

Vanguard Spotters Guide



By Alan McMillan 2009

Photos used are from various sources in his archives.

Chapter 1 1948 The Beginning

The 1948 Vanguard is quite easy to identify from the outside by the absence of rain gutters and marker lights, small bumper overriders and long doors. As we move to the interior we notice the much talked about right hand gear change, an eight button dash and most probably cloth seats. Surprisingly, the options for seats were cloth or leather with vinyl coming later. The pull out front door pockets, which those familiar with these will quickly remind me can only be effectively pulled out when the door is open, is also an indication that you are looking at a very old Vanguard. Close inspection of the front seat will reveal a screw type adjusting mechanism. When we open the bonnet we see some more differences over the more "normal" Vanguard engine bay views. The battery is mounted behind the engine on the firewall rather than at the side, there are no horns visible as they are mounted under the front bumper, a non vacuum advance distributor, a metal topped fuel pump (U type), a 32BI carburettor, a combined regulator/fuse box and a large inlet/outlet hose radiator with appropriate thermostat housing.

Several chassis frames have been used on Vanguards, the main difference in the one used in 1948 is found in the shape of the front shock absorber mountings. These can only take the straight arm shock absorbers. I understand that later changes to increase the travel of the front end were brought about by experiences gained on Australian roads.

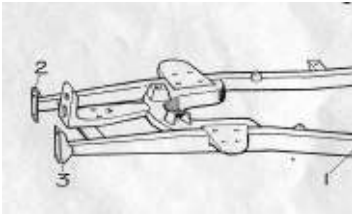
These cars had the 2088 wet sleeve overhead valve engine and were available in Saloon, Estate Car, Delivery Van and Pickup Utility configurations. Comm Nos as far as I can tell ran from 1-20000. Today sadly there are not many examples of true 1948 Vanguards around. Comm No 1562 is owned by a club member and many of the original features are still evident. Comm No 12554 is also owned by a club member and the only other one I have seen is in a wrecking yard at Cooma NSW. All are saloons, I am yet to see an Estate, Van or Pickup. (Dream on.)

This picture shows the absence of rain gutters and marker lights, also the small overriders. You might also be able to make out the full length doors.

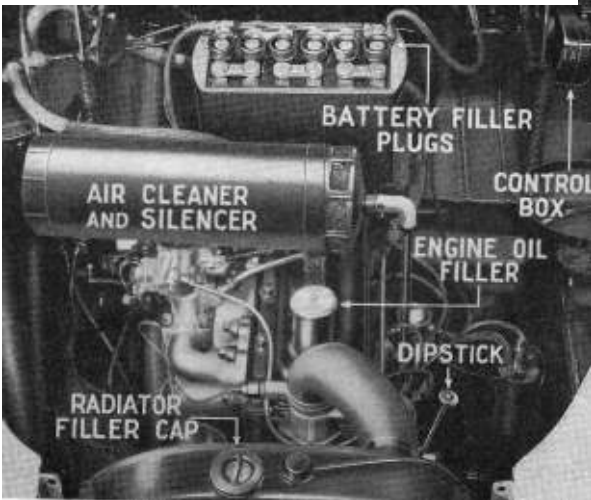
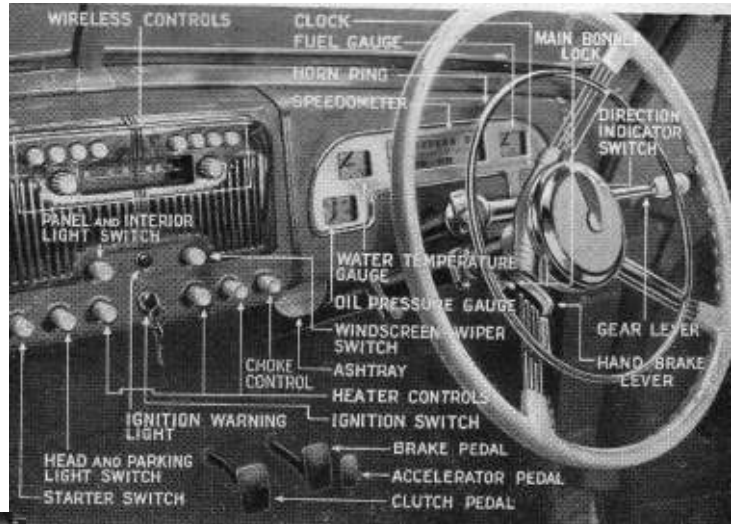


When power counts –A 1948 Vanguard with caravan makes easy work of this Australian Gradient

This diagram of a frame shows the flat shock absorber mounting points



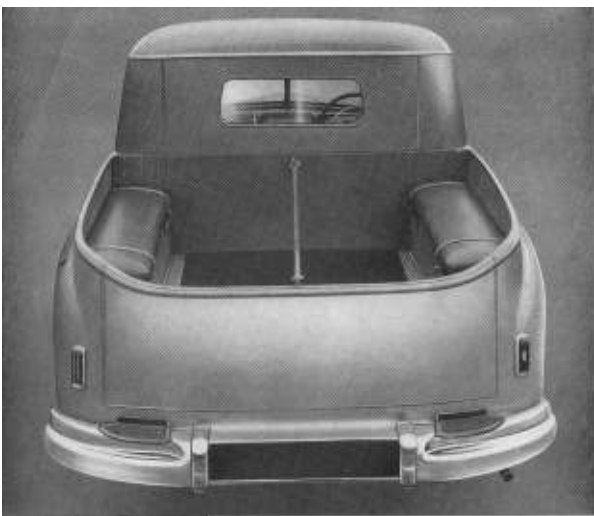
At right we see the eight button dash the early style optional radio the very attractive cream gauges and of course the right hand gear change.



This engine bay shows the larger radiator hoses and the rear mounted battery. (Note Australian vehicles had the oil bath air cleaner.)

