

TREND

January - March 2025 Edition

2024 CHRISTMAS PARTY

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THE FUTURE OF CLASSIC CARS?





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The committee has therefore determined that the cost of a full-page advertisement will be \$100 paid annually (plus any artwork costs unless finished art is supplied). Please contact the editor if you wish to book a page for your business.



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January

Sun 5th - Let's
Toast 2025

Sun 19th - Monthly
Brisbane Drive

Sun 26th - Bayside
Restorers Annual
Australia Day Event

February

Sun 2nd - Monthly
Gold Coast Drive

Sat 8th - TSOAQ
Annual General
Meeting

Mon 10th - Drive
Your Triumph Day
2025

Sun 23rd -
February Drive Day

March

Sun 2nd - Monthly
Gold Coast Drive

Sun 16th - March
Drive Day



PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Welcome to 2025! The year is only a handful of days old and already everything is happening. There has been Gaza and Trump etc but closer to home our Triumph activities for the year are moving right along.

We have had a pleasant evening out at the Manly Hotel already and that was a good start to the year organised by Steve, Warren and Greg.

There have been preparations underway for hosting our 2026 Nationals believe it or not. For those of you who are not familiar with these Nationals events they need a long lead time to make sure everything will get done. The weekend visit to Toowoomba late last year by some of the organising committee laid important groundwork. The significant achievement is that we have secured the Platinum International Motel as our accommodation base.

The committee has met again recently and is building on the achievements of the Toowoomba visit and will continue in this way, using monthly meetings, to develop our whole Nationals Week program. The immediate target is to have a reasonably well prepared program of activities to present at the 2025 NSW Nationals which are on from 10 to 17 October. The NSW Nationals information has been released and expressions of interest have been called. For those interested in participating it will be necessary to act quickly because of the expected demand for attendee places.

While on the subject of planning for events the long lead time theme is a feature of all of our larger events. MACS Bridge at the Caboolture airfield is also well under way with the many different tasks already forming a planning list to be worked through. Lessons learned from our inaugural event are part of the new planning list.

Also, our mid year, Christmas in June/July type weekend is coming along nicely. Our accommodation at Tranquility Park, Maleny, is being complemented by some interesting and different places to visit and some good drive options to get to them. Keep a lookout for an "All Members" email for more details.

By the time you read this the AGM will have passed into TSOAQ history. I cannot add more other than to urge you to continue to support your Management Committee and all of those members who put in time and effort into making the club run smoothly and remain a viable part of the sports and classic car movement.

Our thoughts also go out to those TSOAQ members who have lost loved ones recently. Our condolences are extended to those members and families in such sad times. We are also mindful of those members and families who are unwell and facing surgery and/or various levels of medical treatment. We wish you all a successful outcome and a speedy recovery.

Finally, a reminder that the various committees and supporting members are putting in their time to provide a range of activities for your participation and enjoyment. One of the advantages of being a member of a club such as ours is the opportunity it provides to share friendships, a motoring interest and the chance to enjoy some of the many places and activities that Queensland has to offer.

Frank J.



2024 TSOAQ CHRISTMAS PARTY

Traditionally the TSOAQ Christmas Party have been held at the clubrooms having an outside caterer to provide the lunch but required input from members in setting up the clubrooms prior to event and clearing up after. The committee received feedback from members that they would prefer having the event at an outside venue that had air conditioning and would release members from setup and clearing up duty.

Whilst organising a Christmas lunch at an outside venue may at first seem like a simple task when you get into the detail it becomes somewhat more complicated as we require a facility where we can have lunch in our own room, be airconditioned, have good parking, be easy to access and be reasonably priced.

For 2023 we organised the lunch at the Alderley Arms Hotel which met our criteria but the numbers attending reached the maximum capacity of their function room, so it was crowded with minimum room to circulate, also drinks had to be purchased from the adjacent bar. For 2024 it was decided to look for an alternative option.

The Nudgee Golf Club was selected on the basis that it met our criteria, and we had received helpful feedback from members who had previously attended events in their function area. We were accommodated in a large room with plenty of space complete with its own bar so members could spend a couple of hours chatting and circulating prior to the meal being served. The meal was a self-service banquet comprising a selection of food that met with members approval. This was far easier from the committee to organise than having to preorder members meal selections prior to the event.

Frank gave a speech and presented awards to members who came dressed as their alter ego Cliff Chambers and Richard Graveur were recipients of awards.

