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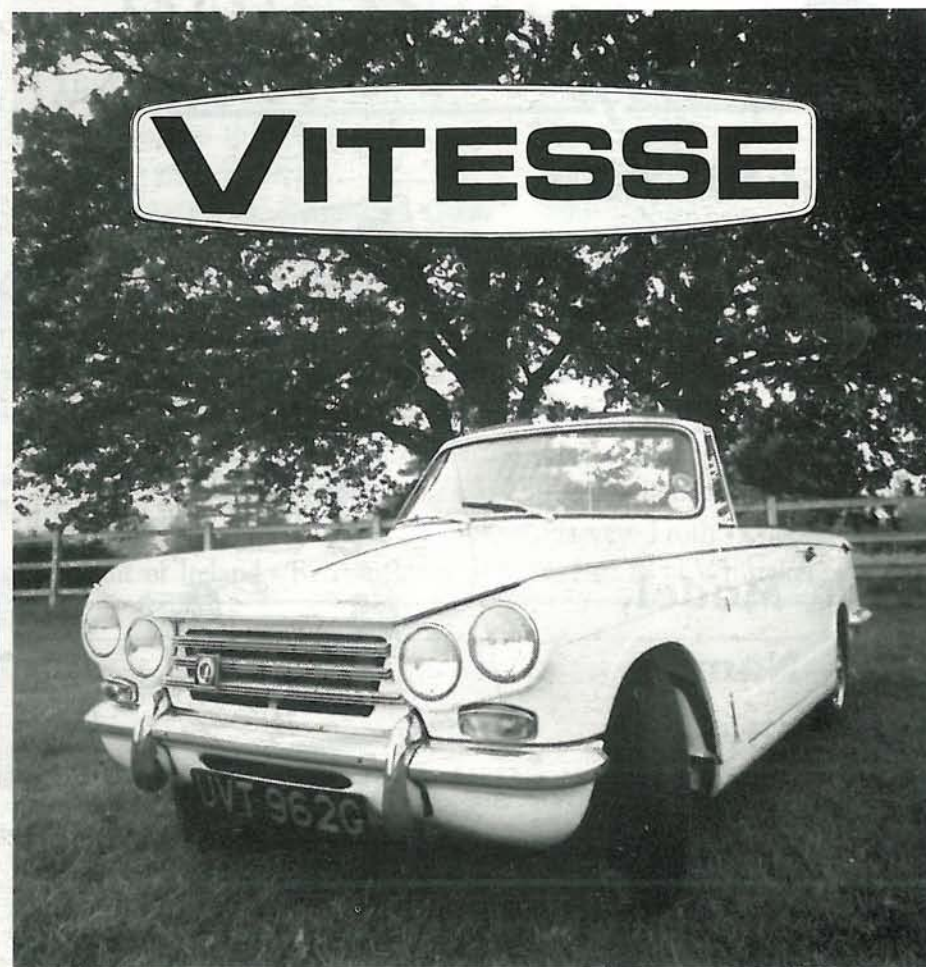
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# Turning Circle

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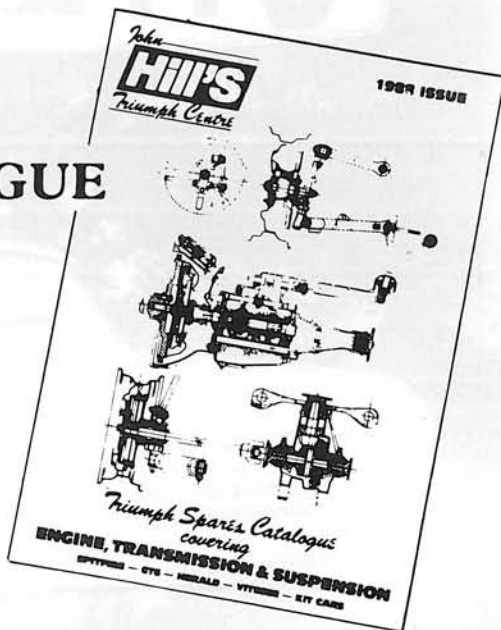
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TURNING CIRCLE  
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# Editorial

With the long summer we've been having, what could be better than the thought of powering along in an open top Vitesse: clear road ahead and even clearer skies above. Conversley, there's nothing much worse than going through the summer with your Vitesse Convertible in pieces on the drive and distributed around the garage which is where the state of my car's rebuild is right now. It's getting there but never fast enough.

Values are rising for all models of the Vitesse along with the so called investment ratings, this does help when deciding on an expensive rebuild but we love our cars for being cars, the road is their rightful place, so lets keep them there!

So for all of you out there with cars on the road, "Enjoy your Vitesse", I'll be back with you next year.

*Pete Williams*

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# ABROAD EXPERIENCE

**John Malcolm**

*Driving abroad can be very enjoyable but sometimes...*

This is a story of a Vitesse Mk2 Convertible and one of its broad experiences. I think it was the summer of 1984 when I decided to take the car abroad. This being the first time driving a right hand drive car on a round trip outwith Britain.

The summer prior to this excursion I prepared the car for Sprint racing as one of a team of 5 club cars. I pressed the machine to its limits on the track and it eventually started to pour black smoke from the exhaust at the end of the season so it was relegated to the garage and a Dolomite purchased for winter motoring.

January saw the plan of the tour budding and a move to sort the car was put into progress. At a club meeting I described my intentions and was offered a GT6 engine for £50 in good running order. The original engine would be put aside for a full rebuild at my leisure.

A major overhaul of all the mechanical parts was a must



to prevent breakdown and eventually the last thing to do was to fit the engine. A new clutch was placed on the existing flywheel and the gearbox bolted up. Some resistance was felt while tightening the two units together and when I tried to turn the crank by hand it was seized solid with still half an inch before both surfaces would meet.

The old engine flywheel was different but when fitted to the new engine, the ring gear was in the wrong place. I then realised that the crankshaft was longer than the old engine. Apparently the engine was from a Triumph 2000

auto hence the different flywheel and the longer crankshaft.

After taking accurate measurements of the components the clutch release bearing carrier was sent to an engineer for shortening. This did the trick but now the starter kept jamming, so I elongated the mounting holes for it in the engine backplate to offset it and it worked.

A test drive proved that all was not well due to a lag prior to the drive train takeup.

I would let the clutch out, the clutch would then slip and then snatch but I got used to it and accepted that it would have to get us round Europe because time had now run out.

AA 5 star insurance to cover everything had been arranged for £55 and green card for insurance arrived the day before we left. A medical certificate was also obtained from the relative Government department although not strictly necessary. Ferry crossings were booked in advance and the route planned to cover 2300 miles from our home in Ayr, Scotland in total. The funds had been saved and amounted to £560.

The first day took us down to a village outside Bedford to stay with relations before catching an early ferry from Felixstow to Zeebrugge in Belgium. The tent was pitched near Brugges and we parked our gleaming white Vitesse

in the Town square car park and admired her as we sipped our drinks in front of the many cafes that surround the square. A similar white colour caught my eye and I was surprised to see a Mk1 GT6 draw up and park in the square. I left my wife and my drink and headed off in the direction of said car. By the time I reached it the driver had disappeared and on close inspection the GT6 was indeed in a near concours state. It was so original and yet so new looking and it sported foreign plates. After having our Italian meal we returned to find that the GT6 was still there. Another good look, then we waited for a while and decided to get an early night.

We packed the tent into the boot and coloured the lights amber and stuck on the black triangles to block the dip beams. Two reflective triangles and tools etc. took up a lot of space and the sleeping bags were kept in the back seats. Hood down we set off in the direction of Luxemborg for the next overnight halt. Driving on the opposite side of the road was no problem for either of us and we planned to drive 200 miles each day for the first legs then 100 miles thereafter or stopping in one place for more than a day to maintain a degree of flexibility.

It became so hot that we had to sport the hats we had bought during our flotilla sailing holiday a couple of years beforehand. After many detours we ended up in a small village in the hills of Luxemborg. We could only find one eating place which only served cheveaux (horse) meat. It was alright.

Next morning we set off to the shops to buy food for a picnic

lunch then headed for southern Germany, again enjoying the sunshine. A short stop for the picnic and a change of drivers and then back onto the main road heading for Saarbrücken. My wife was just changing up from 3rd when she said that it wouldn't go into 4th, so I suggested she try 3rd and 2nd as the car slowed to a halt at the side of the road. No warning and no noises. I sat in the driver's seat and tried changing gear at standstill and it wouldn't enter any gear. I stopped the engine and started it again in gear with the clutch pedal flat to the floor. As I let the clutch up a metal grinding sound like broken gears entered my ears and the car didn't move.

We put the top up for protection from the scorching sun and I set off hitching into Lebach to phone for help armed with dictionary and AA booklet. I phoned the ADAC and gave them the details. Reg.No. SND 521K, and when the girl repeated it she got the K wrong so I hastily said K for Krout then realised what I'd said. There was silence as she held her hand over the phone and when she spoke again I could hear laughter in the background, so they must have taken it light heartedly. Having got a lift in a car via a slip road into the town I had to work out how to get back to my car. I came across a red Spitfire outside a house and called in to find an electrician working away. I managed to communicate but he couldn't leave for another hour and he said he would come along after. Half an hour later I saw my car on another road miles away in the valley. Yes, I had taken the wrong road back. Blisters on my feet I arrived back and we had to wait for hours before the truck

turned up to tow us away. They had been looking for us on the south side of Lebach instead of the north. Meanwhile another Spitfire passed, a BMW stopped and 2 knowledgeable bikers riding old British bikes stopped.

We were taken to a British Leyland dealer who opened up specially on Sunday evening to receive the car and the AA vouchers etc. We decided that because parts might not be immediately available, it would be sensible to send the Vitesse back home. We were then taken to a hotel where we contacted the AA and sorted things out. We were to collect a VW Golf to do us for the rest of the holiday. We were disappointed but grew to like it. That's another story though. We travelled our route to Venice, Italian lakes, Nice and up through Grenoble to Le-Havre over to Southampton to be met by a Hertz rep and a Nova to complete the journey home. The Vitesse wasn't back. A 'phone call revealed that I had omitted to hand the garage my Registration document and until customs had it the car was compounded at the port. Two weeks later I arrived home from work to find it sitting outside the house covered in dust, even inside from its ordeal. A wash and she looked like new.

Luckily we still had alternative transport so I took my time to repair the Vitesse. When the gearbox had been removed it appeared to be fine without going to the trouble of stripping it down, so I decided to remove the clutch pressure plate to inspect the clutch. On removal the clutch plate fell in bits onto the garage floor. The centre had been completely ripped out. I took it back to the supplier



*A sad Vitesse being loaded onto the rescue truck.*

and it was sent to the manufacturer for tests. That was the last I ever heard about it. In the meantime, I refitted the clutch that I had on the old engine and the same symptoms revealed themselves in the lurch in 1st gear though slightly softer because the plate was well worn. The car was now back in regular use and attending club rallies, then one Saturday 400 miles later I jumped into the car, started it, indicated to pull out and let out the clutch; nothing happened except a slight click. Yes, the same thing had happened again in Ayr High Street. She was towed home yet again but making funny rattling noises from the bel-housing. Out came the gearbox and out fell the pieces of clutch plate. I was baffled to say the least, so I decided to leave it alone until I had asked enough people their interpretation of the problem. Everyone was dumfounded and I was getting nowhere. Months passed by and Autumn loomed as I gradually forgot about the Vitesse sitting out of sight in the garage, when, as usual, I was sitting in the quiet room reading my latest edition of the Courier back to front when I shrieked Eurika. The problem was solved. Somebody had experienced the same thing on a Herald and found the trouble to be an engine back plate that was bent.

Gathering myself together I sped off in the direction of the garage, brushing off the cobwebs and clenching a ½" spanner. Bolts were hastily removed as fast as I could and within minutes the backplate was pinned to the floor, only to rock from side to side. Yes, fantastic, it was incredibly bent, or should I say noticeably. A sigh of relief and delight. All because I was a member of the TSSC and had read the Courier. These wee snippets of information are worth their weight in gold. On went the old engine backplate and in with a new clutch and the gearbox. The test drive was beautifully perfect. It had been a year of unsatisfying driving and I had almost lost heart, but of course the easy thing to have done would have been to do up the old engine and I would have had none of the aforementioned heartache. The old engine remains in the corner of the garage today and sadly the car has sat for 3 years outside due to failing its MOT for main chassis rot which prevented the doors from closing properly. Until I can afford to renovate and keep her she will remain in this sorry state. I will never part with her; I dream of her resurrection regularly and the time is getting closer at last.....