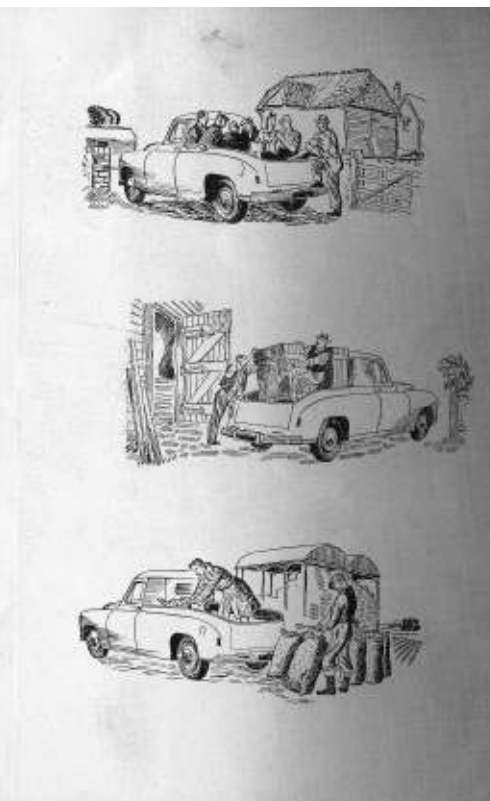


This is an original cloth seat from Vanguard Comm No 1562



The large amount of space available in the Standard Pick-up Utility for both goods and passengers will be seen in the above illustration.

Right: Passengers can easily gain access to the seats in the rear by means of the step on the bumper.



These photos from a brochure show the intended uses of the 1948 Pickup Utility from Standard. Note the padded rear seats and the passenger rear bumpers with the addition of stepping pads. The tailgate must be held in place by the chain attached to the front of tray.

Chapter 2 1949 Consolidation

In attempting to list the various differences in Vanguard models it is probably necessary at this time to point out that models didn't actually follow calendar years and that many of the changes were introduced mid model. I have in these articles followed the principle of listing all the changes that occurred in a model run. As a result some actual vehicles will not have all the changes mentioned.

At first glance the 1949 model Vanguard does not appear on the outside to be that much different than the 1948 model. Closer inspection however reveals the addition of front marker lights and rain gutters.

Once we enter the vehicle we will see that the eight button dash has made way for the six button because the heater controls are now mounted under dash and have been changed to the slide type. The cream gauges continue; the seats would be the same as in 1948. The attractive hinged door pockets have given way to open holes in the door casings giving access to either steel or paper mache pockets. Don't ask me how this worked out as I have not been able to establish any pattern. It must have been the luck of the draw. The steel ones are obviously longer lasting and favoured for restoration.

The under bonnet view has changed considerably with the battery now at the side, the twin horns located at either side high up towards the front and the significant change to a vacuum advance distributor. The BIO carburettor was introduced at Engine No 33694E.

At Comm No 32506 the chassis was modified to take a front shock absorber designed to allow a longer travel in the front suspension.

Major mechanicals remained unchanged. Numbers ran from 20001 to about 50800 or 900 something, certainly between 49962 and 51000. There are a lot of these vehicles at the Cooma wreckers, some restorable. I don't know of a good running example.

Factory manuals show that the 1949 Vanguards were available as Saloon, Estate Car, Delivery Van or Pickup Utility. It's this model that actually seems to introduce the Ute to the Australian market several examples in paddock condition can be seen.



Factory Photo of a 1949 Saloon

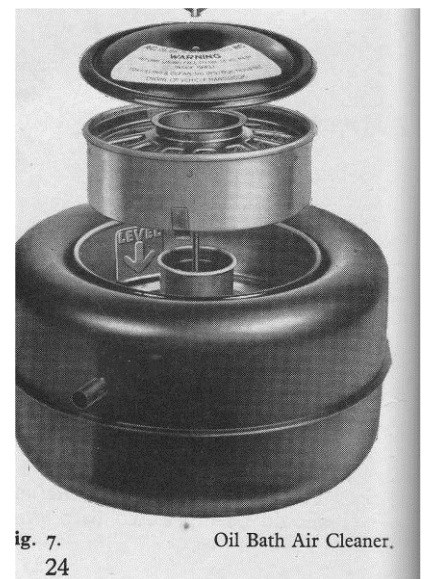
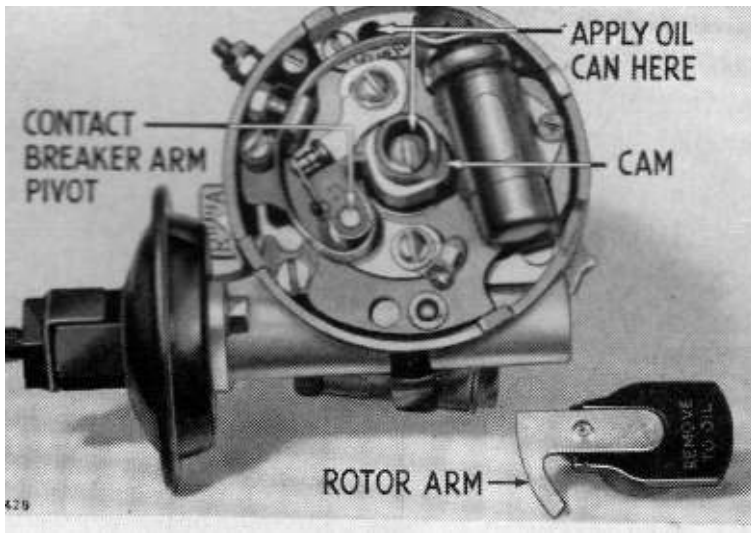


fig. 7.
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Oil Bath Air Cleaner.

