

The TRIUMPH

JUNE 2024

# TRUMPET

The Triumph Car Club of Victoria Magazine



## THE TRIUMPH STAG

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### For the Preservation of the Triumph Marque

The Triumph Car Club of Victoria (TCCV) is a participating member of the Association of Motoring Clubs (AOMC).

The TCCV is an Authorised Club under the VicRoads Club Permit Scheme.

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Design and production of the *Trumpet*:  
Fran Madigan, editor@tccv.net

# THE COVER STORY



*From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

**The Triumph Stag is a 2+2 sports tourer** which was sold between 1970 and 1978 by the British Triumph Motor Company, styled by Italian designer Giovanni Michelotti.

## Design and Styling

Envisioned as a luxury sports car, the Stag was designed to compete directly with the Mercedes-Benz SL class models. All Stags were four-seater convertible coupés, but for structural rigidity – and to meet proposed American rollover standards of the time – the Stag required a B-pillar ‘roll bar’ hoop connected to the windscreen frame by a T-bar. A body-colour removable hard top with defrost wires on the rear window, full headliner and lever operated quarter windows was a popular factory option.

The car started as a styling experiment cut and shaped from a 1963-64 pre-

production 2000 saloon, also styled by Giovanni Michelotti. His agreement was that if Harry Webster, Director of Engineering at Triumph, liked the design, Triumph could use the prototype as the basis for a new model. Webster loved the design and took the prototype back to England. The result, a two-door drophead (convertible), had little in common with the styling of its progenitor 2000, but retained the suspension and drive line. Triumph liked the Michelotti design so much that it propagated the styling lines of the Stag into the new T2000/T2500 Mark II saloon and estate model lines of the 1970s.

Triumph gave new projects four-letter development code names (e.g. ‘Bomb’ for the Spitfire) and the Stag was the only Triumph to take its development code name into production.

**Continued on page 6**



CLUB PERMIT  
**EDITOR**  
VICTORIA



This month we are taking a detailed look at the history and development of the Stag – and some of its rare variations. We have quite a few Stag owners in the TCCV, so if any of you have a story to tell about your pride and joy – or any other Triumph model – let me know.

Thanks to Jerome Mailer for his guidance on how to produce an armrest for a Stag – a great project for these colder months.

Following on from our coverage of the Triumph Mayflower in the May edition of the *Trumpet*, Roger McCowan has shared the story of his Mayflower. Let Roger know if you have any tips for releasing the nuts at the gearbox end of the engine!

On the first day of winter there was a TCCV breakfast in the west in Newport. Sounds like a very enjoyable day. Thanks to Nick Skinner for writing about it and to Alan Andrews for the photographs.

At the May general meeting, a Safety Alert about working under vehicles was distributed. It's included in this edition

of the *Trumpet* as a reminder to take appropriate care when you are working on your cars.

Thanks again to our Webmaster Alan for his report. Magazines from other car clubs are well worth a read.

Western Washington  
All British  
Field Meet

July 13, 2024  
10 am - 4 pm  
St. Edward State Park  
144 G. Asanda Drive NE, Kenmore WA

**Brits on the Green**

Celebrating 100 Years of Triumph Cars

Commemorating the Contributions of Guy Boswell

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Alan also found this event which is happening in the US in July. So, if you happen to be anywhere near Kenmore in King County, Washington, on 13 July this is the place to be!

And don't forget to send in any articles – or suggestions for things we should cover – for future *Trumpet* editions.

In the meantime, travel safely on these wintry days and keep warm!

**COPY DEADLINE**  
**ANY TIME IS GOOD!**

Or, if it is for the next edition, please submit copy/photographs by the last Friday of the month.

Please forward to [editor@tccv.net](mailto:editor@tccv.net) or contact Fran Madigan on 0403 133 063



## WHAT'S AROUND THE CORNER?



### TCCV general meetings:

7.30pm on the third Wednesday of the month at the Manningham Hotel & Club, 1 Thompsons Road, Bulleen VIC 3105

**Register** on the TCCV website **by midnight the day before** the meeting.

**More information, flyers and booking/ registration details for these and later events** **CLICK ON Event.**

**JUN. 19 / TCCV – General Meeting**

**JUL. 14 / Coffee & Cars**

Dust off your classic and head up the hills to Gembrook. Local coffee, cafes, bakery & the motoring museum 'The Motorist'. 77 Main Street, Gembrook. 7am-11am, every second Sunday every month.

**JUL. 17 / TCCV – General Meeting**

**JUL. 21 / 2024 President's Luncheon & Christmas in July**

This year we are combining our 'Presidents Luncheon' with our 'Christmas in July' events.

Meet at the Mobil Service Centre West Bound, 6511 Western Highway, Ballan. There are two service stations opposite each other.

Arrive at 11am for an 11.30am departure for the Wallace Hotel, 741 Bungaree-Wallace Road, Wallace, VIC 3352, less than 20km away.

Booking made for 60 people for midday. Order at the bar and pay. TCCV subsidy \$15pp. Register on the TCCV Website.

**AUG. 11 / Coffee & Cars**

**AUG. 18 / All Triumph Challenge**

Winter at Winton also incorporating the TSOA Challenge. First 20 Triumph entries will be in the Triumph Challenge group. Register on

the Marque Sports Car Association of Victoria website ([www.msca.net.au](http://www.msca.net.au)). Venue: Winton Motor Raceway, 41 Fox Street, Winton, VIC 3673.

**AUG. 21 / TCCV – Annual General Meeting**

**AUG. 31 / TCCV: UK Tour 2024**

**Booking cut off date: 31 August 2024 at 8pm.**

**SEP. 8 / Coffee & Cars**

**SEP. 11 / TCCV: 2024 September Midweek Meandering**

Meet at the NE corner of the Brandon Park Shopping Centre carpark (adjacent to Brandon Drive) at 9.30am for an Observation Run/ Scavenger Hunt. Lunch at the Paradise Valley Hotel, Clematis. Maximum 15 cars, so register early to guarantee a start.

**SEP. 18 / TCCV – General Meeting**

**OCT. 13 / Coffee & Cars**

**OCT. 16 / TCCV – General Meeting**

**OCT. 17-21 / ACT, SOCSA, TCCV: Joint Event**

Annual ACTTCC, SA Stag Owners & TCCV event. Destination Jindabyne. TCCV convoy details TBA.

**NOV. 3 / 2024 Point Nepean Heritage Motor Show**

Presented by the Rotary Club of Sorrento at the Point Nepean Quarantine Station. Entries open in June.

**NOV. 10 / Coffee & Cars**

**NOV. 20 / TCCV – General Meeting**

**DEC. 8 / TCCV – Christmas Party**

Venue TBA.

