

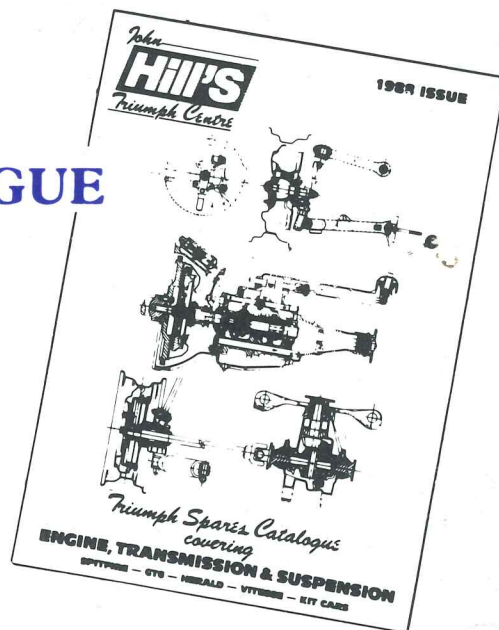
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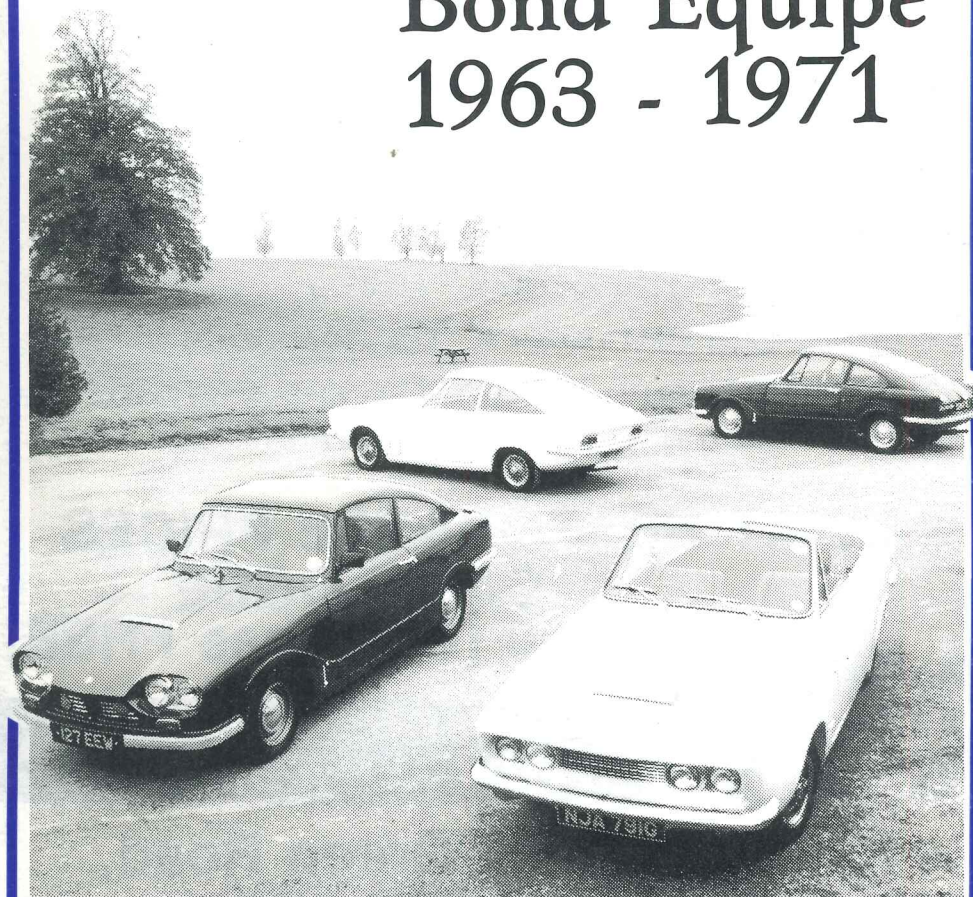


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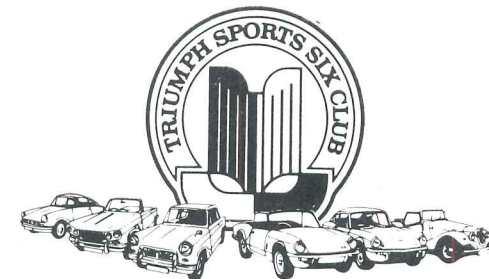
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TURNING CIRCLE
Editor: P. J. WILLIAMS



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Editorial

Although I've never owned one, Bond Equipes have always held something of a fascination for me, culminating in me almost buying a 2+2 a few years ago though ultimately diverted to an early Herald Coupé. In the course of time I've seen some very different 4- and 6-cylinder Equipes from the immaculate Concours to the badly Duluxed and even further to a green and hairy 2-Litre sprayed with some kind of stuff resembling stick on felt (honest)!

Be the cars good or basic runners, one thing binds their owners together like nothing else - pure enthusiasm for the marque. This enthusiasm is no better felt than being in the company of Peter Jacklin our Bond Register Secretary whose major assistance in putting this Turning Circle together I'm pleased to acknowledge. Peter would like nothing more than to see a lot more of you bring out your Bonds this year and especially to the Bond Equipe Weekend date at Yaxley. Fix it firmly in your diaries.

See you there.

Peter Williams

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An Introduction to the Bond Equipe

Peter Jacklin

Sharp's Commercials' first venture into the four wheeled car market was in 1963 with the Bond equipe GT. This was a mainly GRP bodied two door fastback saloon based on the Triumph Herald chassis but fitted with a Spitfire power unit. Following some criticism in the motoring press, certain body modifications were carried out in 1964. These mainly consisted of a revised bonnet incorporating twin headlamps and a different treatment at the rear of the car giving increased headroom for the backseat passengers plus outside access to the boot via a boot lid. This new model was designated the 4S, the GT being retrospectively called the 2+2. The 4S continued with various modifications, these generally following Triumph's upgrading of the Spitfire engine through the sixties until the demise of the Bond concern in 1970.

In 1967 a totally new model was introduced which outwardly betrayed few clues as to its parentage. This was the Two Litre, again with Triumph mechanicals but utilising very few Triumph body parts. The car was later developed as the Mk.2 to take advantage of Triumph's revised Vitesse rear suspension and a convertible version was also introduced. Sadly, all this came to an end in 1970 when Reliant took over and closed the Preston factory. Nearly four thousand Equipes were manufactured, many of them being exported to some twenty six countries worldwide.



A Brief History of Sharp's Commercials and Bond Cars Ltd.

Paul Grogan

Paul takes us through some fascinating history both in front of and behind the scenes of the Company that eventually produced the Bond Equipe.



The factory in Ribbleton Lane, April 1966. (The line of cars in the foreground are standing where there was once a row of terraced houses. To the right of the picture, running in front of the stores, used to be Gosford Street.)

Photo: Peter G Reed.

The object of this article is to try and give an insight into the Company from the early beginnings through to the introduction of the various models, of Minicar to the Equipe, and how its success was also partly to blame for the Company's downfall.

The origins of the Company go right back to 1922 when Paul Sharp set up a little bodyshop and garage business in Blackpool Road, Ashton, Preston. The Company was called Sharp's Garage (1922) Limited.

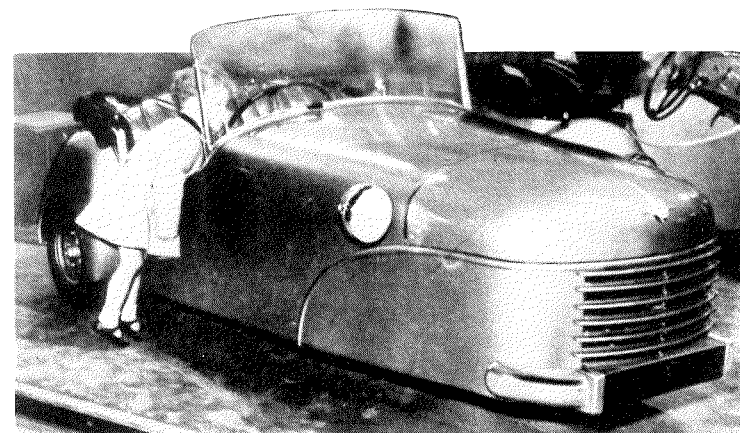
In 1938, the business was bought by the successful and expanding Loxhams & Bradshaw Group and the garage premises were re-named as Ashton Preston Garages Limited.

At around the same time, an eight year old agreement between General Motors in America and Bedford Trucks in England finally expired. The agreement had been set up whereby General Motors would refrain from importing any of its Chevrolet trucks, which would then allow Bedford to establish itself within the United Kingdom market. The Loxhams & Bradshaw Group saw this as a good business opportunity and immediately set about obtaining the distributorship for Chevrolet Trucks for the whole of the

North of England. To handle this new business, a new Company called Sharp's Commercials Limited was formed.

During the war, Sharp's Commercials continued to prosper by building up CKD Chevrolet Trucks for the Ministry of Supply under the 'Lease/Lend Agreement' signed between Britain and America. In 1942 and as more and more trucks were pressed into service, the Government put out contracts for civilian companies to carry out major servicing work on behalf of the Army. These became known as Auxilliary Army Workshops. Sharp's Commercials were given one of these contracts but with two buildings already at full capacity producing trucks, new premises had to be found. This was overcome by purchasing the redundant rope works in Gosford Street, off Ribbleton Lane in Preston.

As the war came to an end, the requirements of the Army changed and the Auxilliary Army Workshop found its role



The Mark A at the 1947 Motor Cycle Show.

altering to that of vehicle reconitioner. Reconditioning to Ministry standards meant that everything was stripped down and all traces of old paint removed. All parts were then repainted and the whole vehicle completely rebuilt to an 'as new' condition. These vehicles ranged from AEC four-wheel drive Matadors, Bedford three ton and Chevrolet 15cwt. trucks to Hillman Pickups. The Ministry required 40 vehicles a week.

It was April 1946 when a young Lieutenant Colonel C R Gray returned from the Army in Germany for demobilisation. Commissioned in the Royal Artillery, he had served with them throughout the war and now joined a struggling Sharp's Commercials to become the Managing Director.

By re-organising the whole operation, combined with many hours of hard work and burning the midnight oil, the Ministry targets for reconditioned vehicles were eventually achieved. Sharp's Commercials had been turned into a profitable company once again.

As the demobilisation of the Armed Forces continued, it became apparent that sooner or later the demand for reconditioned vehicles would cease and the contract with the Ministry of Supply would be terminated. It therefore came as no surprise in early 1948 when the Company received notification that no more reconditioned vehicles would be required after December.

At about the same time, Colonel Gray was contacted by a Mr Lawrence Bond who had heard that the contract was coming to an end and wondered if it would be possible to rent the empty factory to produce a lightweight three-wheeler car that he had designed and built. The Colonel declined to rent the premises although he did offer to make the car for Laurie Bond. That offer was in turn declined and the meeting between the two men came to an end.

Some weeks later, Laurie Bond again contacted the Colonel to see if the offer to produce the car had been a serious one. The Colonel replied that it hadn't but agreed to have

a look at the prototype anyway.

The next day was spent touring the Lancashire countryside in a car which 'frequently broke down, refused to stop when required to do so and at one stage completely lost all of its steering!' However, at the tender age of 28, the Colonel dismissed such matters as 'trivia'. He did, though, feel that with the likelihood of petrol rationing continuing, there would be a market for such a vehicle in the near future and it would also be a means of keeping a loyal workforce together.



Mark D production at Gosford Street, 1957.

Suitable terms were eventually agreed upon with the condition that Laurie Bond made himself available to Sharp's Commercials to do design work from time to time. By the end of 1948, the Bond Minicar Mark A was ready for production.

The little Bond three-wheeler with its stressed skin two-seater aluminium body, perspex windscreen, 122cc two stroke motorcycle engine, cable and bobbin steering, no rear suspension and rear brakes only was an immediate success. With moderately careful driving, nearly 100 miles could

be travelled on a gallon of precious, rationed petrol. C P Reid, assistant editor of 'Motor Cycling' recalled that he was struck with the boldness of introducing a completely new kind of car to the motoring world. 'We hadn't yet learned to regard the Bond as a normal vehicle and were faintly surprised that it even worked at all!'