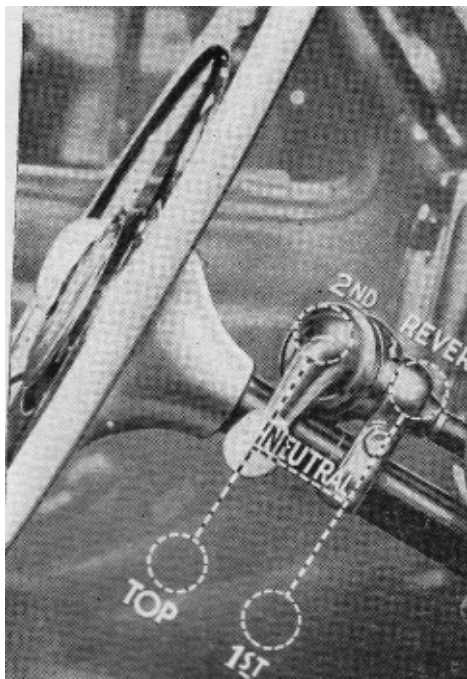
This is the Air cleaner Fitted to all Australian Delivered Vehicles.



Left - This is the vacuum advance fitted distributor that was new for 1949

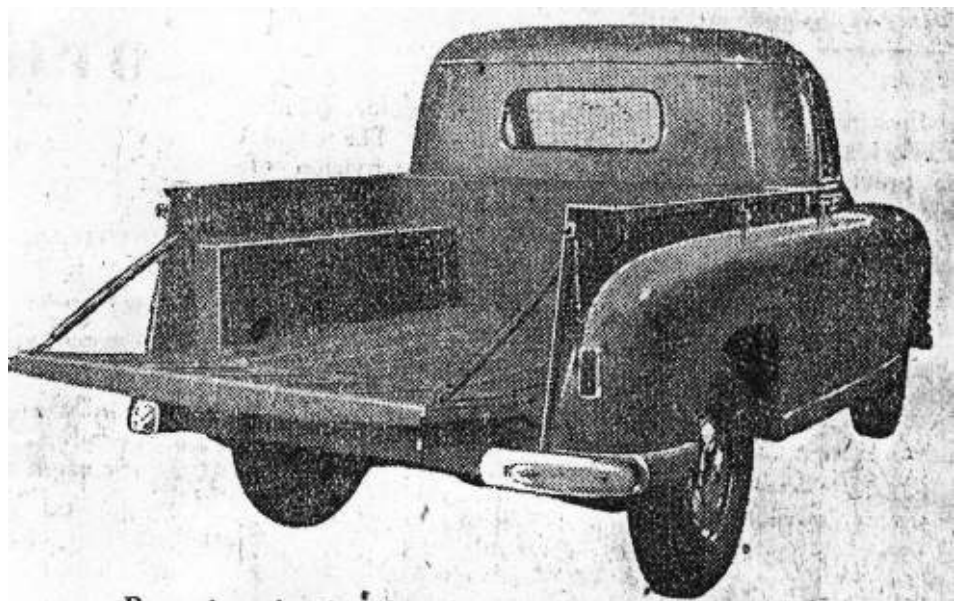


Above - The Combined Regulator/Fuse Box Continued from the 1948 Model



This photo at left shows the unusual right hand gear change that was unchanged in the 1949 models. Also just visible is the door panel cut-out for the pockets.

At right we see the familiar style of the Ute as delivered to Australia. Although there appears to be rear bumperettes fitted I have no evidence of these being on when delivered. Also note the full length wheel arches and although not evident in this photo there was a step at the back to assist passengers.



Chapter 3 1950 Significant Changes

Several significant changes were made for the 1950 model Vanguard. Commission numbers for these vehicles commenced at 51000 and went to approx 64422.

The most easily recognised changes were the addition of rear wheel spats to the saloon and estate car, an attractive bonnet motif, shortened doors to end above the sills and a lock added to the chrome fuel cap. A change to the rear taillight lenses occurred at around Comm. 55193 when the vertical flutes were replaced by a flatter glass with short horizontal ridges probably to improve reflection.

A look inside the vehicles reveals the passing of the right hand gear change mechanism. This feature of early Vandguards is still talked about today and many stories, some not so flattering, are told about the right hand change. The more conventional left hand change was a definite improvement although I must say I didn't find problems with the early ones once they were correctly adjusted and wear in the bushes was addressed.

There seemed to be a progression from cream to grey faced gauges during early 1950 cars together with a change to a grey painted facia. Changes were made to the front seat at Comm. no 51000 when the screw type adjusting mechanism made way for a lever and slide. Seats were now available in leather or vynide only. (No cloth)

Little if anything changed under the bonnet except the remotes for the new gear change mechanism.

Mechanicals remained basically unchanged from 1949.

1950 Vandguards were available as Saloon, Estate Car, Delivery Van or Pickup Utility.

Fortunately some 1950 models have survived.





Chapter 4 1951 Little Changed

1951 Vanguards were little changed from the previous year. Factory manuals show commission numbers ran from approx 64423 to 150000, although I have not seen any beyond the 138000, perhaps there was a gap left to start the significantly different 1952 model at 150000.



The easiest way to pick a 1951 from a 1950 would be the change from a lockable chrome fuel cap to a concealed cap behind a quite large flap in the rear left guard.

Mechanically, 1951 saw the introduction of a flap valve assembly in the exhaust manifold at Comm. 135000. The wisdom of this change has been much debated over the years. The mechanism would certainly assist warm up but if not well maintained could and did lock up. If this occurred when closed the result was greatly reduced performance and eventually could burn a hole in the manifold. It's no secret that preventative maintenance during the Vanguard years was not always in the forefront of many owner's minds, therefore I have seen very few flap mechanisms still operating. Almost all Vanguards operating today have either, by intent or luck, have this valve locked in the open position.

At Comm. No 85001 a changed radiator and consequently thermostat housing and hoses were fitted. The hose was changed to a smaller 1 3/8 inches.



