

TUESDAY,
JANUARY 14, 2020

Auto watch



COVER
VEHICLE
PG. 2

SUV-ERSTAR



IT'S QASHQAI TIME

Manufacturer's warranty extended



by John Jones

NISSAN Qashqai has been one of the company's most popular SUVs since it was introduced to this country in the mid-2000s.

Now there is even more reason to like it following Nissan's big announcement of 2020 that it is extending the manufacturer's warranty.

It is a model that has picked up an incredible share of awards and plaudits in its time, something like an Academy Award-winning film.

Nissan is now backing the Qashqai, and indeed all vehicles in its fleet, for five years or 150,000 kilometres, whichever comes first.

That is an extra sweetening for a vehicle that has already proved popular with people ranging from young and old, from singles to a family of five.

Powered by a 2-litre motor seamlessly mated with a seven-speed CVT automatic transmission providing 106kW of power and 200Nm of torque, the ST Plus model tested is perfect for our East Coast roads.

Its fuel economy is excellent. It sips only 6.9 litres/100 kilometres.

There is ample room for the tallest driver and front seat passenger to relax while leaving more than enough

room for rear seat passengers.

Then there is a raft of standard features such as satellite navigation, tinted windows and 17-inch alloys.

The intelligent key enables you to lock or unlock the vehicle and start it without having to take the key out of your pocket — a case of “look Mum, no hands,”

Another big positive is the elevated seating which makes entry and egress a whole lot easier and provides a better view for rear seat passengers while reducing the onset of car sickness.

The ST Plus has an all-round camera that gives a 360-degree bird's-eye view around the vehicle — a big part of a five-star safety package.

It is extremely well fitted out, with all the basic comfort features, including hand-free phones, Bluetooth and a quality audio system.

When you put the extended warranty together with Nissan's 1 percent interest finance package, you have a magic formula.

It's Qashqai time this summer.



Now crash away, crash away, crash away all...

IF you've ever wondered why Santa drives a sleigh pulled by a team of reindeer, and not a \$400,000 Lamborghini powered by a V10 engine, this might give you some insight.

Michail Antonia (right), of English Premier League football club West Ham United, was trying to spread some Christmas cheer to his family while dressed as a snowman late last year, but instead managed to send his Huracan Performante through a family's back shed

in South London.

Thankfully, Antonio and his passenger escaped without injury, but the same can't be said for the garden shed or the extremely expensive Lamborghini coupe.

Police said they were called to Nightingale Lane, Balham, at 6.36pm on Wednesday, December 25, to a report of a car crashed into a garden.

"A Lamborghini car was found at the scene. It was reported that it had left the road and crashed into a road sign and a garden wall. The

driver did not require hospital treatment. There were no other reported injuries.

"There is no police investigation."

While no details of the crash have been released to the public, it's safe to assume Antonio simply lost control of the high-performance vehicle while travelling down the narrow street.

As many car enthusiasts know, less-than ideal conditions and high-powered performance vehicles rarely mix well.



Tesla breaks new ground with Shanghai Gigafactory

BEIJING — Tesla's Shanghai factory delivered its first cars to customers last week and chief executive Elon Musk said the electric automaker plans to set up a design centre in China to create a model for worldwide sales.

Musk presided at a ceremony where a half-dozen buyers wearing red Tesla T-shirts drove away new Model 3 sedans. He expressed thanks to earlier customers who he said made Tesla's expansion in China possible by purchasing imported models from the fledgling brand.

"We just delivered our first customer cars from Gigafactory Shanghai, marking only one year from when the teams broke ground on the site."

Tesla Inc. built the Gigafactory 3, its first outside the United States, following the ruling Communist Party's 2018 decision to allow full foreign ownership in electric car manufacturing.

It is due to produce the Model 3 and a planned SUV, the Model Y.

Producing in China insulates Tesla from possible duty increases on imported US-made vehicles from Beijing's tariff war with Washington.

Other foreign automakers, including General Motors Co., Volkswagen AG and Toyota Motor Co, have long had joint-venture factories in China.