In April 1951, the Mark A was phased out in favour of the Mark B. The new model had numerous refinements including a larger rear boot, a 197cc engine, Triplex windscreen and rear suspension.

October 1952 saw the introduction of the Mark C with a redesigned body, single passenger-side door, 'Flexitor' bonded rubber rear suspension and, what was to become the trademark of the Bond Minicar, the 180 degrees steering lock.

The Mark D of May 1956 looked identical to its predecessor. A 12 volt electrical system allowed electric starting using the new 'Siba Dynastart' on a new design of 197cc engine. Reverse could also be offered for the first time. By simply running the engine backwards, all three gears could be used!

As the popularity of the Minicar grew and the weekly production totals increased, the bodymaking activities at Gosford Street became restricted to the point where alternative premises had to be found. The problem was solved in 1957 by acquiring the old India Mill, once one of the largest cotton mills in Preston, at the rear of the factory in New Hall Lane. This four-story building was large enough to allow the bodymaking to treble the output capacity and still leave space for Sharp's Commercial to develop its fibreglassing techniques.

Another redesign of the body in October 1957 gave the Mark E a more car-like appearance with a driver's and passenger's door, large curved Triplex windscreen, 7 inch headlamps and a steel chassis integral with the body, except it still retained the 197cc two stroke engine.

It wasn't long before the Mark E's big brother, the mark F, was introduced in November 1958. Identical in almost

every way, the most important difference was the use of a 250cc engine. This helped it cope with the increasing amounts of weight that the body had put on with the passing of years. It was still advertised as 'The World's most economical car' even if the claimed fuel consumption figures of 80-85 mpg were, perhaps, a little optimistic!

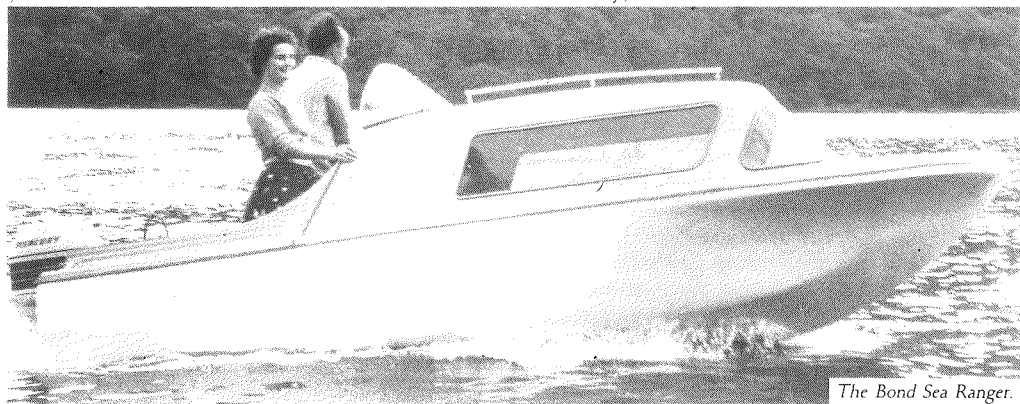


Mark G Estate, "The World's First Three Wheeler Estate".

The final phase of the Minicar began in August 1961 with the Mark G. In response to customers wishes, and to try and compete against other opposition (the Mini was rapidly gaining in popularity since its introduction in 1959), several important new features were incorporated into the body. Whilst looking similar to a Mark F, a redesigned windscreen and roof gave the interior sufficient room to be able to carry four adults in reasonable comfort, the doors had wind-up windows and, most of all, the brakes were now hydraulically operated (courtesy of the Austin A30).

For several years the Bond Minicar had enjoyed immense popularity but as Britain entered the era of the 'Swinging Sixties' so the sales began to decline. This was certainly not helped when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Reginald Maudling, cut purchase tax on cars from 45% to 25%. Three-wheelers were left at 26% and it was a severe blow to the Company at a time when they least needed it.

At the end of the 1962 Motor Cycle Show, it was announced that because the Chancellor had not awarded any tax cuts for three-wheelers, Sharp's Commercial had been forced to seriously cut back Mark G production. Fortunately, it was not a total disaster because that had



The Bond Sea Ranger.



Bond P1 and P2 Scooters at the 1959 Motor Cycle Show.

managed to diversify into other new areas with the Trailer Tent, Sea Ranger and Power Skis. (Sharp's Commercial had a previous diversification into the scooter market with these had met with only a limited amount of success). These new projects would save the Company from closing down, although approximately 100 semi-skilled jobs (one third of the labour force) would have to be lost in the process.

By May 1963, the Equipe GT had been announced and the fortunes of the newly named 'Bond Cars Limited' had turned again. The Lancashire Evening Post reported that the factory was having to work a seven day week to keep up with demand. A Company spokesman commenting on the £822 Equipe said the project would lead to a 'considerable expansion of our existing staff.'

The success of the GT (it was not officially called the GT 2+2 until August 1964) led to the improved GT4S starting production in September 1964. With the new model's improved rear passenger headroom, opening boot and new bonnet design, the GT 2+2 ceased production shortly after the GT4S was announced at London's Dorchester Hotel in October.

Whilst the Equipe had certainly put Bond Cars back on the road to prosperity, the three-wheeler market was not totally dead and the Minicar still had its loyal supporters. A Mark G in saloon, estate, tourer or van version could still be ordered from the factory and it was not until November 1966 that the last Minicar was produced.

In the mean time, Bonds still felt confident enough to compete for a slice of the three-wheeler market and in August 1965 the Bond 875 was unveiled to Dealers and Distributors. The new fibreglass body used the complete

Tent, Sea Ranger and Power Skis. (Sharp's Commercial had four types of scooter between 1958 and 1962. However,

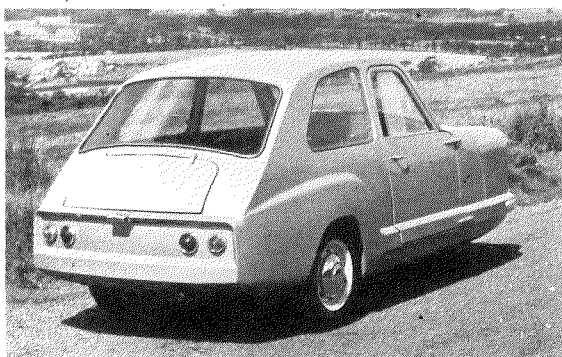


The Power Ski.

engine/transmission and subframe arrangement from the Hillman Imp, but with the lower compression engine from the Husky van. The unusual front leading arm arrangement was designed by Laurie Bond and the front wheel was made to lean into the turn to improve the handling characteristics.

Weight and cooling problems delayed the introduction of the 875 until April 1966. Obviously, it was aimed fairly and squarely at the competition from Reliants. Unfortunately, the weight problems led to a downgrading of the interior fittings and the optional extra, custom-made roof rack was not a good substitute for the lack of a proper boot. On the plus side, however, it had a 0-60 time of less than 16 seconds. It was indecently fast and must have left many car drivers wondering who made the three-wheeler

An early 875 Saloon.



with the '875' badge on the rear panel that had just left them standing!

In February 1967 the GT4S benefited from the use of the Mk.3 Spifire engine of 1296cc and it was not long after, in August, that the new Equipe 2-Litre GT Mk.1 was unveiled. Production of the GT4S was temporarily suspended whilst stocks of the new 2-Litre were built up and then, afterwards, the two were built side by side. Originally, the new body style and increase in power was not intended to rival the GT4S, it was merely to fill yet another gap in the market place for the customer who wanted a Grand Touring car that was a little different. In fact, the sales of the 2-Litre were such that it determined, from then on, that the GT4S would be built mainly to order. (Less than 400 were made in the next three years.)

Success breeds success and just over 12 months later, in September 1968, the Equipe 2-Litre GT MK.2 was announced along with its very pretty companion, the 2-Litre Convertible. The outlook for the Company looked good, but this was also a time of change and things were happening within the Loxhams & Bradshaw Group that were to have a marked effect on Bond Cars Limited.

Colonel Gray had become Chairman of Loxhams and Gray Group in 1959 and in 1962 he passed on the Managing Directorship of Sharp's Commercial to Tom Gratrix. In 1965, the Colonel had extended the Group by the acquisition of another group of companies in the North East and in 1968 he decided to sell the whole group to a publically quoted company, the Dutton-Forsshaw Group. The new management wanted Colonel Gray to spend the whole of his time as Director with the new Group and not to have the distraction of a manufacturing business called Bond Cars Limited. So it was with great regret that the decision to sell the Company had to be made.

An attempt to buy the Company by the Bond Management failed when they were unable to raise sufficient funds. This then left two other parties interested. One was Standard Triumph, and the other was Reliant.

With the Equipe, Bond had enjoyed a very happy relationship with Standard Triumph for several years and it seemed for some time that they might have bought the Company. Also in the running were Reliant who shared similar interests in the three-wheeler and specialist/coachbuilt car markets. They saw a merger as a means of gaining access to the shared Standard Triumph franchise overseas and wanted to develop a whole series of vehicles by building on the success of the Equipe.

Research seems to indicate that Standard Triumph were not very keen on Reliant with their long association with Ford and so they decided to back off and see what happened. Presumably they expected that the merger would fail and then they could step in and buy both Companies?

Negotiations were finally concluded on February 16, 1969 and Reliant became the new owners of Bond Cars Limited. A statement at the time made by a Reliant spokesman in London said, 'It has been made very clear by Bond and Reliant that the factory in Preston will be continuing.'

The new owners took a few months to get their feet under the table and then the changes started to happen. One of the first casualties was the 875. Reliant had already experienced overweight problems with some of their Regal three-wheelers failing to make the 8cwt maximum certification and the 875 was also known to be very near to the limit. It was therefore decided to run out production of the 875 in favour of a new design of three-wheeler from the Ogle Studios in Letchworth.

Trailer Tent.



A new introduction to India Mill in July 1969 was the Scooter Ski, a sort of water-borne motorbike. Reliant had obtained the order from Scooter Ski Sales Limited of Draycott, Derbyshire. The initial production run was for 1000 units to test the market reaction, with talk of a further 2500 after that. (In the end, only 616 were made at Preston.)

Work on producing the new three-wheeler, the Bug, started in January 1970, with the last 875 being made a month later. Producing any new vehicle has its teething problems, but the Bug seems to have suffered more than most with moulding faults, body to chassis alignment problems, poor supply and fit of parts and allegations of excessive hours being taken to produce vehicles. It was eventually announced to the public on June 2nd 1970.

Some months earlier, a new franchising policy by BMC had seen the merging of the Jaguar, Rover and Triumph franchises. As a consequence, a much wider, combined, spread could now be offered across the model ranges and it effectively meant that there was no longer a place for a car such as the Equipe. This left Reliant without the easy access into the overseas markets that they had hoped for and one wonders, perhaps, if the production problems on the Bug weren't just part of a deliberate policy to discredit the Preston factory so that it could be closed down at the earliest opportunity.

This article could not have been compiled without the assistance of several people, but I would like to give a special acknowledgement to the following ex-Bond employees: Lt. Col Gray (ex-Managing Director), John Woods (Production Manager), Roy Atkinson (Works Manager) and Alan Pounder (Chief Design and Development Engineer).

Paul Grogan, 1990.

In July 1970 a statement was issued by Reliants that said Bond Cars had been running at a loss and, as there was no hope of the factories at Preston becoming economic to operate in the foreseeable future, the decision had been taken to phase out all production by the end of the year. The Preston operations would be absorbed by other factories within the Reliant Group and the 150 works personnel and 40 staff would be given every assistance to find other jobs.

The Bug and Scooter Ski were quickly relocated to other factories and the final few GT4s and 2-Litre Equipes were finished off during August 1970. (They were definitely not finished off at Tamworth as stated in a previous article. Any discrepancies in the specification of the last produced cars can be accounted for by the fact the 'whatever was to hand' was used to clear these vehicles. It would also not make economic sense to transport all the pieces to another location, set up an area and train personnel just to complete a few vehicles.)