Chapter 5 1952 The 1A



Typical Australian country scene near Melbourne

All that's best from Britain . . .

Revised front and larger rear window were the main changes to what has become known as the Phase 1A Vanguard. Commission Numbers started at 150000.

Larger exhaust valves were fitted at Engine Number 171251E. Very early in production, I think about 250 units into the model, the ratio of the optional Laycock de Normanville overdrive was changed from 3.79:1 to 3.5:1.

It can be immediately seen that the venetian blind looking grille has made way for a more open chrome grille made up of an oval divided by a heavier horizontal bar. Front and rear bumper bars have been changed to a heavier one piece type with overriders front and rear. The actual curve of the front of the bonnet changed to a softer line and a new more graceful motif was fitted.

The rear remained much the same except for the rear bar and the number plate light which was now fitted to the boot lid and shows the Vanguard name. The boot handle has been changed to a twist type.

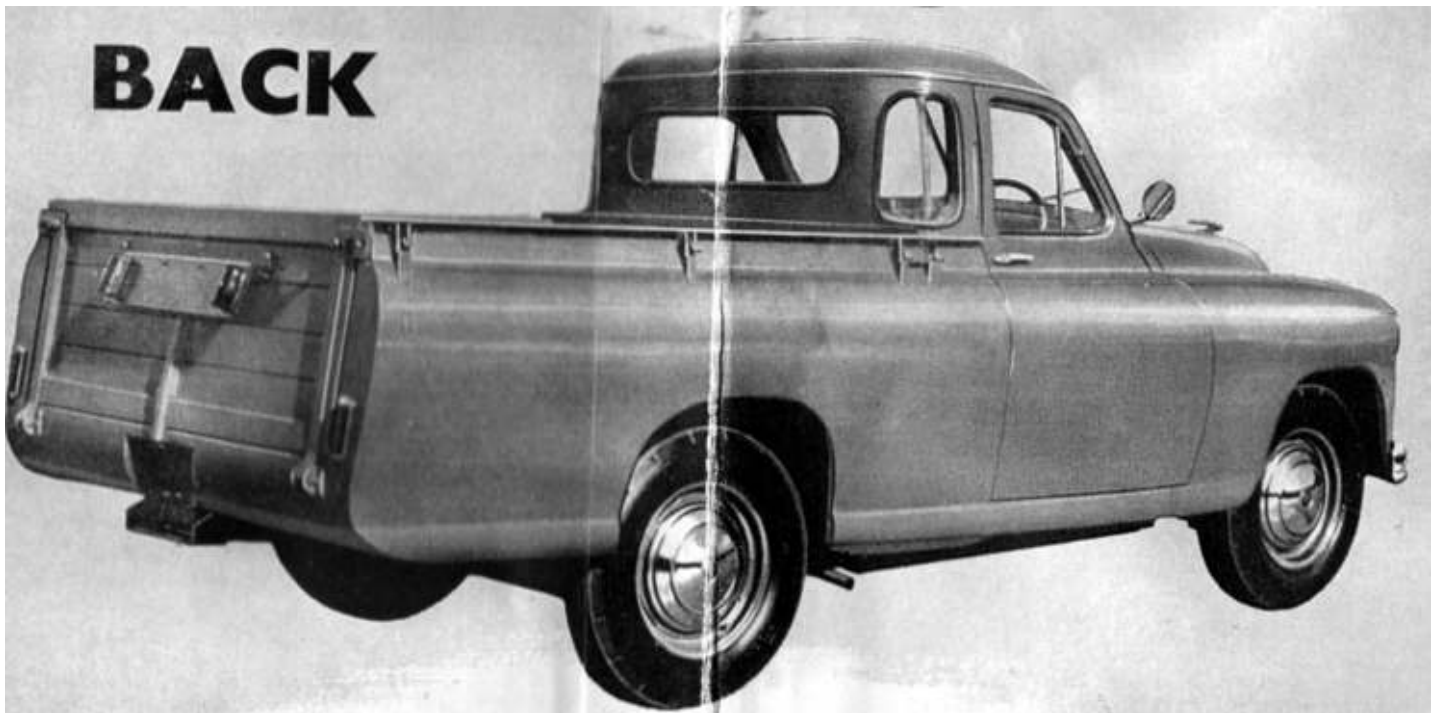
From Comm. No 154325 on a larger rear window was fitted to improve vision.



Here we can see the revised rear end



Other body changes included new push button outer door handles, simplified front arm rests and fixed window winders (no hinged ends).



Some Phase 1A Utes were released with the short streamlined back but most had the larger squarer back similar to later Phase 11's.

There are not that many 1952 Vanguards around today. Queensland member Michael Marsh has a good example of a Ute similar to the one pictured above. There are a couple of saloons in Victoria and I have seen both an Estate and Van.

A 1952 Vanguard was my first car for which I paid 32 pounds 10 shilling in 1963. I hand painted it black and red with a few white highlights. I drove the car very hard as young people tend to do and eventually, when executing a down change at speed on the overhead railway bridge in Wingham, completely wrecked the clutch and even the diff. My brother in law then gave me 10 pounds for it to use as parts in his Vanguard.

Chapter 6 1953 Series 11 New Body Shape



1953 saw the introduction of the Phase 11 known in Australia as the "Spacemaster". Its new body featured a larger boot (now 16 cubic feet), larger front doors giving more room and better access to the front, four sidelights and a much larger rear window.

The grille is two piece not three but extends either side to take in the parking lights. The rear wheels are now only partially covered. The rear end is completely different and features a very attractive

tail light arrangement. To celebrate the greatly increased Australian content, the "Spacemaster" carried the distinctive Kangaroo bonnet motif.

Inside, the car shows some trim differences and the time clock is replaced by an ammeter. The oil pressure gauge has been changed in appearance to match the ammeter.