**Events Coordinator:** Peter Welten

**m** 0409 511 002 **email** [events@tccv.net](mailto:events@tccv.net)

**or** [ann.welten@bigpond.com](mailto:ann.welten@bigpond.com)

**For the most up-to-date and complete calendar for the year.**

TCCV events are labelled with 'TCCV'.



## TCCV Presidential Backfire

By Pete Byrnes, TCCV member #830



Here we are in June and suddenly it's winter again. It seems like only a few weeks since those balmy days of summer. We all need a decent heater in the garage while doing all those

necessary repairs and unnecessary embellishments to our cars.

We had a very interesting and informative presentation at the May general meeting by our fellow member Nik Hadaway who gave a very comprehensive explanation of the metallurgy and manufacturing processes behind all the bolts and fasteners used in our cars. I think the most essential takeaway was to be very careful where you buy your bolts for all those critical applications – there's a reason the bolts at certain retail outlets are cheap. Information supplied by Nik is on the website for those who missed the meeting.

It's fairly quiet on the club events front this month, apart from Coffee and Cars and the June meeting. I encourage all members to register their attendance for the combined President's Lunch and Christmas in July event at the Wallace Hotel at Wallace on Sunday 21 July. Lunch is subsidised by the club (\$15 subsidy) and details are on the TCCV website.

Like most members I really like a wide range of older classic cars, and there are dozens of them I'd dearly love to have in the stable, but alas, cashflow and space dictate the limit on how many I can buy (or hide). Well, that and the fact

that Janet would probably banish me to the shed. I've been watching auction results and sale prices for many of our precious classics (and other marques) over the last 12 months or so, and while I think prices for the upper end seem to have fallen off from the heady days of a few years ago, a lot of the lower end cars have continued to rise. It's also clear to see in looking at some of the more crusty, rusty examples of Ford/Holden/Valiant, some of which were advertised at breathtaking prices over \$50k based on a badge, that many are now back to where they arguably should be in the \$-teens, seemingly due to people coming to the harsh realisation of what it actually costs – and how long it takes – to fully restore a car, particularly one which is rusty and missing critical bits.

As my two-year term as President comes to an end at the August AGM, along with all committee positions being declared vacant, it's timely to ask members to consider nominating for the President or a Committee position, or to offer their assistance as a volunteer. It's good to rotate the responsibilities to keep things fresh and introduce new thinking, and it helps to lighten the load of some on the committee who are often tasked with the heavy lifting, but who always rise to the challenge. We are fortunate that we have always had a number of the latter members on the committee, and we should support the incoming committee with a good supply of backup and volunteers.

As always, I look forward to seeing you on the road, and please drive safely.

Best regards.

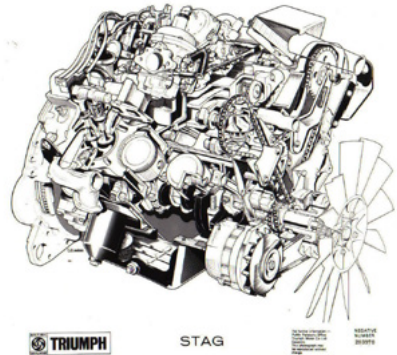


*Continued from page 2*

## Engineering

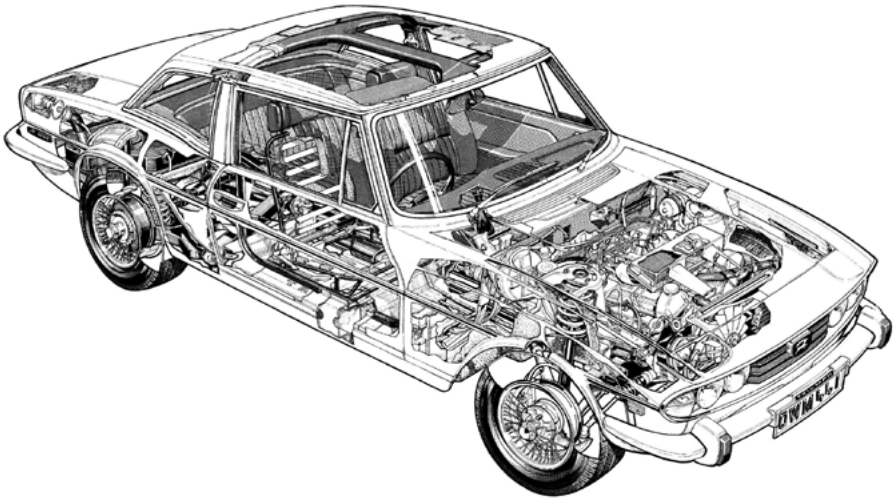
The initial Stag design used the saloon's 2.0-litre six-cylinder engine which was intended to be upgraded to 2.5-litres for production cars, but Webster intended the Stag, large saloons and estate cars to use a new Triumph-designed overhead cam (OHC) 2.5-litre fuel injected (PI) V8. In 1968, under the direction of Engineering Director Harry Webster and his successor as Chief Engineer, Spen King, the new 2.5 PI V8 was enlarged to 2,997 cc (3 L; 183 cu in) to increase the power available. To meet emission standards in the US, a key target market, the troublesome mechanical fuel injection was dropped in favour of dual Zenith-Stromberg 175 CDSE carburetors. In common with several other manufacturers, a key aim of Triumph's engineering strategy at the time was to create a family of in-line and V engines of different sizes around a common crankshaft. The various configurations Triumph envisaged would enable the production of four, six and eight-cylinder power plants of capacity between 1.5 and 4 litres, sharing many parts, and hence offering economies of manufacturing scale and

of mechanic training. A number of iterations of Triumph's design went into production, notably a 2.0-litre slant four-cylinder engine used in the later Dolomite and TR7, and a variant manufactured by StanPart that was initially used in the Saab 99. In 1968 the Saab variant became the first of these engines to be fitted to a production car, followed by the Stag V8 in 1970. Sometimes described as two four-cylinder engines siamesed together, it is more strictly correct to say the four-cylinder versions were the left half of a Stag engine.



It has sometimes been alleged Triumph was instructed to use the all-aluminium Rover V8, originally designed by Buick and under development by Rover at the time, but claimed it would not "fit". Installation testing of both the Triumph V8 and the Rover V8 was carried out in May/June 1967, the conclusion being that the engine was too tall and that front structure changes would be necessary. It was decided not to further hold up Stag development and to proceed with the Triumph V8 unit. Although later enthusiasts have shown that it can be made to fit the space, the decision to go with the Triumph V8 was probably more due to the Buick's





lack of British sales experience, the fact that there was not a manual gearbox offered by Rover at the time, and that the different torque characteristics and weight would have entailed substantial re-engineering of the Stag when it was already behind schedule. Such a substitution would also have required a rethinking of the wider engineering strategy, both of which were important “fit” considerations beyond the comparatively trivial matter of the relative dimensions of the two engines. Furthermore, Rover, also owned by Leyland Motor Corporation at the time, could not necessarily have supplied the numbers of V8 engines required to match the anticipated production of the Stag.

