

948 Herald Coupé Memories

Your article about the original Heralds in the February/March issue brought back memories. I had been 'brought up' in my parents' Standard Ten, in which I got my driving licence and subsequently drove around a fair bit of Australia. So when I graduated as a doctor and started earning the pittance we used to get as a hospital resident, the Herald had just come out and I saved up for a deposit on a green and white Coupé.

I loved it dearly, as one does with one's first car, despite the early Heralds' problems with water leaks and other issues. They got a bad name in Australia, mainly from breaking back axles, and eventually were taken off the market altogether. But mine didn't let me down, and over the next four years the only thing that needed replacing was the generator, though I used to spend Saturdays rebalancing the SU carburetors (using my stethoscope) and trying to seal the latest leak.

Another resident at the hospital had a fawn and white Coupé (like the one in your article), but 1960 was near the peak of the popularity of the VW Beetle, and a number of the other residents had these. I remember once the two Heralds happened to be parked side by side at the top of the hilly residents' parking area, and a whole lot of VWs were down at the bottom. The green and brown looked a bit like the camouflage used by the RAF, and I remarked to my colleague that they reminded me of two British fighters ready to dive on the German formation below. He said he had thought the same thing!

An engine of 948cc seems small nowadays, but mine still holds my personal record for distance travelled in one day of 750 miles. I fitted it with a heater and a radio, the first of either I'd ever had in a car. I also lay claim (without any proof) to being the first person in Australia to fit seat belts to a Herald, which I did in 1960. My medical training had made me an enthusiast for three point belts, but in those days cars had no fittings for them. One had to take the car to a company who made belts for light aircraft and between you decide where to fit them. I remember thinking the strongest place for the shoulder strap was probably on the rear wheelarch (the car being only a two seater). Believe it or not they were attached with high tensile pop rivets! I never had to call them into use fortunately, but I remember having a policeman come up to me while I was stationary at a red traffic light and ask me what it was like to wear them. I replied quite truthfully that I felt naked without them. Of course a few years later they became compulsory, then Volvo brought out the inertia reel.

When I went to the UK in 1964 I bought a secondhand 12/50 Herald saloon, which was very much better built than the earlier car and despite the sunshine roof it never leaked. But it always had a flat battery, and suffered interminable small problems such as the horn blowing unrequested and having to be disconnected. I learned to hate it after a while, and got a humble Hillman Husky that I could (and did)



sleep in on trips to continental Europe. My last Triumph was a 1951 Renown, which I found in a farmyard and restored over some years, but alas that has gone now too.

I find it remarkable that, much as I loved the Herald Coupé, I have very few photographs of it. Perhaps the best one (and that is not particularly good) is one I took on its 750 mile dash, because of the road speed signs (mph in those days), which I found amusing, and maybe you might too, especially as it was not in my home state. The other one probably won't be much use to you, taken at the Parkes radio telescope in the west of NSW, and one can hardly see the car, dwarfed as it is.

Graeme Johnson

My dream garage

It is many a long day since I wrote to *Triumph World*, and on that occasion I was awarded a pewter TR2 which I still have. My dream garage wish list would include the following:

1. An early TR3. (Enclosed is a photo of my desired car – as you will note, it seems to be a 1956/7 TR3 but closer inspection reveals that it is a long door TR2 so even in the 1950s updating was common.)
2. TR5 (I've not owned one, and it must be in first class condition).
3. TR6 (I've not owned one of these either, and it too must be excellent).

4. Dolomite Sprint (I did have one and enjoyed it very much).

5. Accessing the TRs would present problems due to my age and arthritis, so a fork lift truck to get me in and out might be necessary as my fifth vehicle! If not, then since all collections of



exotic cars should include at least one erotic car, mine would be a Ferrari Dino 246 GTS.

Hugh Anger

I'm not that old!

Many thanks for the favourable book review in the latest *Triumph World*. However, although I may look and sound 93, I am still only a mere 90!

Derek Pollock

My pleasure Derek, and sincere apologies for ageing you so prematurely! On the bright side, at least the review is future-proofed for three years... Ed