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# Changing up to ... ... Automatic!

Tom Longley

*This is the story of two MkII Vitesse and how eventually they became one. Firstly a brief history of each car.*

I acquired a Vitesse MkII Convertible (VGX 175G) in March 1985. She was found in someone's front garden looking very tatty. She had not been used for some time and certainly not cared for and was almost certainly destined for the nearest scrapyard. The owner was glad to get rid of her, a deal was struck and 'Geraldine' as she was soon to be known, became mine.

After a fair amount of work had been carried out she was able to get an MOT and from that day on she became my sole means of transport, my first convertible car and my first six cylinder car all rolled into one! I was delighted. Using, and enjoying, a Vitesse for about 12,000 miles a year necessitated a few modifications in order to improve performance and comfort. Originality was not a major concern as Geraldine was no 'One owner from new, low mileage example'. A few of the modifications include an alternator SU 1 3/4in carburettors, K&N air filters, remote anti-drain oil filter, overdrive and Daimler Sovereign seats. The seats were not easy to install and are a great improvement over the original Vitesse ones and because they are fairly conservatively styled, they do not look out of place.

Despite the overdrive conversion mentioned previously, which was a great success, I had always



*Before the rebuild*

wanted to make Geraldine into an automatic. At this point I think I should say a few words about automatics as I am sure most people reading this will be wondering why I should wish to change from a manual gearbox to an automatic one: the conversion is usually the other way around in the case of Triumph Stags and the like. I have driven a number of powerful automatic cars and have found their performance both exhilarating and effortless. This coupled with ultra-smooth gear changes and the fact that you can keep both hands on the wheel at all times made me really appreciate them. They do also have disadvantages as well, the major one being that they waste power through the torque converter thus losing a certain amount of performance, however in a powerful car this is not a problem. (In recent years, advances in automatic gearbox technology has led to some manufacturers producing automatic models which are quicker and more economic than their manual equivalents).

I do not expect to convert anyone else into preferring automatics, as

the choice between manual gearboxes and automatics is purely personal. I like manual gearboxes and get pleasure from driving them but I happen to prefer an automatic especially when the car is a powerful one. I'm sure I wouldn't enjoy a 1000cc automatic!

I looked into the possibility of converting to automatic quite seriously when I first got the car. My research showed that the obvious choice of a Triumph 2000/2500 automatic gearbox would not fit between the chassis mainrails because of its' wide sump. I did not like the idea of altering the mainrails of a chassis, the cost apart from anything else would probably be prohibitive anyway. Nobody knew of a smaller automatic gearbox which would be suitable, and it was considered too difficult to alter the width of the sump on the Triumph 2000 one. I resigned myself to the fact that I would never have a Vitesse automatic and I certainly did not want to sell her and get something else because I liked her too much to be able to part with her!

All this changed when to my surprise I saw an advert in the September '88 Courier for a Vitesse Mk.II chassis which had been built to order by Leyland to take a Borg Warner automatic gearbox. I could not believe my luck. I rang the owner immediately and arranged to view the chassis which he kindly agreed to keep until I had seen it.

A few days later I and two fellow Herald/Vitesse owners drove up to Solihull where the seller lived. He was extremely helpful and told us everything he knew about the chassis' history. The car it came from was a white Mk.II saloon built in 1971 and registered AAF 555B which we think is a number transferred from an earlier Vitesse. It had left the factory with a 3.27 differential and a Borg Warner type 35 automatic gearbox, surprisingly not the same one as fitted to the Triumph 2000/2500 of that period but the Rover 2000/2200 one. The Borg Warner type 35 fitted to the Triumph 2000/2500 is the same 'box but has a longer tailhousing. The shorter tailhousing of the Rover version allows the gearbox to fit forward of the middle outriggers thus meaning less chassis alterations. In fact all of the outriggers are standard even though the mainrails are considerably modified.



Automatic chassis, two doors, bulkhead and two gearboxes towed back home from Solihull

Later in its' life it was given a 2500cc engine instead of its' original 2-Litre. Also the differential unfortunately seized at some stage and was replaced with a normal Vitesse 3.89 ratio.

The car had failed its' MOT and its' owner had broken it for spares. The rotten saloon bodywork had been removed and the chassis completely stripped. Because of this, we were able to easily assess its' condition: the mainrails were found to be solid which was a relief, but the siderails, outriggers and bootsupports needed to be replaced.

It was not going to be easy but I was determined to put Geraldine onto this chassis and have my dream of an automatic Vitesse come true.

What must have looked like a pile of rubbish to some people was going to be the best thing that happened to my car in the whole of its lifetime. Two weeks later we were towing it home using Geraldine of course (How many cars have the somewhat dubious honour of towing their own new chassis I wonder!). Anyway, she managed the 150 miles with the chassis, the bulkhead, two doors, two gearboxes and three people. Little did she know of what was to come!

A firm called 'New Weld Engineering' had been recommended to me because they had a chassis jig for the Herald/Vitesse. They were a little

bit more expensive than another firm who quoted to do the work but they were friendly and efficient and their work was first rate, so I chose them to do the chassis restoration. They gave it a total renovation employing new outriggers, siderails and bootsupports, sand-blast cleaned it and painted and waxoiled all the box sections. It looked superb.



Rebuilt automatic chassis

While this was going on I managed to obtain another bulkhead which could have the necessary alterations to the floorpans carried out, whilst still keeping Geraldine on the road. The time Geraldine was going to be off the road had to be kept to a minimum as she still had to be my daily transport. This 'new' bulkhead was sound and, because it was stripped and easily moved around by one or two people, remarkably easy to work on. The original floorpans from the automatic had been retained in order to be used as patterns for the 'new' bulkhead. One mounting plate was replaced and the clutch master cylinder attachment holes filled with weld.

All the welds were ground back to neaten their appearance and the two or three days were spent preparing and painting the 'new' bulkhead.



Automatic gearbox mated to engine with manual alongside

When I felt sure I had everything I would need for the rebuild, I took Geraldine off the road and started to dismantle her. That was on the 27th March 1989 and one day later with the help of two friends Geraldine was completely stripped. Where she had stood the day before there was nothing. It was really quite sad to see the car I had done nearly 50,000 miles in, in pieces! It was very easy to strip one of 'our' cars, the difficult part was trying to put things away carefully so they would be easy to find during the rebuild.



Stripping commences

The first things to go onto the new chassis were the front suspension towers. These were cleaned and repainted along with the other front suspension components and put back with a very nice plated-nut-and-bolt kit from 'Classic Automotive'. New front springs and shock absorbers were used and the front suspension completely rebuilt with new bushes, track rod ends, ball joints and so on. Next the rear suspension was installed and soon we had a rolling chassis.



Rolling chassis complete and the rebuild very much under way

The original 2-Litre engine from Geraldine was coupled to the automatic gearbox and with the help of three friends this was lifted into place. On went the 'new' bulkhead, engine ancillaries, dashboard, bonnet, rear body doors and so on...as simple as that. Well, no actually but I'll spare you the gory details.



*Bulkhead meets chassis! Note the lack of clutch pedal*

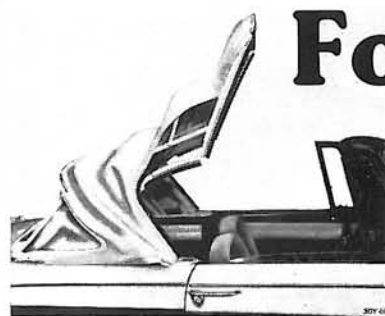
I bought her a new tax disc to start on the 1st of May and by midnight on the 30th April she was ready to go. Four of us piled in and off we went. I was expecting a few problems and sure enough we had them. Firstly, transmission fluid had spilled onto the exhaust pipe and burnt off filling the car with black smoke (the hood was up as it was raining!). Secondly, the gearbox changed up to top at about 5 miles per hour and would not change down! And thirdly, the engine ran hot and lacked power!

'Park' to 'Drive' position a dull thump is felt as power is transmitted through the gearbox. The car starts in first gear and the thing you notice the lack of first gear whine that you normally get with a manual Vitesse. Also the ratio is slightly higher than the manual first gear so you can use it to take you up to higher speeds. Upward changes are almost imperceptible and acceleration seems just as quick as a manual (but without the effort). Opening the throttle a little wider gives you later change-ups and therefore quicker acceleration. Top gear is the same ratio as top in a manual Vitesse so acceleration in top is also similar, though the automatic is probably slightly slower here because of the torque converter losses. However, a Vitesse is not slow in top whether manual or automatic.

The kickdown mechanism is where the automatic really comes into its' own. Pressing the throttle to the floor gives you instant changes down to either intermediate or first, depending on road speed. This gives really startling speed increases. Suddenly you are in a lower gear with full throttle and this, in a Vitesse, is truly exhilarating. I find the automatic a real pleasure to drive. It's very much less tiring around town because you are not constantly pumping the clutch. Fuel economy seems about the same as when she was a manual though possibly not on a long run as I had fitted overdrive to her when she was manual. That is the only drawback for me, I really miss the overdrive. fitting a 3.27 diff. will help as it will give a higher overall gearing and I hope to fit one soon. Of course acceleration will not be so good from rest, but the 2-Litre should cope. Perhaps a 2.5-Litre?...Well maybe in the future.

Was it worth it? Definately. I've created a car I really like (It'll probably breakdown immediately now that I've said that!) and it's still very much a Vitesse in character. I take it to a number of shows and weekend events and it always gets shown a great deal of interest. That's one of the nice things about the Sports Six Club - the friendly response to each others' cars, whatever the condition.

Since I made my automatic Vitesse I have heard of two other special order automatics: one a 1600 and the other another 2-Litre Mk.II. Anyone with any information on these or any other special order automatic Club cars would be gratefully accepted. ★



# Folding Your Hood... ...The Right Way

**Mike Crewes**

*A little while ago our esteemed Turning Circle Editor published an article in the Courier on how to fold a Convertible Herald/Vitesse hood. The article included a couple of important omissions and when I mentioned this to him the reply was, "Well do an article showing the correct way then!" Well, after much pushing and nagging, I eventually put it together. Regular readers will see similarities to Pete's original article but with the important additions highlighted along the way. Here it is.*



Figure 1 - With the hood in the erected position, first gently dust the plastic windows with a clean cloth making sure not to rub any of the dust into the material. This will stop the windows from scratching when folded and stop them from turning opaque, ultimately prolonging the hood's life. Next, undo the windscreen rail clips and pull the windscreen rail upwards.



Figure 2 - With the door window seals at about 45 degrees, fold the plastic windows into the hoodwell making sure not to crease them at the corners...



Figure 3  
...and along the rear.



Figure 4 - Pull the windscreen rail upwards with one hand, whilst pulling the excess roof material over the second rail, outwards with the other hand.



Figure 5 - Fold the frame into the hoodwell, tidying away the clips and laying the excess roof material on the rear deck.



Figure 6 - Fold the excess roof material tidily over the frame.



Figure 7 - Fit the hood cover or tonneau. This should lie flat with no bumps if the roof has been folded properly.

The above method can also be found in the Owners' Handbook. It is the best way to fold the hood both for its' protection and for folding it right down into the hoodwell.

Some don'ts:-

**NEVER** fold the hood if it is cold, iced or snowed over as this will crack the material.

**NEVER** fold the hood by pulling the material - pull the frame.

**NEVER** crease the hood during folding, this will weaken and eventually rip the hood.

Quite simple - all common sense really.

Thanks very much to Bob who kindly lent his lovely Vitesse and his services at Stanford Hall for the hood folding sequence shown. ★

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# Vitesse 1600 / MK 1 Originality Guide

John Thomason

John takes us through everything that you'd always wanted to know but didn't know enough to ask concerning the differences between these two fine models.



1600 Press Car



2-Litre Mk.1 Press Car

The Vitesse 1600 was first introduced in April 1962 and remained in production until September 1966. During this 4 year period, 31,261 cars were built: 22,814 Saloons and 8,447 convertibles. The 1600 was replaced by the Vitesse 2-Litre Mk.1 in September 1966. A total of 10,830 cars: 7,328 Saloons and 3,502 convertibles were produced, up until September 1968 when the 2-Litre Mk.2 was introduced.

