

# Last ever Ford Falcon GT rolls off the Broadmeadows production line

BY: JOSHUA DOWLING NATIONAL MOTORING EDITOR

FROM: HERALD SUN

1 DAY AGO 1 DAY AGO OCTOBER 09, 2014 12:00AM



Memory lane ... a Ford Falcon in 1960. *Source: News Limited*

**THE last ever Ford Falcon GT rolled off the Broadmeadows production line yesterday as more than 600 workers gathered for the emotional send-off.**

It was the end of an era and the beginning of the countdown to Ford's factory closure in October 2016 as production began on the updated Falcon and Territory that will see out Australia's oldest car maker.

Ford will keep building the Falcon sedan and ute — and Territory SUV — for two more years but this is the last Falcon GT of all time.

Car number 500 from a batch of 500 was sold in a charity auction last month for \$236,100 — three times its RRP — to car enthusiast Steven Clarke, from Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs, who briefly owned one of the very first Falcon GT sedans, and has regretted selling it ever since.

**VIDEO: Why Ford's Falcon GT is a legend**

**RELATED: Last Ford Falcon GT Sedans raise \$393,700**

**MORE: Ford unveils last ever Falcon GT Sedan**



Final Ford ... the new owner of the last ever Ford Falcon GT sedan, Steven Clarke. *Source:* Supplied

Ford allowed the winning bidder to select the colour of the final Falcon GT and Mr Clarke chose a one-off “victory gold”, the closest Ford could match to the original 1967 Falcon GT.

In an unprecedented move, Ford also allowed the winning bidder to help build the car from start to finish, including turning the spanners on the supercharged V8 engine in Geelong.

Mr Clarke even stamped his initials on the V8 engine, and fitted some of the parts to the car on the assembly line.

“It’s mixed emotions for me,” said Mr Clarke, who drove the car off the line at Broadmeadows yesterday, but won’t take delivery until next month.



Victory gold ... the last Ford Falcon GT sedan. *Source:* Supplied

“I’m excited to finally see the car, but I’m sad about the end of manufacturing in Australia. I’ve gotten to know a lot of the workers over the past month ... and they’re just a great bunch of people. They really wear their hearts on their sleeves.”

The respect seemed to be mutual: some of the workers asked for Mr Clarke’s autograph. “They’re the heroes as far as I’m concerned, for turning out a truly world class car,” said Mr Clarke. “It’s sad that our country won’t be doing this for much longer.”

Some of Ford’s longest serving factory workers were there for the final Falcon GT send-off.

“I’m really proud,” said Mick Veleviski, a quality supervisor, who started with Ford in 1975.



Ford workers Mick Velevski (left, who has worked for 39 years with Ford) and Boris Grujovski (right, who has been with Ford for 38 years) with the last Falcon GT sedan. Source: Supplied. Source: Supplied

“What the company did today, and got us all together to celebrate this car, is really fantastic,” said the 39-year veteran of the factory floor. “I have friends that work at different manufacturing companies, but we work for the best company.”

Mr Velevski said he wasn’t sure where he will work once Ford closes its factory but said he had “two years to worry about it”. “Right now we are working on the new Falcon and Territory.”

Boris Grujovski, who has been working on the Falcon GT as a team leader for the past two years, is a 38-year veteran of the company, joining Ford just one year after Mr Velevski.

The pair were childhood friends from the same village in Macedonia and moved to Australia as teenagers.



Emotional ... Ford workers at Broadmeadows send off the last ever Falcon GT (left) as the updated Falcon (centre) and Territory (right) go into production ahead of the October 2016 factory closure. *Source: Supplied*

“At Ford we have the skill, the experience, we can do anything,” said Mr Grujovski.

Ford brought production of the Falcon GT in-house at Broadmeadows in February 2013; the final assembly had been outsourced from 1992 to 2012.

It was the first time in 37 years that a Falcon GT had been completed on the Ford production line and many detractors said Ford couldn’t handle the extra complexity.

Yesterday, the detractors were proved wrong as the last car was completed without a hitch.

Meanwhile, Mr Clarke says he has already been offered \$100,000 more than what he paid for the last Falcon GT but “it’s not for sale”.

