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The official magazine of  
the Thoroughbred Sports  
Car Club

May-June 2020



Watkins Glen 1960s

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**Closing Date for the June-July magazine 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020**

# About Our Club

## Calendar

The [Official Calendar](#) is published on our web site. Print a copy to keep in your historic log booked vehicle.

## Club Meetings

[Club meetings](#) are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month except December and January at Carlingford Bowling Club.

## Club Objectives

- To foster a better acquaintance and social spirit between the various owners of Thoroughbred Sports Cars in Australia
- To help and advance Thoroughbred Sports Cars in Australia
- To establish and maintain, by example, a high Standard of Conduct and a Respect of the Laws of the Road

## Club Shoppe

Visit the [Club Shoppe](#) and make sure you are dressed appropriately for the next event.

## Correspondence

All correspondence to The Secretary, TSCC  
P.O. Box 3006, Dural, NSW 2158.  
Email: [secretary@thoroughbredsportscarclub.asn.au](mailto:secretary@thoroughbredsportscarclub.asn.au)

## Incorporation

TSCC is incorporated as an association;  
Registered No. Y15083-35

## Affiliation

TSCC is affiliated with CAMS Limited

The contact details of the [Committee](#) are published on the Website.

## Other Information:

[Administration](#)  
[Annual Awards](#)  
[CAMS](#)  
[Club History](#)  
[Club Plates](#)  
[Membership Forms](#)  
[Pointscore](#)  
[Sporting](#)

## Disclaimer:

Any opinions published in the Newsletter should not be regarded as being the opinion of the Club, of the Committee, or of the Editor. No responsibility is accepted for the accuracy of any information in the Newsletter, which has been published in good faith as supplied to the Editor.

Articles are invited and should be mailed to the Editor for publication showing the name and address of the author

## Website

[www.thoroughbredsportscarclub.asn.au](http://www.thoroughbredsportscarclub.asn.au)  
Contributions to the Webmaster:  
[webmaster@thoroughbredsportscarclub.asn.au](mailto:webmaster@thoroughbredsportscarclub.asn.au)

## Top Gear

Top Gear Magazine was [first published](#) on 1st September 1981 by the Club. There is no connection or affiliation with the British based Top Gear magazine first published by Immediate Media Company on or around October 1993.

Current and previous editions may be downloaded [here](#).

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## Guest Editors

Alfa Editor: [Barry Farr](#)

Aston Martin Editor: [Les Johnson](#)

Jaguar Editor: [Terry Daly](#)

Lotus Editor: [Roger Morgan](#)

## Other Information:

[Administration](#)  
[Annual Awards](#)  
[CAMS](#)  
[Club History](#)  
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Top Gear has been continuously published since September 1981.

Just as cars in storage need maintenance, so the Thoroughbred Sports Car Club has called on its committee to prepare it for when life returns to 'normal'. However, the main problem has been trying to predict what the new normal will be and when it will return. When making these decisions we take into account the so-called Covid-19 rules, which are in constant flux and the fact that most TSCC members are in the 'vulnerable' age group. Things continue to move fast, the latest being the Crossroads Hotel cluster, which is a bit too close to home.

**General Meetings** will be very different. For the July meeting we tried Zoom and it worked quite well. Twenty-nine members participated and, under Jeremy's tutelage, everyone who wanted a say was heard. The best outcome was the presence of members who, for reasons of time or distance, have not attended a general meeting before. It has made us think that, when face-to-face meetings resume we'll try a hybrid version, adding Zoom for those who can't make it in person. The plan at this stage is to hold a GM at Carlo Bowlo under strict Covid-19 regulations. The club will allocate the big room instead of our usual space and spread the tables apart. Members will have to book in -no prior notice of intention to attend, no admittance. Catering can be arranged but there will be a restricted menu from which to choose and meals will be served to the tables at about the same time. Tess will send emails closer to the date and when details have been finalised. This will give Tess and others on the committee additional work so please follow the instructions to help the evening run smoothly.

**Wednesday Runs** have been on hold for some months. We got close for the July run when Gary and Wendy Maher planned a drive to the Scottish Arms in Bowral but we couldn't be sure we wouldn't be contravening either the letter or the intent of the regulations at that time relating to the size of organised gatherings and the number of people in a hotel/restaurant at any one time. Barry Farr and Dott have plans for a Wednesday Run in August but we're holding off making a decision until the end of July.