The most obvious differences between the 1600 and 2-Litre Mk.1 were mechanical, namely:- the increased engine capacity, stronger all synchromesh gearbox, stronger and lower ratio rear axle, and larger front discs and callipers to cope with the increased performance. However, there were other changes between the two models as I hope to show below. Indeed the 1600 saw several changes throughout its production run, although no changes were introduced to the 2-Litre Mk.1 during its 2 year production run. Where possible, I have included the commission number at which the change occurred.

The approximate tie-up between key commission numbers and dates is as follows:-

1600	HB 1	DL	April 1962
	HB 6,798		Feb 1963
	HB 15,001		Sept 1963
	HB 27,985		June 1965
	HB 34,053		Sept 1966
2-Litre Mk.1	HC 1	DL	Sept 1966
	HC 12,079		Sept 1968





## INTERIOR

Figure 1 - One of the most distinctive features of the early Vitesse 1600 was the dashboard. Fitted up to Comm.No. HB 15,000 only, the dash was very similar to the Herald 1200, with a single central instrument indicating speed and fuel. You had to guess the engine temperature!

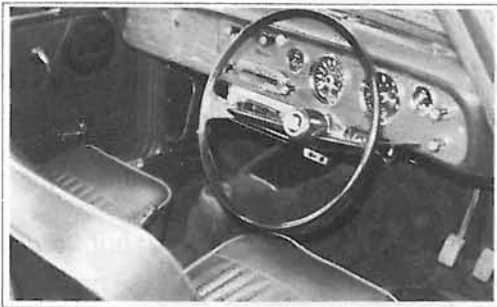


Figure 2 - Later 1600's were fitted with a more comprehensive dashboard. I suspect as a result of Triumph Marketing demanding a more distinctive, up-market dash compared to the Herald

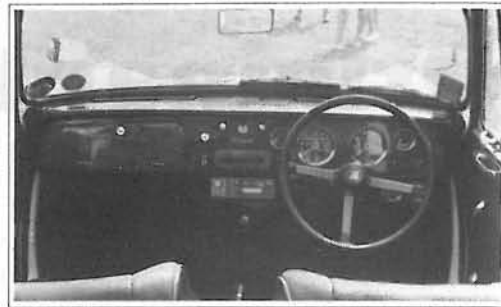


Figure 3 - The 2-Litre Mk.1 dash was essentially the same as the later 1600 dash. The 2-Litre was fitted with the more luxurious, TR4 style leather rimmed steering wheel.

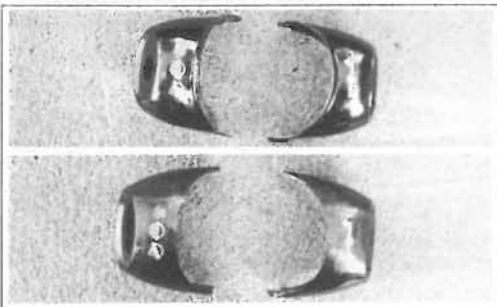


Figure 4 - Early 1600's were fitted with steel steering column switchgear cowls (top) whereas later 1600's and 2-Litre Mk.1's had the more common plastic variety (bottom).

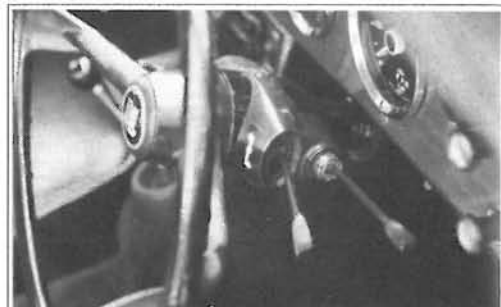


Figure 5 - If the overdrive optional extra was fitted then a new cowl was fitted, combining the indicator and overdrive stalk controls.

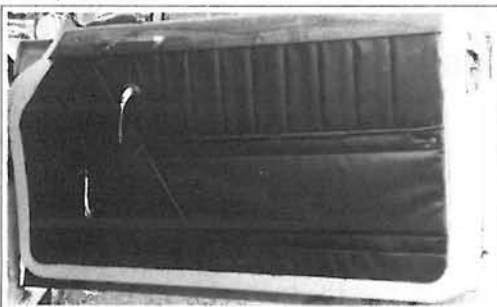


Figure 6 - All 1600 Vitesse's were fitted with map pockets on the door trim.



Figure 7 - On 2-Litre Mk.1's, the door trim panel was simplified, the vertical pattern being deleted. This was also the case on the rear trim.



Figure 8 - 1600 seats were available in either vinyl or leather. Up to Comm.Nos. HB 18,764, colours available were Black, Matador Red and Phantom Grey. Thereafter Midnight Blue and Cactus were added to the range.

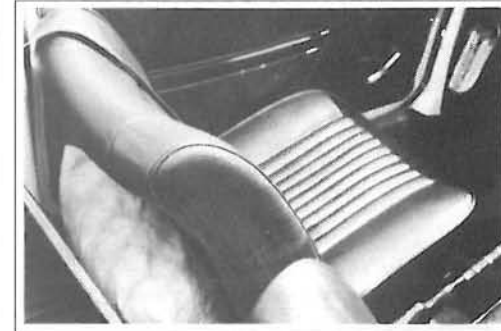


Figure 9 - 2-Litre Mk.1 seats were better shaped than the 1600 seats, again available in either leather or vinyl. Light Tan and Shadow Blue were added to the 1600 colour range, while Phantom Grey was deleted.



Figure 10 - 1600 sun visors were un-padded with an oval shaped vanity mirror on the passenger's visor. *Other differences between the 1600 and 2-Litre Mk.1 interiors comprised:-*

1. 1600's, up to Comm.No. HB 15,000 were not fitted with the passenger's footwell map pocket, as fitted to all subsequent Vitesse's.
2. 1600's were supplied with a distinctive grey/white fleck carpet, whereas 2-Litre Mk.1's were supplied with black carpet.
3. A layer of sound deadening felt was fitted between the roof and headlining and also underneath the rear seat squab on 1600's. I do not believe that this was fitted to 2-Litre Mk.1's.
4. Speedo calibration changed to accommodate the change in rear axle ratio from 4.11:1 to 3.89:1 and the fitting of radial or crossply tyres. Some 2-Litre Mk.1's appear to be fitted with a speedo calibrated at 20mph intervals as opposed to 10mph intervals as shown in Figure 3 (depending upon how much the photo is reduced!).



Figure 11 - 2-Litre Mk.1 sun visors were padded while the mirror was more rectangular in shape.

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## BODY



Figure 12 - The 1600 front grill with the Triumph emblem on the top of the bonnet.



Figure 13 - On the 2-Litre Mk.1, the grill remains the same but a 2-Litre badge is added. The Triumph badge is deleted. A smaller 2-Litre badge is fitted above the bonnet catches on either side of the bonnet.



Figure 14 - Badges on the rear of the 1600. Note the correct position of the optional overdrive badge.



Figure 15 - The rear of the 2-Litre Mk.1. The number plate bezel is cut out to accommodate a combined number plate light and reversing light. The inset shows the correct position of the 2-Litre Mk.1 overdrive badge.



Figure 16 - Up to Comm.Nos. HB 25,738 and intermittently until HB 26,125, the rear indicator covers were clear (right) and had an internally attached lens. Later 1600 and 2-Litre Mk.1 covers were ribbed (left) with the separate lens being deleted.

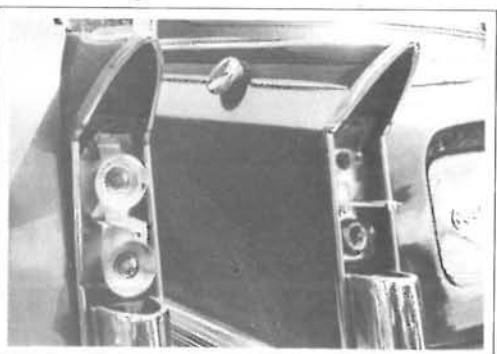


Figure 17 - The different lenses necessitated different bulb holders & reflectors. Early type right, later type left.

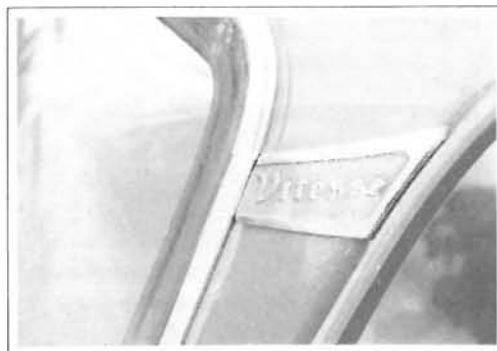


Figure 18 - Vitesse 1600's up to Comm.No. HB 2,855 were fitted with a 'Vitesse' rear roof pillar badge. These are very rare - I have only ever seen one.

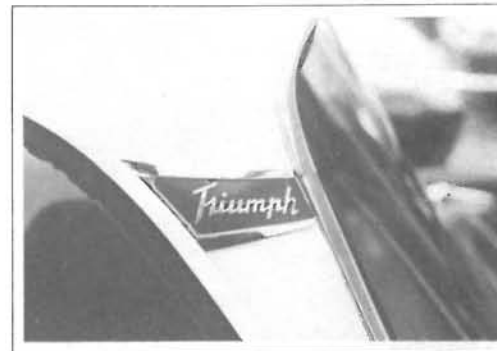


Figure 19 - The more common Triumph badge fitted to all subsequent Vitesse. The coloured background was available in Black, Blue or Red.

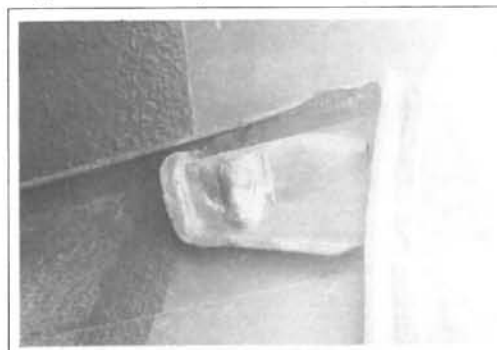


Figure 20/21 - Early Vitesse 1600's were fitted with the simple early 1200 Herald style bonnet brackets.

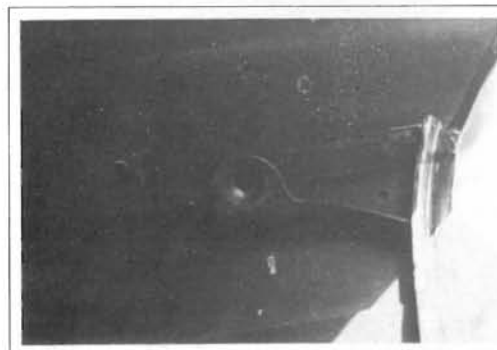
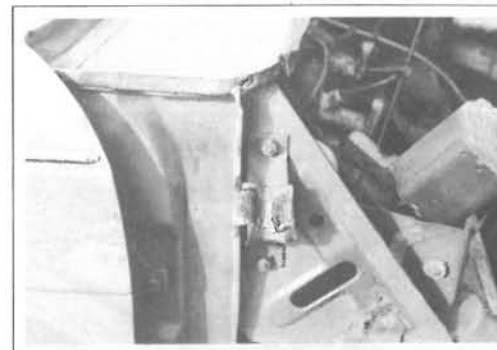


Figure 22/23 - Later Vitesse were fitted with the more common bonnet 'cone' type of location.

*Other changes to the Vitesse bodywork include:-*

1. Early 1600's were fitted with stainless steel finishers around the windscreen and rear side window seals. All subsequent Vitesse were fitted with the horrible plastic finishers that fades with age.
2. Early 1600's were equipped as standard with a

bottle jack as opposed to the later more common scissor jack.

3. The boot floor of some 1600's was covered in a sheet of bitumous sound deadening material. I don't believe that this was the case with the 2-Litre Mk.1.

## ENGINE BAY

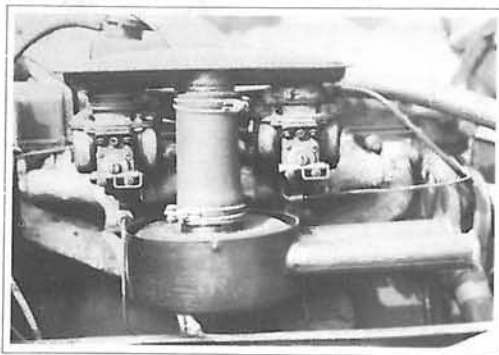


Figure 24 - The most striking changes to the 1600 engine bay were the different carbs fitted. Up to engine nos. HB 6,798 Twin Solex B.32 P1H Downdraft carbs were fitted.