The chassis has been strengthened by the addition of bracing at the cruciform and gussets at the rear corners. These chassis are stamped E7 and used on all variants Saloon, Estate, Van and Pickup.



Larger 600X16 tyres are fitted to 3 and a half inch rims. The weight of the car increased slightly to 25cwt.



The engine compression increased to 7-1 and the closed crankcase ventilation system was replaced by open to air. The fuel economy was claimed to increase to 26-28 mpg which my experience shows to be quite attainable. A smaller, upright 12 gallon tank was fitted to Saloon only.

The clutch is now operated hydraulically with a combined brake and clutch master cylinder/reservoir still situated in the hard to get at position on the chassis rail.

The optional Laycock de Normanville Overdrive is still manually selected with the gear lever and operates on top gear only. A modified selector and cable is used.

Utes, Vans and Estates were not changed to the new body shape but remained essentially the same as the previous model but shared the mechanical changes and the front end treatment of the new model. Two Vans were offered, the larger more squared version was only built in Australia and carried CC suffix. Comm. numbers started at V200000 and went to about V220900.



Several good examples of 1953 Vandaguards survive in all body configurations

Chapter 7 1954 Introduction of Diesel Power



This photo shows the change to the internal sun visor mounting rod .The curved 1954 version is at the top.

There were only minor changes from 1953 to 1954. Close inspection however, reveals a curve in the mounting rod of the internal sun visors and a newly styled locking handle for front and rear quarter vents. The spare wheel carrier was modified in an attempt to prevent theft. Carpets became an option with rubber mats front and rear as standard and matching rubber was also used for the scuff section on the lower edge of doors.



Different quarter vent locks can be clearly seen here with the 1954 curved version at the bottom.

The optional Laycock de Normanville overdrive now operated on second and top gears and was engaged by an electric solenoid.

1954 Comm. Numbers ran from approx V220901 to V261000.

In March 1954 a diesel was introduced with a highly modified chassis, and minor body changes necessary to accommodate this engine. Diesels were available in all body shapes and were all fully imported. It is thought about 1754 diesels were built and there are two good examples, a ute and an estate car owned by club members.



Left. The 2092cc 40 hp Standard diesel engine.



An unusual starting procedure on diesel engined vehicles used a hand brake lever to engage the starter motor. This can be seen in the picture at left.



The highly modified diesel chassis.

Chapter 8 1955 New Style for Commercials

1955 model Vanguards commenced at around Comm. No V261000 and saloons are extremely difficult to pick from 1954 models. Ring gears were now bolted to the flywheel, oil pressure gauge piping washers were changed, a new distributor was fitted and the starter motor was upgraded resulting in a change to the gear box bell housing. I have seen a couple of two toned vynide interiors in very late "Spacemasters". As I said minor changes indeed, however, this is not so with the Ute as a streamlined Australia only version emerged.

The new Ute was promoted as having "New Style, New Comfort, New Ruggedness". The new ruggedness claim was hard to understand as the full length box section frame, wet sleeve engine, heavy duty suspension and the long wearing ball thrust race hydraulic clutch mentioned were all carry overs from 1954.

"New Styling and New Comfort" however, was quite justifiable with the attractiveness of the newly styled tail end immediately obvious. This new treatment also resulted in extra room in the cargo area. There was improved vision from the full width passenger car rear window. The comfort in the cab was greatly improved with a new seat, fully padded armrests, parcel shelf behind the seat and pockets in both doors.



1956 Vanguard.

Written by Alan McMillan. Photos used are from various sources in his possession

“New Vanguard - A Big Advance. - More Handsome Body - Better Handling and 31 MPG (Hard Driven) make the Phase 111 a winner.

Only the engine and gearbox with minor modifications remain, the rest is completely new.”

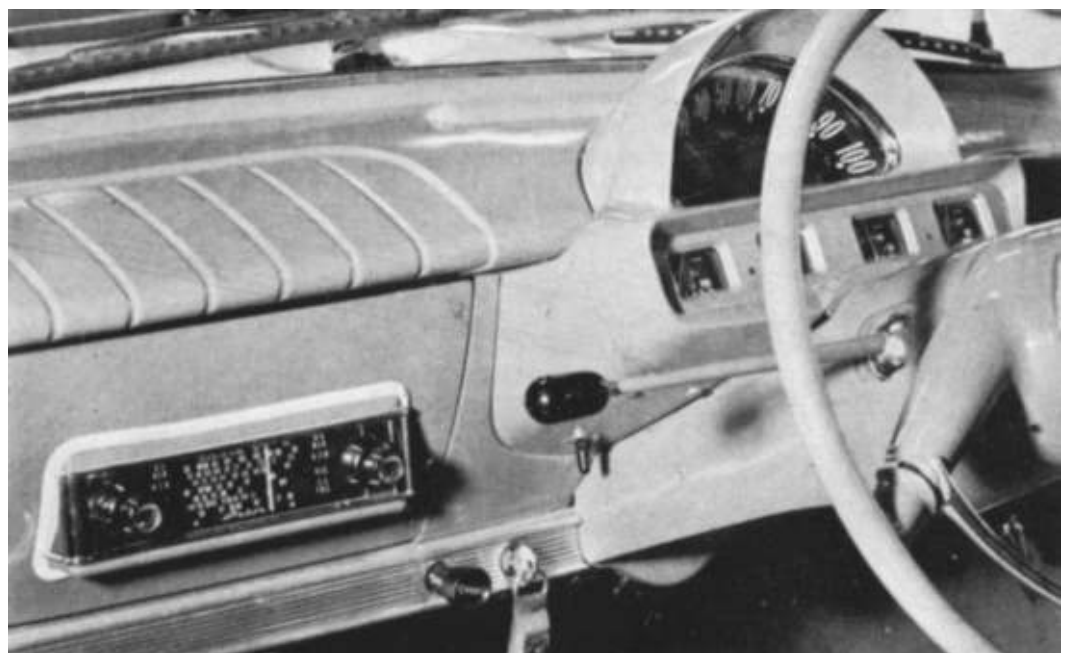
This is how the 1956 Vanguard was announced.