**Cars 'n' Coffee** at Kurrajong was run this month and Jeremy reported appropriate social distancing. The **Plates Run** to Riverside Oaks was well attended and the number of those attending was encouraging but not so big as to strain the restaurant's permitted capacity.

The **Christmas Party** is still on the calendar and we will announce details in due course. The one thing that has occupied the committee more than anything has been the **Bon Vivant Tour** to Victoria in November. Pre-Covid, Jack had planned in considerable detail an excellent tour of the southern state. Some deposits were paid, and contracts signed which imposed conditions on both parties, as contracts do. To be able to modify our plans if necessary, Mike has been doing what Treasurers do, analysing the agreements and recommending the actions we should take. Our aim is to ensure that we can go on the trip if possible but more importantly, to be able to postpone or even cancel with no loss to the membership at best, or minimal exposure at worst. I'd like to acknowledge the input from Jeremy in preparing appropriate letters and primarily of course, Jack. The good news is that all the properties are in the same boat and understand that the decision to go in 2020 or 2021 or not will almost certainly be beyond our control. Contracts that would normally be watertight are being allowed to leak a little. That's about it for now. Clearly we are in the most inactive period that this club has experienced and spikes in infection in Melbourne and more recently south-western Sydney show that it won't improve much any time soon. All I can say is stay tuned for developments and cross everything hoping we can resume normal service before too long.

This month's magazine is less fulsome than would normally be the case, although, it may be that what we are now experiencing will be the norm for some time. Ordinarily, I wouldn't write a piece about my cars, as editor I'm a little uncomfortable with this, however, content constraints being what they are, I have. So please if you have something you think might be of interest, please send it to me. Otherwise, I'll write an article about my Holden period...

With the March COVID-19 lockdowns and associated lockdowns, job losses and market conniptions, I would have expected the collector car market to have gone to sleep along with everything else. It appears, however, that this is not the case. In fact, it seems that Australian petrol heads have responded to the likelihood of extended international and possibly interstate travel restrictions by buying another of those long wished for special cars.

A quick survey of activity within the TSCC certainly seems to confirm this, with all sorts of new acquisitions reported.

And so it was, that on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, I spotted what looked to be a "bargain" 1961 Alfa Giulietta Sprint on Bring A Trailer. It is alleged to have travelled 28,000 miles from new, completely original and comes with all documentation from the original owner who collected it in Italy, before taking it to the US. Bidding was a bit torpid, so I put in what I thought was cheeky one and won it. Needless to say, almost immediately the full force of COVID-19 hit and just after I paid for the car the \$A fell to \$US57.5c...The car was in New Jersey and the initial plan was to ship it to LA for asbestos removal and thence to Long Beach for shipping to Sydney, as I did for most of my previous US purchases. The fall in the \$A resulted in the shipping cost nearly doubling, so I arranged for the selling dealer to put the car on consignment for three months. The logic was that if they couldn't sell it, at least I would have free storage while I figured out what to do.

And so it was, that by mid-May, the car hadn't sold, the \$A had recovered somewhat, I was feeling better about things and decided to bring it Australia. I found a Ferrari specialist in New York State who was prepared to undertake the asbestos removal, so I decided to ship it the 200 miles to his facility. It was then that the dealer told me he had a buyer for the car; however I had made up my mind to bring it here. As I write the brakes etc., have been attended to and the car is about to leave for the shipper.

I have quite a lot of prior with Alfas. I have owned the three primary iterations of the 750/101 series Giulietta/Giulias. Back in 1999 I fulfilled a 15-year dream to own one of the 1400 Alfa Giulia Sprint Speciales produced in 1964-66. Originally owned in Australia by Ray Gulson, this car had been restored and converted to RHD in the 80s. You may recall that at this time you couldn't register a LHD car outside Canberra or SA. The conversion to RHD led to the major issue with this car, driving it. These series cars have the steering box





mounted forward of the front axle. Apart from being an effective spear in an accident, this results in a problem in converting to RHD in that the carbies are on the RHS and the long column has to pass under them, placing the steering wheel in the drivers lap, literally, unless the column is cut and fitted with a universal joint, which mine wasn't. Concerns around capital as a result of the establishment of a new business a few years later, saw this car sold, something I regretted almost immediately, particularly as the funds weren't required after all.