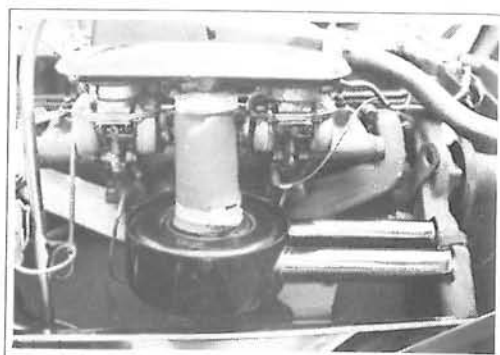


Figure 25. - From engine nos. HB 6,799 to HB 27,985 Twin Solex B.32 1H carbs were fitted, the major difference being the jet block and the deletion of the accelerator pump. The distinctive air filter case and air box remained.

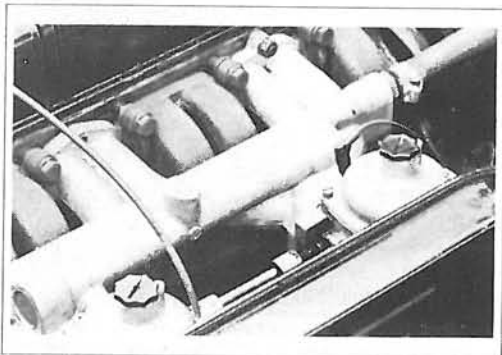


Figure 26. - From engine nos. HB 27,986 onwards the more familiar Twin Zenith Stromberg 150 CD carbs were fitted, requiring a different inlet manifold (heated) and air filter box.

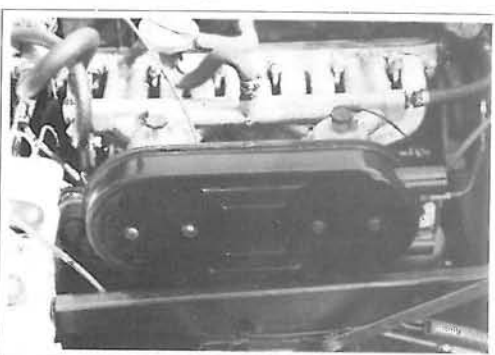


Figure 27 - All 2-Litre Mk.1's were fitted with the Stromberg 150 CD carbs, retaining the same inlet manifold and air box as the later 1600's. Note that the inlet manifold is now drilled to accept the crankcase breather valve.

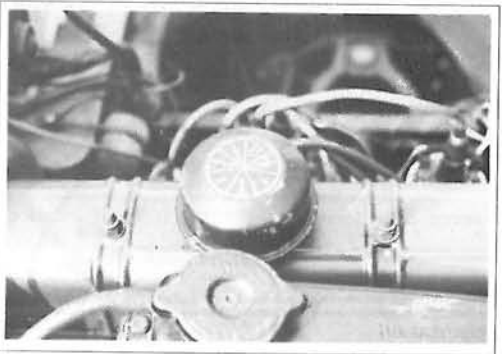


Figure 28. - On the 1600 crankcase, breathing was simply via vents in the oil filler cap on the rocker cover. Note the transfer.

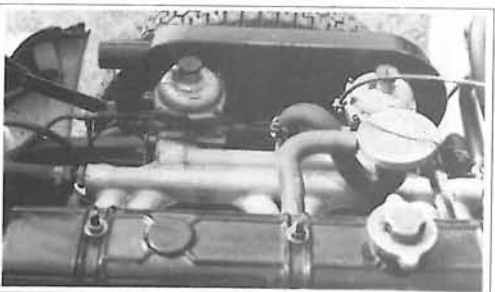


Figure 29. - With the crankcase breather valve fitted to 2-Litre Mk.1 inlet manifolds the rocker cover incorporated a breather pipe outlet and a sealed oil filler cap.

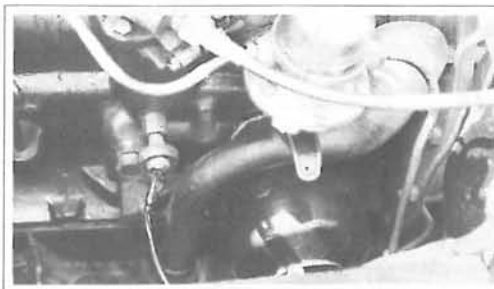


Figure 30 - On the 1600, further crankcase breathing was achieved by a breather pipe on the left-hand side of the engine block.



Figure 31 - On early 2-Litre Mk.1's, this was blanked off, while on later Mk.1 engine blocks, it was removed completely from the block casting.



Figure 32 - 1600's up to engine nos. HB 27,986 were fitted with water pump housings with a single tapping for the temperature sender unit.



Figure 33 - Subsequent Vitesse water pump housings had two tappings, one supplying coolant to the heated inlet manifold, & one for the temperature sender unit, now on the other side of the housing.

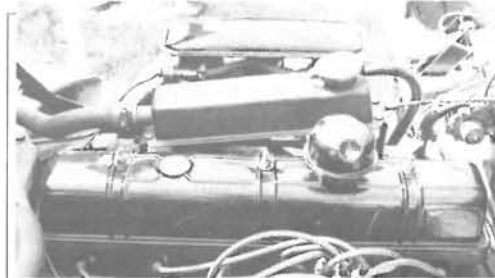


Figure 34 - The other distinctive feature of 1600 engine bays up to engine nos. HB 27,986 is the separate radiator header tank. This was removed from subsequent Vitesse, requiring the fitting of a different radiator with only one top hose connection.



Figure 35 - A curiosity on 1600's up to Comm. Nos. HB 15,000 was the pressure sensing hydraulic brake warning light switch fitted to the brake pipe union on the RHS of the engine bay. Subsequent Vitesse used the pedal operated switch.

### Other engine bay differences include:-

1. At HB 15,000 the distributor changed from a Lucas 25D6 to a Delco Remy D200 which included a cable drive to the Rev Counter introduced at this point. This was then replaced by the Delco Remy D202 on 1600 Vitesse after engine no. HB 16,302 and all 2-Litre Mk.1's.
2. Triumph couldn't make up their minds about the type of accelerator control to use:-

HB 1 to HB 7,604	cable operated
HB 7,605 onwards	mechanical lever operated
HC 1 to HC 4,814	mechanical lever operated
HC 4,815 to HC 4,910	lever/cable operated
HC 4,911 onwards	cable operated

3. Because of the larger discs and callipers fitted to the front of the 2-Litre Mk.1, the brake master cylinder was increased in size. *I hope I haven't given Originality Class Concours judges too much ammunition!* ★



*"Oh My God, Not Another One!!" my Parents would say, as I bought yet another Vitesse home. The story so far.....*

I bought my first car, a 1971 Triumph Herald in Wedgewood Blue, RBK 262J and was, after passing my driving test in it, promptly overtaken by a funny looking Herald with funny lights and lovely wheel trims travelling extremely fast. "I want one" I shouted, and the next week I did, in fact, buy one. BPA 708H was a 2 litre MkII Saloon in Dolphin Grey. I found the car, marked with a "For Sale" sticker outside a pub in Southampton and promptly closed the deal - £300. The unfortunate thing was that about once a week something would go extremely wrong with the car, the differential would explode, the gearbox would stop, or the wiring would short, but it was good fun getting it sorted out and gradually the feeling of the car coming together was something that was worth waiting for.

Then, one day a friend offered me a 2 litre MkII convertible with overdrive for £100. From the bulkhead back the car was in very good condition, although the front suspension and bonnet had suffered damage, due to the fact that the car had been in an accident. I promptly unbolted all the goodies off the MkII Saloon and bolted them on to the convertible including the bonnet and front suspension. SUF 430H was then taken down to the body shop and resprayed to bring it all into one colour. The old Saloon was sold to an enthusiast for a good price, and she is still

# NOT ANOTHER ONE!!

**Mark. E. Farrell**



currently undergoing restoration. I had good times in the convertible and gradually added bits and pieces including a Kenlowe fan Then I went and did something extremely silly, I am afraid I part exchanged SUF 430H for a Lotus Elan Plus 2S which is generally a good car if sorted out and mechanically sound. Mine wasn't and it was absolute rubbish. Ah, well, my lesson learnt. Straight back to Vitesses and I bought JGC 104C. A car previously owned by a chap called Kevin Parfoot, which he rebuilt himself and was in fact featured in a 1988 Courier magazine. It was in my favourite colour Wedgewood Blue with a lovely white stripe running down

her side and also had a sun roof and overdrive, as well as an extremely attractive cactus coloured interior. Although the car was in excellent condition, it lacked the punch of the MkII Vitesse. So, I sold her and with the money went shopping for a new car. My New Vitesse was found in a little village just north of Basingstoke. There were a few slight problems with her including a glaring pink stripe running across the Sienna brown paintwork, as well as an extremely dirty engine bay and a dodgy universal joint on one of the rear half shafts. Now, nearly a year later, I have got a Vitesse exactly the way I want

her HPX 305H had come through it all and now boasts a new coat of Sienna brown paintwork, new universal joints all the way round, new trunions front and rear, new shock absorbers front and rear, high quality fabric sliding sun roof, twin SAH exhaust system (what a noise!!) and a Kenlowe fan (what a difference!!). The car has only covered 74,000 miles from brand new and runs extremely well. Especially, it is amazing the difference that the Kenlow, shock absorbers and trunions have actually made together to the overall handling and power of this Vitesse. I love these cars, they are absolutely brilliant. I promise not to buy any more Lotus Elans. ★



# Members Cars

## Triumph Vitesse GBD 113D

Charles Brotherton

GBD 113D was built in January 1966 at Triumph's Canley factory in Coventry. It was the 20,856th 1600cc Saloon built since their introduction in May 1962.

When Mr W Roberts was looking for a replacement for his MGTD - caused by the growth of his daughter - he wanted a car that could be easily maintained and had sporting performance. After touring around the car showrooms he decided upon a Triumph Vitesse. The order was placed in January with Yates of Stockport: the car arriving six weeks later, and duly registered on the 8th March 1966. The car was supplied in white with a black flash and red interior - thus emulating the first works Triumph Vitesse Rally car as entered in the 1962 RAC Rally. Along with the option of overdrive and wing mirrors, the car cost £846.

In 1969, Mr Roberts' work with Rolls Royce (Aero Engines) moved, taking the family from Hazel Grove to Allestree Derby. As a consequence, the car was now maintained by Rally Motor Ltd. Derby, who carried out all repairs and MOTs until 1986.

As the family's only car it was well used, making numerous runs to Eglwyswal, Dyfed for family holidays. However, such use began to show and in October 1985 the engine was rebuilt after 125,091 miles. Therefore this is a testament to Triumph engineering, and the useability of the Vitesse saloon as a family car.

However, Mr Roberts, after 20 years began hankering for another car and duly purchased a new Vauxhall Cavalier, advertising the Vitesse in August 1986. Thus I became the proud second owner of GBD 113D, a high mileage but well maintained Triumph Vitesse.

The car is still in regular daily use back in the city of its birth: Coventry. In addition, the car has taken part in a number of 'car' events including two Norwich Union RAC Classic Runs. The car is original and unrestored (other than the engine) and has proved extremely reliable as it approaches 140,000 miles. It is a very enjoyable car to drive and I look forward to many more miles of Vitesse motoring. ★

## HLT 937C

Tom Nicholson's 1965 Vitesse 6 has had a full body off restoration and is currently in, as you can see, very nice condition. Since the photos were taken, Tom's aim of returning the car to original specification including removing the front spots and reversing lights, refitting original wheels to replace the Marina items shown and fitting new carpets has been achieved. Anyone who uses their Triumph daily will agree with Tom's comment that keeping the car up to scratch is quite a job but that it's well worth it. I certainly agree. ★



Though taken a few years ago, the happy Vitesse pictured here is still going strong along with its owner Lorna Moss, pictured here with her late brother. May Lorna and the car keep travelling together for many a year to come. ★



The Editor's Vitesse two thirds of the way through having its chassis restored. Both rear outriggers weren't welded along the top edge and as the condition described in Stan Walters' article were flapping in the breeze. ★



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## Trust the experts

# Vitesse / Herald Body Removal & Replacement

**Stan Walters**

*SW Classics' Stan Walters offers some very welcome advice concerning body removal and the art of body replacement.*

Whilst many owners of these cars do not hesitate to tackle the more apparently straightforward tasks on these vehicles, there are few who are willing to have a go at body removal and replacement aspects of restoration. I am hoping that this bit of information from the 'Trade' might make someone's life a little easier.

