

'61 MORRIS

'61 MORRIS MINOR 1000 PANEL VAN

An interested reader of Hot Rod Magazines, Steven D'Elia diverted to vans when he saw an old Morris Minor and thought he could make something special out of it. Steven is a sign writer by trade so paint work on his van held no fear for him.

With help from his father and brother, Steven has done all the work on the van himself. This has taken about ten months and an additional outlay of \$1500 over and above the purchase price of \$1000.

Leaving the original Morris suspension and brakes in standard form except for reconditioning of various components the Morris remains unaltered underneath. Wheels on the van have been replaced with wider Chromies fitted with Bridgestone tyres.

Under the hood the usual motor transplant has taken place as a 1200 Datsun motor and gearbox now resides there. The hydraulically controlled Datsun clutch has necessitated the fitting of the Datsun clutch master cylinder to replace the Morris mechanical linkage. Engine cooling is cared for with a thermatic fan and the original Morris radiator.

Work on the body was all done at home prior to the application of the ten coats of acrylic lacquer in Dark Burgundy. Tail lights are Holden HQ and the rear bumper also comes from an HQ but has been shortened to suit the Morris body.

One variation in the appearance of the Morris is the fitting of the Austin grille in front together with bumperettes in lieu of the original.

After completing the external paint the mural on the back doors was applied by air brush. Title of the mural (depicting a skeleton on a motorbike) is The Chosen Few. Chrome work on the body consists of the door and bonnet hinges, wheels and several under hood fittings and accessories have also been plated.

Interior of the body has received the usual van treatment with fitted cupboards in the back together with a mirrored ceiling and the balance of the lining in the shag pile carpet.

Bucket seats from a Toyota Corolla have replaced the originals in the front cabin. Remaking of the dash involved fitting a full set of gauges to monitor all engine functions.

The problems that Steven and his father encountered have all been overcome with perseverance. The fitting of the motor and gearbox caused some concern as with the HQ bumper and the rewiring of the van. As Steven says "They are both now far more experienced to tackle the next one". This is to be a Morris Tray Utility.

As work on his utility progresses toward making it mobile, Steven proposes to sell his van, as he says you can only sit in one seat at a time. If you are interested watch our "for sale" section.

FAWKNER, VIC