And so it was, that in late 2009, I spotted a 1965 Giulia Spider Veloce, one of 1095, that had been passed in at auction in Sydney. I went there straight away and bought it. It was shiny red with black trim and not very good. It had been "restored" in the US some years previously. The paint was covered in humidity blisters and it had poor rust repairs, as I was to discover. I knew I would have to restore it to concours condition. This took five frustrating and expensive years. As delivered it was black with red trim, although a fairly uncommon colour combo, I already had a black car and didn't want another, I wanted to paint it a beautiful light blue/green called Celeste, a factory colour. This resulted in a major argument with the restorer, which I lost, and the car ended up black. It won its class at the CMC Concours in 2016. After all the time and effort it took to finish it, I really couldn't cope with the black, so I sold it a little while later. Should I have? Probably not, but secretly I had always preferred the looks of the Sprint coupes to the Spiders.

The SS and the Sprint were designed by one of my three favourite Italian designers, Franco Scaglione. He was responsible for the three spectacular BAT Alfas, the Porsche 356 B Abarth GTL, arguably the forerunner of the 911 and one of the most beautiful cars ever made, the Alfa Tipo 33 Stradale, which is on the cover. The other two are Ercole Spada, designer of the utterly lovely Lancia Flaminia Super Sport and of course, Giorgetto Giugiaro, who among many other

others, designed my Alfa GT 1300 Junior, while he was in the army.

The Sprint has always been my favourite of the three, the SS is much wilder but does have some odd angles, particularly side on. The three body styles were all on the same floor pan, there was also a sedan and later three Zagato iterations, the SZ and TZs 1 and 2, all very successful in racing and rallying. The Sprints and SSs were built by Bertone, while the Spiders were built by Pininfarina. My car is a single carb 1300 called a Normale, to distinguish it from the Veloces which had twin carbs, uprated engines and front brakes and later, five speeds. Mine has four. It might grow a fifth and another carbie...

I will update this report when the car is in Australia.

While this was going on, over the past three years I have been restoring a South African Alfa GTV6.

GTV6s have been something of a constant in my motoring life. I've owned four of them, the first in 1988. South Africa was the only place in the world where a three litre Alfa V6 engine was fitted to a GTV6 and the only three litre V6 engine that was not fuel injected, instead they use six downdraft Dellortos. The three litre cars were homologation specials for SA touring car racing. BMW SA had put the 3.5 litre six in the E28 BMW, before the factory did, and the little 2.5 litre Alfas couldn't keep up. Alfa

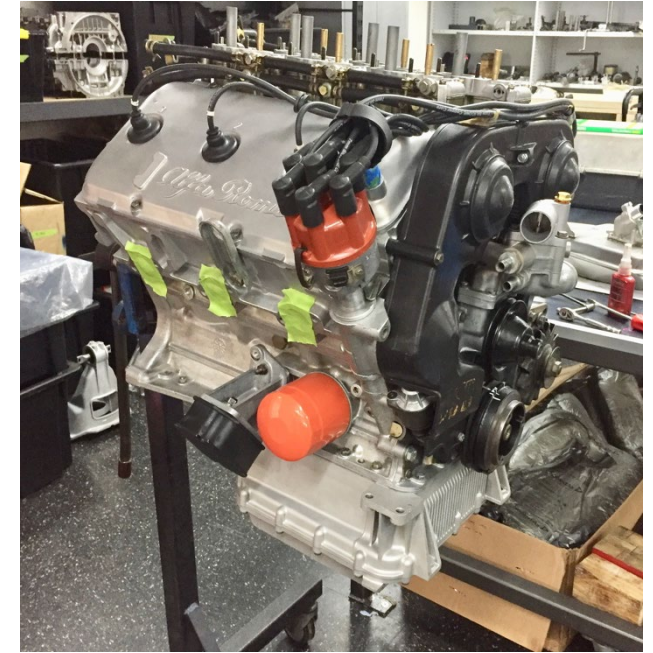
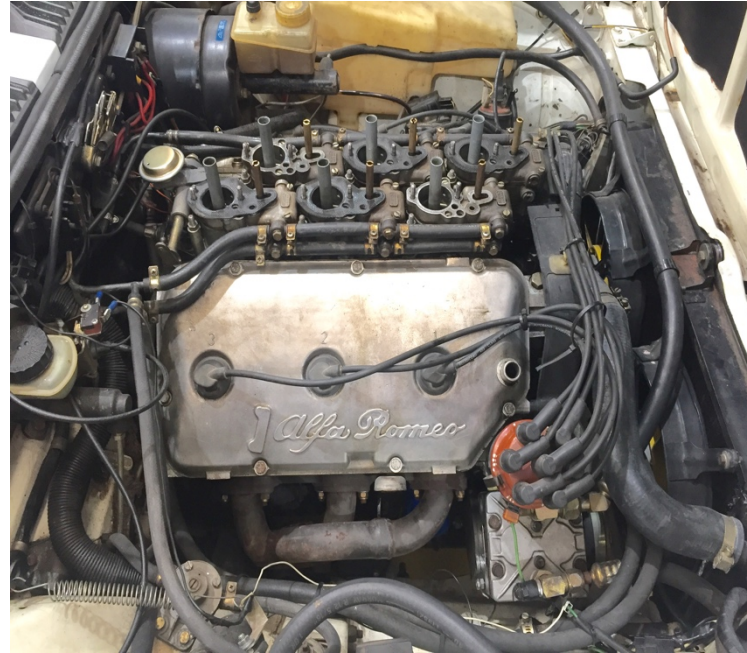