As in the 2000 model line, unitary construction was employed, as was fully independent suspension: MacPherson struts in front, semi-trailing arms at the rear. Braking was by front disc and rear drum brakes, while steering was power-assisted rack and pinion.

## Production

The car was launched nearly two years late in June 1970, to a warm welcome at the international auto shows. In the UK the Stag was an immediate success for Triumph with a 12-month waiting list rapidly being established and cars changing hands at well above list price. But when it was released into the US, its main target market, it rapidly acquired a reputation for mechanical unreliability, usually in the form of overheating. These problems arose from a variety of causes.

First, the collaboration with Saab on the related slant 4 engine gave rise to design features being carried over to the V8, some of them questionable from an engineering perspective. For example, because the Saab 99 placed the engine back to front in the engine bay, the traditional mounting of the water pump on the front face was not possible. The answer for the Saab engine was to place the water pump within the top of the engine block,



which is a higher position than is usual. Due to the use of a common machining line for both the slant 4 and the V8, this positioning was copied to the V8 and led to a situation where, if the engine became hot in traffic and coolant escaped from the cooling system via the expansion bottle, the volume of fluid left when the engine cooled down again fell. If this was not noticed and it continued to occur, it would eventually fall below the level of the pump, which would fail to circulate the coolant and overheating would result. Water pump failures sometimes occurred due to poorly hardened drive gears, which wore out prematurely and stopped the water pump. Once this key component of the cooling system had failed, overheating ensued.

A second cause of engine trouble was the lack of attention to corrosion inhibitor in the coolant. The block was made from iron and the heads from aluminium, a combination that required the use of corrosion-inhibiting antifreeze all year round. This point was not widely appreciated by owners or by the dealer network supporting them. Consequently, engines were affected by electrolytic corrosion, and white alloy

oxide sludge collected in radiator cores, reducing radiator efficiency and again causing overheating. The result was head gasket failure due to cylinder head heat distortion, a very expensive repair. Owners would usually get their repaired cars back with the radiator still clogged, leading to repeat failures.

A third cause of trouble was the engine's use of long, simplex roller link chains, which would first stretch and then often fail inside fewer than 25,000 miles (40,200 km), resulting in expensive damage. Even before failing, a stretched timing chain would skip links and cause valves to lift and fall in the wrong sequence, so that valves hit pistons and damaged both. This fault may have been worsened by poor quality chains.

Another problem with the cylinder heads was said to be the arrangement of cylinder head fixing studs, half of which were vertical and the other half of which were at an angle. Anecdotally, this arrangement was used to reduce production costs, as the cylinder head mounting studs and bolt were all accessible with the rocker covers fitted, allowing the factory to assemble the cylinder head completely before fitting to the engine. This arrangement worked well enough on the 4-cylinder engines, but in the V8 the angled and vertical studs, when heated and cooled, expanded and contracted in different directions sufficiently to give rise to sideways forces that caused warping of the engine block. The problem was made worse by the engine's propensity to overheat.

Finally, although pre-production engines were built meticulously, those fitted to production cars were

not subject to the same careful quality control. Engines are still being discovered with casting sand and core wire inside, blocking the coolant passages and causing overheating.

This combination of manufacturing and maintenance flaws led to some engine failures in the UK but in the US the situation was exacerbated by the need to fit low compression pistons to comply with California's low octane petrol requirements, and the associated advance in ignition timing to meet that country's continually changing emission regulations. The result was that the engine developed greater heat and, when automatic transmission and air conditioning were fitted, the engine cooling ability was overly compromised. Although US cars were fitted with engine cowls to try to compensate, all too often the result of a freeway tailback

was an overheating engine. *Time* magazine rated the Triumph Stag as one of the 50 worst cars ever made.

British Leyland never materially re-engineered the Triumph 3.0 litre OHC V8 to address these issues, other than introducing a domed piston to aid combustion and a high-pressure cooling system that boiled over at a higher temperature. Another problem was that the Stag was always a relatively rare car. British Leyland had around 2,500 UK dealers when the Stag was on sale and a total of around 19,000 were sold in the UK over seven years. Thus the average dealer sold only seven or eight Stags during the car's production run, or roughly one car per year. This meant that few dealers saw defective Stags often enough to recognise and diagnose the cause of the various problems.



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A number of owners replaced the troublesome engine with units from other cars, such as the Rover V8, or the Triumph 2.5-litre engine around which the Stag was originally designed. The number of such conversions undertaken is not known, but as at July 2017, 91% of Stags known to DVLA had a 3-litre engine, according to [www.howmanyleft.com](http://www.howmanyleft.com). It is not clear how many of these are original Stag engines and how many are Ford 3-litre Essex units. The once-popular Rover V8 conversion powers fewer than 5% of surviving Stags and it is thought by the relevant owners club that the Ford engine figures are much lower than this.

The last production Stag (BOL88V) is kept at the Heritage Motor Centre, Warwickshire.

### **Mark I and Mark II variants**

Perhaps because the American market never took to the Stag, only 25,877 cars were produced between 1970 and 1977. Of this number, 6,780 were export models, of which 2,871 went to the US. As the Stag was originally destined for large sales in the US, Triumph utilised the 'model year' method of altering specification details, with each new model year bringing cosmetic changes. For the 1973 model year a number of engineering changes were also made and, although Triumph only ever referred to Stag as one model, since production ceased, enthusiasts have introduced the terms 'Mk 1' and 'Mk 2' to refer to cars produced before and after the 1973 model year change. Model year batches or 'sanctions' are generally identified through differing production numbering sequences, thus, as the first 1973 model year car was

chassis numbered 20001, those cars with chassis numbers before 20001 are often referred to as Mk 1 cars and those cars with chassis numbers after 20001 are often referred to as Mk 2 cars.

When introduced in 1973, the most notable differentiating feature between Mark 1 and Mark 2 Stags was the addition of twin coachlines to the body. At this time the sills and tail panel colour was also altered from body colour to low-gloss black but as the tail panel was altered back again for the 1976 model year, it is not an ideal indicator of the difference between Mk 1 and Mk 2 cars. Inside, Mk 2 cars had a slightly different warning light cluster and the instrument dial needles point up rather than down. They also had a single courtesy light in the T-bar rather than lights at the top of each B-post, the steering wheel was smaller, the seats were upholstered in a different way such that it was possible to fit a simple head restraint (which was initially an optional extra but became a standard fitment later on) and the map-reading light was deleted from the door of the glove box and replaced with an internal light. Very early production cars had a three-quarter window in the soft top, which was deleted during the 1972 model year as it tended to become trapped and then split when stowed. A higher-pressure cooling system was introduced during the 1972 model year. For the 1976 model year the cars returned to having body-colour sills and tail panel, but a stainless steel sill cover, as fitted to all US Stags, was fitted over the sills for all 1976 and 1977 cars. Late Stags fitted with the slightly longer BW65 automatic transmission had a correspondingly shorter propshaft to compensate.