By Christmas 1970, India Mill and the factory at Ribbleson Lane had been cleared of all machinery, tooling and equipment. The Bond name would be carried on in the Bug until May 1974, but the Bond at Preston was no more.

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Bond Specification Guide

Model	GT 2+2	4S	4S	4S 1300	2L Mk.1	2L Mk.2	2L Conv.
Engine c.c.	Spit4 Mk.1)* 1147	Spit4 (Mk.1) 1147	Spit4 Mk.2 1147	Spit Mk.3 1300	Vit 2L Mk.1 1998	Vit 2L Mk.2 1998	Vit 2L Mk.2 1998
C.R.	9.0:1	9.0:1	9.0:1	9.0:1	9.5:1	9.25:1	9.25:1
Power (BHP)	63	63	67	75	95	104	104
Diff Ratio	4.11:1	4.11:1	4.11:1	4.11:1	3.89:1	3.89:1	3.89:1
Clutch	6 1/4in coil late as 4S	6 1/2in diaph.	6 1/2in diaph.	6 1/2in diaph.	8 1/2in diaph.	8 1/2in diaph.	8 1/2in diaph.
Brakes Fr:	9in disc	9in disc	9in disc	9in disc	9.7in disc	9.7in disc	9.7in disc
Re:	7x1 1/4in drum	7x1 1/4 drum	7x1 1/4in drum	7x1 1/4in drum	8x1 1/4in drum	8x1 1/4in drum	8x1 1/4in drum
...Wheel base	all models 7ft 7 1/2in.....						
Length	12ft 10in	13ft 1in	13ft 1in	13ft 1in	13ft 10in	13ft 10in	13ft 10in
Width	5ft 0in	5ft 0in	5ft 0in	5ft 0in	5ft 1 1/2in	5ft 1 1/2in	5ft 1 1/2in
Weight (on road)	15cwt	16cwt	16cwt	16cwt	18 1/2cwt	18 1/2cwt	18 1/2cwt
Tyres	5.20x13	5.20x13 or 145x13			155x13		
Pressure Fr:	20	20 or 22			22	24	24
(psi) Re:	22/26	23/26 or 25/28			26	26	26
Fuel Cap.	10 gal	10 gal	10 gal	10 gal	9 gal	9 gal	9 gal
Years Prod.	1963/64	1964/65	1965/67	1967/70	1967/68	1968/70	1968/70
No. Prod.	444	183	1751	571	591	841**	

Notes.

- 1) most of the above information has been extracted from the relevant Owners Handbooks.
- 2) * Three 2+2 cars were produced with Mk.2 engines.
- 3) It appears that seven prototype/preproduction 2+2s were manufactured (TCK 300/1/2, TCK 888, SRN 998/9) some of these eventually passed into public ownership and one, SRN 999, was converted into a prototype 4S. TCK 888 has survived albeit in much 'restored' condition.
- 4) ** No separate production figures have yet been found for 2 Litre Convertibles but study of part of the production records shows that approximately 50% of Mk.2's were built as convertibles.



My Bond

Irene Fussell

I thought I would write a few lines for this Turning Circle to answer those friends who ask me, "Have you still got your Bond Irene?"
Yes I have - well sort of.

It's a Bond Equipe 2-Litre saloon, registration number YRE 751H, with blueish, flaky paintwork and lots of cobwebs. It was purchased from London in June 1982. I first thought, "What an ugly car!" It grew on me of course - like a wart! I began to love it - it was a 'bit quick'. I don't think many people in the street knew what it was, so I got funny looks, or maybe they were because I always had to be the first away at the traffic lights (without wheel-spinning of course!) After while however, lots of other makes of saloon cars began to appear in increasing numbers, with GTI and Turbo on their rears, and all of a sudden my Bond wasn't quite so quick. It didn't help, over a period of time, when my back end began to vibrate (please pardon the expression, I'm not very technical). This meant that driving over 30mph on any road was almost impossible, and after a heavy meal, well...

Eventually I got this fixed but it did have other little quirks (I thought everybody's did). When I thought I was empty, I was full, and when I thought I was full, I was empty. Something was wrong with the wiring of the fuel gauge. It was fun though. Guessing whether I had enough petrol for a certain journey became quite an art.

Then one of the doors dropped. It did not amuse my friends that they either had to squeeze into the passenger seat through an opening all of three inches wide, or alternatively scramble across the drivers seat and gearstick in a most ungainly fashion risking an alteration to their sex lives if they were ever unwary enough to accept a lift from me.

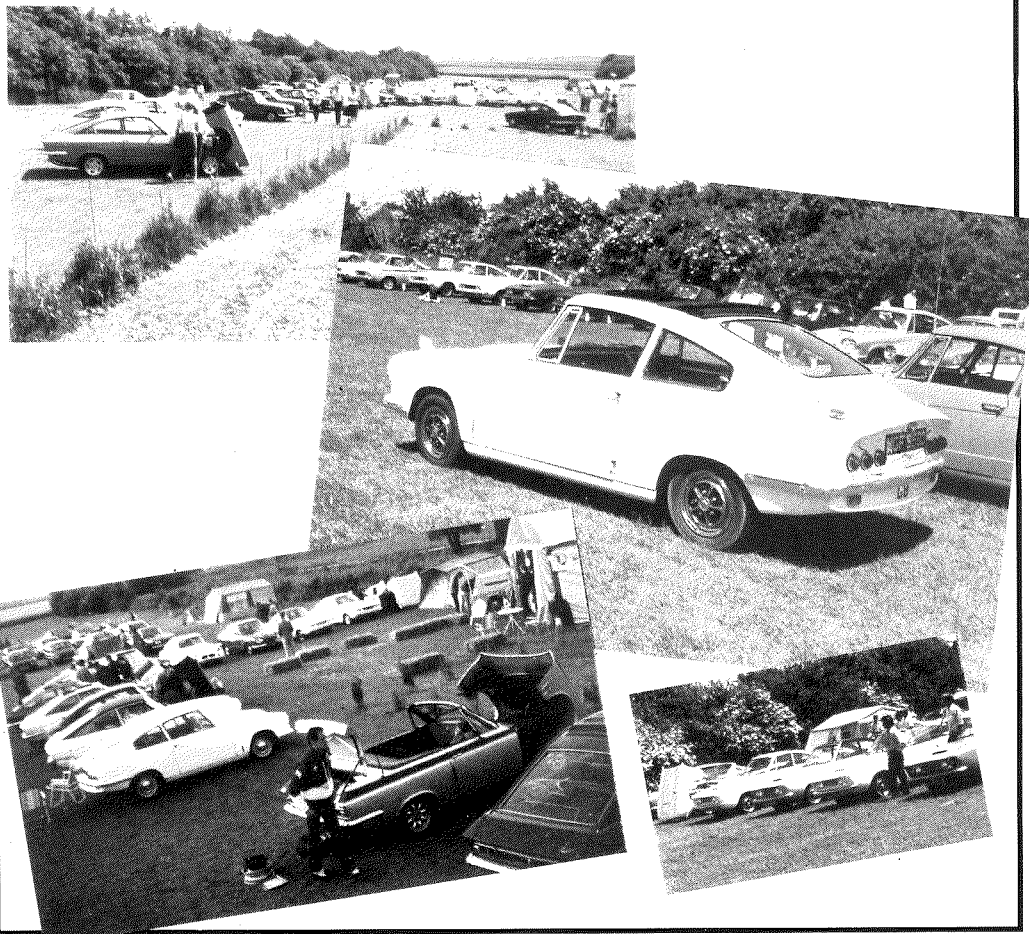
On more than one occasion I was told by the chairman of the company where I worked, "There's something wrong with your exhaust - it sounds like it's coming off!" He used to sound quite cross - I think it woke him up in the mornings. Then it did come off - well, some of it. It was

smokey and I worked out in the country where sometimes the tracks which lead to our offices were impassable. One particular morning we had to make a detour and in doing so my exhaust caught one of the sentry posts which was laying down at the time. My car now sounded like a tank. I was not pleased, neither was the chairman - but my company did pay for a new exhaust - if only for a quiet life. The final straw was reached when poor Bond needed an MOT but welding first and some other things too! I decided to put it into a lock-up garage until such time as funds were raised. I didn't know however that a car is not supposed to be stored with the handbrake on, nor with the clutch pedal in the up position - mine has been. To make matters worse, the battery is flat - well, I'm sure it must be by now but I can't really check this as the bonnet locks have seized in the on position too! One of these days when I win the pools and meet a Bond-loving person who has nothing to do and enjoys solving problems (such as how to get the car out of the garage in the first place), I shall bestow upon my poor vehicle a chassis-up rebuild. In the meantime, there's always the story of the borrowed Bond I drove after YRE 751H....!

★

The Bond Equipe Weekend

The Bond Equipe Weekend was first held in 1986, when it was organised by Dennis and Diana Watson, with the idea of providing a friendly meeting for Equipe owners to get together and share experiences, buy and sell spares, and enjoy each others' company. The event has been held each year since its inception at The Three Horseshoes, Yaxley, near Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. All Equipe owners and those with an interest in the marque are most welcome to attend so, **make a note in your diaries for the 9th and 10th June 1990.**



My GT4S

P Berry Ottaway

Bond Equipe GT4S registration number GWV 876E, commission number R10-2838, was purchased by Peter Berry Ottaway, the present owner, in May 1983. At that time the car was in good mechanical condition but the ravages of time had taken its toll on the metal work of the body, especially the doors and sills. The interior was very good and appeared to be original with the exception of a sturdy roll-over bar which consisted of 2 inch tubing on the inside of the rear door pillars and over the inside of the roof connected by a supporting tube to a stantion in the boot. This was apparently fitted by the previous owner as his wife had once rolled a car and he was concerned at the lack of strength in the GRP roof of the Bond.

Amazingly, although the log book records five previous owners they all appear to be members of two related families. The speedometer reading at time of purchase was 39,347: apparently genuine as a number of early MOT certificates and maintenance invoices accompanied the car's papers. The current mileage is only 40,670 miles, surely the most under-used car in the Club. (I'm sure they'll be more than a few takers for that title -Ed).

During 1983 and '84 a considerable amount of work was carried out: the rusted nearside door was replaced by a new one (still in factory primer) located in a garage store in Slough. The offside door was re-skinned and rebuilt and the sills replaced by modifying a pair of new Herald sills.

The biggest problem during the first two years was the collapse of the exhaust manifold. After considerable phoning around and a number of false leads, a sound unit was eventually located on a scrapped Mk.2 Spitfire. After some careful modification to the exhaust pipework this was fitted successfully and the previous throaty roar considerably toned down. Most other mechanical parts that required replacement (including differential in 1987) have been obtained from other



Triumph sources. The only item which has so far eluded us is the reversing light switch on the gear lever. The car is a golden metallic colour and during renovation there were obvious signs that it had been re-sprayed at some time. The colour was matched to 'Rootes Golden Sand-Metallic'. An attempt was made to find the original colour and after contacting Chris Gardner who was then secretary of the Bond Register we were both surprised and pleased to find that the car was one of a batch produced during September and October 1966 and the

relevant page in the production book shows it was painted in Golden Sand.

The car has been shown at two TSSC events, at the Wales meet in 1986 and at the West Midlands Bromsgrove meet in September 1988. It was awarded the Best Bond Trophy at the Welsh meeting but had to be withdrawn during judging at Bromsgrove when a message was received that the owner's wife Andrea and baby son Charles had been involved in a serious car accident whilst travelling in another car. ★

(Charles now fully restored).

GT4S Custom Restoration

Chapter 1

John Watson

As John says, the customising restoration of his GT4S is perhaps not everyone's cup of tea but wish him luck all the same.