SA then went to Alfa in Italy and sourced a three-litre engine developed for Rallying by Alfa Corse. You may remember that later Ford SA put the 289 Windsor in the Capri and created the Perana, which was unbeatable.

Reported numbers vary, however, they sourced between 208 and 211 engine kits and built them as road cars. Distinguishing features were a fibreglass bonnet to clear the carbs, a deeper front valance also fibreglass and Compomotive three-piece wheels. Mine is number 157.

I bought the car in Perth, relying on photos and the vendor's description, neither of which reflected the true condition of the car. It was a mess. What saved it and the primary reason I bought it was the interior, which is in excellent condition. Mechanically it was trashed, the problem with the tune turned out to be mismatched pistons, one bank had 40mm extractors, the other side 44mm! The carbies had been screwed down so tight on the insulators that the bodies had been warped, we couldn't even extract the main jets, so I had to source a new set from the UK. And so it went on, fighting us all the way.

The engine was fully rebuilt, we had new pistons made and sourced an exhaust system from Germany, as the original extractors were not usable. We rebuilt the gearbox and suspension.



The opportunity was also taken to add power steering to the car. This was standard on the 75 sedan and is a "bolt in" for the GTV6. This upgrade is the one that makes the most difference to the drivability of these cars. They were never sold with it and the addition of the heavier V6 engine to the Alfetta GTV makes the steering quite heavy. We also added ball joint risers to the front suspension, another popular and easy Alfetta upgrade. I also decided to modify the gearshift linkage to the later Isostatic system. Later GTV6s have a modified linkage system for the gearshift. With a rear transaxle, the original gear linkage system is one of the major weaknesses of the earlier cars. We weren't able to fully convert the car as the rear gearbox mounting arrangement is different, however, we have been able to achieve most of the Isostatic benefit of a shorter more positive throw. My thanks to Mick Mitchell and the team at Corse Automotive, this was not a straightforward project and tuning the carbies is quite a mission, it's easy to see why fuel injection was standard.



This wouldn't be complete without mentioning my two long term Alfas, My 1970 Giulia 1300 Ti (GG) and 1969 GT 1300 Junior (the bathroom). These two have lived together for nearly 30 years, although GG had a five-year sabbatical in the late 90s, before I bought him back in 2002. They have both lived quite different lives. GG was bought as a second car to replace my first GTV6 when Jess was a baby and we couldn't fit all the associated clobber in its small boot. At that time our primary car was an E9 BMW 3.0S, a wonderful car let down by the rust in this particular example and more seriously by its propensity to overheat and crack heads leaving the driver with a young child stranded. GG, on the other hand, was completely reliable and to date has never broken down on us. GG has led a very active life, with a number of early Repco Mountain Rallies, club events, long trips, super sprints and around 50,000 miles. It was my daily driver in the 90s and has been to all Australian states except WA and NT, at least once.

He had a major rebuild in 2002, which included some then necessary rust repairs, however, I didn't paint it, so it still shows two shades of green polished through to the primer in a few places. He is meticulously maintained, only last year we did a Driving Adventures Snowy Tour. My GT 1300 Junior, however, has led a much more pampered existence. It was bought in 1993 during one of the Mountain Rallies using the \$5,000 we had saved up for bathroom renovations, hence its name. As I've explained at length to Wendy, several houses later we have good bathrooms and we still have the car. I always wanted a "stepnose" 105 Alfa. The car was complete, registered and running. In the mid 90s the decision to repair some rust around the front sway bar mounts led to a full restoration which was finished in the late 90s. In 2001 it won the CMC Concours outright. It doesn't go out very often, but like all 105 series Alfas, is a delight to drive, even today.