Firstly, a basic toolkit comprising of AF ring spanners and sockets, hammer, wrecking bar and an angle grinder with cutting discs should see the body removed, although if possible, additional access to some oxyacetylene equipment would be very useful. Although releasing all the bolts etc. can be carried out by one man (or woman), help will be needed when you come to lift the body sections away.

To start with, the bonnet should be removed, but in order to do this, the front overrides and valance need to be removed first. Before disconnecting lights and horns, be sure to remove the

battery first. Remove the bonnet stays and springs. Then, with the bonnet closed, from the front of the bonnet remove the bolts securing the frame to the adjusting brackets. The bonnet assembly can now be removed. Next, remove the doors and bootlid. If you are restoring a saloon, the roof is the next obstacle. Access to the bolts securing the front of the roof is gained by removing the sunvisors and rear view mirror.

There are three bolts securing the rear of the roof to the rear deck, these can be seen from below the rear deck. All that remains here to have an instant convertible is a bolt at the base of each side pillar

behind the vinyl. A bit of leverage here and there and it's off.

Next we turn to the backend. Remove all seats, trim, carpets and fuel tank. Remove both sills and you should have revealed the four body bolts up each side of the car. Before going any further don't forget to remove the rear handbrake cable. Obviously when working underneath the car make sure that the chassis is securely raised up on axle stands.

Let's now turn our attention to the sixteen body bolts and eight self tapping screws which secure the body to the centre outriggers. The first bolts to remove should be the

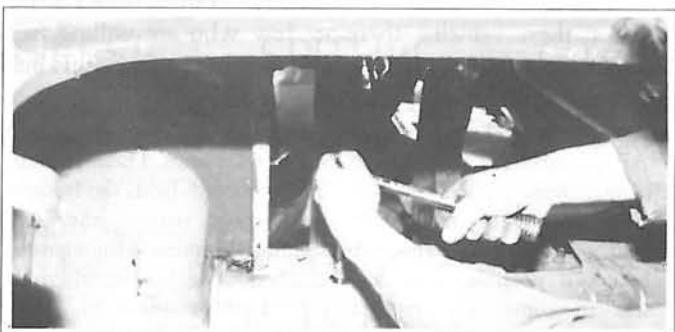
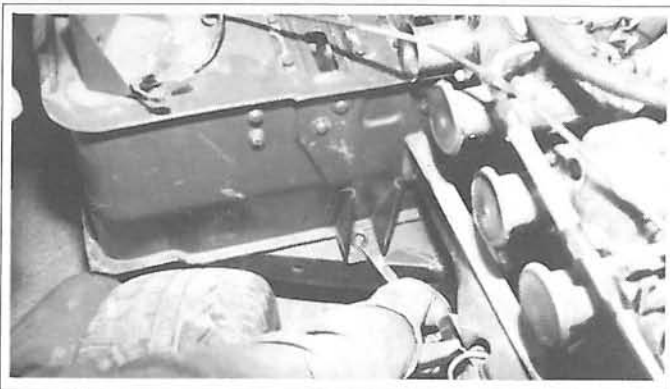
bulkhead to front outriggers: these bolts very seldom become seized.

Next, move to the rear of the car and remove the two bolts in each corner of the boot floor.

Next, forward of the the bootfloor on the raised section can be seen one large rubber grommet in each side. Remove the grommets to expose two more bolts which can now be removed. All that remains is to remove the four bolts along each siderail: very seldom can these bolts be removed easily as they are continuously exposed to the elements. This is where the angle grinder and oxyacetylene gear (or other form of localised heat) come in very useful. After removal of these often stubborn bolts, all that is left is the inboard seatbelt eyes and the eight self tappers across the floor. With the help of a couple of friends the backend can now be lifted off. After removal of the steering shaft and various cables from the bulkhead to the engine, the front bulkhead section can also be removed.

Seeing the chassis from this angle can often reveal lots of horrors, especially if outriggers have been replaced with the body in situ. In fact I often wonder how some of these cars actually pass the MOT with outriggers welded on three sides only and flapping in the breeze. This is now surely the time to put all this to rights.

(Too true. When I recently removed the body from my Vitesse it was found to have had its rear outriggers miswelded on in exactly this manner - ED).



## Chassis Repairs

If you are a competent welder then replacing the odd outrigger should present no problems. A MIG welder is ideal for this sort of work. But be warned, it is imperative to fit any new outriggers in the correct positions if the body is to be refitted with minimal packing between body and chassis. Placing a straight edge across the chassis should ensure that the outriggers are not fitted 'drooping' downwards. Without the use of a jig, the best way of positioning them correctly fore and aft is to replace them one at a time. If this is not possible then measurements will have to be taken from the 'Datum Line' shown in the original workshop manual. Replacement of the rear extensions is a different matter as again without some sort of jig the backend will have to be lifted on, the new extensions tacked in place, the backend lifted off again and then the extensions welded in properly. Always check the chassis thoroughly in the main rails especially either side of the differential. Severe rust here and repairs tend to be a bit more involved. These should be entrusted to an expert.

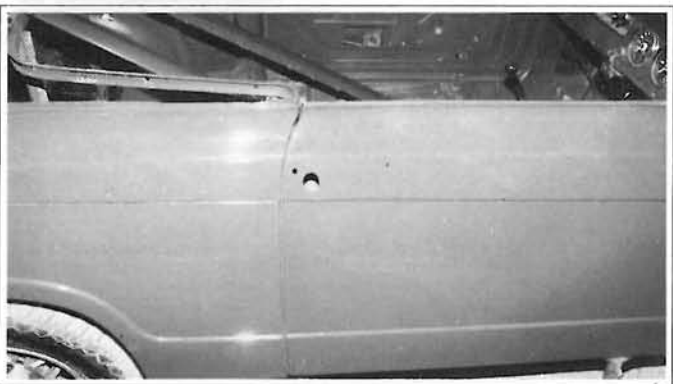
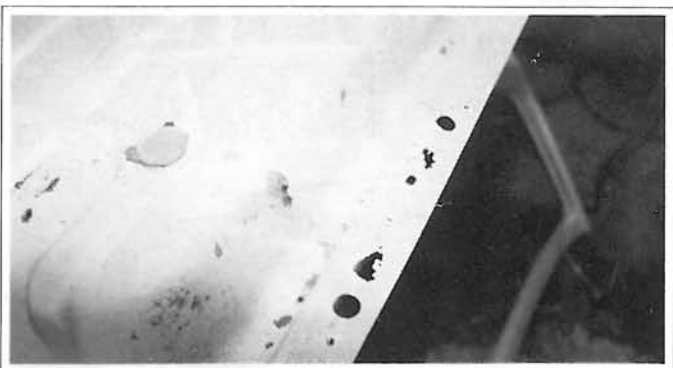
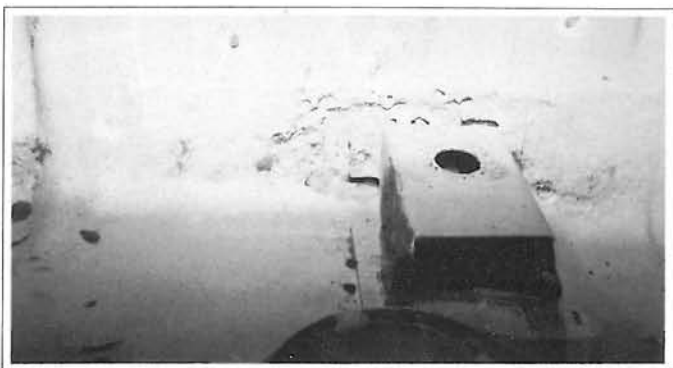
## Body Refitting

Before refitting the body sections, they should be turned over and a close inspection made of the body mounting brackets. These should be replaced or repaired as necessary as should be the adjacent floor areas. Any weakness in these areas and you will never be able to achieve the correct door and bonnet gaps. Once satisfied that all is well in this department, the front bulkhead section should be fitted. This section once bolted in position is not adjustable unlike the rear end which is. Place one new mounting pad under each mounting bracket and mounting strips between the rear floor edge of the front foot well and the centre outriggers using new bolts and captive plates. Loosely bolt down the bulkhead section.

Next, lift the backend onto the chassis and secure in the same manner as the bulkhead. Do not bolt anything down tightly until the doors are fitted in position. Once this is done you will be able to work your way around the vehicle adding shims where required between body and chassis in order to give correct gaps around the doors. I try to aim for something in the region of 1/4 to 5/16in gaps all round. Do not expect to achieve this easily as I find a full day should be allowed. When all this is done, refit the bonnet having freed up the adjusting rods first. Fun and games is also the norm for this operation.

To attain the correct gaps between doors, bonnet and scuttle you will need to alter the adjusting rods. If this does not give you the desired perfection you will need to consider heating and bending the bonnet support frame on the 'U' bend at the bottom.

If all this work is carried out methodically and taking plenty of time to think about things, an excellent result can be achieved. This part of the restoration process of Vitesse and Heralds is however my 'Pet Hate' so good Luck. ★



*Aim for 1/4 to 5/16in gaps all round. Although it takes time, the end result is well worth the extra effort.*



# A Light-hearted Woman's View of the Vitesse

Leslie Ann Last

*... That was my brief. I didn't feel like a light-hearted woman - at an office in Mayfair - my tortured body in 88 degrees, eve of the umpteenth rail strike, when Dennis Benson from the TSSC telephoned. My guess is therefore that the brief should have been 'A Woman's **Light-hearted View** of the Vitesse'.*

Vitesse progressed to 'politesse', alas short of bribery (TSSC don't pay for articles). Could you have tolerated a light-hearted woman? My view won't take long.

'Glam' (GLM 754J) is a Mk.II Vitesse Convertible in Valencia Blue which became my first and only car in February (strange time to buy a convertible) 1986 from a local newspaper advertisement in the town where I live, East Barnet. You know the stuff, "One lady owner, vicar's wife, only done 55,000 'odd' (!) miles (who the lady or the vicar?) - only used for shopping.

Nothing much has changed: I too only use it for shopping and on Sundays (to country pubs). GLAM has only done 56,316 miles but





am married to a man who by no stretch of the imagination could be described as 'vicar material'. If that is the criteria for a lady Vitesse owner perhaps I should get rid of him? No, that's silly. I've only been married 9 months - see photo - (so what if the right fender fell off!)

I can't help but muse over what might be the 'image' of Vitesse drivers. In the 1960's, a Vitesse was the conveyance of trendy young men - I'm told the word then used was 'Mod' but how would I know being just a filly myself? I don't agree with either of the above definitions of a Vitesse driver.

If I were to be asked what car in the world I would like to own, I wouldn't change - you must believe that if you are to follow my sentiment. My husband, demon on wheels, drives - CORRECTION - rides a Sierra 4x4 (glorified sofa). So do I need electric windows when, with my Vitesse, I can take the lid off? My only temptation towards another car came at a TSSC club night when I fell in love with a black GT6 - why didn't I succumb? - no lid. When it came to my Cousin's nuptials did the bride want to use the Sierra for the wedding car?

Guess who got the job - high honour indeed if you know my cousin. How many Sierras do you pass on the M25, clockwise or anticlockwise: the front is the same as the back. Do those Ford drivers experience the magic I do when I turn on the ignition? My car has never let me down... Well if you don't count the time my brakes failed (no fluid) on the fun run at 'Wheels and Wings' 1988 when I was behind a vintage MG. I go cold remembering it was he who

won the prize that year. Well, so, I got a medal too! The lid had been known to leak a bit but only on the passenger side - it wasn't me GLAM was letting down, only the Sierra driver!

How many girls (?) at 33 years, overweight and responsible parent of two Burmese kittens, can get in a car, topless and feel like a 25 year old, long legged blonde - Vicar's wife? Twin-sets and pearls - NEVER.