The Equipe in the photographs is not my first Club car, nor my first 'unusual' vehicle - merely another of the different cars that I have owned over the past five or six years. First up was a nicely modified GT6 Mk.3 (PJO 220J) which has since achieved a certain notoriety as the rustiest car in the National Concours - Shame! Then followed some boring stuff, then a Bond - yes one of those 'bright orange wedgy things' - a Bug 700. After that a Spitfire powered and much modified Herald 1200 convertible (JNR 421L) which was sold to buy back the GT6 which was swapped for a Mk.3 Spitfire (MNM 227G) - again modified a fair bit. The Spitty gave way to a Panther Lima which was sold to buy a fitted kitchen.... ahem....meanwhile a Cortina provided daily transport.

It was at this time that I approached a young lady I know whose husband owned the GT4S. The car had been a daily driver until being towed home one day having completely lost drive - a suspected broken gearbox. I looked it over one day...it had been set on blocks on their lawn for five years and was covered in mildew etc. Half the

interior was out and the bulkhead appeared to need attention. It was agreed that it would need to be cheap. I then bought an accident damaged Mk.1 Vitesse convertible named Sybil (SYB 320F) as it seemed a much better idea!

In the way of things, Sybil was sold

when I ran out of money and I again asked about the Bond. It was still there. Les (the young lady's husband) had decided that I would probably give it a good home and it was mine to tow away. Cor!! It was then towed away and casually inspected at a friend's house.



Hopefully you can see from the photographs the extent of the damage. Anyway suffice it to say, new outriggers and side rails were fitted along with the bulkhead frame from a Herald saloon. Fitting of the bulkhead without removing the rear half of the body is not an easy job due to the fact that it needs to slide under the roof and the rear floor edge. If you leave the engine and gearbox in place its damn near impossible. However we managed.

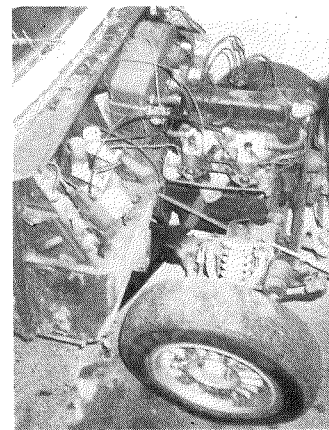
Having replaced the bulkhead which was by now resplendent in its bright orange paint, the next step was to start on the bodywork. I removed the 'Works Escort' style rear arches plus

all the badges etc. and have cut the roof to form a 'T-Top' with lift out panels.

This was carried out one day after a branch treasure hunt using an electric jigsaw and a large bottle of 'Cripplecock' cider.

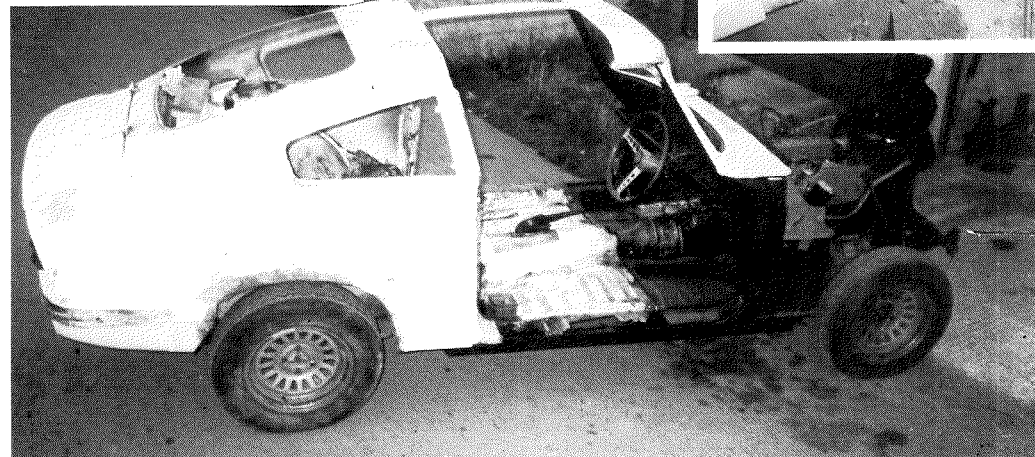
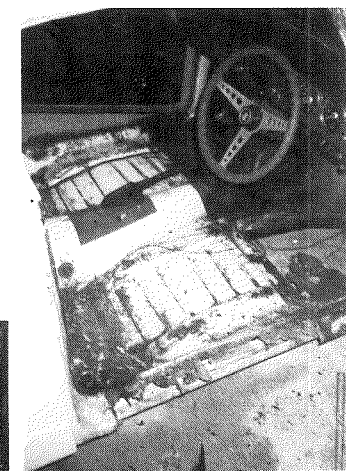
Inside, the dashboard has been rearranged slightly to accommodate a decent stereo and also to house an extra few dials. The steering wheel and gear knob have been painted orange to match the bodywork which will ultimately be bright orange with a bold black stripe running from the leading

Oh dear..Oh dear..I've already mentioned the mildew but not the rusted chassis; non-existent treadplates; lack of footwells; cracked and flaking gel coat and the body etc. etc. What a mess.



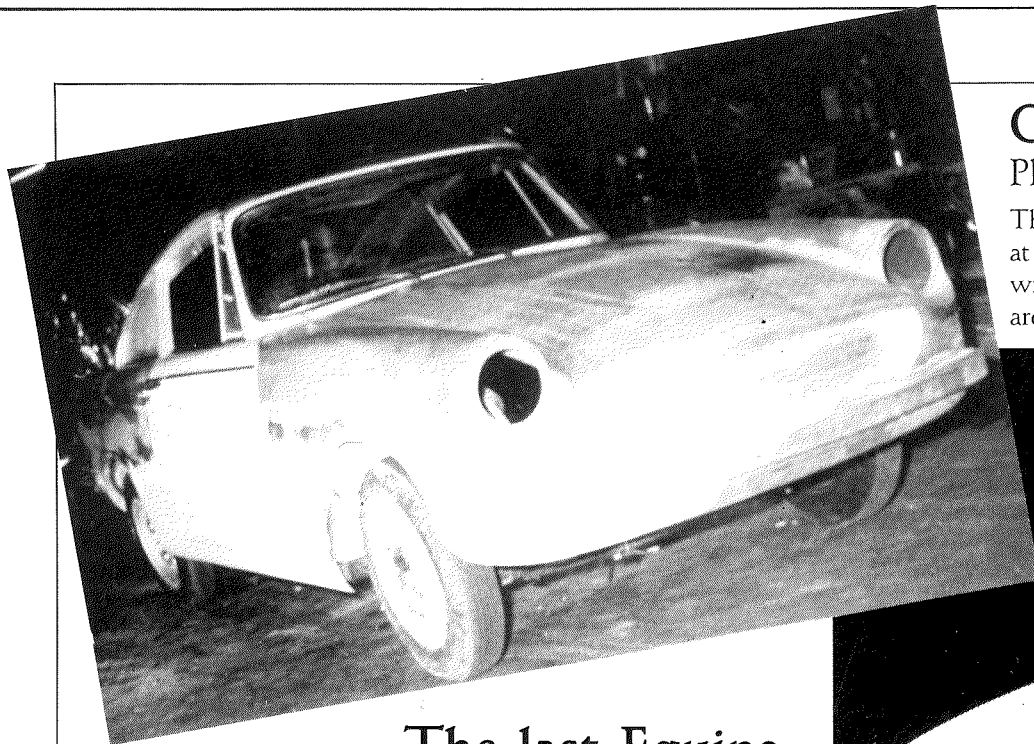
edge of the bonnet, across the roof and over the boot. A few other modifications will include black glass all round, trenched in electric arial, no bumpers, colour coded wheels and, if finances allow, late Spitfire rear suspension. The car already has a Spitfire engine and overdrive 'box.

As you can see from the pictures there is still plenty to do as of Christmas 1989 but I am hoping to finish early in 1990 - finances allowing. On the subject of finances, the cost in total is not expected to exceed £500-700 and should be finished within about six months from start to finish. I'm an insane optimist (Aren't we all -ED?)



Possibly not everybody's cup of tea but wish me luck and I'll see you at Yaxley.

NB. I am still interested in hearing from owners of customised cars who may be interested in forming a register or just exchanging ideas. The address is: 81, Albion Street, Swindon, SN1 5LN.



Original Equipe GT

Photos: A Pounder

These photographs, probably dating from 1962, show the original Equipe GT (SRN 999) at the India Mill Factory in Preston. Note that it is fitted with original Herald doors complete with chrome trim plus what appear to be some Herald body panels in the lower bonnet area (adjacent to bonnet catch) and at the rear wheelarch.

The last Equipe - What might have been.

A prototype of the next Equipe (MK.3?) was built at the Reliant factory in Tamworth during 1970. Unfortunately, it was never put into production. The vehicle shown in the photograph was actually completed and put on the road. Has it survived?

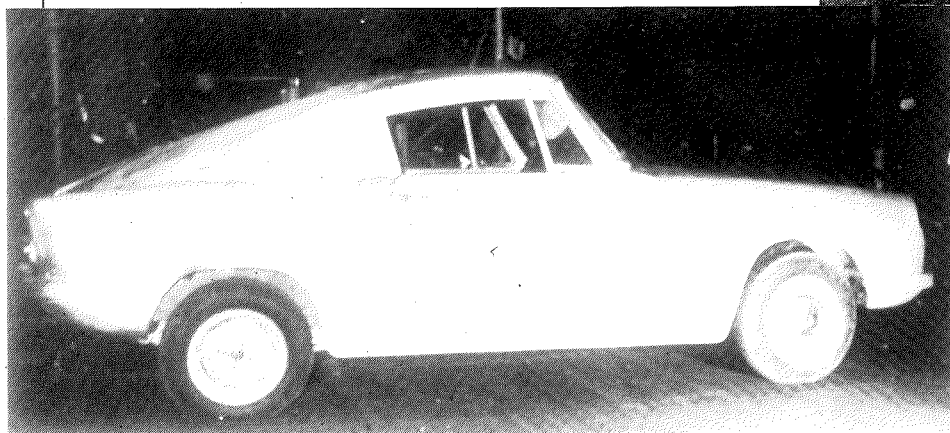


Photo: D Pither



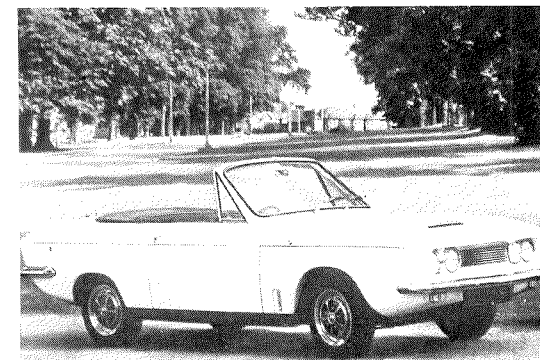
Parts Sources for Equipes

The following table lists the source of a number of parts for all the Equipe models, please note that the majority of mechanical and some body parts are obtainable from the original Triumph base model; eg. Spitfire, Herald, and Vitesse as relevant.

Model	2+2	4S	2 Litre
Bonnet air intake trim	N/A		Triumph 2000 Mk.1
Headlamp trim	Herald		Triumph 2000 Mk.1
Doors	Herald without chrome trim		Bond skins on modified Vitesse inner
Door handles	Herald	Herald	Spit Mk.3, MGB
Windscreen Glass & rubber	Herald	Herald	Bond
Bootlock	N/A	Herald	Triumph 1300
Rear lights	(Lucas) Viva SL90 or Imp (L692 + L691)		Vaux. Cresta PB (Lucas L748)
No. plate light	Herald (L467)	as 2+2	Triumph 2000 (Lucas L743)
Side lights	Herald (L584)	as 2+2	as 2+2
Fuel tank	Bond	Bond	Herald Estate
Filler cap	Early Spit/GT6	as 2+2	Tri. 2000 Estate Stag, GT6
Carbs	Twin SU HS2	as 2+2	Twin Stromberg 150CD
Distributor	Delco D204	Delco D204	Lucas 25D6
Regulator	Lucas RB106/2	Lucas RB340	Lucas RB340
Dynamo	Lucas C40L	Lucas C40L	Lucas C40L
Badges	Reproduction bonnet, Equipe script and 'Bond' letters from Register Secretary		

Motor Show unveiling by Bond

Researched: Bernard Robinson



Bond Cars Ltd, who were awarded a coachwork gold medal at the Earls Court Motor Show, introduced two new models at the international exhibition.