In my view, these series Alfas are one of the best driving cars of the 60s, twin cam engine, five speeds, four-wheel discs and great handling and they are still a joy to drive and not fussy in modern traffic.

I have learned, through all this, that one of the most dangerous phrases in old car land is "and while we're here"...





# My Motor Sport History and Race Cars

BY RICK MARKS

As we previously discussed, I started collecting classic cars some 50 years ago but have always been keen on Motorsport including watching Bathurst every year and whatever other motor racing was televised back in the 1960s and '70s.

In 1979 I met a couple of guys (still great mates) who encouraged me to have a go. Firstly in drag racing, then hill-climbs, lap dashes, dirt circuits and finally Historic racing on some fantastic race tracks in some fantastic historic race cars. Prior to full-on Historic racing, all my competitive events in the early 1980s were in my 1964 Sunbeam Tiger V8 roadster – a car that I have owned for 47 years this year. Owning this car led me to acquire my first dedicated race car, the 1964 Sunbeam Tiger Le Mans. An extremely rare car, being one of three only in the world and one of two that actually competed at Le Mans in 1964.

During 1984 and 1985, I competed in Combined Sports Car Association (CSCA) lap dashes in the Tiger Le Mans and joined the HSRCA in preparation for jumping at the deep end into Historic circuit racing. After getting my CAMS provisional competition licence, my first event was the HSRCA Amaroo Park in January 1986. This got me hooked well and truly, and started my 30 years of competing in Historic racing events at tracks around Australia. My favourite circuits would have to be Bathurst, Phillip Island and Eastern Creek in that order.

My list of race cars owned is as below including the years they were owned.



Lolita Mk2



Lotus Eleven Le Mans



Mercury 100 Special



Elva Courier

Each has its own place in my racing history, with some good memories, some not so good. Some extremely valuable machines and others not so much. Some I should have kept, others were moved on to make way for something else to race – similar to my classic car collection.

During my racing career, I had many



Sunbeam Alpine



Sunbeam Tiger



Bizzarrini



1959 MGA

highlights (and a few lowlights including prangs, mechanical blow-ups etc) but the highlights far outweigh the low. Of special note was winning the overall Historic Group S Production Sports Car championship three times (2006, 2008 and 2009) in my 1958 Elva Courier – certainly three career highlights.

My last competitive event was at the HSRCA Summer Festival at Eastern Creek in November 2015 in my 1966 Mustang Shelby de Mexico. Having retired from the workforce, I needed to choose between actively continuing in Motorsport (relatively expensive) and keeping a collection of classic road cars (also relatively expensive). I was always of the view that "The older I get, the faster I was" so I decided to put an end



Shelby GT350. Peter Schell photo.



MGB



Studebaker Commander R4



Birrana F71 Formula Ford



Sunbeam Alpine at Amaroo Park



MGB Le Mans Replica



Sunbeam Tiger



ex-Works Lotus Eleven Le Mans

to motor racing and hung up the helmet. Do I miss it? Yes I do at times. However, I now commentate at Historic race meetings so I still get to enjoy the sights and sounds of Historic Motorsport and will hopefully do so for many years to come. I have lots of good mates (some older, some younger) who still actively compete so it is good to keep abreast of their on-track exploits.

(Editor's Note. Starting with the next issue of The Oily Rag we will be looking closer at some of the competition cars that have featured in Rick's racing career.)



Le Mans Sunbeam Tiger



Sunbeam Tiger Mk1A



Brian Caldersmith's rendition of Rick's Nota Sportsman S2

1964 Sunbeam Tiger Le Mans	1984 - 1993
1961 Sunbeam Alpine S1	1988 - 1997
1971 Birrana F71 Formula Ford	1991 - 1992
1963 Nota Sportsman S2	1992 - 2003
1959 MGA	1993 - 1994
1969 Lolita Mk2	1993 - 1994
1963 Sunbeam Alpine Le Mans Rep	1996 - 1999
1957 Lotus Eleven Le Mans	1998 - 2001
1966 Shelby GT350	1999 - 2001
1967 Bizzarrini GT America	1999 - 2004
1965 Sunbeam Tiger Mk1	2000 - 2004
1969 MGB GT	2001 - 2002
1957 Mercury 100 Special	2001 - 2003
1958 Lotus Eleven Le Mans	2003 - 2008
1966 Sunbeam Tiger Mk1A	2003 - 2018
1958 Elva Courier	2005 - 2016
1999 Mazda MX5	2008 - 2009
1964 Studebaker Commander R4	2012 - 2017
1965 Shelby GT350	2013 - 2015
1966 Mustang Shelby de Mexico Notchback	2015 - 2016
1969 MGB Le Mans Rep	2017 - 2019
1977 MGB Roadster	2018 - 2019