Cars for export markets such as the US comprised unique combinations of features specifically required for compliance with various states' requirements, or simply for marketing purposes. Cars factory-designated as "Federal specification" included features such as side impact bars in the doors, Federal Department of Transportation compliant lighting, and anti-smog emissions equipment which was not generally found on vehicles for other markets.

Approximately half of the cars built were fitted with a Borg-Warner Type 35 3-speed automatic transmission which, on the last 3,800 vehicles produced, gave way to a Type 65. The other choice was a derivative of the ancient Triumph TR2 manual gearbox which had been modified and improved over the years for use in the TR4/A/IRS/TR5/250/6. The first gear ratio was raised and needle roller bearings were used in place of the bronze bushings on the layshaft. Early 4-speed manual transmission models could be ordered with an A-type Laycock overdrive unit and later ones frequently came with a J-type Laycock unit. The overdrive option was often chosen as the engine RPM drops significantly with this option in 3rd and 4th (top) gears, and it was included as a standard fitment for all manual cars from 1973.

Other than the choice of transmissions, there were very few factory-installed options. On early cars, buyers could choose to have the car fitted with just the soft-top, just the hard-top (with the hood stowage compartment empty), or with both. Later cars were supplied as either a 'soft-top model' or with both roofs as a 'hard and soft-top model'.

Three wheel styles were offered. The standard fitment for non US-bound cars from 1970 to 1975 was steel wheels with Rostyle "tin-plate" trims. The wheels are secured with the usual four bolts, but the Rostyle trims have five false bolts. Standard fitment for the US for 1971 and 1972 model years was a 72-spoke wire spoke wheel which was specially designed for Stag. These were possibly available as factory fitments for other markets. For the 1973 model year in the US, five-spoke alloy wheels became the standard fitment and these were also available for other markets. For the 1976 model year, cars for all markets had the alloy wheels fitted as standard.

Electric windows, power steering and power-assisted brakes were standard with Delaney Galley air conditioning being a factory-fitted option. A range of aftermarket products including a luggage rack, uprated Koni shock absorbers, floor mats, and Lucas Square Eight fog lamps were available as dealer-installed optional accessories. Part numbers were allocated for leather upholstery but its actual existence is doubtful as it was not included in either the sales brochures or the price lists and no surviving car is known to have original factory leather. Rather unusually for a 4-seat touring car, the parts catalogue included a sump protector plate that was never produced. This was probably included as a slightly "gimmicky" tribute to Triumph's rallying successes.

## Replacement

The Stag was never directly replaced. British Leyland planned an equivalent model to follow the Stag in the form of a derivative of the Triumph TR7 sports

car which was codenamed the Lynx. The Lynx used the TR7 platform with an extra 12 inches in the wheelbase to accommodate a rear seat and had fastback coupé bodywork. Power came from a 3.5-litre Rover V8 and the gearbox and rear axle were lifted from the Rover SD1. The Lynx was very close to production being scheduled for launch in 1978. However the sudden closure of the Triumph factory in Speke, Liverpool, where the car was to be built and new policies implemented by BL's new chief executive, Michael Edwardes, led to the Lynx's cancellation.

### Unmade variants

Triumph planned a coupé version of the Stag to complement the open-top tourer, in the same manner as the smaller GT6 coupé was based on the Spitfire. In 1968, Michelotti converted his original 1966 styling concept Stag into his idea of a coupé version and, following further deliberations at Triumph, he was sent a prototype body shell for an 'improved' version to be manufactured. This second car took very clear styling cues from the GT6, including the shape of the rear windows and roofline and the provision of air vent 'gills' in the C-pillar. In 1970/71, Triumph built a one-off 'production' Stag coupé, called the Fastback, to Michelotti's design with minor detail differences to match the production Stag more closely. Although the design was considered successful and "more useful than an ordinary Stag", British Leyland did not continue with the project, reportedly because it feared the Stag fastback would take sales from other actual and planned vehicles in the BL range. The Triumph-built prototype survives. (see page 14)

A number of Stags were built with four-wheel drive using the Ferguson Formula developed by Ferguson Research and pioneered on the Jensen FF. One Stag was reportedly fitted with the FF system by Triumph itself during development, but was either scrapped or converted back to standard specification. Two more 4WD Stags were built in 1972 by FF Developments, a company separate from Ferguson that had licensed the technology for converting existing road cars. The cars (one with manual transmission, one with automatic) were commissioned by GKN for development and testing work. Both had automatic locking differentials actuated by a viscous coupling and the same Dunlop Maxaret mechanical anti-lock braking system as used in the Jensen. The cars differed visually from standard by having a broad bulge in the centre of the bonnet; the engine had to be mounted slightly higher in the engine bay to accommodate the drive to the front wheels. Both these cars survive.

A lightweight Stag was tested which was essentially a standard Stag with most of the sound-deadening material removed. This did not proceed. A 32-valve Stag V8 engine was considered, but no documentary or other trace of any actual engine having been built has come to light. Any such engine could not have used two Dolomite Sprint 16-valve heads because it would have required mirror-image heads on opposite sides. Otherwise, the second camshaft, above the opposite bank of cylinders, would have emerged at the wrong end of the engine.

FF Developments also converted a number of Triumph 2000s (saloons and estates) to 4WD, including at least one

'Triumph 3000 estate' which received a Stag engine and gearbox as well as the Ferguson 4WD drivetrain.

### Classic status

Approximately 1,100 Stags are known to have survived in Australia out of the 1,596 originally exported. Most are club registered in their respective states.

Some Stags in Australia and New Zealand have been fitted with the 4.4 Rover V8 made for the Leyland P76.







## The Last Surviving Triumph Stag Fastback Prototype

*Original article from Silodrome Gasoline Culture, by Ben Branch*

This is a Triumph Stag fastback prototype and if you've never seen one before it's likely because just three were made, the variant never made it into full production, and this is the only surviving example.

In the late 1960s a Triumph Stag bodyshell had been sent to Michelotti in Turin so that he could design a fastback roof for it, have it fabricated and fitted, and then send the car back to Triumph in England.

Three cars were partially built before the project was officially nixed by

parent company British Leyland, who felt that the Triumph Stag Fastback might cannibalise sales from the upcoming Jaguar XJS model.

Two of the prototypes were scrapped but for reasons unknown the car you see here was saved. It was kept at the factory and slowly assembled over time into a fully equipped Stag. Once completed it was kept by one of British Leyland's directors for his own personal use, and registered for the road.