The only downside for the day was the weather and the fact that it was the first weekend of school holidays which combined to make for a difficult traffic situation, Paul and Rita Bingham had a horrendous drive up from the Gold Coast with torrential rain causing major delays. My own drive to the event was slow but uneventful but the Sunshine Coast highway was a carpark northward from North Lakes, and I made a mental note to avoid it on the way home. My drive home started to go wrong from the time I walked out of the Golf Club in pouring rain only to find that a Ford 150 parked well over the white line next to my car leaving me about 200mm for me to open the door and squeeze in. By the time I got seated I was in a bedraggled state, and when I started the car the proximity alarms sounded, indicating I was close to an object on the right side, as if I was not already aware.

As we received valuable feedback from members on the venue and meal, the committee has booked for his years Christmas Party at the same place on Saturday 6th December which is a week prior to the start of the school holiday. We have hopefully avoided or reduced the traffic problems and can only hope for improved weather conditions.

In his speech, Frank also advised members of my 80th Birthday, a milestone that I passed in October that I am trying to pretend did not happen. I was presented with a meal voucher, for which would like to thank the club, Carol and I will enjoy a belated birthday meal at the Belvedere in the New Year. A birthday card was circulated and was filled with positive comments, I was quite overwhelmed when I went through the messages at home - a big thank you to all who contributed.



Mike Taylor

'I know that many of our members are in desperate need of pastoral care and moral guidance. I thought my alter ego, a man of the cloth, should deliver guidance to this very wayward flock.'

'Why Groucho? Firstly, I look enough like him to get away with some greasepaint and hair chalk and I've always looked terrific in an ill-fitting suit. I admired his determination never to take 'maybe' for an answer and duck a right hook while delivering a punch line. Also his determination to never let a string of words make any sense at all.'



Pictured: Best dressed winners Richard & Cliff as their alter egos explaining who they chose and why...



BUYING BRITISH SPORTS CARS



Adapted from a Unique Cars feature by former TRend Editor, Cliff Chambers. Originally published in 1994.



For more than thirty years Britain dominated the world sports car market and Australians 'Bought British' when choosing an open-topped model. Backlash against wartime austerity was one reason for the boom in sports car production after 1945. Also significant was Britain's need to pay off a massive debt, owed principally to the United States. Americans loved the responsive little soft-tops they'd seen in Europe; cars which the world's most successful motor industry couldn't, or wouldn't, build. After the barriers were breached by MG's T Series, North America was deluged with specialised models. First came Jaguar's XK, followed by the Austin-Healey, Triumph TR-series, MGA and finally the Jaguar E Type. As the 'export or die' philosophy became entrenched, a cottage industry of specialised manufacturers emerged to satisfy domestic demand. Britons who were forced to wait months for cars they could have bought off the showroom floor in New York, Los Angeles or Melbourne eagerly supported the independents and their often-quirky offerings. A young racing driver called Colin Chapman recognised the potential for a daily driver/Sunday racer and produced the Lotus Seven. Others who followed this course included Marcos, Elva, Fairthorpe, Turner and TVR. Morgan was, of course, already there and now is just about the sole survivor. By the early 1980s MG and Triumph had abandoned sports car production. Other famous marques including Lotus, Aston-Martin and Jaguar were forced into alliances with larger concerns in order to survive. The days of affordable British sports cars will not be seen again. Low volumes and the cost of meeting the unique design requirements imposed by major vehicle markets have seen to that. Buyers instead turn to the classic arena, where dedicated owners ensure that cars built 45-75 years ago remain available and in usable condition. Prices as shown in the 1995 vs 2025 comparisons have changed but cost is still relative to the times in which we live. With very few exceptions, older cars appreciate in similar proportion to income and property values and most British models cost less in real terms than in 1995. Even if only have the price of a new Korean hatchback to spend on your sporty car, that \$25-35,000 still provides great opportunities in this fascinating sector of the classic market.