China is the biggest global market for electrics but Tesla's manufacturing launch comes at a time when sales are sagging following the end of government subsidies in mid-2019.

Total electric vehicle sales fell almost 45 percent in November from a year earlier to 95,000. Sales for the first 11 months of 2019 were up 1.3 percent at just over 1 million vehicles.

Musk said Tesla planned to increase investment in China and set up a design centre to "create a car for worldwide sale".



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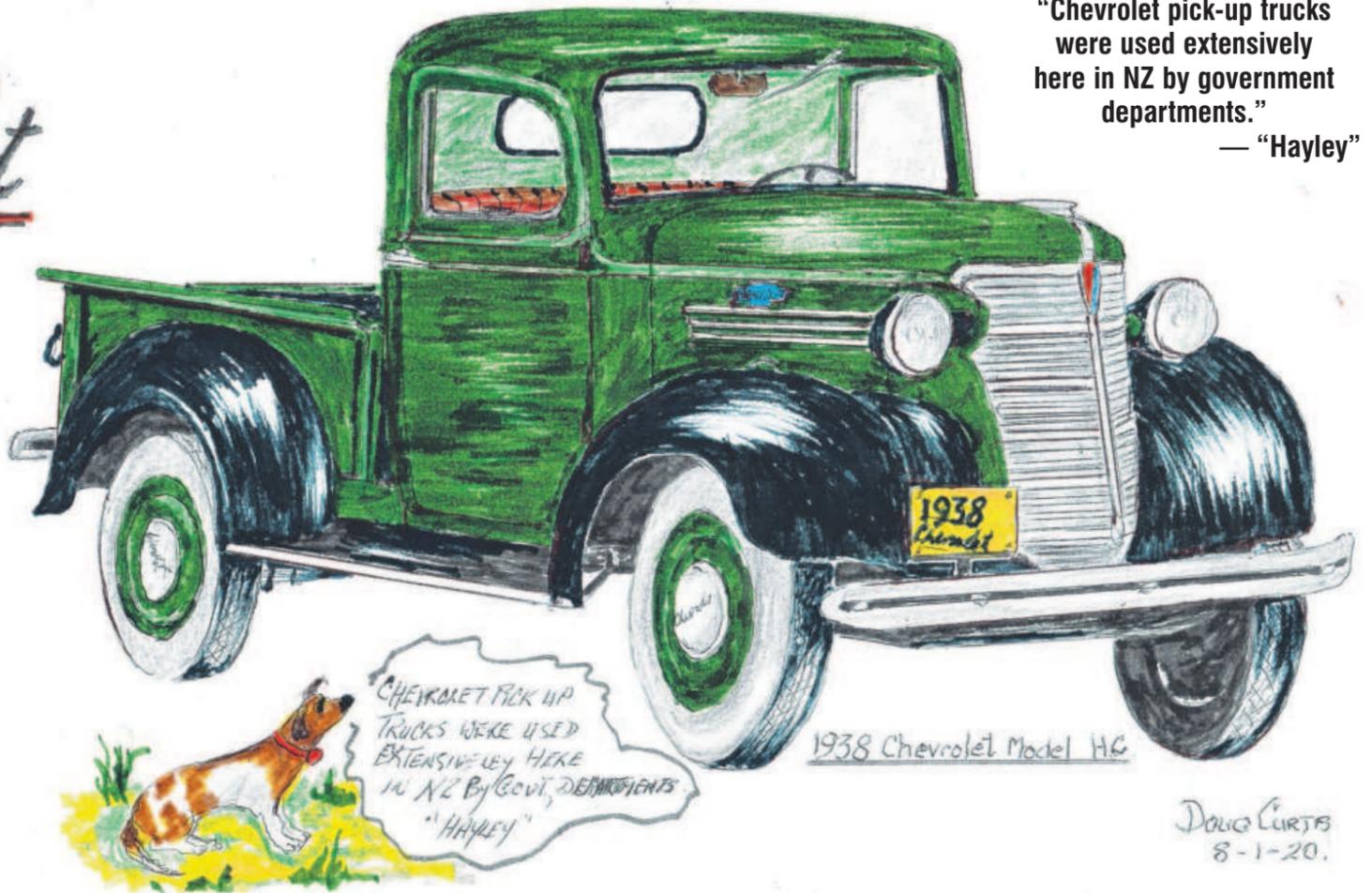
INTELLIGENT AROUND VIEW
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*Finance offer available to approved applicants of Nissan Financial Services only and excludes all lease and some fleet purchasers. Available on new Nissan vehicles only. Maximum term 36 months. No deposit required. \$375 establishment fee, \$8.05 PPSR fee, and \$10 monthly account keeping fee apply. Terms and conditions apply. Valid from 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2020. Units must be registered by 31st March 2020. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Nissan reserves the right to vary, withdraw or extend this offer.