Many years later the almost mythical Stag Fastback was found by enthusiast and collector Alan Hart who organised for it to have a full restoration, after which it was displayed at the 1989 NEC Classic Car Show.







## Stag Estate?

*Excerpt from Classics, 2019*

*Words by Simon Goldsworthy*

*Photography by Jonathan Jacob*

Let's start our story with the car. To the casual observer, this simply looks like a very nice example of a Mk2 Triumph 2.5PI estate. However, as soon as you hear the engine running, the distinctive exhaust note tells you there is a Triumph V8 under the bonnet rather than the standard-fit straight six. That is not unheard of these days as a number of enterprising owners have given their cars engine transplants, but this one is a little different.

The man behind it was Ian Lines, always known as Del, who ran Atlantic Garages in Weston-Super-Mare, England. In 1973 Del started to buy new 2000/2500

shells from Leyland, fit them with factory-returned Stag engines that were rebuilt either by Richard Longman or Downton Tuning, complete the cars with a mixture of new and secondhand trim then knock them out as new cars, registered under Atlantic Garages chassis numbers.

After a while, Leyland got the hump because Del was marketing his cars as Stag Estates. They refused to sell him any more bodyshells, so Del then started converting customer cars instead. Del never was one for accurate records, but we think there were about 26 new saloons and estates, and maybe another 40 or 50 conversions on customer cars.

"How Del did it I don't know, but all the cars were registered as Triumph



Stag Estates or Stag Saloons,” says Alan Chatterton, owner of DEL 33 (now LYB 864K) and former chairman of the 2000/2500/2.5PI Register. “Because this was the first conversion, it doesn’t have an Atlantic Garages chassis number and still carries the original Triumph one for a white 2.5PI estate, but the logbook was changed at the time and it was

registered as a Stag Estate. I have had criticism for calling it a Stag, but that was how it was sold and marketed, that is what it says on the logbook, and it has Stag badges all over it.” Fair enough.

And since this is one of four known survivors, it is important that this heritage is honoured.



## Making an armrest for a Stag

*By Jerome Maller, TCCV member #990*

When I first took ownership of my Stag, I felt that going for a leisurely cruise would likely be more comfortable with the addition of an armrest. Ah, the feeling of the elbow and forearm resting softly on a cushion with the left hand resting lightly on the t-bar. So, I went about building one. My first design used metal cases from an old computer CD-ROM for the front and back components of the armrest (using metal snips to cut the sizes, then some pliers to form the shapes), and some pieces of cardboard with a piece of plastic from the lid of a storage container to add firmness. On top I added a thick layer of sponge. Then I wrapped it with faux leather offcuts and screwed it all together. The armrest simply slides in between the two front seats. Very comfortable! However, it was big and accessing the seat belt buckle required me to lift the armrest out each time.

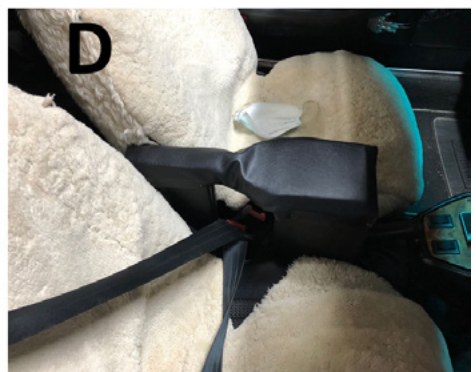
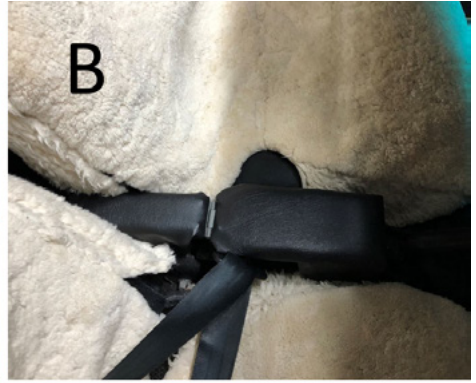
So, I redesigned it to have a front piece that raised like a drawbridge. I started with a piece of plywood about one metre long and cut it into various sizes and shapes to replicate the length, width and height of the first armrest. But this time I made it with a hinge at the point where it would need to raise. Using the remains of the CD-ROM casing, I cut out small angle brackets and screwed them in place to hold the wood pieces together. Specifically, eight corner angle brackets, each held in place by 2 x 1/8" x 12mm countersunk screws (with washers and nuts). The two top pieces of wood are held together by

a 50mm hinge. Using some old-school metal files, I smoothed out the corners of each piece of wood, and steeply filed away the ends of the top pieces of wood where the hinge would be placed so that it could be lifted fully without rubbing once completed. I then went to Spotlight and bought one metre of black Zephyr vinyl which looks very similar to the original hood stowage cover vinyl in the Stag. I placed two layers of cardboard on the top pieces of wood, followed by a piece of foam, and then wrapped them in the Zephyr vinyl (from the many videos I watched on the Internet, this seemed to be a common technique for making armrests). However, it was prone to sagging where the hinge was positioned – I showed a picture of this in the October 2021 issue of the Trumpet.

My third (final?) attempt allowed plenty of access to the belt buckle and had no sagginess. This is how I built it:

First, I bought a piece of 10mm plywood and 14mm pine. I cut out the top part of the armrest from the plywood, and from the pine I cut out four pieces to raise and stabilise the top part. The two parts at the back of the armrest had to be shorter than the front two in order to accommodate the low Stag centre console (which holds the ashtray and covers the rear part of the handbrake lever) – that is, the rear pieces were to sit on the ashtray console, whilst the front pieces were to sit tightly in between the seats and the ashtray console. My first two armrest attempts had gone through various iterations to account for these heights, so by the time I reached this third version, I





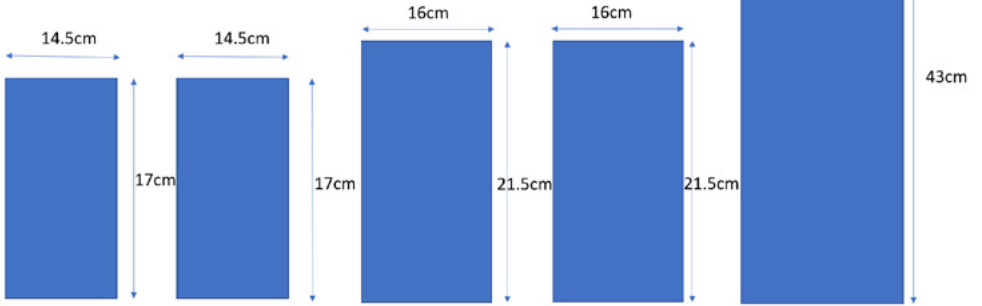
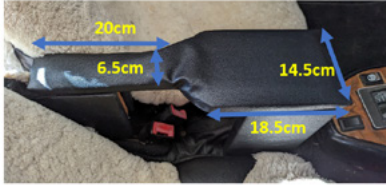
**Figure 1.** A: Armrest version 1. B: Version 2. C: Version 3. D: Version 3 but the vinyl was wrapped differently.