## Vale: Ron Tauranac 1925-2020

We have lost another motorsport legend, of particular relevance to us. As this magazine was going to press, I learned of the death of Ron Tauranac at the age of 95.

Tauranac, Brabham, RALT undoubtedly, three of the most significant Australian names in what was arguably the golden age of international motorsport. Below is a brief piece by Will Hagon, which I have reluctantly and carefully edited. If you would like to know more about Ron and this era, Mike Lawrence's biography, "Brabham, RALT, Honda" is an excellent read. For a more abridged version here is a link to an excellent article on Ron by Michael Stahl, published in Motor Sport in 2014.

<https://www.motorsportmagazine.com/archive/article/january-2014/102/pragmatist>

An essential part of Jack Brabham's marvellous career, Ronald Sidney Tauranac has died, aged 95, on the morning of Friday 17th July. Quietly in his sleep.

Of all the many Australians who have excelled, in many and various ways, in the tough and demanding world of motorsport, none have had as wide an influence, for as long and at the very top, as Ron Tauranac.

He competed himself in cars he built in the 1950s, while also helping Jack Brabham a bit in those early days. Which led to Jack getting him to improve the 1959 Cooper into the low line model that won Jack his second drivers' championship the next year. Not a bad start for a builder of specials in Australia only a few years earlier.

It was on then to the Brabham team and cars that, amazingly with a low budget for the cars and the Australian-developed Repco engine, won two drivers' and two constructors' championships, 1966-67. Appropriately, all Brabham cars were BT followed by a model number. Brabham was sold in 1972, but that was far from the finish for Ron. It was back to RALT cars again, reviving his name and that of his brother Austin Lewis. Put Ron at the front and Tauranac at the rear and there it is, a brand that every aspiring grand prix driver drove in the 1970s - '80s.

He was also the biggest race car constructor in the world, building around 1500 cars! As humble as he was, his achievements were great, for which hundreds of directly affected people have much to thank Ron Tauranac for in their careers.

Truly a motor sport giant.





**canepa**

### New Ford GT Arrivals!

Ford's ultimate road car: The Ford GT. Based on the 2016 24 Hours of Le Mans-winning race car, these Ford GTs each have a special history that put them a lap ahead of the others. One of the most advanced road cars produced by an American manufacturer, Ford returned to the 24 Hours of Le Mans 50 years after their first victory with the GT40 in 1966. Sharing a significant amount of DNA with their racing counterparts, these Ford GTs are one of the closest things you can get to being in a road-legal race car.

Look up the Canepa Collection on YouTube, there is some fabulous stuff there.





## This issue's TSCC Quiz and yes! there is a prize

Colin Piper

Colin is looking for a caption

As a teenager in the early 1960s my petrol-headed instincts developed around the same time as my interest in snorkelling, spearfishing and subsequently scuba diving.

This photo has come my way via an organisation to which I belong, the "Historical Diving Society Australia-Pacific". It really tickled my fancy when I saw it.

It is an American advertisement from 1959 depicting an Austin Healey 100-6 and 2 people, one of whom is about to go diving. The ad, for BMC, says that the car is "The Sports Car for Sportsmen" and 'built to run 'til the road wears out'.

There are members of the HDS who have vast collections of old diving gear, one individual has 20 or so of the old brass helmets in his garage in Sydney, several of which are in working condition and dived regularly at various events. I keep thinking that the HDS should do a few 'shed tours' like those we do from time to time looking at cars.

Anyway, I want a caption for this photo; the best will receive a bottle of wine sometime in the future when the TSCC eventually gets back on the road so to speak. Just email your suggestions to the Secretary by October 1st and the winner will be announced shortly after.

*Just to get into the spirit of things, here's mine: (Ed)*

*"The water comes up to about here, yes, I understand the car park was full and it's difficult to drive with flippers on."*



## The Car's the Star



Lancia Stratos Zero

## The End