ENTERPRISE MOTOR GROUP 323 Gladstone Road • Ph 867 8368 • a/h Steven Shields • 027 483 9666

Chevrolet

Illustration
and story
by Doug
Curtis



“Chevrolet pick-up trucks were used extensively here in NZ by government departments.”
— “Hayley”

Marvellous time with Dad and his Chevrolet

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FOR MORE INFO OR BOOKINGS
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Phone 869 0616 • Email:
andy.searle@gisborneherald.co.nz
Leave message, name & phone no. and I will contact you.

AUTO ACTION AROUND TOWN

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**East Coast Museum
of Technology**
Open Sun-Fri 10am-4pm,
Sat 1pm-4pm Main Rd, Makaraka

Gis. American Car Club
Various Events
Colin 868 1454;
Rick 027 490 1373

Tairawhiti Aviation Museum
Open Tuesday 9am-4pm and
Sunday 9am-4pm Gisborne Airport

Ulysses Motorcycle Club
Monthly meeting held on the first
Thursday of the month.
7.30pm at the Tatapouri Sports
Fishing Club

NOT a lot of changes were made to GM's Chevrolet trucks as the years rolled by.

The 1937 truck had a vertical grille and not a lot else was different.

Dad was working as an overseer for the Public Works Dept (later Ministry of Works) in 1937 and we were living in Opotiki as his main work was on the East Coast highway about 30 miles (48 kilometres) east of Opotiki along a cliff face next to the sea.

I was taken on occasions with him in his brand new Chevrolet PWD truck. As a six-year-old I thought that was marvellous.

Sadly when he was transferred to Te Araroa in 1938 under a different

department area, he had to leave his 1937 new truck in Opotiki and was given a 1936 Chevrolet for his time in Te Araroa.

I spent hours with him when he was doing road inspections and checking on his roadmen during our 1938-41 stay in Te Araroa, so I knew all the road problems in the area — culverts, bridge approaches, road batters, drains and cambers, metals and gradients. Little boys have big ears.

God knows why I was never a roading engineer but I finished up a motor mechanic.

As to the 1938 Chevrolet truck . . .

The engine was an overhead valve six-cylinder that had low oil pressure lubrication for the crankshaft and big end lubrication with a displacement of 206.8 cubic inches.

The bore was 3½ inches and the stroke 3¾ inches with a compression ratio of 6.25:1 that suited the petrol of that time. The bhp was 90 @ 3200rpm.

The crankshaft had three main bearings. A single downdraft Carter carburettor was used. A GM-designed diaphragm single dry-plate clutch was used and it had a three-speed floor change manual gear box with synchromesh on second and top gear.

The rear drive used a torque tube system with Hypoid gearing.

The electrical system was a Delco Remy 6-volt, with a generator for battery charging. The hydraulic brakes were GM Huck design, with a cable-operated rear axle handbrake.

These trucks did excellent work and were used here in New Zealand by tradesmen, farmers, county councils and government departments.

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Shelby still in a class of its own

WHEN it comes to tuning Mustangs, plenty of tuners have tried their hand at pulling more power out of the V8 engines, but no one has stood the test of time quite like Shelby.

Over the years, Shelby has built a reputation for being the most competent when it comes to modifying various Mustang models, and its iconic GT500 models seem to be leagues ahead of the rest.

As expected, the 2020 Shelby GT500 is no different.

With a supercharged 5.2-litre V8 engine pumping out a whopping 760hp (566kW), this thing means serious business.

