



# Bulging collection

A Brisbane muscle-car fanatic is living out a boyhood dream.

Jeff Bloom caught the muscle-car bug early on. One of the country's most avid collectors of performance vehicles, he was fascinated by their power and lurid colours from the age of about four.

"I have an older brother who was a mechanic and he had a very busy workshop in Brisbane hotting up muscle cars," Bloom says. "I just loved the loud colours and the stripes and the big wheels and the sound – everything."

Far from losing his obsession as he grew older, Bloom says he found the attraction became stronger. He now boasts a 102-strong collection of cars that forms the backbone of the Aussie Muscle Car Museum.

Now 43, Bloom says he acquired his first car when he was 15.

"[It] was a very rusty 1970 Holden Torana GTR that we paid \$600 for," he says. "I had all these big intentions of restoring it and turning it into a street machine.

Unfortunately, the car was more rust than metal, so it ended up on the scrap heap and being sold as parts."

Undeterred, Bloom began making

ambitious plans to collect muscle cars. "When I was about 16 I bought a *Street Machine* magazine about an American who had a collection of muscle cars," he says.

"They were all parked in a warehouse side by side in all the different colours and options. They looked absolutely sensational. It really touched a nerve for me and I

*'I just liked certain cars and wanted to own one of each of them.'*

thought, 'Wouldn't it be great if someone did that over here with Australian cars.'

It was some years before Bloom's finances allowed him to get serious about his dream. The first car in his collection was a Ford Capri V8, bought in 1997. This was followed by an array of performance Fords.

"I guess I must have an obsessive-

compulsive side to me because I just kept buying and buying and buying," he says. "I just liked certain cars and wanted to own one of each of them."

While you might think acquiring more than 100 cars would break the bank, Bloom, a business consultant and life coach, says timing helped him stay in the black.

"When I started the collection the cars were very affordable," he says. "I was paying \$5000 for a Falcon GT, \$8000 for an early Monaro and these are cars that are now worth six figures. I couldn't even contemplate doing it today."

While Bloom dreamed of putting together a collection, he hadn't considered having it on public display. The muscle-car museum, opened in 2005, is the result of intense interest from enthusiasts. He now houses his collection in a large chook shed in the Pine Rivers Shire, just north of Brisbane.

"I did it in response to people who knew that the collection was there," Bloom says.

"I had lots of pressure to open up the collection for display. We started



"It's pretty surreal" ...  
Jeff Bloom at his  
museum. Photo: Paul Harris

a website at the same time, called [aussiemusclecarmuseum.com.au](http://aussiemusclecarmuseum.com.au), and we had something like 300,000 or 400,000 hits in the first month. It was just huge."

Five years down the track and with the keys to a massive muscle car armada, Bloom says he still has to

pinch himself. "It's pretty surreal," he says.

"It's definitely my proudest achievement in life. There are times I get really frustrated because there is a lot of work and upkeep involved in keeping them in a presentable condition. But it's a great feeling."