Possibly my greatest pleasure in driving GLAM is flashing other Vitesse drivers in recognition of their exceedingly good taste and my favourite amusement is when they, in their confusion, pull over in case something drastic like their wheels for instance, have taken a hike, at which time I wave my TSSC recruitment forms conspicuously. I have not yet been rewarded - I wonder why that is?

So, who cares if I don't know what differentials are? Am I any less of an enthusiast? I was due to be driven from my wedding in a chauffeured car but telephoned hubbie-to-be at 4.30am on the day in tears, "Please bring my car". I reckon if a bridegroom at that wee hour on his wedding day would get up polishing GLAM he must be on my team, Sierra driver or not.



So, patient readers, if you see me at traffic lights in GLAM, handbag swinging on the choke knob or kangarooing up a hill in the wrong gear, - please say "hello", and you can bet I'll be feeling LIGHT-HEARTED! ★

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## Vitesse 2-Litre Mk1/MK2 Brief Performance Specification Comparison

### Shaun Mitchell

Data from: Vitesse 2-Litre and 'Mk2 pre-launch Press Information pack.

#### Vitesse 2-Litre...

"The outstanding characteristics of the Triumph Vitesse - 6-Cylinder engine power and compact comfort - have been improved upon with the introduction of the new Vitesse 2-Litre".....

....."Few alterations are made to the popular styling while the basic dimensions of the car are retained, but a higher powered engine, a modified version of that of the Triumph 2000, has given a marked increase in power from 70 - 95bhp. The new Vitesse is still the least expensive six cylinder car in Britain by over £100".....

#### ...and on the Mk2

"During its six years in production the Triumph Vitesse has earned itself a unique niche in the UK and European car markets. Its appeal derives largely from a combination of features - saloon car comfort and compactness, sports car performance at a relatively modest price."...

..."Initially introduced in 1962 with a 1598cc 6-cylinder engine, it incorporated many of the best features of the Herald - unrivalled manoeuvrability, separate chassis, fully independent suspension - combined with much improved performance. In 1965 it received a big power increase with the fitment of the 2-Litre engine. The interior was restyled at the same time. The Mk.2 Vitesse 2-Litre is a refined version of the 2-Litre - it produces 10% more power, and has a restyled interior and completely redesigned rear suspension"...

..."The Vitesse 2-Litre Mk.2 is still the lowest priced 6-cylinder car on the UK market and offers excellent value for the motorist who requires a compact saloon with sports car performance and handling."...

	Vitesse 6	Vitesse 2-Litre	Vitesse 2-Litre Mk.2
Engine			
Number of Cylinders	6	6	6
Cylinder Bore		74.7mm	74.7mm
Stroke		76mm	76mm
Capacity	1596cc	1998cc	1998cc
R.A.C. Rating		20.8hp	20.8hp
Compression Ratio		9.5:1	9.25:1
Max Power	70bhp at 5000rpm (solex)	95bhp at 5000rpm	104bhp at 5300rpm
Max Torque		117lb.ft at 3000rpm	117lb.ft at 3000rpm
Acceleration 0-60mph	17.1sec	12.5 sec	11.0 sec
Top gear acceleration 40-60mph		8.0sec	8.0sec
Top gear acceleration 60-80mph		11.8sec	10.0sec
Max Speed	90mph	100mph	103mph
		(depending on conditions!)	

(Data for Vitesse 6 given where included in 2 litre information packs).

# From Rags



## to Riches...

### ...The Story Continues

Dennis Benson

*Since my article in the last Vitesse Turning Circle (November 1985) titled 'From Rags to Riches', I have covered many miles in my Vitesse Mk.II Convertible - UVT 962G.*

After entering several Concours events and coming close second or more often unplaced, I decided that if I was ever going to win I would have to make some dramatic improvements ie. remove all the underseal, which took me hours to put on and re-finish all of the engine bay. Luckily my Concours marks were quite good on exterior, a few problems with chromework but on the whole fairly impressive. The interior was almost faultless but the engine bay was poor which in all fairness to my mind was excellent but after seeing some of the other cars, the standard was worlds apart from mine.

December 1985 in the outback of sunny Bromsgrove: engine bay stripped and the painstaking job of removing underseal started to take place. The underside of the bonnet had been sprayed in body Schultz - all over the wheel arches, the wings as well as the headlamp front panel and bonnet top. The bulkhead skuttle top and front had also been undersealed but painted in



five coats of Triumph White and the chassis front rails had been coated in the dreaded 'black stuff', and again painted with several coats of black paint.

Removal of the underseal was slow using wood chisels (1/2, 3/4 and 1in) and I started to plane it off. The chassis was fairly simple and took only a weekend and a few nights. The bulkhead took a little longer about three or four weekends plus the odd night but the bonnet was a problem. This started in January 1986 and finally finished in mid March (the same year) - the wheel arch to wing seals proved almost impossible. The engine bay looked a mess and I had begun to wish that I had never started and I hadn't got a clue how I was going to remove the last 5%, nor the underseal smears left from the solvents which I had used to soften up the hard-to-get-to areas! A tip for anyone considering removing underseal - scrape off as much as possible while the underseal is still solid - only use solvents as a last resort because all you do with the latter is move it around and get nowhere fast.

The engine bay was wiped and washed with white spirits, petrol, Jizer etc. etc. which did remove some of the remaining 5% and cleaned up the metal.

How do you get rid of the last bits which are in the awkward hard-to-get-at places especially when you are trying to get a good finish/appearance and remove the rust? Wet and dry hardly touched the rust and clogged up very easily at the slightest touch of underseal.

Then the most stupid thought came to mind - Shotblasting. I spoke to a local shotblast company who thought that they might be able to shotblast the engine bay without damaging the interior or exterior paintwork. A snowy morning in April 86 saw UVT 962G (Paddington we call it as it was bare for so long) loaded onto a trailer and off to be sorted out. The bonnet was removed. All the holes between engine bay and interior were taped up with several patches of card behind to give more protection. The windscreen was covered in cardboard and the rest of the car was covered in old sheets and finally sealed in polythene. The car, after being pushed into the shotblast room, was stripped of its front suspension and left resting on axle stands for a man in what resembled a deep sea diving suit to come to 'do the business'. Incidentally, the bonnet was covered externally in cardboard and was shotblasted using a much finer grit in a separate room.



The results were impressive. All of the underseal gone and bare, non-rusty metal everywhere! Now the moment of truth - the rest of UVT was unveiled and to my disbelief, not mark on the outside.

UVT was put back onto the trailer and taken straight to the painter's where it was repainted in primer, bonnet refitted, aligned and finally all the engine bay was sprayed in Triumph White to match the rest of the car. What an improvement! The gleaming re-finished front suspension started to make the bay look the part. All the components were powder coated black and new bushes and shock absorbers sprayed to the original colour (Ford Caribbean Blue). New brake hoses, pipes and re-plated brake calipers all added to the new improved looks. At this stage, the car was transported home where the rebuilt engine was re-installed. All the rest of the engine bay ancillaries were fitted - I was impressed.

Finally, light units and final trim were added to the bonnet. UVT's second rebuild was over and just in time as the following evening we took it to the NEC on the invitation of Tony and Janis Spicer to be on the TSSC stand at the Classic Car Show on the May Bank Holiday of that year!

From May '86 to the present day, I have had enormous pleasure from my Vitesse. The last three concours seasons have been very successful: in total, 42 firsts, 3 seconds, a third and a few unplacings in Club events as well as the larger classic car shows and a few small shows locally and much to peoples' disbelief I do actually use the car every day during the summer months. Not only have I entered Concours, but have taken part in auto-tests and used the car as a run-around and in the summer of '87 UVT was lying on the Devon beaches soaking up the sun while the following week saw us thrashing

up the M6 to Scotland for more holidays and concours.

The car has taken quite a lot of punishment and unfortunately now shows signs of wear and tear and even had another car bash him up the backside! Although I have tried to fend off the ageing process (*to the car or yourself Dennis? - ED*) I am no longer able to do so successfully as, since I have bought the Cottage, UVT has had to live outside in all weathers and yes I do have to keep removing two inches of water out of the footwells and boot (good ol' Triumphs!).

Rust started to appear at the dreaded seams and all the other usual Herald/Vitesse spots, so I decided that



UVT should retire and enjoy the scenery at car shows and leave me more time to talk to people and look around the cars and venue rather than standing around by the car all day waiting for the judges to come and moan and groan at the car! However, the night before

the International Weekend at Stafford '89, I had to rush back home and tidy up the car and with some help, resurrected UVT to a presentable standard to make up the numbers in the Original Vitesse class. That proved that although 'Paddington' may not be what he used to be, UVT can still give anyone a tough time on the concours scene.

I intend to enjoy my Vitesse over the next three years even more: holidays, events, weekend trips, auto-tests etc. etc. and use the car for what Vitesse were designed for - DRIVING. And then watch out - I am going to rebuild UVT to an even better standard. ★



# 40 - 80 ACCELERATION<sup>4th GEAR</sup> or Putting a 2.5 into a Vitesse

Harvey G. Troth

*The 2.5- for 2-Litre swop remains a popular conversion. More tips on how to tackle the job, together with Harvey's rationale for doing it are given below.*

The 2.5 is a stroked 2 litre engine, i.e. the crank throws have been made longer so that the increased capacity has been obtained by making the piston travel further up and down. Externally the engines look identical and it is a fairly easy job to change one engine for the other.

The engine can be obtained from a 2.5 PI or 2500 S saloon. In the latter case you may be lucky enough to obtain inlet manifold and carburettors (SU HS type). However the 2.5 PI engine is to be preferred as it has a higher compression ratio and larger valves. Also the injection gear can be fitted - that's another story which won't be dealt with here,

except to say that if you do it, as well as the engine and its attached ancillaries also obtain the fuel piping, the 2.5 PI petrol tank, pump inhibitor switch (it switches off the pump on impact!) as well as the pressure pump and filter of course. Using the PI tank with brackets is easier than modifying a Vitesse tank.

A technical note here, the 2 litre

Vitesse engine develops maximum torque or twisting power and therefore easiest acceleration at 3250 RPM. The PI engine does it at 2000 RPM. So using a 3.27 differential 40 mph in 4th gear = 2000 RPM and 80 mph = 4000 RPM. Hence the point of the article 40 - 80 acceleration!

So on to the practical side:

*List of items to be done to the 2.5 engine*

- 1) Take off the flywheel and backplate from the 2.5 and substitute the Vitesse components (both MkII of course). Use the simple inertia starter motor - they're much cheaper than a pre-engaged type.
- 2) The front engine mountings on the 2.5 will need to be cut off using either a hacksaw or an angle grinder. The Vitesse mountings are then attached to the sides of the 2.5 engine.
- 3) Use the Vitesse sump suitably modified to allow the crank on the 2.5 to go round.
- 4) Use the Vitesse distributor instead of the injection type distributor.

*Author's Case*

This is the second time around for the author. In the first instance a PI conversion was done but in this case a stripped down PI engine was bought from a fellow enthusiast. The history of this engine was that it had been in a Vitesse which had been written off going through a thick hedge! So the idea was to put onto the engine all the normal Vitesse engine ancillaries, e.g. Stromberg 150 carbs etc. Items 1) and 2) above had already been done. For some reason or other the engine still had a 2.5 sump on it. Therefore the major job was to modify the sump. Before describing that process I would like to say that I took out the crankshaft and had it reground and new bearings supplied (mains to

big ends) at a cost of £65 from Central Garage, Portsmouth. I also gave it a new timing chain - cost £5.50!

*Sump*

The 2.5 sump is about 1 inch larger than the Vitesse sump in the deep section and it does not have a groove in the front end for the steering rack. It is also slightly deeper at the front end. Therefore it cannot be used easily for the Vitesse as it fouls both the chassis cross member and the steering rack. See diagram 1 and figure 3.

Three depressions have to be put into the Vitesse sump to allow the crank to turn. The positioning of these is best seen from the figures. Make depressions to match those shown in figure 3.