Unlike many collector cars that get locked away, Mr Clarke says he is going to drive the final Ford Falcon GT and it will appear at car shows, so fans can enjoy it as well.

“It won’t be a daily driver but it’s absolutely not going to be locked away,” said Mr Clarke.

Mr Clarke, 44, owned his first Ford when he was 20 before he upgraded to a restored original Falcon GT, which he bought and sold 10 years ago.

However, Mr Clarke describes himself as a car enthusiast rather than a Ford fanatic. He previously owned a current generation Nissan GT-R, and now has a Toyota LandCruiser as his daily driver.

Mr Clarke said he was prepared to pay up to \$250,000 to secure the final Falcon GT and the last 40 seconds of the online bidding process was “the most nervous I’ve ever been in my life”.

The proceeds went to the National Breast Cancer Foundation. Car 001 of 500 of the last Falcon GT series fetched \$157,600 in the same auction and was bought by a car collector in West Australia.

This reporter is on Twitter: [@JoshuaDowling](#)

**Ford Falcon GT: making them like they used to:**

**XR GT (1967)**

Price: \$3890

Engine: 4.7-litre V8 (168kW)

Bathurst: 1st and 2nd place

596 built



The 1967 Ford XR GT Falcon motor car. *Source: News Limited*

**XT GT (1968)**

Price: \$4050

Engine: 4.9-litre V8 (172kW)

Bathurst: 7th place

1415 built



The 1968 Ford Falcon XT GT. Source: News Limited

**XW GTHO Phase I (1969)**

Price: \$4495

Engine: 5.8-litre V8 (216kW)

Bathurst: 2nd place

260 built



The Ford XW Falcon GTHO in the Bathurst 1000 race at Mount Panorama in 1969. *Source: Supplied*

## **XW GTHO Phase II (1970)**

Price: \$4830

Engine: 5.8-litre V8 (224kW)

Bathurst: 1st and 2nd place

402 built





A 1970 Ford XW Falcon GTHO Phase II (orange) and a 1971 Ford XY Falcon GTHO Phase III (green). *Source: News Corp Australia*

**XY GTHO Phase III (1971)**

Price: \$5250

Engine: 5.8-litre V8 (283kW)

Bathurst: 1st, 2nd, 3rd (1971), 2nd (1972)

300 built



A 1971 Ford XY Falcon GTHO Phase III sedan. *Source:* Supplied

**XA GT (1972 to 1974)**

Price: \$5100

Engine: 5.8-litre V8 (224kW)

Bathurst: 1st (1973 and 1974)