Two-litre Convertible

Britain's first four-seat production convertible for six years brought a foretaste of Springtime fresh-air motoring to the Motor Show. The Bond Equipe Convertible packs a sumptuous interior and a six-cylinder two-litre power unit into sleek, head-turning coachwork.

And its price? Only £1277 6s 1d. including £279 6s 1d PT, a figure that indicates big sales ahead among drivers seeking low-cost individuality.

The Equipe Convertible, in common with its Equipe GT sister, is based on Standard-Triumph International mechanical components; chassis, transmission and engine. It gets the full

international warranty and servicing facilities of Triumph thanks to a unique partnership agreement, in which all Equipe models are marketed in UK and export markets through the STI dealer network.

A specially designed fold-away hood which can be raised or lowered in a few seconds gives open air motoring without fuss.

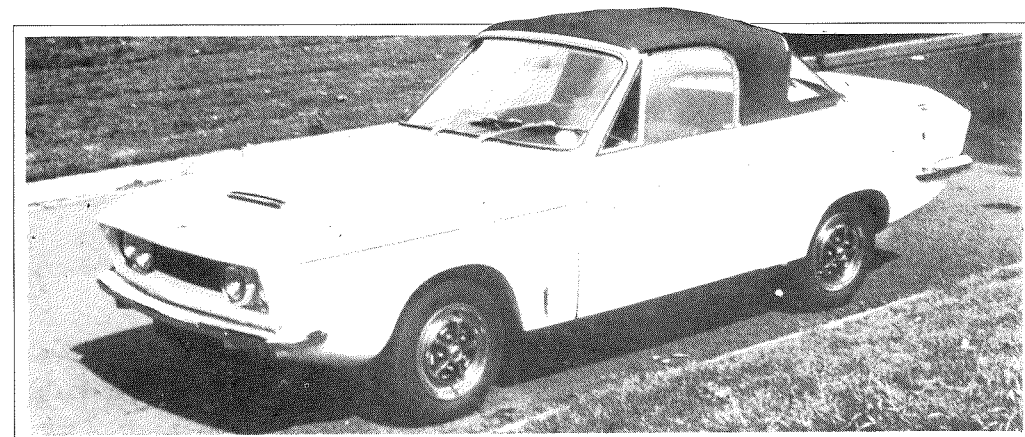
The twin carburettor power unit gives 104bhp at 5300rpm and a maximum speed of 100 miles per hour-plus depending on conditions. General performance is outstanding, aided by the superb handling characteristics of the new wishbone independent rear

suspension.

Standard luxury specification includes: magnum wheeltrims, black perforated leathercloth facia and trim, recessed instruments and controls, armrests, leather-bound steering wheel and automatic reversing lights.

Separate bucket-type front seats give good support and are adjustable for height, rake and leg length. Rear seat is full-sized, taking two adults.

Bond Equipe - 2 litre convertible - snug fitting hood gives good rearward visibility, and it can be opened and closed in a one-hand action.



Dimensions

Length	13ft 10in	4115mm
Width	5ft 1 1/2in	1562mm
Height:Hood up	4ft 6in	1371mm
:Hood down	4ft 4in	1320mm
Wheelbase	7ft 7 1/2in	2325mm
Track:Front	4ft 1in	1245mm
:Rear	4ft 0in	1220mm
Ground clearance	6 1/2in	165mm
Turning circle	25ft 0in	7.6 metres

Capacities

Fuel tank	9 galls	40.89litres
Engine sump (drain and refill)	8 pints	4.55litres
Cooling system	11pints	6.2litres
Gearbox	1 1/2 pints	0.85litres
Rear axle	1 pint	0.57litres

Weight

Dry, excluding extra equipment	17½cwt
Complete, including fuel, oil, water and tools	18½cwt

Gearbox

Four forward ratios and one reverse. Synchromesh on all forward gears, Silent helical gears.

	Top	3rd	2nd	1st	rev.
Ratios	1	1.25	1.78	2.65	3.10
Overall ratios	3.89	4.86	6.92	10.31	12.06
Compression ratio	9.25:1				

Performance

Maximum power: 104bhp at 5300rpm

Maximum torque: 1400lb in at 3000rpm

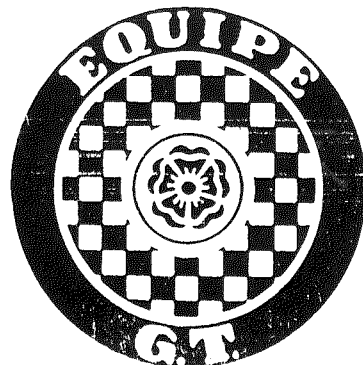
(Equivalent to 144 lb/sq in BMEP)

Piston speed of 2500 ft/min, equals a road speed of 88.5mph (142.48kph) in top gear.

	Top	3rd	2nd	1st	Rev.
Engine speeds (rpm) at a road speed of :					
10mph	586	733	1045	1560	1820
10kmp	365	455	650	970	1130

Road speed at 1000rpm in top gear is 17.7mph approx. (27.53kph).

Maximum speed 103mph-plus, depending on conditions.



Equipe two-litre mark 2

The new version of the fast-selling Equipe 2-litre GT gets a power boost to 104bhp, scorching performance, better road handling and interior revamping. The Equipe's eye-catching fastback styling in hand-built glass fibre is unaltered.

It's a luxury full four-seater, designed for the motorist seeking performance and individuality at modest cost. Since its introduction in August 1967, the 2-litre Equipe has given Bond a production headache - they couldn't produce enough to satisfy demand.

The Mark 2 version represents even better value at £1196 16s 1d including £261 16 1d purchase tax.

A standard fitting on all GTs is a radio aerial concealed in the glass fibre roof, where it is impervious to vandalism and corrosion. It can be connected to any car radio.

The twin carburettor power unit gives 104bhp at 5300rpm and a maximum speed of 100 miles per hour-plus depending on conditions. General performance is outstanding, aided by the superb handling characteristics of the new wishbone independent rear

suspension.

Dimensions, capacities, weight, gearbox, performance, etc., as listed except for saloon height which is 4ft 4 1/2in.

Optional items at extra cost.

Overdrive on two gears (both models)

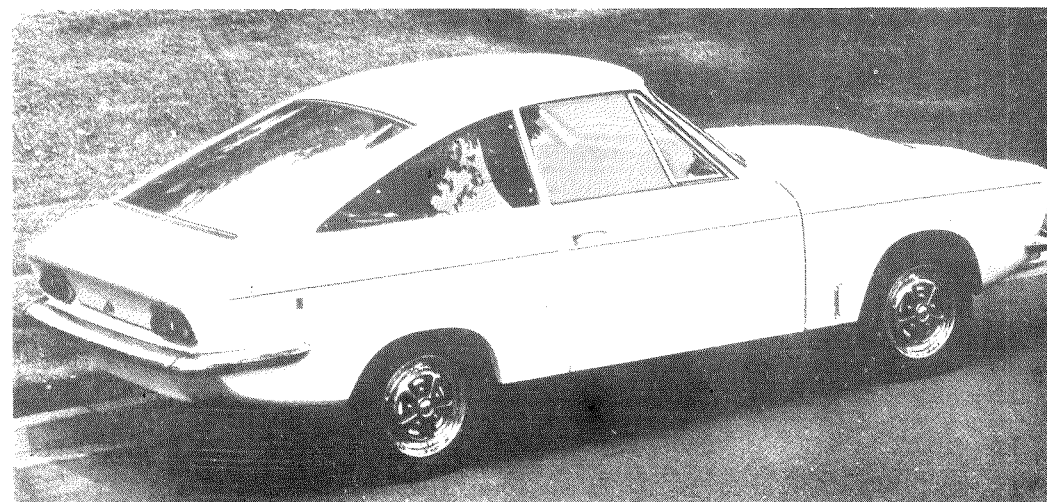
Sunshine roof (saloon only)

Heated rear window (saloon only)

White sidewall tyres (both models)

Tonneau cover (convertible only)

Reprinted from: *Standard Triumph Review*, Volume 30, No. 11, 1968.



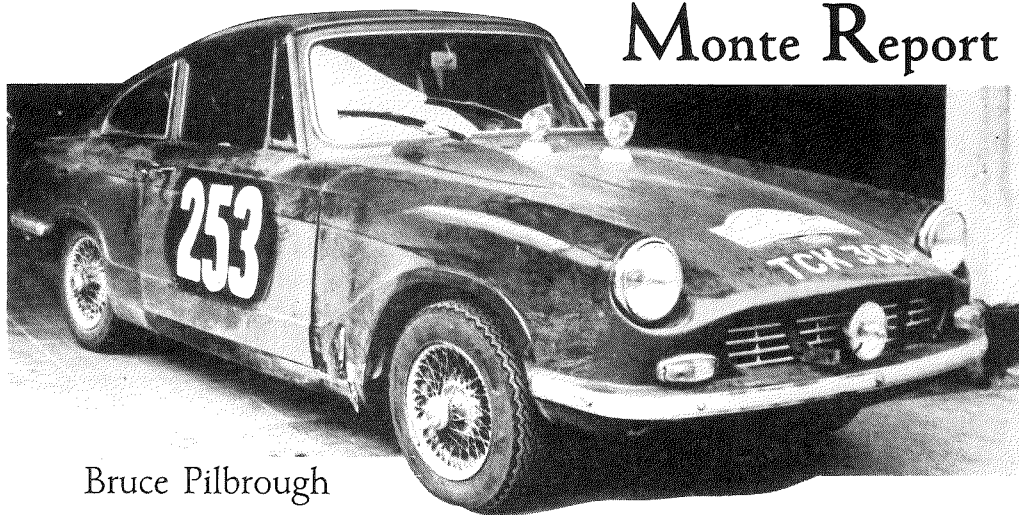
Bond Equipe GT Mark II - pacy fastback, with luxury Grand Touring interior features, hand-built around Standard-Triumph components. Modified rear suspension, power boost to 34bhp and magnum wheel trims are newly introduced features that combine to make the Equipe an even better buy for the motorist seeking individuality at reasonable cost.

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EQUIPE

Monte Report



Bruce Pilbrough

The Bond Equipe had an accomplished competition history including the prestigious Monte Carlo Rally. The full story is always a lot more than the final results might suggest and the Bond Equipe's is no exception.

DURING the autumn of 1963, someone at Sharp's Commercials had the idea that it would be useful to raise the public profile of the recently introduced Bond Equipe by entering one in competition. The Monte Carlo Rally, one of the most prestigious events at the time, was chosen to be the competition debut for the car. A joint sponsor was found in the form of the local paper, the Lancashire Evening Post. Their motoring correspondent John Lambert was to be the co-driver and John Cuff (well known for his international rally exploits) was to be the driver. All that remained was to provide a car for the event.

The car chosen for the assault on the 'Monte' was a pre-production car registered as TCK 300. This car can be seen in standard form along with its sister pre-production cars TCK 888, TCK 301 and TCK 302 in many of the contemporary press releases and reviews of the Equipe GT.

It was fitted with opening rear quarterlights and wire wheels then sent to the acknowledged Triumph tuning specialists SAH for preparation. When the Equipe was returned to the Preston factory it had an SAH engine developing 85bhp at 6000rpm. A spare engine was also supplied to the same specification.

The engine modifications which produced the 35% power increase over that of the standard engine were:

balanced and tufttrided crank with special bearings
compression ratio raised to 9.75:1
high-lift camshaft
larger inlet valves
ports enlarged and polished
special manifolds
twin choke Weber carburettor

An oil cooler was fitted together with additional instrumentation.

There were other mechanical modifications, but it is difficult to determine whether they were carried out by SAH or Sharp's. These included the fitting of a 4.55:1 differential, an overdrive (which is said to have been available on 2nd as well as the usual 3rd and 4th gears) and Armstrong adjustable

dampers. The car was also fitted with a radiator blind to assist rapid warm-up in the cold conditions expected during the rally, special seats and navigational/timekeeping equipment.