These bumps are about one inch

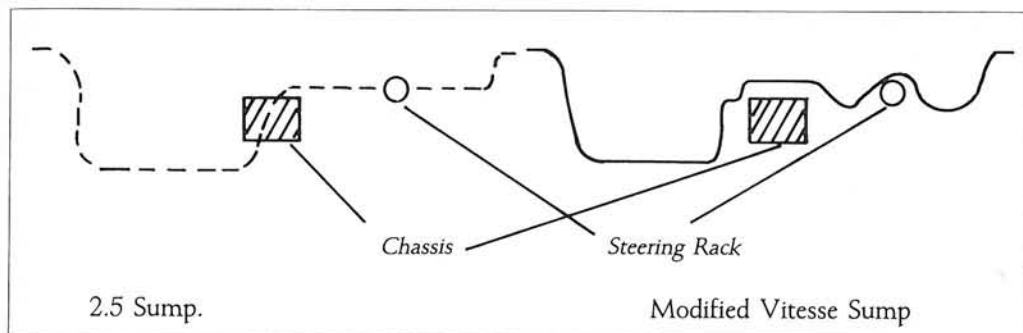


Fig.2. Tools for the job

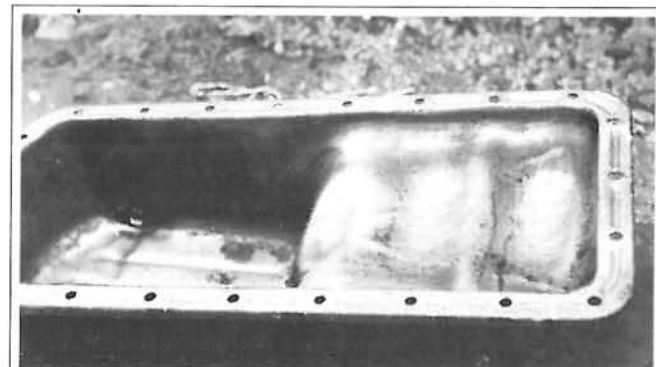


Fig.3. Modified Sump

deep at the maximum point. The method used was a sandbag support (made from an old trouser leg filled with sand and tied at either end), a bent piece of water pipe, a heavy hammer, and a rounded head hammer. These are shown in figure 2, together with photographs of the first sump I modified.

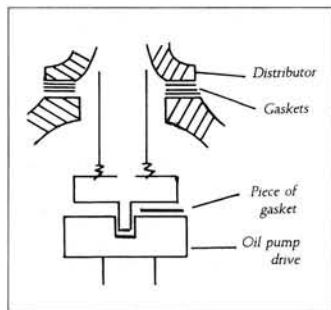


Do the hammering when the neighbours are out and the wife has gone shopping!

Offer up the sump without the gasket in place and make sure the crank clears. Plasticine can be used to check the clearance. Put the sump on and treat the engine to a Triumph Tune spin on adaptor with oil filter and non-return valve which largely eliminates start up big end rattle (Figure 4). After doing this sort of job I change oil and filter after about 200 miles to make sure everything is clean.

#### Distributor

Much time can be lost here. It seems a simple job - the classical error is to be 180° out. First consult books. To get the clearance on the substitute distributor I use a piece of paper gasket between the oil pump rotor and the distributor drive. DON'T DROP IT IN THE SUMP. Press the distributor home and add gaskets until there is no gap. Then



take the piece of gasket material out and you have the clearance about 5 thou between the components.

Now check that No. 1 is at TDC with valves 11 and 12 rocking. The rotor arm should now point towards No. 1 lead and with the points just beginning to open, a lamp connected across them should light with the distributor connected to the battery in the normal way. This should allow you to start the engine and time it properly with a Strobe.

Sorting out distributors and ignition timing can take an enormous amount of time. By the way, batteries run down rather quickly when cranking a 2.5!

#### On the road

Now comes the road test. Perhaps at this point I should tell you that you really need an overdrive gearbox such that 5000 RPM = 100 mph in O/D 4th or a 3.27 differential or both so that 100 mph can be reached in O/D 4th at 4000 RPM.

The 2.5 doesn't really like revving very much above 5000 RPM and maximum torque is achieved at just over 2000 RPM. So the following numbers are relevant:

Normal 3.89:1 diff. 80 mph = 4700 RPM 4th gear  
85 MAX! = 5000 RPM

So 40 - 80mph, 2350 - 4700 RPM, is extremely rapid. Also the car is like an automatic - it only needs 4th gear!

O/D 3.89:1 or 3.27:1 (non O/D) 100 mph = 5000 RPM 4th gear  
So 40 - 80 mph, 2000 - 4000 RPM is the ideal range in which to use the engine.

The author has experience with the 3.89 O/D with petrol injection and a 3.27 without O/D but with a normally carburetted (Stromberg 150) 2.5. Currently an O/D gearbox is being fitted to the 3.27 (rather than 'phoning perhaps I could persuade Tony to hurry up with the O/D via this article!). With a 3.89 differential, wheelspin is a frequent occurrence in the wet. Therefore the 3.27 is to be recommended. 40-80mph is more rapid than many modern cars and the Vitesse is at its best on the A roads where 40 - 80 is the speed range used. The XR3 and 205 1.6GTI are left behind changing gears!

A final word of advice - don't be too exuberant and go beyond 5000 RPM or you'll ruin the engine. Why do you think I had the crank reground. PS. The author has taken out the seven bolts and gone topless for the summer - that's another story. ★

# CIRCUIT OF IRELAND



## RETROSPECTIVE 1988

### Graham Hill and Nigel Whittaker

*Enjoy the fun of the drive and description of the countryside scenery as Graham and Nigel relive their rallying exploits around Ireland.*

It all started in March 1988 with Mike McCarthy's report in "Classic and Sportscar" magazine on the 1987 Circuit Retro' which closed with the line - "If you want to take part, and I cannot recommend it too highly, contact the Ulster Automobile Club.....". Well, the prospect of a three day rally from one end of Ireland to the other, interspersed with the odd pint of Guinness, sounded too good to miss! Letters, entry forms and map packs subsequently winged their way back and forth across the Irish Sea and we were in!

The car was to be Nigel's Vitesse Mark II convertible. During the winter the car had undergone a complete brake and suspension overhaul, incorporating the usual mods to improve the handling and roadholding. As the second weekend in October came even closer, ferry tickets were bought etc., and it became increasingly clear that an already suspect bottom end in the motor was getting rapidly worse! So, a new crank, bearings and thrust washers were obtained from Triumph Tune and the engine and gearbox removed from the car. Nigel did all the mucky



*Nigel on DT4*

bits during the week and the following weekend everything was returned to its rightful place with the usual amount of pushing, pulling and cursing! The remaining preparations centred around the box of spares and a diff to be sure! Yes really, the one in the car was well worn and there was no time to change it. About two months before the off we learned that four Club members from the Wessex Area were also entered for the

event: Jonathan and Janis Longhurst in a Spitfire III and Gerry Woodward and Neil Williamson in a Vitesse II Saloon. As our ferries were already booked, we made arrangements to meet at the starting venue of Balloo House, outside Belfast.

Thursday 6th October: The day of departure was upon us. We packed the car in the morning and we were off: sunshine, blue skies and the top down - a perfect day - until we reached Liverpool, by which time the weather had turned very nasty and we couldn't find the ferry terminal anywhere! We must have driven around for twenty minutes not daring to stop in case someone pinched the wheels. (My apologies to anyone who lives nearby but you must agree that Liverpool's dockland on a windswept night is not a very welcoming place!).

The ferry terminal turned out to be a tin shed on the quay and here we sat for an hour or so while the sniffer dogs did their work and the howling wind tried to rip the corrugated roof off the shed. This, of course, filled us with nothing but confidence for the crossing. We then embarked and settled down in the bar where one of the stewards was packing away the glass ashtrays - we took our sea sickness tablets!

We managed to sleep through most of the weather and woke up at 5.00am, glad to be alive. Time for breakfast before we docked. Dun Laoghaire turned out to be a beautiful port, such a contrast to that which we had left behind only hours earlier. There was just one small hitch. They couldn't

dock the ferry. The forward compartment which housed the bow thruster had flooded and put it out of action, and consequently the ferry just kept blowing away from the quay. After two failed attempts, a tug was called and the ferry unceremoniously shoved towards the quay.

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The route we had chosen took us through the centre of Dublin, a lovely city, and as we cleared the edge and took the N1 north, the overdrive decided to pack up!

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No amount of switching would persuade it to work. Ah well, it would have to wait until we reached the start venue. We bowled along at 65/70mph and seemed to be overtaking most of the local traffic. No one had told us that Eire has a 55 mph blanket speed limit and with petrol at 54 pence a litre, people were happy to stick to it!

We passed through Drogheda and Dundalk and arrived at the border checkpoint. As we slowed down a soldier appeared with a machine gun: time to stop, this was a new experience for us. "Morning lads, where are you going?" "Balloo House near Killinchy". "Are you part of the rally?" "Yes". "OK, carry on, best of luck". We obviously weren't the first entrants past there.

The car park at Balloo House was like a time capsule, full of 50's and 60's sporting cars. MGA's, Sprites,

Minis, Reliant Sabres, Healey 3000's, a Sunbeam Tiger and, parked together, a Spitfire and a Vitesse - the Wessex Area entries. We clocked in and received our route instructions, then met up with Jonathan, Janis, Jerry and Neil. The afternoon was spent in the chaotic jumble of maps, route cards, romers, pencils and highlighters; then sticking on the car numbers, scrutineering and wandering amongst the other cars. We had time to investigate the overdrive problem - just a corroded bullet connector!

The Rally Briefing followed. Clerk of the course, Rodney McComb, issued instructions and advice above the hubbub, only two bits of which I heard. One was concerning the 55 mph speed limit with advice to drive slowly, very quickly! The other was that if anyone had any questions it was now too late to ask!

Our number 38 gave us a mid-field starting position and so the opportunity to turn spectator and watch the first cars away from the start. Most memorable of these was the Austin Seven Chummy with hood down which was filled to the brim with its two man Irish crew - an entry which epitomised the spirit of the weekend.

"Three, two, one, go!" yelled the starter - we were off. Saintfield Market and Driving Test No. 1, via a road of which any roller coaster designer would have been proud!

Within a couple of miles our "rallying confidence" was shattered. We couldn't find the market and it was little

consolation that many others couldn't either. Irish tracks all look the same at night and several blunders were made before we got to the test start. Driving Tests had to be done 'driver only' so out I got and walked to the finish and watched some of the cars charging in and out of the cones on this slippery course. Nigel's turn came, tyres scabbled amongst the stones and mud as he slid his way to a reasonably respectable time. I got the time card marked off and then it was time for the calibration check to compare the official mileage of future regularity tests with the car's odometer. It took the form of tulip diagrams which were followed to DT 2. My turn now. On the dry gravel surface in the farmyard I got in and out of the coned garages and then calamity: I went around the wrong side of a cone and as a consequence scored a maximum time. This left room for improvement!

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Next came a navigation test. We had to average 30mph around the tortuous lanes to arrive at the checkpoints at the correct times and from the right direction. There were several different routes so it was no good trying to follow another car!

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We managed to avoid getting hopelessly lost and attracted several comments questioning our sanity for driving with the roof down on a cold October night.



Graham on DT5

With the navigation test completed, we headed for Rookfoot Service Station in Newry which had stayed open by special arrangement to allow the rally cars to fill up for the run down to Athlone.

As we arrived at the service station we were greeted by a wonderful sight - the garage had been taken back in time 20 years by the collection of cars on the forecourt. As we filled the car, Jonathan and Janice arrived. Notes were exchanged on the evenings proceedings and we agreed to stick together for the journey to Athlone: a good decision as it turned out. We left the garage hotly pursued by the Spitfire, down the hill into Newry. Suddenly, picked out in the lights, the most enormous sleeping policeman loomed up. The screech of tyres as we bounced across it greatly amused the patrolling soldiers!

Nothing fell off the car, although it had every excuse. We pressed on as we had over 100 miles to cover and it was nearly 1 o'clock. We drove on what had seemed on the

map to be a good direct route on fairly major roads. Well, the locals say that a blindfolded passenger can tell the moment that the car crosses the border into Eire. I now know that this is correct, their roads are basic!

We had been going for about an hour when we learned one of the golden rules of rallying - the hard way. I looked up to see the mainbeam turning yellow and fading into nothing in the space of a few hundred yards. We pulled off the road, we had no choice as we couldn't see it! The golden rule is use an alternator not a dynamo! Jonathan stopped and we explained that he would have to lead and Janis navigate. I hope that she has forgiven us for waking her up and presenting her with the job of getting us from the middle of nowhere to Athlone, although how she slept anyway in a car in which they both wore ear defenders all the time beat me. We followed the Spitfire for 30 miles or so on side lights only to give the battery and dynamo a fighting chance and made it to Athlone without any incident, but we were very, very tired.