This allows the coupe to hit 100kmh from a standstill in just 3.3 seconds, and 160kmh in 10.6 — if you can get traction

on the road.

When this car was announced, there were doubts about any examples coming to New Zealand due to its left-hand drive nature, but it looks like the first model is about to land, and is for sale.

Unlike the models from press pictures, this one is finished in Oxford white, and doesn't feature the iconic racing stripes usually seen on Shelby models.

Optional extras on this particular model include a carbon-fibre instrument panel, Recaro leather seats, a painted black roof, and the technology and handling packages.

In the United States, these cars came with a hefty US\$74,000 base price, and could be optioned up to US\$107,080 if you so wish.

This makes the \$200,000+ price tag that this one has been hit with understandable.



Sony unveils EV

FOR the last few decades, Sony has been one of the brands at the forefront of personal entertainment systems in the form of PlayStation consoles and TVs, but it seems the Japanese company is jumping on the EV wave.

Unveiled at CES 2020, Sony has dubbed its concept EV the Vision-S, which seems to follow the sleek themes of modern EVs and is apparently jam-packed with autonomous driving tech.

Created to showcase the brand's autonomous technology, the car features 33 sensors, including CMOS image sensors, Solid State LiDAR, and a radar system that's embedded across the exterior panels.

All of this tech allows the car to detect and recognise people and objects around the vehicle while in motion, and Time of Flight sensors in the cabin can detect people and objects inside. Sony claims

that this is good for level 2 autonomy.

Like other EVs in its class, the Vision-S cabin is set out in an extremely simplistic way, with a massive screen taking up the majority of the dashboard.

This handles the infotainment system and driver controls while the section behind the steering wheel acts as a digital gauge cluster.

Just like the Honda e and Audi e-Tron, the wing mirrors have been replaced with cameras, and the monitors are mounted in the bottom corners of the windscreen for ease of access from the driver's seat.

One of the key features that Sony wanted to show off was the 360 Reality Audio system that reportedly offers superb audio immersion for all occupants. To achieve full immersion, speakers will also be integrated into the seats.

Out of the shadows

WHILE Tesla may be at the forefront of the electric vehicle revolution, other brands were delving into battery-powered transport long before Elon Musk launched his first rocket.

One of these brands is Fisker and while it has been around for quite some time, battling with bankruptcy has left the American brand in the shadows of the mainstream market.

That could change.

Fisker decided to unveil its latest creation — the Ocean SUV (pictured below) — at CES 2020 and it is to come up against Tesla's Model Y and Ford's controversial Mustang Mach-E.

Set to go on sale in 2021, the Ocean is said to have a maximum range of 482km on a full charge, and run off an 80kWh battery. This will allow the electric SUV to hit 100kmh in around three seconds.

On the inside, Fisker has followed in the footsteps of Tesla and Ford with an extremely simplistic cabin.

A large touchscreen sits in the middle of the dash as the infotainment system and a smaller one acts as the digital gauge cluster.

One of the strangest drawcards that Fisker made sure of mentioning in the launch was the California Mode, which allows the driver to open all nine windows at the touch of a button.

In the States, the Fisker will set you back around US\$38,000 for the two-wheel drive variant, with the all-wheel-drive model coming in a little higher.

Considering that this is Fisker's first official mass production vehicle in a few years, it seems unlikely it will make it out of America for a few years, but all things going well, the brand will eventually be seen Down Under.



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Smorgasbord of EV delicacies in 2020

PRESTIGE customers with an appetite for green motoring will be spoiled for choice in 2020 as carmakers move to electrify their fleet.

Mini's first electric car, the Cooper SE, blends a 135kW electric motor with a relatively small battery offering about 250 kilometres of range.

Rather than trying to build the fastest or farthest-running electric car, the brand focused on making the machine feel as Mini as possible, with agile handling and manageable dimensions. Expect it to cost at least \$50,000 on the road.

Once Volvo's performance brand, Polestar is now an electric car marque. The Polestar 2, due in the fourth quarter of 2020 over the ditch, brings the first in-car infotainment system powered by Google's Android.