Some body modifications were carried out by Sharp's - these were the inclusion of an air outlet duct on the bonnet and the fitting of strips of metal or plastic to the screen pillars. The air duct was provided to direct warm air from the engine bay onto the screen to help keep it ice free. The strips added to the screen pillars were fitted after Cuff and Lambert experienced unacceptably high levels of wind roar at speed during their testing of the car. A Rover development engineer, who was contacted by Cuff, suggested that these strips would change the pattern of air

flow along the sides of the car and cure the problem. Quartz-iodine headlamps and spot lamps were also fitted.

Unfortunately the SAH engine was seized during testing and the spare engine was already on the way to France with Alan Pounder and Bert Edwardson (the service crew). A replacement was rushed through from SAH and fitted into the car, this also seized after only a few miles. By now there was less than half a day before the car was due to depart for the Glasgow start. Factory staff worked well into the night to fit an engine taken from a sales demonstration car. Some of the parts from the SAH engine were fitted. Certainly the manifolds and carb were used, possibly the cylinder head as well since it is difficult to believe that the car would run well with the combination of the rather small inlet valves of the standard Spitfire cylinder head and a twin choke Weber carb. It is impossible to be precise regarding the exact specification of the Equipe when it finally departed next morning for the Glasgow start.

On the way to Glasgow, there were some doubts about the special manifold and Weber carburettor, so the car spent the afternoon prior to the start in a workshop having the manifold and carb re-fitted.

The car started on its route from a floodlit ramp at dusk. Three and a half hours later after covering 170 miles the car was driven onto the fore-court of the Excel Hotel, north of Preston, where Tom Gratrix, Lt-Col. Gray and other well wishers were waiting. By the end of the first leg of the rally (650 miles), the crew had 'time in hand'.

By the time they reached Rhemes no penalty points had been incurred despite difficulties due to snow, ice and freezing fog. Snow covering the headlamps making them dim, building up on the screen and jamming the wipers, and 'coating' the radiator causing overheating had slowed the car at times, but the crew made up any lost time before it counted against them.

On the 4th night, Cuff and Lambert were still running with time in hand and no penalty points, as they had all along the route, until they were within 10 hours and a few hundred miles of their goal. A series of minor mischances then combined to hinder their progress on an alpine section during a night of freezing fog.

After Chambery the Bond's headlamps were smashed twice and one of the fog lamps once by stones thrown up by the tyres of other competitors cars.

Their pace was slowed until replacements were fitted. Then a wrong turning took them 3 miles out of their way and a puncture whilst turning round lost them time at a crucial point. The crew pressed on to make up time, but in their haste lost traction on an ice covered corner and had an 'argument' with a snow bank which resulted in minor body damage and the loss of another headlamp. This series of incidents put the Equipe 6 minutes 'out of time' at Annot. John Cuff and John Lambert completed the route with the Bond but owing to the time already and a second puncture, they arrived 24 minutes too late for a placing.

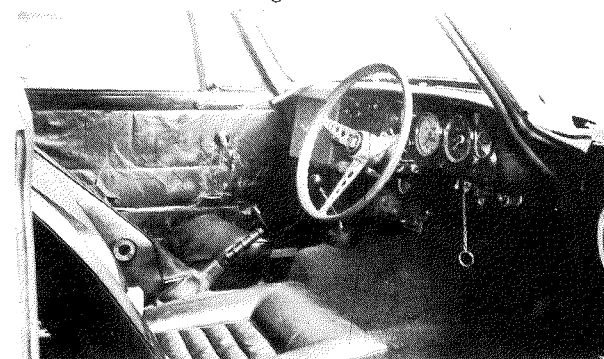
It was sad that the Equipe was unplaced considering the performance of the car and crew until the 4th night

and their efforts to make up time after their misfortunes. That the car completed the route without major problems was highly commendable. That this was achieved on the car's first entry to competition and that the crew had never seen the car until about a fortnight before the start was remarkable.

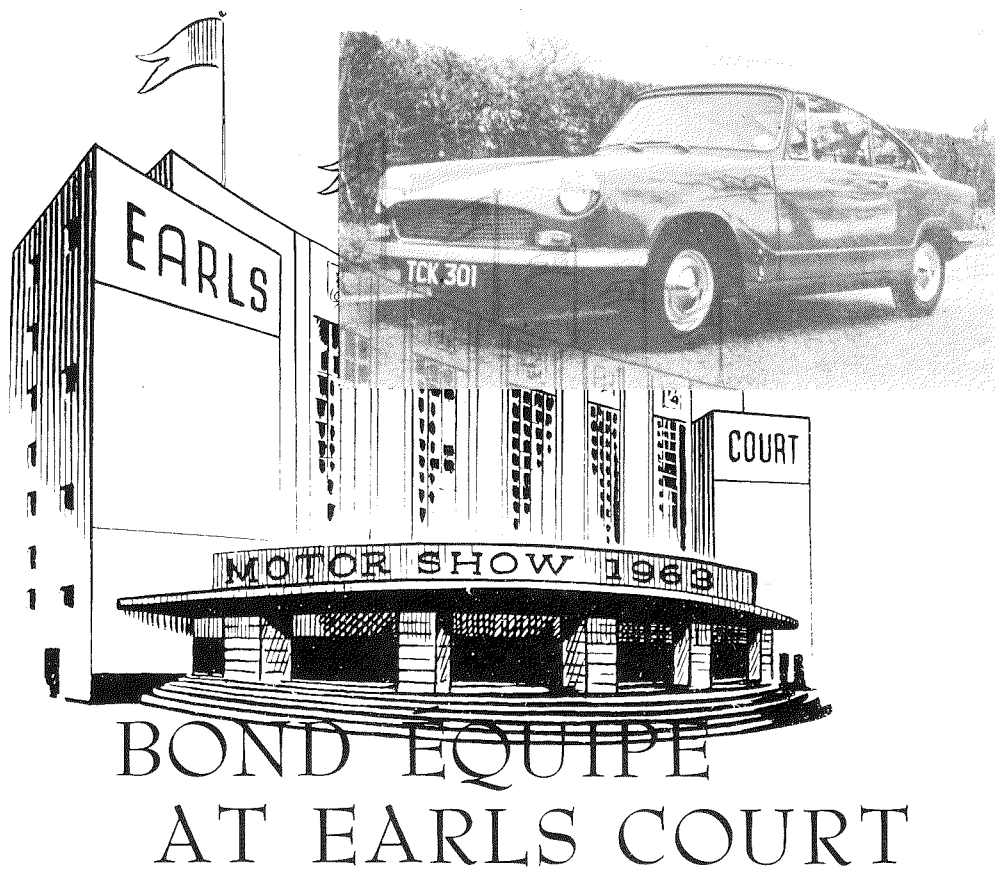
After the car returned from the continent it was used for promotional displays at dealers' showrooms. It is believed to have competed in the Tulip rally of 1964 but it was certainly driven by a team of three lady drivers to take the Lady's 24hr Endurance Record for Oulton Park circuit. Half an hour before the planned start of this record attempt a gearbox problem developed. The gearbox was removed from another Equipe and fitted. After a delayed start the car driven by Pat Coundly, Liz Jones and Anita Taylor covered a distance of over 1435 miles in 24 hours.

What became of TCK 300 after this is uncertain. One ex-factory employee suggests that two Equipes were maintained by the factory in rally trim and loaned out for competition entries. This is interesting but unfortunately not supported by any evidence from other sources. If this is correct, UCK 444 may be the other works car, since this is the only other one known to be photographed in competition. ★

If anyone has any information regarding any of the cars mentioned in this article please contact me by writing to: Mr B Pilbrough, 16 Arnhem Road, Preston, Lancs. PR1 4QL



With acknowledgements to: Peter Jacklin, Paul Grogan, John Cuff, Bert Edwardson, Tom Gratrix and John Woods.



BOND EQUIPE AT EARLS COURT

*Bond Cars of Preston make their Motor Show debut with the Equipe GT Saloon....
(with a little bit of period snobbery selling at the end)....*

In the five months since the introduction of the Bond Equipe Grand Touring saloon, the orders for the car have exceeded all expectations.

The Equipe, which combines Italian inspired Bond design with Standard-Triumph engineering, is a car that bridges the gap between sports car and family saloon.

Hitherto, the fame of Bond Cars of Preston has been solely in the three-wheel market, in which the company were pioneers of minicar motoring. The Equipe, which is on show at Earls Court this month (October), marks the company's first entry onto the four-wheel market and its first appearance at an International motor show.

The car uses the Triumph Herald 1200 double backbone chassis and the Triumph Spitfire 1147cc. engine and gearbox. These have been combined with a body of reinforced glass fibre and steel to produce a custom-built, two door family four seater GT saloon at a retail price of £822 4s. 7d. (including purchase tax).



An enthusiastic reception from the motoring Press greeted the car's introduction:-

Daily Express - "New Coupe for fast families".

Daily Herald - "Bonds bridge the gap".

Daily Mirror - "Sleek Italian-style saloon".

Daily Telegraph - "...a car in the Gran Turismo style, but at a price more in keeping with family saloons..."

The Guardian - "The Bond Equipe GT is a most promising small-family express".

Motor World - "...a handsome glass-fibre family sportscar..."

Garage and Motor Agent - "A smart new GT saloon".

Brighton Evening Argus - "A smart new GT saloon".

Sheffield Star - "...she's a beauty!"

The Press were not alone in their enthusiasm. For since the Equipe's introduction, production figures have had to be doubled to meet the growing demand.

So far, the car has been offered to the home market only. But enquiries have been coming in from abroad steadily with orders from as far apart as Austria and Borneo. It is hoped that with further orders on the way, it will soon be possible to begin export deliveries.

Much of the initial success of the Equipe lies in the fact that it combines elegance, comfort and performance with family saloon price and economy - its 10 gallon fuel tank gives a cruising range in excess of 300 miles.

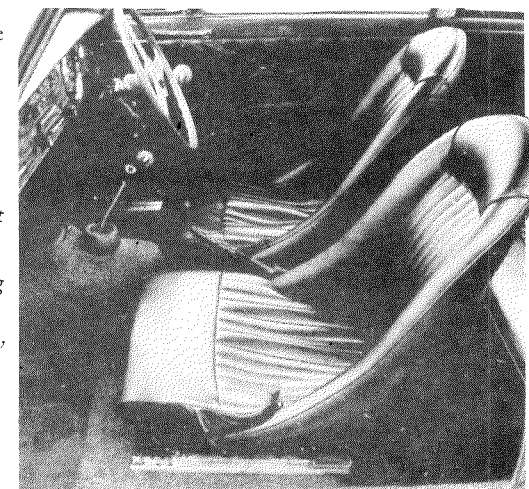
With the help of Standard-Triumph, Bond have produced what is, technically, one of safest cars on the road today.

Lowered independent suspension all round; nine inch diameter caliper disc brakes on the front wheels and drum brakes at the rear provide fade-free instant stopping power; a modified double backbone chassis forms the soundest basis for strength and superb road-holding; the windscreen is constructed of special non-shatter glass and the steering column collapses on impact.

Comfort has not been ignored. Snug bucket seats at the front can be adjusted through 72 different positions and the deep leg well should cater for even the tallest drivers. The rear bench seat carries two children in comfort or can be folded flat to give extra luggage space.

Road noise is reduced to a minimum by the provision of thick, fitted carpeting throughout.