Athlone High Street became the 'parc ferme' for the rally cars and as we sorted our luggage etc. for what was left of the night, we heard what sounded like one of the 'works' Healeys coming through the houses. We looked up to see Jerry and Neil but no Healey; their Vitesse rumbled to a stop next to ours and they were not happy! They had suffered similar battery/dynamo problems and dropped the back half of the exhaust, which was not in the boot. We had a 9.30 am start the next morning so sleep was a top priority. The rally had taken over 2 complete hotels in Athlone and we headed towards our respective lodgings.

Saturday 8th October. After a good half night's sleep and a hearty breakfast, we were ready to start the day. Having completed all the basic checks we were ready to look at Jerry's Vitesse's exhaust, but discovered that no repair was possible as the front pipe had broken. The next problem was starting it. Our car had recovered from its flat battery but Gerry and Neil had had a solo run to Athlone with no-one to lead them. We bump started the car down the middle of Athlone High Street, what a racket at 9.00am!

We clocked out and headed south for DT3 at Endrim Hill. Here was a shock - the test was held on an open road junction! Fortunately their roads are not as busy as British ones! Having formed up in the queue I walked over to see the course layout. A 'Frogeye' Sprite had just backed across the line which formed one gate. He went for first gear but couldn't select it; the door flew open and out came

the shout, "Give us something heavy, quick!". The enterprising marshall standing nearby handed him the iron base from the marker pole. This was cracked down on the gear lever and the car sped off to complete the course. We completed the test and then went on, south again for DT 4 at Glenacarragh Castle. Here we met David and Carol in their Healey 3000 which had a nasty crease in the rear wing. "Oh yes, the rear wheel fell off in deepest Wales on our way here", explained Carol. Nigel did a nice neat job of the driving test and we left for Roscrea and DT 4.

Here we started the first regularity test and everything went well until about a quarter of the way into the test when I made a monumental error with the navigation, putting us about a mile off the route. We turned and headed back in a hurry as time was tight. Rounding a corner in a lane we came face to face with a JCB. Somehow Nigel found room as we bounced between the tractor's bucket and the hedge. It was a heart stopping moment and I think it's the first time I have been glad about the Vitesse's marginal elbow room! Back on the correct route we had to suffer the embarrassment of being spotted by Jerry



DT8 Kenmare

and Neil emerging from the wrong turn we had taken. Then onto the run down to DT 5 at Cappagh White. Navigating 30 odd miles by four pages of tulip diagrams and staying on time proved to be a challenge we didn't meet that well, but who cares, we had fun.

We struck south towards Tipperary and as the song goes it really is a "long way", at least it was via the route we took. At length we arrived at Derrinlin and DT 5 and then on to DT 6 with all speed. It was becoming obvious that a 3.30 arrival in Killarney was a bit optimistic. We found some petrol at a general store with a lone pump outside, miles from any habitation, and were served by a fine old gentleman who greeted us like long lost family.

I took over the driving and made all speed towards Sugar Hill and

DT 6. This was right out on the open moorland and over some lovely twisty, undulating roads. As we went we tucked into the seemingly endless supply of sandwiches and chocolate biscuits that we had bought for the ferry crossing! We arrived at the DT in time to see a TR2 driver giving a nice display of car control with liberal use of the handbrake and lots of flying stones from the loose surface. My turn arrived and I decided to go for getting it right and not worrying about the time. Unfortunately, when someone yells "Go!" at me and starts a stopwatch, the hooligan in me comes to the fore. Still not a bad effort.



Kilmakilloge Harbour, DT10, with two extremes of Austin

We headed off for Abbeyfeale on the run into Killarney, with luck and a following wind we would make it on time too. We picked up the main road for what turned out to be some of the best miles we covered. The Vitesse was going beautifully and we were in a hurry with the roof down, perfect! As we pushed on at 70/80 mph I became aware of a buzzing noise behind the car. I looked in the mirror to catch a glimpse of a Hillman Imp before it was past us and gone. How long would that last I wondered! As we climbed through a pass between Knockakin and Crinny Mountain the rain started: never mind, you don't get wet in a convertible as long as you keep going.

As we descended the opposite side of the pass the weather cleared up again and we seemed to be on time. We more or less took up residency in the middle of the wide road as we were going a good deal quicker than the local traffic but a surprise was in store. Now, a Vitesse doing 80 mph makes a fair bit of noise, but when we heard the 'works' replica Austin Healey bellow as the driver (or should that be pilot) selected third, still 50 yards behind us, we knew we didn't stand a chance! We gained the full benefit of its side exhaust as it powered past and into the distance.

We did get wet later however, when we were water bombed by some youngsters on the edge of Killarney, they couldn't believe their luck at spotting an open car! We clocked in with a few minutes to spare

then found the hotel and settled into our rooms. Later we checked the car over. All seemed OK apart from a large hole in the passenger footwell courtesy of the Irish roads, which incidentally, had also shaken off one of the Spitfire's expensive driving lamps, only for it to be run over by the car and flattened.

In the early evening the TSSC contingent congregated to plot the route for Sunday. According to the maps some of the best driving was yet to come, although at times it looked as if we might all get lost together. After all this brain exercise it was time to find the bar for a Guinness and something to eat.

Sunday 9th October. We set off at around 9.00 to meet at the first DT just outside Killarney but obviously were still half asleep as we missed the turning and eventually arrived coming from the wrong direction which was not missed by the officials! DT 7 was completed without further embarrassment and then on towards Launa bridge for the start of regularity test 2. This took us out through some desolate though beautiful moorland and over our first proper mountain pass. I still, to this day, can't tell exactly where we went because I can't follow the tulips on the map! During this section we passed a Toyota pickup with the Austin 7 Chummy in the back and one of the Reliant Sabres on a tow rope behind: a sorry sight. We pressed on, the car being ideally suited to the terrain, although maintaining the required 30 mph average over the Ballaghbeama Gap was exciting! Last tulip, left on to the

main road and a short hop to DT 8. Here we discovered that the rough roads had taken their toll as we had picked up a puncture, the main problem here being the time it took to unearth the spare wheel from the bottom of a very full boot!

The DT was quite complex and with no opportunity to look at the actual course I nearly went wrong, and only a quick glance at the diagram for renewed inspiration saved the day. On the way to the next DT we committed the most monumental navigational drop-off of the weekend, although we turned out not to be the only ones. We completely missed a right up into the hills and DT 10, but sailed straight on for miles to be joined by David and Carol in the Healey. Once the mistake had dawned on us, we decided we would be better off taking our own route, a route which turned out to be not much better than forest tracks at times. At every farm we passed, the whole family would be by the gate waving and cheering and the farm dogs took great delight in trying to bite the tyres, providing us with opportunities to check our brakes!

The next DT was also on an open public road junction. A couple of non-competing cars arrived during the proceedings and seemed more than happy to wait for the car on the test to finish before the marshalls flagged them through. Everyone in Ireland seems to enjoy rallies!

Then it was down the south side of Kenmare estuary to Kilmakilloge Harbour where we all stopped at the pub/general store. Once the locals discovered that we were headed across the Healy Pass, stories abounded about bad roads and treacherous bends with unfenced drops. It sounded marvellous but I think the story tellers were trying to wind us up! The route turned out to be everything a classic car driver dreams of - alternating 170° hairpins, beautiful views and the glorious sound of the Triumph 'six' reverberating off the rocks. We were surprised to catch a Mini Cooper on this section, but it turned out that he was spluttering along almost out of petrol. Eventually we had to stop and get the petrol can from the boot!

The main road along the north side of Bantry Bay was about the worst we encountered, and the car took a hammering along here, but we arrived at DT 12 on time. As we queued up the XK 120 arrived pursued by Jonathan and Janice in the Spitfire. Once we were clocked out of the DT, but before we had a chance to drive away, one of the marshalls stuck his head in the window and started telling us all the Skoda jokes he knew: very friendly but we just didn't have time to chat! Eventually we got away and promptly took a right fork instead of a left. By the time we had put ourselves right we were late and behind the XK 120 and the Spitfire. The XK was soon passed - it had broken down, but they had the problem in hand. We saw a Herald estate parked up with a 'For Sale' sign on it; Jerry and Neil apparently stopped and negotiated to buy it and it took some persuasion later that this was not such a great idea, especially as they were primarily interested in the Eire number plate!

Our trusty steed was beginning to show signs of wear as the second gear synchromesh had disappeared, probably frightened to death! Despite this we were really flying now, all second and third gear work, but still down on time. Ahead we saw the Spitfire. Gradually we reeled them in and a flash of our lights had them moving over to let us past. If Johnathan was running to time, we were still a minute down. We descended towards Slakeny Valley passing the Imp parked up by the roadside with a re-organised front end: I knew it wouldn't last! Down in the valley we now sped up a wonderful tree-lined avenue

consisting of short straights and quite sharp kink bends. Just around one of these was our time control. We nearly overshot the mark but just slid to a stop next to the control car. We were on time? Yes of course and with a minute to spare! I enjoyed that drive. Later we closely studied the map looking for the name of that pass, couldn't even find a number for the road so we christened it 'synchro' pass. No road that good should be without a name!

Back to the L62 where we had gone wrong that morning and to Kenmare for DT 10 after a much needed petrol stop. As we waited our turn, everyone was gathered around a Midget up on ramps. Apparently it had taken them all day to get first gear disengaged, a job which was supposed to be impossible without taking the gearbox and engine out. And we thought Triumph gearboxes were bad!

Having completed DT 10 we headed back towards Killarney for the last driving tests, skirting Muckcross Lake and Lough Leane through beautiful landscapes. We arrived at the Liebherr Factory car park for DT's 11 and 12 and met up with the rest of the TSSC team. Janice didn't do too well on DT 11 and scored a maximum when she went around the slalom poles the wrong way. Jonathan wasn't too pleased but wasn't upset for long because he made a 'pig's ear' of DT 12 and so honours were even. This test had a 360° pirouette around a pole and the sight and sound of the T' series MG's going around this in tail-out skids was glorious. Suddenly that was it, the rally was

over, well, almost. We made our way back to the hotel and met in the bar to sample some more Guinness before the prize giving dinner. This turned out to be quite chaotic; the restaurant was much too small to seat the mass of people that had descended on it, and many had to eat in the bar area. At the prize giving Rodney McComb and the other officials were in fine spirits as stories of the weekend's events were shared, and the Mayor of Killarney was rudely interrupted during his speech by someone dropping the box that contained some of the finishers prizes - glass goblets! We finished 45th, Jerry and Neil 43rd and Jonathan and Janice 58th out of the 68 finishers and 85 starters.

The event was won by an Irish crew in a Mini. Minis so dominated their class that next year they are in a class of their own; their cars being ideally suited to the driving tests. We retired from the revellry relatively early, although we later found out that the party finally broke up at around 4 am and there were one or two sore heads the following morning to prove it.

We intended to spend a few days in Eire before returning and with this in mind we said our goodbyes to the Wessex contingent who were catching the Cork ferry (that should float well!) at lunch time, before heading off towards Bantry and some sight seeing.

On Tuesday we headed for the boat and suffered a rotten crossing, made worse because we forgot to take our 'sea legs' tablets until it was too late! We landed at Fishguard and for the first time on the trip were asked for identification at customs. The remainder of the trip was uneventful and we got home on Tuesday evening.

The Wessex area team had a rather more eventful trip home, as we learnt later. Due to bad weather the ferry was unable to dock at Swansea and so they spent 24 hours bobbing around in the Irish Sea until the wind abated. Eventually they docked on Tuesday evening and drove through the night back to Dorset. Jerry and Neil were stopped twice by the police for excess noise; one police woman apparently insisting that the exhaust be repaired there and then. When faced with the problem of finding a new exhaust for a Vitesse at that time of night - she admitted defeat! No one had minded at all in Ireland.

The Circuit of Ireland Retro' is a superb event with a real feel for '50's rallying and very capably organised by the Ulster Automobile Club. The Irish people are friendly, enthusiastic and generous and Ireland is a beautiful country - a combination that is hard to beat. Hopefully by the time you read this it will be too late to get an entry for '89, after all, we don't want to jeopardise our own chances of entry by creating a rush!

As a footnote: The Vitesse's diff did last through all that punishment, in fact it seems better than before we left. The Circuit of Ireland Retro' is a panacea for all ills - both mechanical and human! ★

Ascending Healy Pass