**Figure 2.** Armrest version 2.



Covered in Zephyr vinyl





**Figure 3.** Dimensions of the version 3 armrest.

**Figure 4.** Construction of version 3.



was confident that the front two and rear two pieces were of appropriate dimensions.

I sanded each of the five pieces to ensure the material that I would fit would not tear or rip around the wood's edges. Starting with the top piece, I cut out two pieces of cardboard (the second [top] one slightly smaller than the first [bottom] one), stapled them to the wood (with a staple gun – a very handy tool!), and then placed a piece of foam above them. After this, I cut out pieces of Zephyr black vinyl and wrapped each of the five pieces of wood and held them in their final places using the staple gun.

Using M8 16mm wood screws, I secured 30 x 30 x 17mm angle brackets to the

inside of each of the four supporting pieces of wood, making sure the top of the brackets would be flush with the long cover piece. Finally, I screwed the angle brackets to the top piece of wood.

I then made another version, this time wrapping (and then stapling) the vinyl of the top piece over the side pieces. However I didn't like that you could see the staples on the outside (of course they could always be simply painted black).

The armrest is comfortable and fits neatly between the seats. You could quite easily add to it, for example, a cup holder, small drawer (e.g. for sunglasses), USB ports, etc.



Michelotti's original design drawing for the Triumph Stag



## My Mayflower Story

*By Roger McCowan, TCCV member #8*

I like woodworking, in particular furniture making. In the earliest days of the TCCV, one member had a Renown, with a full-width wooden dash (it was also coach-built, so had a full wooden frame). Early in 1985, I heard that there was a (registered) Mayflower for sale. I knew it was of monocoque construction (not coach-built), but expected that it would have a full wooden dash, just like its big brother, the Renown. Not so! Just steel and bakelite. Nevertheless, I decided to buy it.

At Easter, I went to a farm at Chewton (near Castlemaine) to inspect this Mayflower. It was in fair condition, although the roof (in particular) had suffered from gum leaf corrosion. A few years earlier, the owner had rebuilt the engine, but would it still work? The engine started and I engaged first gear, let off the handbrake and moved forward. Applied the foot brake (no power assistance!) thus needing some force. This caused the front seat mounting bolts to pull through the rusted floor and tip the seat backwards! Fortunately, the farm had all sorts of bits and pieces, so I was able to cut a couple of metal plates to mount under the floor and bolt the seat back into place. Then went for a slightly longer test drive without incident. Checked things like lights, horn, trafficators, etc. to ensure the car was ostensibly roadworthy, at least for the drive from Chewton to my home in Carnegie. In selling the car, the owner was able to provide me with some of the original

registration papers and related documents. Apparently in the early 1950s, the registration paper continued, even with change of ownership! I'm not sure when it was changed to being an annual registration sticker on the windscreen.



Having got the Mayflower home, there was much work to get the car to a proper roadworthy standard. Obviously the floor-pan needed replacing. The seats and the trim on the doors needed replacement. The bakelite steering wheel had completely disintegrated. Here was my chance to do some woodworking – I machined up a wooden wheel to attach to the steel rim of the steering wheel. Although the brakes had worked for getting me home, I thought it wise to get them overhauled. Took it to an exhaust place



to get a stainless steel exhaust fitted. When I picked it up at the end of the day, the chap commented that several passers-by had stopped and commented about the Mayflower. I was similarly surprised at the number of people I spoke to about having a Mayflower and their comments were "My uncle had one of those", or "My neighbour had one", or "I learnt to drive in one". After getting the car roadworthy (due to change of ownership) and gaining experience in driving the car and its handling, I found other aspects which I felt could be improved. One was the wheel rims. These were manufactured from a length of pressed steel and welded to form the rim. Despite the tyres, this weld joint caused a minute 'bump' when driving along. I got the wheels remade, using the central hub of the Mayflower wheel and the rims of a Volkswagen Beetle. To keep the Mayflower mobile while these were being remade, I used some spare wheels from my 2500TC (which I had sold to buy the Mayflower). It was remarkable how much the handling of the Mayflower improved with 14-inch wheels with radial ply tyres rather than the 15-inch with cross-ply tyres!

Many of the innovative features of the Mayflower were described in the articles reproduced in the *May Trumpet*, but there are a couple of others I was impressed with. Firstly, mounted on the rear mudguard on the driver's side is a small switch (pull-on, push-off). Its purpose was to power the tail-lights when the side-lights were turned on. The reason: going to the rear of the car to turn the tail-lights on ensured

that the driver knew the tail-lights were working! How many cars do you see these days with either one or both tail-lights not working, and the driver oblivious of the fact?



Another ingenious feature was the steering arrangement. The steering column protruded only about a foot into the engine bay before entering the Bishop's Cam steering box. This operated a bar which went across the car to a corresponding position on the passenger side. Connecting rods at each end of the bar went down to the levers at the front wheels to turn them left or right. The merit of this was that it was very easy to swap the Bishop's Cam to the left side for the American market. A big tick for this approach was safety. Almost every vehicle then, and for at least 20 years thereafter, had a solid steering column all the way down to

the steering box at the front wheels. You might recall the legislation introduced in the early 1970s for collapsible steering columns because head-on collisions often resulted in the steering column being impaled into the driver's chest. Not so with the Mayflower – such a catastrophe could never occur.

Not long after I got my Mayflower fully operational and on the road, the Australian television industry was having a nostalgia trip back to the 1950s. An agent from Action Vehicles Australia visited our club meeting one evening, seeking 1950s vehicles for an upcoming mini-series being produced by Crawford Productions. I offered my Mayflower, and it was accepted. The mini-series was called *All The Way* with a cast including Rowena Wallace, Martin Sacks, Ben Mendelsohn and others. It featured in several of the episodes, and also in the regular TV series that followed. The nostalgia trip continued and the Mayflower was also used in a handful of films. My Mayflower also appeared on the Channel 9 News in November 1991. I had entered in the inaugural Great Australian Rally, which started at the MCG carpark, and went down to the Cape Schanck golf course. Channel 9 was there for the cars setting off. Out of more than 800 cars, only a handful were shown in the newsclip – my Mayflower being one! By good fortune at the Cape Schanck Golf Course, I was able to park next to a 1950 Rolls-Royce, the styling of which was Sir John Black's inspiration for the styling of the Mayflower, as shown in the front and rear view photos. These were particularly memorable, but the



Mayflower featured in many other motoring events. The photo below shows most of the commemorative badges I collected by participating in them.