You don't get a key (smartphones unlock the car) but you do get a vegan interior, pixel LED headlights and quietness that

surpasses most luxury cars. There's also the small matter of 300kW of power backed by all-wheel-drive, Ohlins suspension, Brembo brakes and a 78kWh battery, which lends 500km of range.

Electric vehicle fans who want the ultimate performance sedan will find it hard to go past Porsche's Taycan Turbo. Capable of reaching 100kmh in 2.8 seconds, Porsche's first electric car serves up 560kW of electric thrust in an eye-catching four-door body.

While it can't match the long-legged range of big-battery Teslas, the Taycan promises to be the fastest electric car at charging points, receiving up to 100km of range in five minutes.

Porsche has not announced prices for the Taycan in New Zealand, but you can bet it won't be cheap. UK customers pay £138,826 for the Taycan Turbo S, £1306 less than the Porsche Panamera Turbo S E-Hybrid that costs \$429,100 plus on-roads in New

Zealand.

Mercedes-Benz has already launched its electric EQC crossover, so the big news for the brand in 2020 surrounds a replacement for the A-class based GLA baby SUV and the addition of a new GLB bringing seven-seat versatility in a compact package.

Want a high-performance car in 2020? You could do a lot worse than the new Mercedes-AMG A45 hot hatch and its CLA 45 sedan-shaped cousin.

The original A45 redefined what a hot hatch could be and the new model promises to push the boundaries even further, with 310kW of power and a 3.9-second dash to 100kmh.

BMW's range-topping M8 Coupe arrives in the first quarter of 2020. Buyers get a wallop of 460kW twin-turbo V8 capable of powering the big coupe to 100kmh in just 3.2 seconds, giving Porsche 911 customers pause for thought.

A new-generation 911 went on sale in

2019 and you can expect powerful 911 Turbo and track-ready 911 GT3 variants to follow in coming months.

Connoisseurs might gravitate toward Porsche's smaller and lighter Cayman GT4, a circuit-ready model which ditches the four-cylinder turbo motor of regular Cayman variants in favour of a classic flat six.

Or you could wait until 2021 and stride into a Holden showroom to take home the first Corvette officially sold in Australia, revelling in its 370kW grunt and Porsche-like mid-engine dynamics.

Those keen on Ferrari's new SF90 Stradale will likely require over \$1m to not only buy the hybrid hypercar, but to also account for on-road costs and desirable options such as super-light carbon fibre wheels. The hybrid beast has 736kW of power, can run in a green electric-only mode and promises to be the fastest-accelerating car on sale. — news.com.au



New-millennium KITT one of a kind

IT might not have been as popular as the initial "car star" of 1980s TV series Knight Rider in which Michael Knight (David Hasselhoff) solved crime with the help of a talking 1982 Pontiac Firebird Trans Am called KITT, but this new-millennium version (right) is just as cool.

Fans of the crime-fighting reboot that ran from 2008 to 2009 will appreciate the Mustang as it was the only example ever built for the filming of the show.

Unlike other car-related productions that leave hundreds of collectible cars as mangled wrecks, this show managed to work with the one 2008 Ford Mustang GT that wasn't quite a GT500, despite its looks.

A genuine GT500 was ordered for the movie but due to time constraints, a regular V8-equipped GT had to be converted instead. As well as the exterior conversion, the 4.6-litre engine received a Whipple supercharger, which bumped its power output over 400hp.

To support this gain in power, a Ford Racing performance suspension system was added, alongside six-piston Brembo brakes and a free-flowing exhaust system to let the V8 sing its song.

Power was sent to the rear wheels through the standard five-speed automatic transmission because the director wanted actors focusing on delivering lines, rather than shifting gears.

On the inside, the chopped steering wheel and dash screen threw it back to the original KITT.

A set of racing seats replaced the standard Mustang seats and the boot lid was signed by the show's cast.

If all these questionable modifications still haven't put you off this Mustang, it is available in the United States, on Hemmings.com, for a hefty price of \$66,000.

That's a lot to pay for an 11-year-old Mustang, but a small price to pay for a piece of history.



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