The 56 Vanguard, known to many of us as the Belmouth, had clean, no fuss, very modern styling. The car had so many features and was so well appointed that it was almost in the luxury class compared to its opposition.



The newly styled Vanguard had an eight inch longer wheelbase and was three and a half inches lower than the Phase 11.

The Vanguard was fitted with a fan forced heater/demister, full instrumentation including all gauges and a trip meter, electric windscreen wipers and washers, genuine leather seats with folding armrests, blinking turn indicators and pendant style pedals.



The Vanguard was also a very safe car for its time with superior brakes and handling particularly when cornering and on uneven surfaces.

The excellent all round vision also made the car safer than most.

Power was adequate with a reworked head fitted to the proven wet sleeve block and although horse power was still quoted at 68 BHP and the new body was only 80 kgs lighter, anyone who has driven both would recognise the superior performance of the new model. I understand that 68 horsepower was a nominal figure and has been regularly exceeded in modern dyno tests.



This waterproof test was only one of the many rigorous tests the new Vanguard was subjected to before its release.

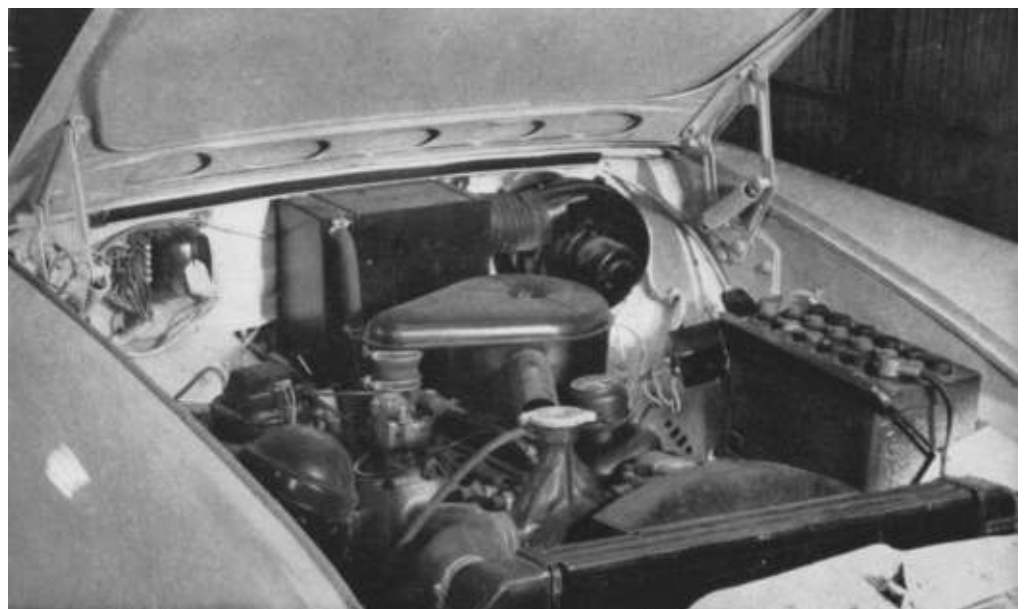


It is just as apparent to modern day owners as it was when released, that the Phase 111 is a lot easier to work on. Checking oil and certainly checking master cylinder fluid became a much simpler task as did more major operations such as removal of engine and gearbox.

The car was still known as the Spacemaster in Australia and was available in a bright new range of colours single, two tone or even triple tone.

Above: Here we see the spacious luggage area free of a spare wheel which is as in the Phase 11 mounted below.

Right: The cleaner more easily accessed engine compartment.



1957 Vanguard.

Written by Alan McMillan. Photos used are from various sources in his possession

The Last of the Spacemasters

The 1957 Vanguard, still known in Australia as the Spacemaster, was obviously a facelift of the previous model and very uniquely Australian. Probably in an effort to match its opposition in bringing out a new model each year the Vanguard in Australia, commenced a pattern of minor changes while waiting for the parent company to make more significant ones.



There are however some very noticeable changes, perhaps the most obvious being the fins on the rear guards, the mesh grille, new stainless steel side strips and the much talked about drop bumper. Changes were also made to the interior with new vinyl covered seats as standard, a crash pad on the dash and newly styled door trims. A whole new range of bright colours became available and there seems to be a dominance of two toned paint schemes. It is rumoured that English officials on a visit to the Australian plant were most unimpressed by the paint schemes and the fins thinking them to be too "American".



Utes in the new Phase 111 style were not yet available so an updated Phase 11 was offered with styling meant to blend in with the saloon, i.e. mesh grille, two tone paint and an interior trim which used the same materials as the saloon.

I have never seen a '56 wagon other than in overseas photos etc. An Australian brochure shows a '57 wagon consistent with the saloon.



1958 Vanguard.

Written by Alan McMillan. Photos used are from various sources in his possession

Introduction of the Vignale

Italian designer Michelotti, who was used by Standard for many major projects, was asked to facelift the Vanguard 111. The result is what became known as the Vignale Vanguard. Vignale was an Italian coachbuilder who made the prototype to Michelotti's design. Incidentally the crossed flags are the merchant marine's signal flags for S and V (Standard and Vignale).



Most noticeable changes were larger front and rear glass, the new front grille and in Australia the stylish star on the bonnet with the emblem in the middle. Actually the emblem was the same as that used in the steering wheel centre. New thick and thin side chrome was used, new colours, almost all two toned (light top and bottom and darker middle). 15 inch wheels were used with new bright trims. Fins were retained together with the large round tail lights. The vertical lights introduced in the English models were not to be seen in Australia until 1960.