TRIUMPH SPITFIRE/GT6

The Triumph Spitfire was launched in 1962 as a rival for BMC's Sprite/Midget duo. By 1974 the Spitfire's engine had expanded to 1.5 litres and become a generic item, powering a variety of British-Leyland models including the MG Midget. Like its BMC equivalents, the Spitfire was plagued by design compromises and cost cutting via the corporate parts bin. Chassis and mechanical parts were shared with the Herald sedan, the swing-axle rear end launching it into spectacular oversteer whenever a Spitfire driver pushed too hard. Not until 1969 was an improved suspension design adopted and by then the Spitfire's reputation was coming in for criticism. Early cars had the Herald's 1147mL engine, with twin carburettors boosting output to 45kW. In 1968, capacity increased to 1.3 litres and power to 50kW for a top speed of 153km/h. Local Spitfire imports stopped in 1973, so anyone wanting a 1500mL version will need to go looking at imports, principally from the United States. The GT6 launched in 1965 is just as it appears - a hurriedly conceived Spitfire coupe with a bit too much power for its own good. Top speed from the coupe with its six-cylinder engine was 168km/h and 0-100 took 12 seconds. The suspension design hadn't changed however, and additional weight plus power transformed handling from tricky to terrifying. With minimal ventilation, the GT6 cabin could become unbearably hot in Australian summers, encouraging owners to fit roll-back 'Webasto' roof panels to help hot air escape. The second-series GT6 released in 1969 offered improved stability and performance. Mark 3 versions with their Stag-inspired rear panel arrived two years later and sold unchanged until 1973 when production ceased.

ON THE ROAD

Once drivers become accustomed to the handling, Spitfires make an enjoyable and durable sports car. The engines are rugged and willing, delivering straight line performance which is able to shade the early BMC Sprites and Midgets. Front disc brakes were standard on all models and the turning circle using the Herald sedan's suspension geometry was a remarkable 7.6 metres. Early cars with their bluff nose can look a little frumpy, so to add some style a Mark 3 with its raised front bumper and lengthened bonnet is worth the search. Spitfire cabin space is generous for a car of its size, with decent legroom and extra space behind the seats. Early cars with their centrally mounted instrument pod came in for criticism but there were wind-up windows at a time when the MG Midget still used side-screens. At moderate speeds the Spittie feels stable and responsive. Oversteer only becomes a problem when you rush up to a bend and lift off the throttle. The early GT6 has little to recommend it. Acceleration is brisk but the rudimentary chassis struggles to cope with 70kW of power. Body rattles and leaks are common and the cabin heat is an issue. Series 2 and 3 GT6s with improved rear suspension are easier to drive but slightly slower than early cars and rare in Australia.

WHAT TO WATCH

Bodywork is a Spitfire/GT6 weakness. The tilt-front panel needs to be straight and rust-free because replacements are scarce. Rust appears in floor pans, lower doors and around the windscreen. GT6 versions are often fitted with folding or pop-out sunroofs which let water into the cabin. Rear suspension components must be in perfect condition to maximise handling. If the car has been treated to a suspension upgrade, so much the better. Engines and transmissions are durable but electrics can present problems.

VALUES (1995)

SPITFIRE (1962-71) FAIR: \$3500 GOOD: \$6500
EXCELLENT: \$10,000

GT6 (1966-71) FAIR: \$4000 GOOD: \$8500
EXCELLENT: \$12,000

VALUES (2025)

SPITFIRE (1962-71) FAIR: \$10,000 GOOD: \$18,000 EXCELLENT: \$27,500

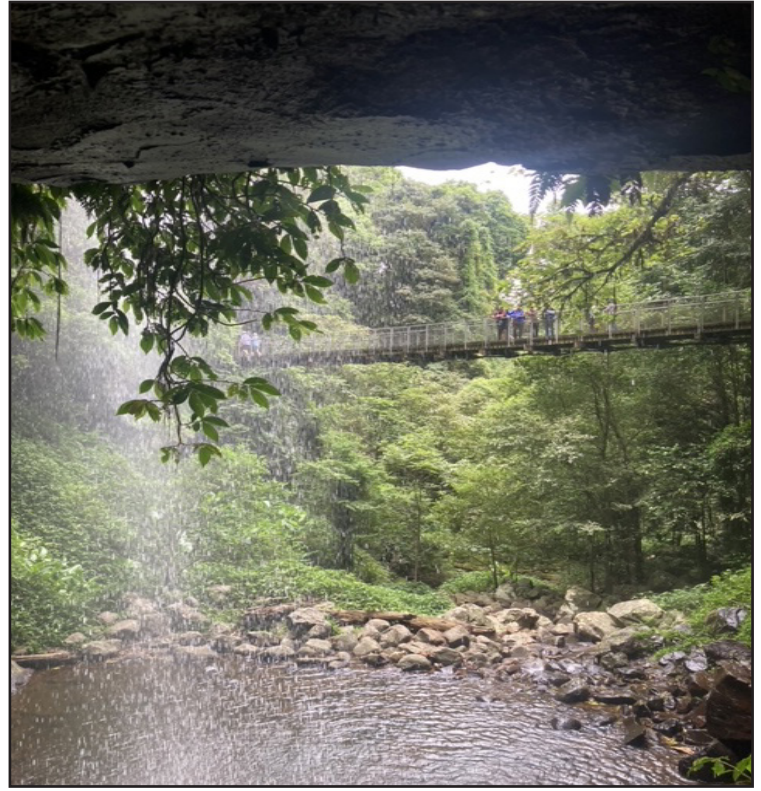
GT6 (1966-71) FAIR: N/A GOOD: \$24,000 EXCELLENT: \$35,000



