We hope to hear from Toyota soon, regarding our planned tour of their factory and premises. Members will be kept informed once we confirm and finalise the dates etc.

Below is a most interesting short story written in association with Ron Gersbank who was instrumental in bringing Geoff Sear's final model into fruition - the Allard Palm Beach Roadster. Below that is David Wright's excellent article written as a tribute to Geoff - and printed in the April 2014 "Diecast Collector"

For members who may be interested in obtaining a model, the un-built kit of the Roadster costs +-£33.00 plus postage. Assembled models built by David Wright cost +-£75.00 plus postage. This cost is mainly due to the small number of models produced, and anyone interested can contact me for further information.

See you at the next meeting,

Keep collecting

Philip

Allard Palm Beach Roadster - Final (After) Sear Model In association with Ron Gersbank

A few years ago, I travelled from my home in Hout bay to Durban, and during my visit I went to see Geoff Sear (and his wife, Marilynne) at their home in Umbilo, not very long before his sad demise. At that stage, Geoff had started, but not completed the pattern of the Allard Palm Beach Roadster and I thought NDMC members would be interested in the excellent article below by David Wright in a recent edition of "Diecast Collector".

In his article, David describes how Marilynne very kindly gave me the unfinished Sear Model pattern of the Allard Palm Beach Roadster which I then forwarded to David in the UK. David then sent the pattern to Barry Smith and both David and Barry devoted a great deal of their time to completing this project and all keen collectors owe them a debt of gratitude. David's latest article, as published in the April 2014 issue of "Diecast Collector", encapsulates the story of Geoff's life to perfection in my eyes, culminating in his final, unfinished model of the Allard Palm Beach Roadster.

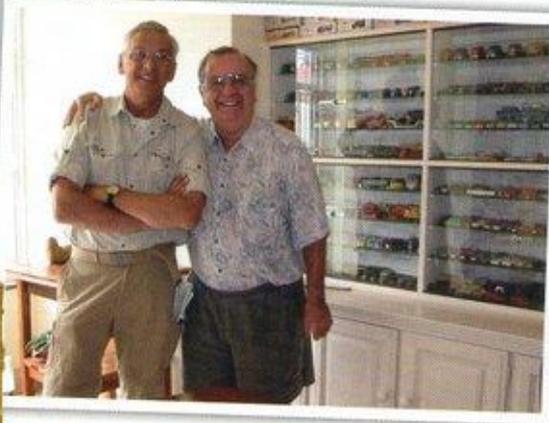
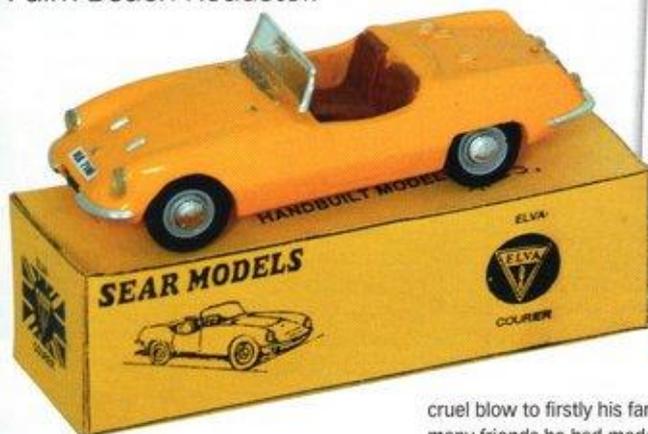
I hope you enjoy reading the article as much as I did.

My model of the 1953 Allard Palm Beach Roadster is in my new display cabinet in my study extension. (see pic on page 4)

Editor's Note: Ron kindly arranged with David to send three models of the Allard Palm Beach Roadster to SA. Ron's model was fully assembled and built by David Wright. The other model kit was sent to John Rabe in Johannesburg, and my model kit was sent to Durban - and later assembled and built for me by John Winter. (see pic on Page 4)

ALLARD PALM BEACH ROADSTER - A TRIBUTE

A fitting tribute to an avid collector, **David Wright** describes the creation of an Allard Palm Beach Roadster.



Above: Geoff Sear (right) with friend John Van Eck. Left: Sear Models Ginetta G4

G Geoff Sear was well known to many collectors in the UK, and his passing on 29th August 2011 at the age of 67, as a result of complications with cancer, was a sad and

cruel blow to firstly his family, but also the many friends he had made in both South Africa and elsewhere in the world.

He had first emigrated to South Africa with his parents at the age of 3, but returned for a couple of years at the age of 12, together with his many Dinky Toys. However, on his return to South Africa, he recalled that these prized toys were left behind for his cousins!

After a year in the South African army, he studied as an architect, eventually starting his own business, which he ran for the following 40 years until he died. He began collecting in 1981 and, with his wife Marilynne as his assistant, would search out Dinky Toys with great energy. Geoff was a founder member of the Natal Diecast Model Club, and was chairman for more than 20 years. He became the Dinky Toy marque expert in South Africa, such as his knowledge of the Dinky Toys range. In particular he acquired many rare examples, such as a tinplate 48 series petrol station, a mint and boxed Ruston Bucyrus excavator, and an all-over cream 29 series double decker bus.

As many of us have done, he began to restore playworn Dinky Toys, which led him to develop his own unique range of 1/43 resin models of cars that no other manufacturer had made. He

produced these in small quantities, known as Sear Models, and they included such rare subjects as the Marauder and a Ginetta G4. Each was packaged in brightly coloured small boxes, with his own logo and artwork on the front.