Minor changes were also made to the interior: two toned seats and door trims with a speckled effect, padding on the dash in front of the passenger and padding all the way along the bottom of the dash.



Less obvious were the mechanical changes although many are quite significant. A heavier flywheel, aluminium rocker pedestals allowing better retention of valve clearances, increased oil supply to the valve gear, improved induction porting and a more efficient oil filter.

Modifications were also made to the front suspension resulting in about a 2 inch lower ride. Rear shock absorbers were now at an angle. Some say these changes were brought about by the input of Australian drivers' experiences in endurance trials. Bigger brakes were fitted and a Borg Warner Auto was offered as an option. Australian content was now well over sixty percent and the Melbourne factory went to a 24 hour day to keep up with demand.

1958 also saw the introduction of a phase 111 Ute. These seem to have, for a while at least, retained the small windscreen, the mesh grille and the shield on the bonnet. These are a bit of an enigma in that they look like they should be a '57 model but were not released until '58. There are also some anomalies in the wagons at this time.



1959 Vanguard.

Written by Alan McMillan. Photos used are from various sources in his possession

More of the same

I only know a few ways to tell a 1959 Vanguard from the previous model. 1959 Vanguards have the dark colour top and bottom whereas the 1958 has the lighter colour top and bottom. There was also a new range of colours available.

The emblem in the centre of the steering wheel and in the centre of the bonnet star changed from gold to black.



The emblem in the bonnet star of this 1958 model has a gold surround



This picture of a 1959 Vanguard shows the lighter colour in the middle



Even in grayscale this 1958 steering centre can be identified by the gold surround.

1960 Vanguard.

Written by Alan McMillan. Photos used are from various sources in his possession

Mechanically not much changed from 1959.

Noticeable changes for 1960 were the changes made to side and bonnet chrome and new vertical rear lights.

The last of the model before the 6 cylinder cars of 1961 are identifiable by a flush fitting alloy scuttle. The following photos show these changes.



This clearly shows the new "Shepherd Crook" side chrome



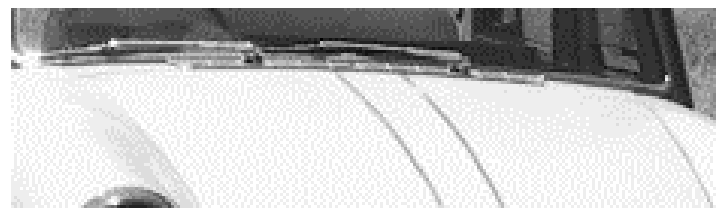
Vertical tail lights replaced the large round ones.



Two chrome strips and the letters V A N G U A R D replaced the star found on previous bonnets.



The raised scuttle found on all but the last of the model



The flush alloy scuttle on the last vehicles in the model

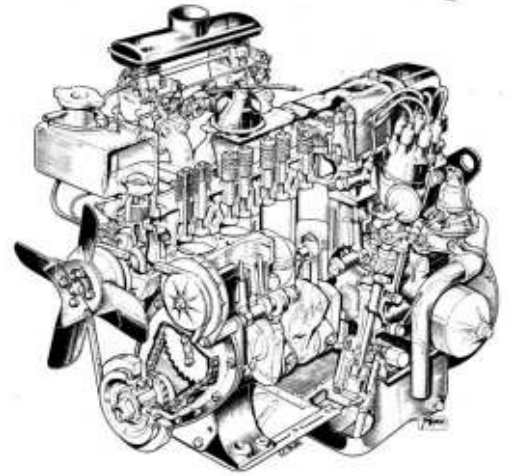
There are a few good examples of 1960 model Vanguards in the club and are well worth preserving as the last model to feature the world renowned ever reliable wet sleeve four cylinder engine.

1961 Vanguard.

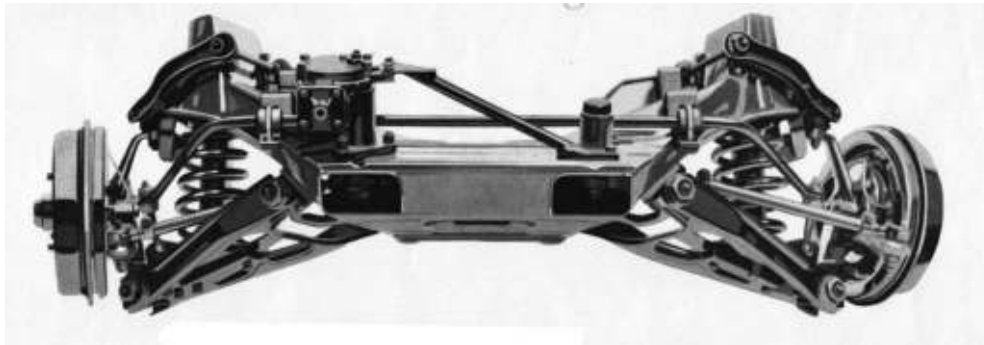
Six Pots for the Vanguard

Written by Alan McMillan. Photos used are from various sources in his possession

1961 saw the introduction of the 6 cylinder engine. Although the capacity dropped from 2088cc in the 4 cylinder to 1998cc, the BHP was up from 68 to 85. Torque was about the same although at higher revs. Surprisingly, the engine was only a couple of inches longer and easily fitted the existing body with only minor changes to the radiator and idler arm support bracket.