Although luxury features such as the

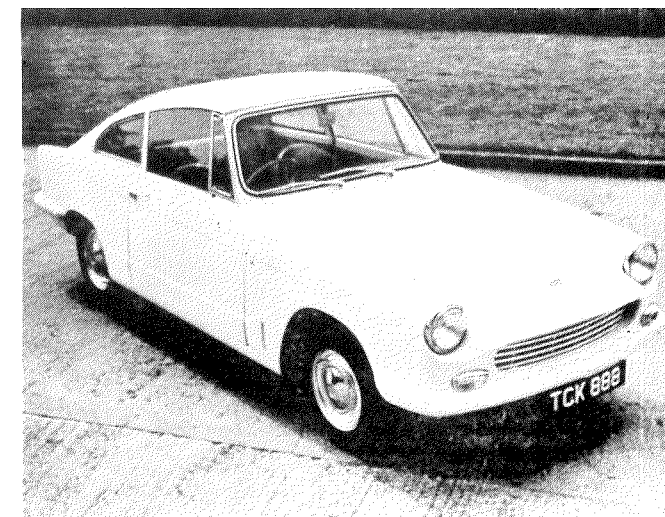


wood-rimmed steering wheel, heater and demister, screen washers, rev. counter, vanity mirror and anchor points for safety harnesses are fitted as standard to the Equipe, Bond have not hesitated to add improvements to the car since it was launched on the market; for example improved rear springing now gives an even better ride and opening quarter lights have been fitted at the rear.

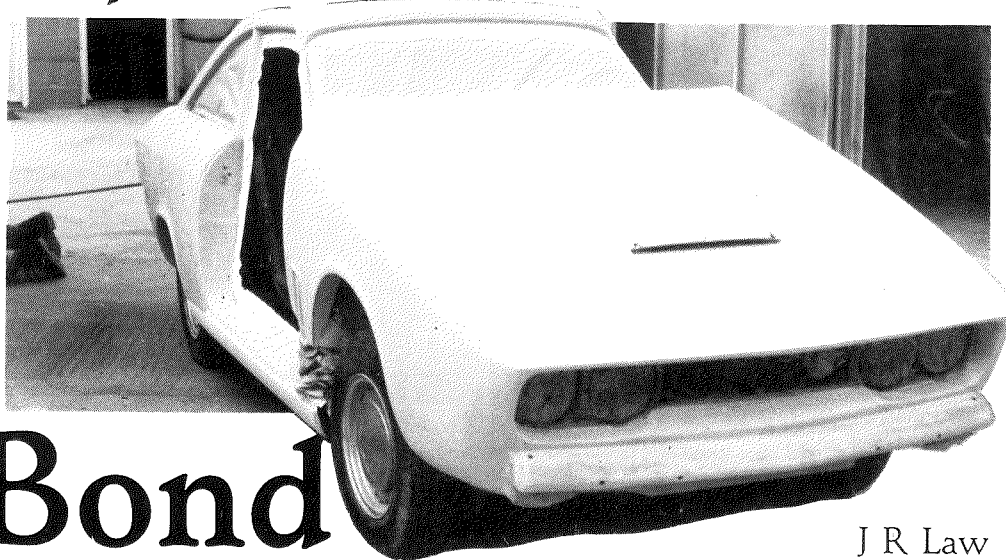
The first Equipe to arrive in the West Country was recently bought by the Duchess of Newcastle. Her remark on taking delivery of the car was, we are sure, indicative of the thoughts of countless other potential Equipe owners:-

"I have been trying to get hold of one ever since I saw the write-up in the Press..."

Reproduced from Standard Triumph Review, October 1963. Price 1 shilling.



Competition Respray



Bond

J R Law

*If you had just won a competition to have your car resprayed what would you do?
..... go out and buy a Bond Equipe!*

The following is a small history of Bond Equipe MCF 745G which was first registered on 6th August 1968 by a Mr R Clarke. After his death his widow took over ownership and kept the car for many years. The mileage by this time had crept up to 51,000 in August 1977 which rose to 61,000 in 1980 and to 63,303 by August 1982. The car was now laid-up at her brother's garage and I had shown interest because I had previously owned a Bond and knew a fair bit about them. The car was under cover with the paintwork slightly faded and the clutch seized but otherwise in fair order.

In 1987 I entered a competition to have your car resprayed. I'm always entering competitions but this time I won!

But what car to paint? Our Renault didn't need it and was painted in pearlescent paint anyway and our old Mini was hardly worth undersealing let alone painting!

Suddenly the Bond became a necessity not only as a good second car but as a car that deserved a respray. Talks with the owner followed, the clutch unseized and a new MOT obtained. The mileage by this time was 63,356. £600 was the final figure and then it was away for a free respray.

I have discarded the chrome side strips and fitted wing mirrors, an oil cooler and disposable oil filter. The mileage is now 68,000. The paintwork is better than new (really), the wire wheels look superb and it runs as sweet as a nut. It is now off the road for a rest and a suspension rebuild. It seems to thrive on long breaks.



Two plus Two

Peter Jacklin



Peter Jacklin, our ever enthusiastic Bond Register Secretary, describes how he came to be the owner of the very first Bond Equipe 2+2 which came off the production line.

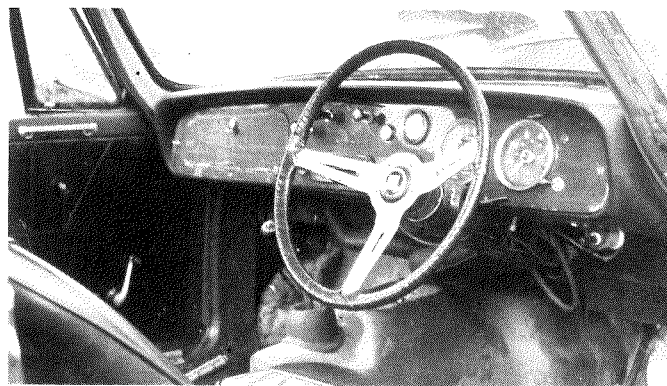
One evening in darkest January 1989 I received a telephone call from fellow Equipe owner Dave Hearndon that he had been told of an early 2+2 for sale in the Croydon area. I took note of the details and decided to investigate a bit further myself. Steve the seller of the car gave me some further details and from the engine number he quoted I was able to ascertain from the Factory Records that this Equipe appeared to be the first one off the production line. My interest level now rose considerably!! A further call was made to Steve and it was arranged that I would view the car the following Sunday.

On arrival at the address given, we found a red 2+2 which started and ran (albeit with a typical Triumph engine rattle) complete with a new MOT certificate and a corroded Commission

Plate which nevertheless confirmed that this was indeed Equipe number 05/101. Some discussion then took place on financial matters. It transpired that Steve had restored the car

sufficiently to obtain an MOT certificate with the object in mind of selling the registration number through a number plate dealer. Reluctantly I agreed to this arrangement as the preservation of the car was of prime importance to me. It was agreed that I would collect 516 FYL the following Sunday as the premises in which it was stored were under threat of demolition in the near future. The Registration of the vehicle was to remain with the present owner pending the transfer of the number.

Came the fateful day, Dennis Watson and myself set off early on a dark, foggy and frosty January morning armed with an assortment of emergency equipment and a



considerable amount of apprehension on my part. A 120 mile drive in January in a largely unknown vehicle is not exactly my idea of fun! However, all seemed well on our arrival in Surrey. The Equipe was started and warmed up, the deal was done and we left for the journey home. Now the fun started!

At the first road junction a brisk uphill get-away was required to avoid an encounter with an oncoming Reliant Robin: lots of revs but little forward progress due to fearsome clutch slip.



Having overcome that problem and only a short distance further on we pulled into a Petrol Station. During the filling operation I suddenly noticed that petrol was leaking from the vicinity of the tank in a steady stream - hurried exit from the pumps in the hope that driving would eventually reduce the fuel level to below the leak! Steady progress was maintained around the M25 as far as the Dartford Tunnel

deficiencies such as a leaking brake pipe, a brake pad inserted the wrong way round, odd sized tyres, no horn push connection and a clutch plate worn down to the rivets. The fuel leak was traced to the flexible hose at the petrol tank take off.

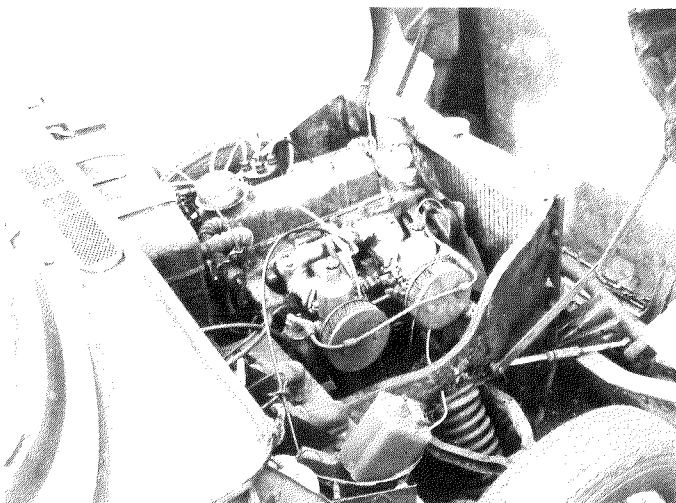
Having compiled a 'hit list' of tasks we set about improving the car during the spring in order to make it fully roadworthy and legal ready for the summer. A number of events have seen 516 FYL during 1989 including the Club International at Stafford, the Leicester National at Stanford Hall and of course the Bond Equipe Weekend as well as a number of local shows. No problems have been encountered and it has proved entirely reliable during the whole season. It is now off the road for a major mechanical refurbishment, bodywork



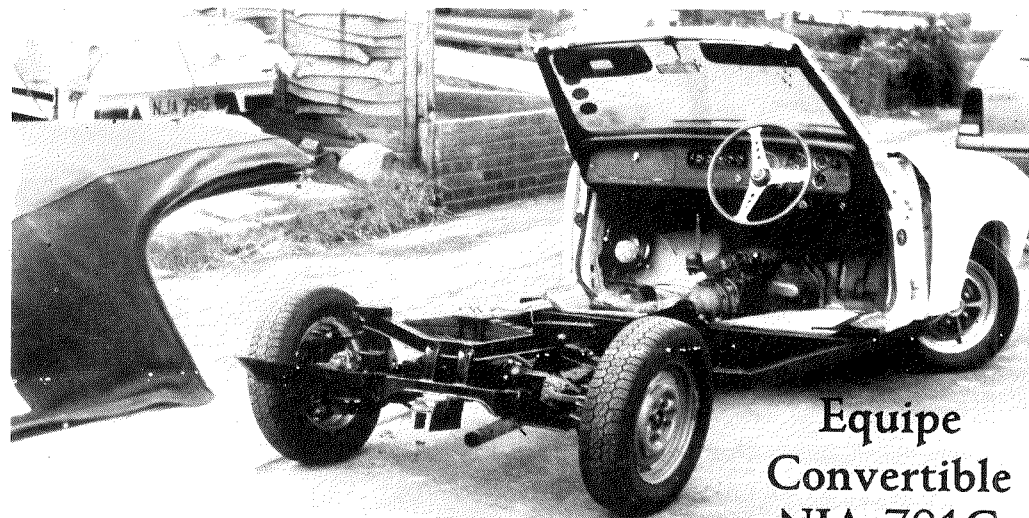
when a stop was made to check the car. The petrol leak had slowed to a slight drip and water and oil levels were still OK so we decided to press on after reducing the tyre pressures in order to improve the handling.

The rest of the journey proved to be uneventful and we arrived in Peterborough after a trip which had lasted a little over 3 hours. Not bad in the circumstances.

Further investigations over the next few days revealed a few alarming



repairs and a re-spray. Following the re-taxing of the car in July, the DVLC sent me the Registration Document so I assume that 516 FYL will now remain with the car. ★



**Equipe
Convertible
NJA 791G**

Keith Dungworth

The Club's Best Bond?

'It must be worth a fortune!' That's what most people say when they see our Bond Equipe Two Litre Convertible - 'Not as much as you might think', is my usual answer.

NJA 791G hasn't always attracted such admiration, when I acquired it six years ago most people wouldn't have given it a second glance, except to confirm just how bad it really looked. When the previous owner rang me to ask if I knew anyone who wanted to buy a Two Litre Convertible (I was running the 'Equipe Info' for the Bond Owners Club) I leapt at the chance. Close inspection revealed that this sad looking Bond had recently had a very good chassis rebuild and it was this that made up my mind to purchase NJA.