1868 sedans, 891 coupes built



The Ford Falcon XA GT. Source: Supplied

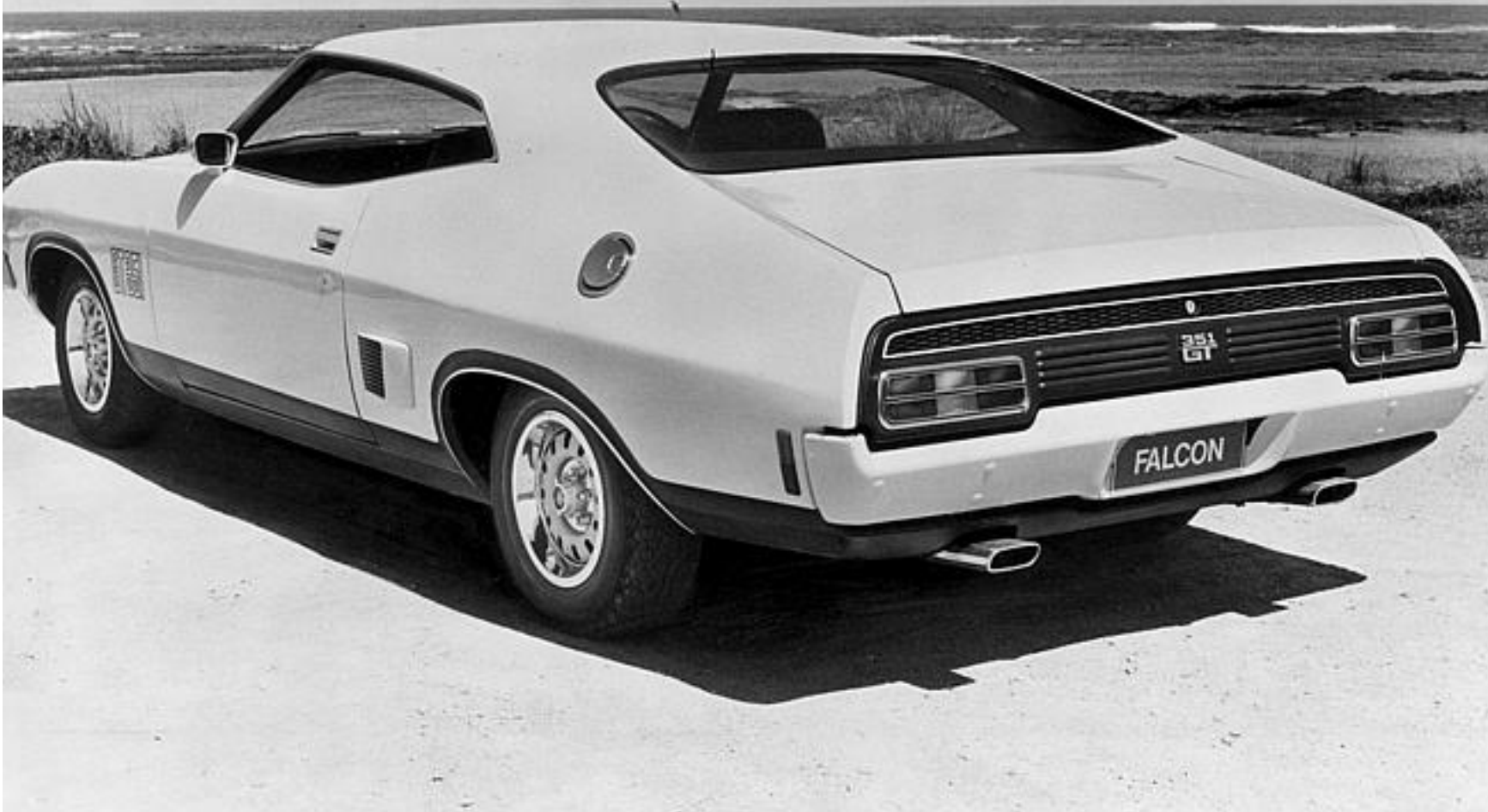
**XB GT (1974 to 1976)**

Price: \$6203

Engine: 5.8-litre V8 (224kW)

Bathurst: DNF (1975), 31st (1976)

1950 sedans, 949 coupes built



The Ford Falcon XB GT. *Source: News Limited*

**Ford Falcon GT (2013)**

Price: \$70,790

Engine: Supercharged 5.0-litre V8 (335kW)

Ford Falcon's most recent Bathurst 1000 victories: 2006, 2007 and 2008.

Approximately 3000 built between October 2010 and December 2012.

Returns to Broadmeadows production line 18 February, 2013.



The last Falcon GT sedan. *Source:* Supplied

**Ford Falcon GT-F (2014)**

Price: \$77,990

Engine: Supercharged 5.0-litre V8 (351kW)

Ford built 500 Falcon GT-F sedans (F for “final edition”) for Australia and 50 for New Zealand. The power was unrated to 351kW, a nod to the engine capacity in cubic inches of the Bathurst winning GTHO of 1970 and 1971. Car 500 of 500 was built at Broadmeadows on 8 October 2014.



The Ford Falcon GTF. Picture: Supplied Source: Supplied

**Did you know ...**

The Ford Falcon GTHO Phase III driven to Bathurst victory in 1971 by Allan Moffat cost \$5250 when new, then a hefty sum. Moffatt told Ford executives at the time “no-one will ever pay that for a Falcon”. Decades later immaculate GTHO Phase IIIs sold for up to \$700,000, although prices have settled back to about half that in recent years. Today, the racing legend says not buying a Phase III GTHO is his biggest regret.

SOURCE: <http://www.news.com.au/finance/business/last-ever-ford-falcon-gt-rolls-off-the-broadmeadows-production-line/story-fnkgdhrc-1227084091538>