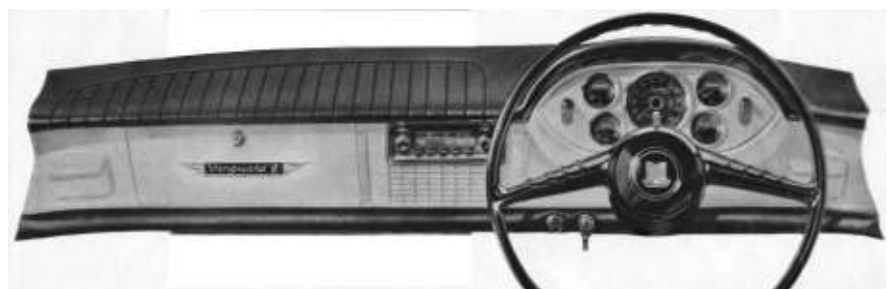
The six cylinder body is almost identical to the 1960 model. Externally there were only badging changes, internally there was a completely new interior. However, in England, a base model and a deluxe were offered with the base model retaining much of the old 4 cylinder interior. Australian models which were completely assembled at AMI, were finished more like the deluxe without the fold down arrests and other minor details.



All sedans and estate cars were fitted with a front antiroll bar (previously an option); this added to the fact that the engine is approx. 25kgs lighter seems to have a significant effect on overall balance and handling of the vehicle. Diff ratios were changed, 3 speed column, 4

speed floor shifts both with electric overdrive as an option and a Borg Warner auto were available. A ute and van were also offered still on the full chassis. Interiors of these commercials were almost the same as passenger vehicles, heavier duty diffs were used and obviously spring rates etc were different. Early into the model the ute rear tail lights were changed from vertical to horizontal resulting in a different rear body side panel.

These cars are still around in numbers. Standard and Triumph Car Club of NSW members have a total of 43, 17 of which are operational and several under restoration. Some Vanguard Sixes are invariably found at club outings. I know there are at least as many operational outside our club. I am not sure how many were sold in Australia but only around 10 thousand were manufactured worldwide which gives a pretty high survival rate.



I have read in several places that the Vanguard Six was never meant to be and was as a stop gap model using the old body with the newly developed engine intended for the Mk1 Triumph 2000 which was experiencing some problems with the rear end. Many of us are very grateful for the delay in sorting out these problems that resulted in another fine Vanguard and eventually a worthy replacement.



1962 Vanguard.

Minor Changes for the '62 Vanguard

Written by Alan McMillan. Photos used are from various sources in his possession

Perhaps the most significant event affecting the Vanguard in 1962 was the decision taken by AMI to distribute Toyota Products in Australia. This decision was to have a profound effect on the Australian Motor industry to this day.

As far as the Vanguard was concerned very few and minor changes occurred.

The grey headlining was changed to white and in mid '62 a spring-loaded boot mechanism was introduced.

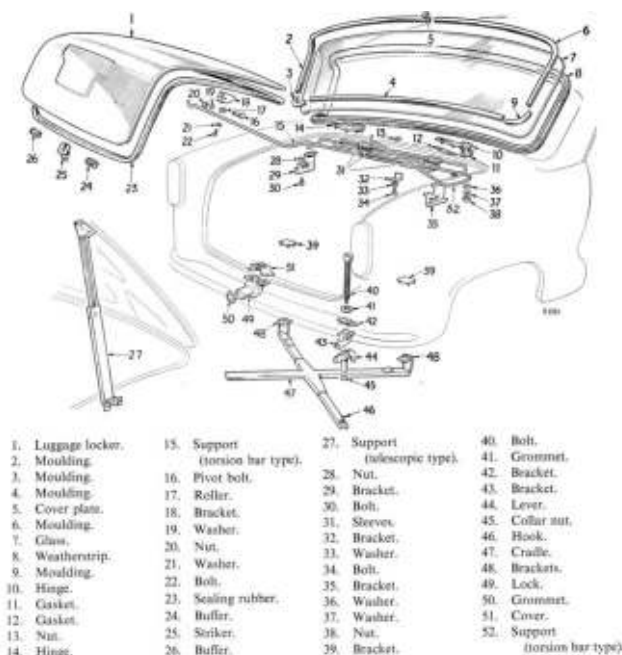
In July the much talked about bowed chrome work appeared. This gave the car a sleeker side on profile. If you are unfamiliar with the concept of high-rise or bowed chrome work on the Vanguard, stand at the side of the car and look at the line of chrome. A gentle rise towards the door handle indicates '62 or later vehicle with high-rise or bowed chrome work. If you can just touch the chrome with your thumb when holding the door handle in the normal position your car has the late bowed or raised chrome work. This difference is particularly easy to spot on estate cars where the higher chrome line runs through the fuel filler flap rather than underneath it.



This 1961 Estate has low side chrome. It can clearly be seen to pass under fuel filler flap.



Chrome on this 1962 Estate is bowed upwards and runs closer to the door handles and through the filler flap.



This diagram shows both methods of boot support. Note items 15 and 27.

1963 Vanguard.

Last of the Vikings

Written by Alan McMillan. Photos used are from various sources in his possession

Although some utes were built in Australia into 1964, for all intents and purposes, 1963 saw the last Vanguard model produced. These vehicles saw minor cosmetic changes. The familiar shepherd's crook side chrome was replaced by a straight side strip running the length of the vehicle, the two bonnet strips were dropped, the letters V A N G U A R D were lowered and spread right across the bonnet and the flags were moved from the rear panel to the front guard. Front and rear bumper overriders were moved further apart. The seats were trimmed in a single colour and in a plainer pattern. The door casings were also heat pressed in a plainer pattern.

All these cars seem to be painted in a single colour rather than two tone. It is also apparent that 4 speed floor change transmissions were more prevalent. For some reason the minor gauges were switched around on the instrument cluster.



This clearly shows the straight chrome, the repositioned flags, the lowered, spread lettering and the more widely spaced overriders of the 1963 model.

Here we have an interior shot of a 1963 Vanguard showing the seat and door trims and the 4 speed floor change. Although not clear from the photograph, the minor gauges are shuffled around from the previous models.



This ends the series on Vanguard Spotting. There are of course many details I have left unsaid. If anyone would like to know more just let me know.