'Just a few photos of **THE TRIP OVER THE BORDER** and the good time had by all. Some great drives some beautiful views and of course Happy Hour. The drive to Dorrigo and the area of Dorrigo was just great as well as the company. See, the only problem with these places is that there was not enough time. Looking forward to the next trip, Never too far in a TRiumph (plus others).'

Paul Bingham





THE FUTURE OF CLASSIC CARS?



This article for your reading pleasure is actually about electric cars and why they will continue to have an impact on our interest in classic cars. How much of an impact is anyone's guess but this brief bit of information may add something to your knowledge that is not readily available from the daily media. If you have had an interest in electric cars that is anything like mine you will probably have little more than a casual level of curiosity rather than a passion.

Most folks I have talked to seem to feel that hybrid cars are a better option for the various challenges that Australia presents, for manageable, reasonably trouble-free motoring. I was recently startled then, by a recent, late-night television news program which highlighted the huge numbers of new electric vehicles sitting in paddocks in China with little apparent prospect of being sold. It stirred my curiosity and I did some digging.

What quickly became obvious was that our daily media channels only drip feed information to us about progress of motoring electrification. Published investigative journalism on the other hand tells in much detail of billions of dollars being invested in electric car development and manufacture. It also tells of the extensive corporate interconnections between the USA, China and Europe. While Tesla was first out of the blocks many others have followed with China's production of 4.25 million electric units for 2024. It is significant and it represents a 41.07% increase over 2023 figures, contributing in large part to global sales being up 25% in 2024. This is a figure in a country in which around 200 million people don't own a car

and an annual ballot system is in place for those wishing to become motorized. The message is clear that the electric car manufacturers are running an aggressive growth program aimed at market domination and an end to fossil fuel reliant transport. The widely held view is that they are in the vanguard of a system change where electrified and computerized energy systems are taking over from fossil fuel energy systems (gas and oil). The frequently heard mantra is that the change is necessary to combat climate change but, in the minds of those who are guiding the rise of electric cars it is a change whose time has come, just as it was when the earliest automobiles were being developed. However, it is not just about cars. It is about energy systems and the storage of power. Think solar panels, powerwall battery storage and more efficient storage and working range in automotive systems.

To get some idea of how committed the players in this game are, consider some of these facts. After considering a short list of States for a Gigafactory, Tesla selected Nevada and got 980 acres of land free. There were a lot more parts to the deal including a partnership with Panasonic to build the factory at a cost of \$5 billion; i.e. factory space large enough to house ninety-three 747 aeroplanes. Incidentally, the "giga" part of the name indicated a scale factor of billions! The plan was for a ten-million square foot factory producing 50 gigawatt-hours of capacity for a production capacity of 500,000 Teslas annually. That was seen as just the start.

Those driving this change do not view electric car production in the same way traditional car manufacturers do, but they

see it as development of computerized and electronically controlled transport driven by stored energy systems. That broad concept led to the autonomous, or self-driving car. It hasn't been without its problems with the first fatality being recorded in May 2016 but the development has continued and the addition of artificial intelligence to the mix has given it added impetus. Systems have also been under development where electric cars communicate with each other and extensive testing has been carried out in special street and road networks for the purpose.

It is not surprising to find that some of the ongoing problems with fully electric vehicles continue to be the hardest to overcome. Available charging stations, speed charging, travelling range and vehicle cost continue to slow acceptance in the public domain. Also, nowhere could I find any references to the availability and supply of raw materials for the massive production of electricity storage requirements envisaged in the future. So where does all that leave us and our Triumph cars and other classics? Probably in a reasonably sound position in the foreseeable future, but I expect we will see a gradual shrinkage of the expertise and resources that we have to rely on. I feel we must remain vigilant as there are powerful lobby and commercial interests that have no sympathy for fossil burning automobiles and are excited by, and motivated by, the power play involved in supporting such a hugely significant energy and transport shift that the world is presently experiencing.

FJ



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