I had attempted a total rebuild once before (a Herald Convertible) but I lost heart and never got it finished: there was just too much to do. My latest acquisition also needed a lot of work, but I wasn't going to fall into the trap of a total strip down. This time I would do a little at a time starting with the bodywork, the idea being to keep up the interest by having a decent looking car even though it ran like a tram with a broken wheel! The original colour was black. The new colour scheme was Mercedes Creme with brown carpets and hood plus bolt on wire wheels.

It is difficult to say exactly when the Concours bug bit but the new colour scheme did not last long.



The following is a list of work carried out over the last six years, mainly in the winter months:-

1985: Fibreglass body re-gelled, new door skins fitted and door bottoms repaired. New bulkhead fitted. All body parts shimmed and/or adjusted to achieve proper alignment.

1986: Engine totally rebuilt. Front suspension rebuilt and painted. Bulkhead and chassis stripped and painted.

1987: Hood frame stripped, straightened and painted. New custom made double duck hood fitted. Seats recovered and new carpets fitted.

1988: Rear body shell removed (after wrapping in Jiffy paper), inverted and the floor repaired plus new wheel arches, stripped and repainted chassis. Total rebuild of rear suspension. 1989: Acute shortage of time. ★

Awards gained:-

Bond Weekend Yaxley:

1986 - 2nd
1987 - 1st
1988 - 1st
1989 - 1st

First Donnington Autojumble 1987:

One of six cars selected out of over fifty in the Classic car park and awarded a bottle of Champagne.

North Yorkshire Moors Run

1987:
Best Car Overall.

TSSC International 1988:

Best Bond

TSSC Leicester - Stanford Hall:

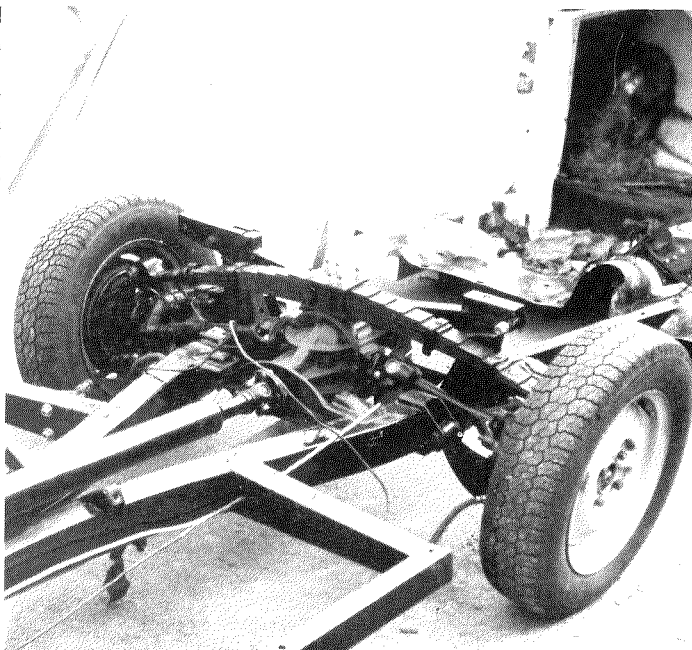
Best Bond

TSSC Peak Run - Chatsworth:

Best Bond and second overall

Bond Owners Club - Morcambe 1989:

Best Four Stroke and Best Overall



GT4S Black Monster

Dave Hearnden

I bought the Bond for £450 which was a fair price at the time. It needed a bit of tidying but it was sound (?), well a small hole here and there.

The Bond was driven hard then the engine and the mechanics started to wear and needed replacing. It was decided that a spare engine that I had already acquired would be rebuilt with one or two modifications.

While all this was going through my little brain I had been collecting odds and ends like front corners from a GT6 Mk.3 and rear shafts from a 2-Litre Bond Coupe. I can vouch that you can get good buys from Club events and it is a wonder what will fit into a GT4S boot.

Engine went away to Oseila Engineering in Oxford. I told them what I required and they have done me proud. The engine performs very well. Cost: expensive but it does do exactly what I asked of them.

Meanwhile back at the ranch, the car had all the rear end suspension and diff etc removed and the chassis was wire brushed and painted with Bond-a-Prima, Hammerited and then undersealed. Other items were then put back on after being reconditioned or rebuilt.

Engine and gearbox was fitted. Car started? No. We had fitted the distributor 180 degrees out. Once cor-

rected, Wham! it started.

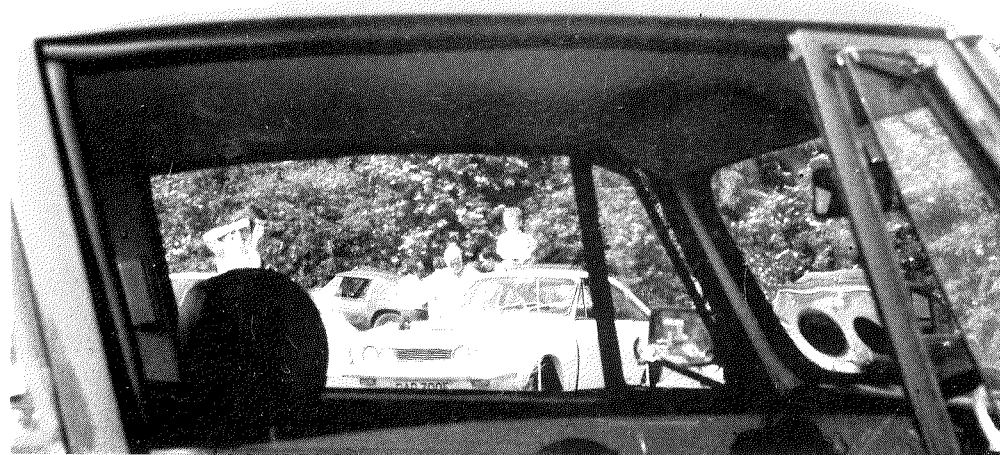
I found out faults to my cost when a couple of friends gave the car a coat of paint. While they were rubbing down the body they found the car had been in an accident on the driver's side behind the door. A replacement panel had been set back half an inch so the depth had to be brought up to the contours using filler - lots of. The windscreen surround was rusted out and again filled with filler. Not a good solution but a way to get the car back on the road and something I can correct at a later date. The car was taken to a local MOT Centre for the test which of course it passed with a comment about a front wheel bearing needing adjusting.



When the car came back on the road and I had put a few miles on the clock, it went on a rolling road where they set up the carbs and timing. The difference back on the road was an overwhelming improvement. The Black Monster showed an indicated 80+bhp at the back wheels and that is via an overdrive 'box which means that my little 1300cc engine was producing more than a 2-Litre Vitesse. Not bad for an engine that started off with one or two mods. The car is very easy to drive and a treat to drive. The Monster will put the likes of your XR2's and 3's to shame and the looks you get? Alright, some of them might be saying,

"What a load of rubbish", but one son has been seen to ask his father if the car was a Porsche - and father turned around and said, "No. It's an Aston Martin."

The car has been on the road for over a year, mainly behaving quite well but for a couple of things like the diff which was supposed to be a Vitesse unit but turned out to be a Marina item with which I've had problems with vibration. I found out by accident that



the split pin in the diff on the flange connected to the prop shaft had moved (all right - had fallen out). The gearbox was supposed to be a Mk.4 Spitfire unit with overdrive and has turned out to be a Mk.3 which is slowly falling apart.

Those of you who turn up to the different meets will probably have seen the Black Monster. Since starting this article I have recently modified the bonnet. The once black bonnet is now a light blue. A barrier on a roundabout rearranged the bonnet very successfully.

Talking of the light blue bonnet, I have bought a Bond Equipe Convertible needing a major rebuild of a major kind. The idea at the moment is that the 2-Litre Bond Coupe that was for sale is now to be broken and its chassis to be used for the convertible together with the larger 2-Litre brakes.

Now I'm back at square one, the Monster is to be rebodied with a repaired bulkhead and a different gearbox: one that can take the extra power, and by the way, the Mk.3 Spitfire box and clutch are not man enough to take any extra power. All I need now is time.

The Black Monster shares the road side with a GT4S called Nora (Batty - full of wrinkles); a 2-Litre Convertible that used to be raced, nick-named the Yellow Peril; the GT4S Convertible that's spread over at least two garages; and dare I mention it a Dolomite 1500 - not even the Sprint.

I have decided to get rid of both GT4S's (Nora and the Black Monster). It will break my heart to say bye to the Monster but since writing this article I realise that having five cars is not a good idea and that you can not devote the time required to keep too many cars over 18 years old on the road. My passion is turning to the convertibles, to keep the 2-Litre on the road and to start work on the GT4S Convertible.

The Black Monster is being sold without engine, oil cooler, Kenlowe and wheels but including the larger brakes. Nora is being sold as a runner needing a small amount of work, required for its MOT. I'm open to sensible offers. My address appears in the Area Directory.

NON MEMBERS

If you are reading this magazine and would like to join the Triumph Sports Six Club Contact 121B St Mary's Road Market Harborough Leicestershire LE16 7DT

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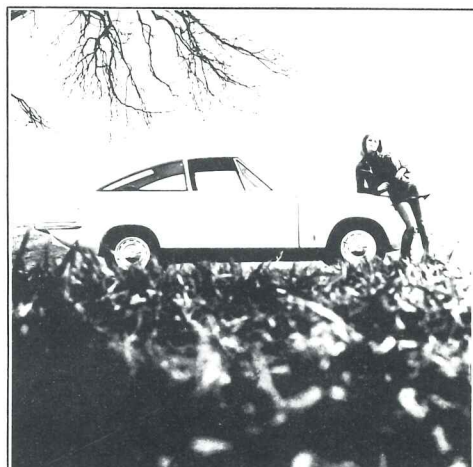


NOW

Until now, the split separates Gran Turismo from family saloon was thought to be unbridgeable. Now now is the car that has done the impossible—a car that has the finesse, excitement and comfort of a GT. The economy of a family saloon and is backed by a world-wide spare parts service through Standard Triumph agents. If you find ordinary cars commonplace, the Bond Equipe is the car for you.

ELEGANCE The Equipe is custom built with deep upholstery from seats adjustable through 72 positions—seats four adults in luxurious comfort with fixed or swivel, padded walnut face wood veneered steering wheel and controls—everything you could wish for in your kind of car including large luggage compartment.

SAFETY Technically one of the safest cars on the road. There's a recent independent suspension all round, front disc brakes and the famous Triumph Herald 1200 double backbone chassis from the basis of the Equipe. And with a 25 turning circle you can out manoeuvre a London Taxi!



The Bond Bombshell - Bond Equipe 2.0 GT.

This is the Bond Equipe 2.0 GT. A sleek four-seater fastback with a smooth 98 b.h.p. 2.0-litre Standard Triumph engine beneath its bonnet. A car that sits on 70 in. p.h. in seconds and reaches 100 in 10. That's the performance pull of the famous 2.0-litre GT. Now, take in its appearance. At first glance, it doesn't seem like one of the most expensive cars on the road. That, admittedly, does draw a lot of attention to it. So does the fact that it's largely hand-built, with a body moulded in reinforced glass fibre with an immaculate coach finish. Now, take the Equipe GT on a practical level. It's built to Bond in association with Standard Triumph. This means you can get a Standard Triumph car with the same engine and gearbox as the Equipe GT. Equally, as well, it means that your Equipe GT can be taken for check-ups or repairs to any Standard Triumph service centre. A hand-built car, country-side, serving facilities. That's the make and philosophy of making an Equipe GT. And with the one supplier, you receive a 12-month 125,000-mile warranty on its performance and reliability. A very attractive car at the all-time price of £11,199 (purchase tax included).



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SPORTS SYSTEMS

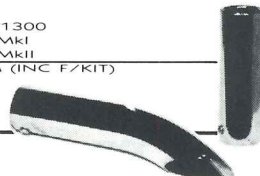
Please note - All 'sports' systems improve gas flow at the expense of some increase in noise level - sounds good!

EXHAUST TRIMS - BE240 Available in chrome and polished stainless steel, both are attractive and functional - will protect paintwork and improve looks of standard systems (GT6 II for example).

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