In June 2011, Ron Gersbank, a long time friend and fellow member of the Natal Club in South Africa, encouraged Geoff to take on the creation of an Allard Palm Beach Roadster and supplied him with copies of Allard brochures to use as a basis for his development of the pattern. Geoff was never able to finish this, and his widow Marilynne passed the unfinished pattern to Ron. Ron's intention was to build it as a unique model for his collection.

The Allard was an excellent choice by Geoff, as the Palm Beach roadster had never been modelled by any maker before, and this was his mission, to fill in the gaps. The

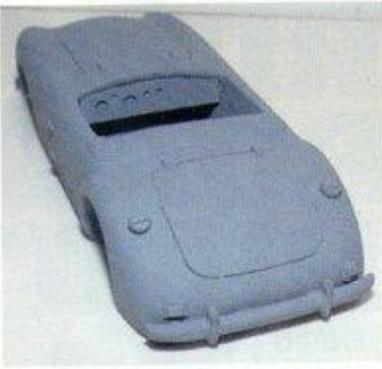


Front and rear views of the original pattern as given to Ron by Geoff's widow, Marilynne. (Both photos courtesy of Ron Gersbank).



Sear Models Marauder. ▶

HANDBUILT MODELS



Left: First modification, by the author. **Middle:** The final result after Barry's work. **Right:** The parts to the kit.

history of the Allard Motor Company, from its first J-type cars, was one of marrying South London manufacture with American V-8 engines.

In its heyday, during the post war late 1940s and early 1950s, this partnership proved very successful for such a small company, culminating in 1952 with Sydney Allard winning the Monte Carlo rally driving an Allard P1 in 1952, the only time a Monte Carlo Rally has been won in a car with the owner/driver of the same name. J2s were also very successful at Le Mans with Sydney taking 3rd place in the 1950 race.

However, as research and development grew at bigger constructors, Allard failed to keep up its former pace and other manufacturers began producing cheaper and more technically advanced cars. Introduced in 1952, the new four and six-cylinder Palm Beach model was a year behind its competitors, and the Palm Beach became the last car wholly made by the company.

So began the opportunity of creating a model of this rare transatlantic sports car. After much correspondence between the author and Ron, interspersed with packages travelling to and fro as exchanges took place, Ron and the author concluded that an even greater fitting tribute to Geoff might be to fully finish the pattern. Once completed, a mould could be taken from it, and a small number of Allard Palm Beach models could be created for friends and enthusiasts in both South Africa and the UK.

The pattern was going to need much

further work, and so it was agreed that it would come to the UK. Ron spent much time and great care packaging up this unique piece of resin, and despatched it to England where the author assessed the work required. Fortunately, not too far away in the South East of England is based Barry Smith, craftsman of many model cars and spare parts made in resin.

The author sought Barry's advice, an agreement was made with both Barry and Ron that Barry would complete the shaping and detailed work on the pattern, match up parts such as bumpers and screen, and would then make a mould from which a small number of castings would form the basis of a kit of the car.

In order to ensure that the new owners of these models would be aware of the purpose of making it, the base would be inscribed with (After) Sear Models, in the same style as the other models Geoff had produced in his range.

In due course, Barry's magic had been woven over the pattern; the final result was photographed, and then e-mailed off to South Africa for Ron to approve. We were all pleased with the result, after debating if Geoff was planning on making a Mk I or a MkII, as there appeared to be elements of both in the initial pattern! It eventually became clear that the pattern was more a MkI so the cast was set!

Castings were taken of the one-piece body, and suitable bumpers found, as an extra to create a more accurate representation of

the rare Allard. Bucket seats seemed to look more appropriate, and disc wheels were sorted, although with a little modification, this kit can also be built with wire wheels.

Arrangements were made to courier Ron's supply of kits and a hand built model via relations of a model collector friend of his, to ensure safe passage into South Africa, and Ron was as pleased as Punch! The original, albeit altered and modified, pattern was duly returned to Ron's safe keeping. While the numbers made will be very limited, readers can obtain more information on availability from www.transportmodellingbooks.co.uk, or direct from the author.

So a truly collaborative effort by enthusiasts has resulted in Geoff's skills, his unique range, and his knowledge of rare cars, becoming more widely known to collectors worldwide. **DC**



The real thing, an Allard Palm Beach MkI Roadster.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to Ron Gersbank of the Natal Diecast Model Collectors Club for agreeing that this model should be made, and to Barry Smith of BTS Mouldings for creating the model from the pattern.

The full story of Geoff Sear's life as a model collector and maker can be found in

David's book - 'The History of Resin Transport Modelling' obtainable from his website - www.transportmodellingbooks.co.uk



The finished models!



Ron Gerbank's (After) Sear Model of the Allard Palm Beach Roadster - model kit assembled and built by David Wright.



(After) Sear Model of the Allard Palm Beach Roadster - model kit assembled and built by John Winter.

Upcoming events

Date	Event/Function	Venue	Comments
26 th May 2014	NDMC Meeting	VCC - Kloof	Time: 17:30 for 18:00 'till we end. Cost: R20.00 for non-members Subs due: R100.00 / year. R60.00 Country Members
26 th May 2014	Theme		Cars of a marque of the member's choice.
5 th July 2014	Annual Hobbies Fair	Moth Hall	Ridley Park Road, Malvern
2014	Visit to Toyota		Date still to be confirmed / advised

Committee 2014

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ROY TOUBERT'S MOTORING JOKES



KEEP RIGHT ON TO THE END OF THE HOLS

The DAVID LANGDON
survival guide for summer's
traffic jams

*Share the responsibility, but not the blame, by appointing your wife
as navigator,*



make frequent stops, but limit them to simple leg-stretching,