One unexpected downside of driving the Mayflower was the attention given by other motorists. I would keep to the left because the Mayflower had very moderate acceleration. A parked car ahead meant I needed to move into the

'faster' lane. Often, I would slow to let a vehicle pass me before moving out. Alas! The driver of that vehicle would slow down when it was alongside me, just to have a look. Consequently, I would have to apply the brakes sharply to avoid rear-ending the parked car until the "rubber-neck" eventually went past.

Among the many things I found out since becoming a Mayflower owner, one in particular is the engine design, from two aspects. First, the unusual: although it has a cast iron block, the head is alloy, just like the Stags of 20+ years later. Second, the sad: it is very prone to burning out the exhaust valves for cylinders 2 and 4 (the latter in particular). Therefore, by the late 1990s with all the driving I had done (including a weekend trip

from Melbourne to the Sutherland Royal National Park south of Sydney for the inaugural rally of the Pre-1954 Register), I was forced to rebuild the engine. This quickly became a job of epic proportions, starting with the steel head studs being electro-chemically bonded to the alloy head. I thought I'd tackle some other aspects while the engine was out. The gear lever linkages had a lot of slack, so I attempted to refurbish those. Alas, no amount of force was sufficient to undo the nuts at the gearbox end. To rub salt into the wound, I was responsible for a series of major projects over more than a decade, thus leaving me with no time to make any progress on the Mayflower's rebuild.

As at today, it is still waiting for the attention it needs.



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## Breakfast in Newport

*Story by Nick Skinner, TCCV member #487*

*Photos by Alan Andrews, TCCV member #572*

On the first day of winter, 14 dedicated TCCV members met up for breakfast in Newport. Event organisers Graeme and Peter thought it was time for a western suburbs breakfast and asked Kaylene and me to find a café willing to welcome a car club. Apparently the venue was acceptable, judging by the volume of chatter and the empty plates and cups at the end!

Subjects discussed at my table were many and varied. Bernie Minogue told a story about the old days when people used to bury their unwanted goods – making for interesting excavations for later generations. (More on that a little later in this article!)

Roger McCowan told me the story of a vibration that developed on his trusty 2500 sedan. Judging by the smooth and rapid acceleration away from the café, the gearbox and clutch rebuild was a huge success!

Naomi Gruzevskis showed Roger and me a photo of her pride and joy – a glorious Jensen! (The car with the iconic rear windscreen.) Unfortunately, she only brought the photo. Next time we want the car!!!

Peter Welten told us of his new

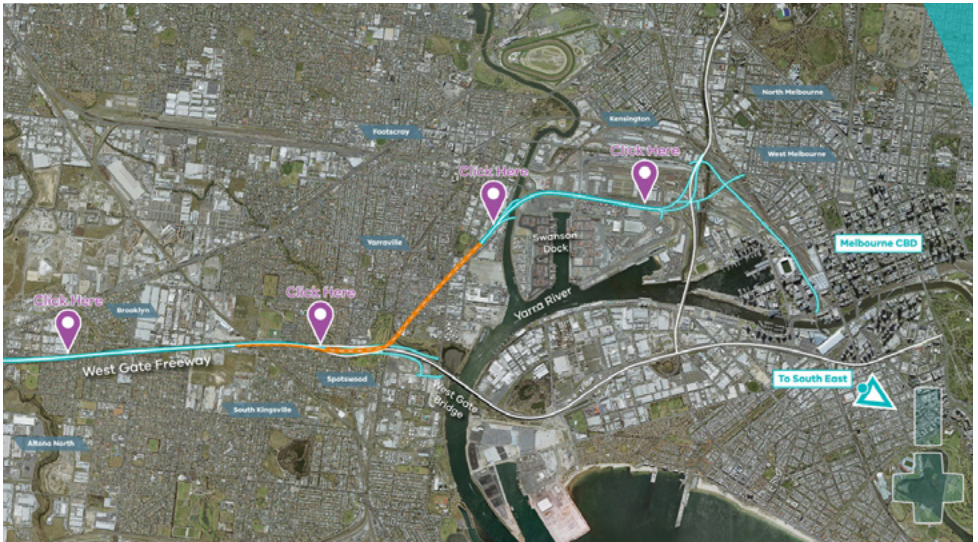
acquisition, a Toyota Land Cruiser, to tow his caravan. Watch out Australia – there's no stopping his upgraded rig.

After the breakfast (really brunch) most of us headed off to the Westgate Tunnel Information Centre. Here the very knowledgeable and entertaining guide discussed the project via a huge screen showing a video of the roadways, intersections, tunnels, bridges and infrastructure. The project is massive! Anyone who has driven over the Westgate and on to Geelong or the M80 will know there have been massive disruptions – but seeing the changed bitumen is really only a small part of the story. The budget for the whole job is a mind-boggling sum, but when you see the things they are doing, the machinery required to dig the tunnels, lift the road sections and sort the spoil, the work is also mind boggling! Not only will the finished project remove thousands of trucks a day off suburban streets, it will also greatly improve freight efficiency. A small (comparatively) side project is a dedicated bicycle path running parallel and all the way to the city.

If you have a chance, I would thoroughly recommend you visit the information centre. The project is due to be finished by the end of 2025.

And remember the story of the old timers burying their unwanted wares ... one of the tunnel boring machines can't be reused, and economically can't be cut up and removed for scrap – so it is going to be buried at the end of its tunnel! I wonder what the future archaeologists will make of that!!





## SAFETY ALERT

### Working Under a Vehicle

#### Death and Injury Risk

##### Working Under a Vehicle

Working under a vehicle that is supported by a jack can be fatal. In Australia, over the last four years at least, 19 people have been crushed and killed by a vehicle they were working under.

All the deaths of men and women involved the vehicle being lifted or supported in the wrong way. Home mechanics are most at risk of this type of death or injury.

In some cases the worker was killed when the vehicle was not secured by chocks and the vehicle rolled on top of them, or the structures used to support the vehicle failed.

On average, 160 injuries are associated with jacks each year. Injuries have ranged from amputation to fractures and crush injuries.

The correct use of jacks can prevent death and injury.

#### PROTECT YOURSELF – FOLLOW THE SAFETY GUIDELINES IN THIS DOCUMENT



#### Safety Warning

**Never get under a vehicle that is supported by a jack**

**Before lifting the vehicle, chock the wheels that will remain on the ground and don't get under the vehicle until it is supported by support stands.**

#### Use the Right Jack for the Job

Read the safety warnings on the jack and follow the manufacturer's advice. Check the weight capacity of the jack and do not exceed it – the jack could fail and place you in danger.

A **trolley jack** should be used to lift a vehicle in order to place support stand underneath it. When using a trolley jack, refer to the vehicle workshop manual to identify the correct lifting points.

A **vehicle specific jack** is normally supplied with your vehicle for the purpose of changing a flat tyre. Check that the jack is marked with the name or trademark of the vehicle manufacturer and matches the model of the vehicle that it will be used with. A vehicle jack is not recommended for repair work. Never use a vehicle jack for raising a vehicle to work underneath it.

**Large vehicles**, such as 4WDs, may be too heavy for similar jacks to lift safely. Always check the jack's label to ensure that its maximum load capacity is sufficient to support the vehicle you are lifting.

#### Mandatory Safety Standards

Manufacturers, importers, distributors and retailers of vehicle and trolley jacks must ensure their products comply with the mandatory safety standards which specify design, construction, performance and marking requirements. The marking requirements include a safety warning not to get under a vehicle that is supported by a jack, but it is the responsibility of the consumer to take notice of the warning and use the product safely in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

**For further information contact**  
ACCC Info centre on 1300 302 502  
[www.productsafety.gov.au](http://www.productsafety.gov.au)  
GPO Box 3131, Canberra ACT 2601



## WORKING UNDER A VEHICLE

### Safety Guidelines

Raising a vehicle using a trolley jack Raising the Vehicle

- Park the vehicle on a hard level surface
- Before raising the vehicle, the un-lifted wheels should be chocked. If applicable, apply the park brake.
- Refer to the workshop manual to locate the lifting point to position the trolley jack under the vehicle. If the incorrect lifting point is used, the jack could slip or tip.
- Watch carefully while lifting the vehicle. Check that the head plate of the trolley jack is sitting squarely on the point you are lifting, and make sure the jack is able to roll slightly to allow for the change of angle as the vehicle is raised.

### Use Support Stands

- Locate the correct contact points for the stands. Position the support stands and slowly lower the jack until the vehicle rests on them.
- Ensure the vehicle is sitting securely on the support stands before getting under the vehicle.

### Caution

- Never place any part of your body under a raised vehicle until it is sitting on support stands or vehicle ramps.
- Do not allow a person or a pet to remain in a vehicle that is being jacked.
- Do not exceed that weight capacity of the jack.

**Fatal crush injuries occur when a vehicle slips from a jack and crushes the worker underneath**

### Wheel Chocks

Chocking the wheels is an important safety caution to prevent the vehicle from moving or rolling. When using jacks, ramps or vehicle support stands, always use wheel chocks on the wheels remaining in contact with the ground.



### Vehicle Support Stands

Use vehicle support stands to provide stability to your vehicle when it is raised. Stands are more reliable than a jack. Bricks and timber blocks are not safe substitutes for proper vehicle support stands compliant with Australian standards.



### Vehicle Ramps

Vehicle ramps can provide an alternative method for raising a vehicle. Ramps should be used on a hard level surface, preferably concrete. The ramps should be used in pairs. Place wheel chocks under the wheels on the ground so that the vehicle cannot roll off the ramps.





## Webmaster Report

By Alan Andrews, TCCV Webmaster

Georgia Triumph Association in the USA has renewed sending their magazine, called *The Trumpet*. Of course, you will find it in Members Only/Shared Magazines on the website.

Regular contributors include ABCCC, TSOASA, Backfire and Sidelights. Visit the website to discover what car clubs they are. A Ballarat car club is a newcomer sending their April magazine.

All the magazines have interesting articles about Triumph and other marques. Checking places they hold social events may give us ideas to where we might go too for drives, breakfasts, lunches, etc. If you spot an event which appeals to you and wish to present it to our Event Coordinators, please do so. Organising it yourself will go down a treat with Peter and Graeme.

Some car clubs and museums have magazines that are available from the "Shared Magazines Available from Club Websites" section. This section

means their magazines do not have to be uploaded to our server but can be accessed directly from their website.

As I reported at the May General Meeting, I am keen to receive photos of members' Triumphs for the "Featured Members Car" section of the Home page. I am particularly keen to receive photos of the Class Winners at the recent Club Show and Shine. I have one for the "Car of the Show" – Keith Brown's TR5. If your car was a winner in another class, please email a good photo to me using [webmaster@tccv.net](mailto:webmaster@tccv.net) Do not concern yourself about the resolution, the higher the better. They deserve to be featured!

A Register reminder: If attending an event with your TCCV-registered partner, enter only ONE Given name, not two. For example, if my wife was coming with me to an event, I would enter "Alan" as the Given name and "Andrews" as the Surname, and "2" as the number attending and if I drove my Triumph to the event, "Stag" as the car. When the form is submitted, the programming automatically hunts for the Given name of the second person and enters it in the list of attendees. If I were to have typed "Alan & Joan" in the Given name field, the programming would go off looking for a member whose Given name is "Alan & Joan".

Also, when attending any event in your other car, NOT your Triumph, do not enter the model Triumph you have left behind in the garage. Only enter it when you actually use it to attend an event.

That's all from me this month.



## MEMBERS' INFORMATION

By Roger McCowan, Membership Secretary,  
TCCV member #8, [membership@tccv.net](mailto:membership@tccv.net)

To our newest member – welcome to the Club. We hope your membership meets all your expectations and we look forward to meeting you at the many events we have around the state, especially when in your area. If technical or originality help is required, please contact the Club's Car Advisor for your vehicle model (see the TCCV website for details).

### Club Membership

As at 31 May, our total membership stands at **270**.

Our new member, who joined during May, is Justin McCulloch who has a TR6.

My thanks to those members who have used the online update form to provide me with correct information concerning their membership and their cars. If you haven't already done so, please check your details on the Members Only pages of the TCCV website and then complete the update form (<https://www.tccv.net/members-only/forms/update/htmlform/update1-iframe.php>) if any changes are needed.

And my thanks also to those members who have promptly renewed their Club membership. To everyone else, please ensure that your membership fee is paid by 30 June, especially if you have a car on a Club Permit.

A reminder that a Club Permit registration will not be issued unless you have met the requirements as set out by the TCCV, which includes being a current financial member.

## Name Badges

Wearing name badges at meetings and events assists members getting to know each other as well as identifies TCCV members at public events and is encouraged. Recently, quite a few members have ordered name badges for their spouses/partners. If you haven't already done so, perhaps you might also like to do this. Please advise me if you require additional/replacement badges (\$10 each).

### TCCV Membership

**\$60.00** Annual Membership, with a **\$10.00** membership fee discount for eTrumpet in preference to a hard copy of the club magazine.

**\$20.00** one-off joining fee applies from 1 July to 31 December only.

Additional membership information, including an application form, can be downloaded from the club website.

NOTE



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A number of TCCV members are subject matter experts for particular Triumph car models and are happy to assist other members as 'car advisors'. If you need any help or advice about your particular model, for contact details of the relevant car advisors.



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