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four speed version of the three speed Vanguard gearbox was fitted, the chassis was a lengthened and reinforced version of that of the Standard Nine, and the rear axle and front suspension came from the Mayflower. The TR's body panels, and therefore its character, were entirely new.

The first TR2, introduced in 1953, was not without its problems though. Owner Eric Hines recalls that it was impossible to take a girl out on a date in one - particularly to Leamington Spa! The kerbs

*The TR's interior was plain, uncluttered and stylish. (TR2 1955).*



*When Eric Hines bought his TR2 in 1991, it had been partially restored. Eric finished the job, and the car is now better than new. (TR2 1955).*

sunroof and distinguishing trim. Soon all the other Heralds were using this chassis, and were fitted with a 48bhp version of the engine. The Herald got a 1300cc engine in 1968, and a front styling overhaul courtesy of Vitesse panels - an easy enough procedure as the car's bodywork was comprised of bolt-on sections. The 1200 continued alongside this 13/60 Herald for a while, but soon suffered at its hands, and was withdrawn in 1970. The final Heralds lasted for another year before production ended.

As soon as the Herald was introduced, Triumph began to

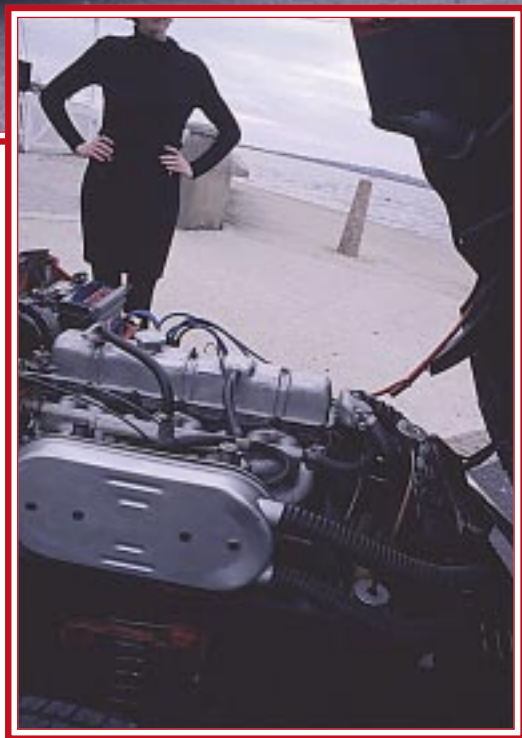
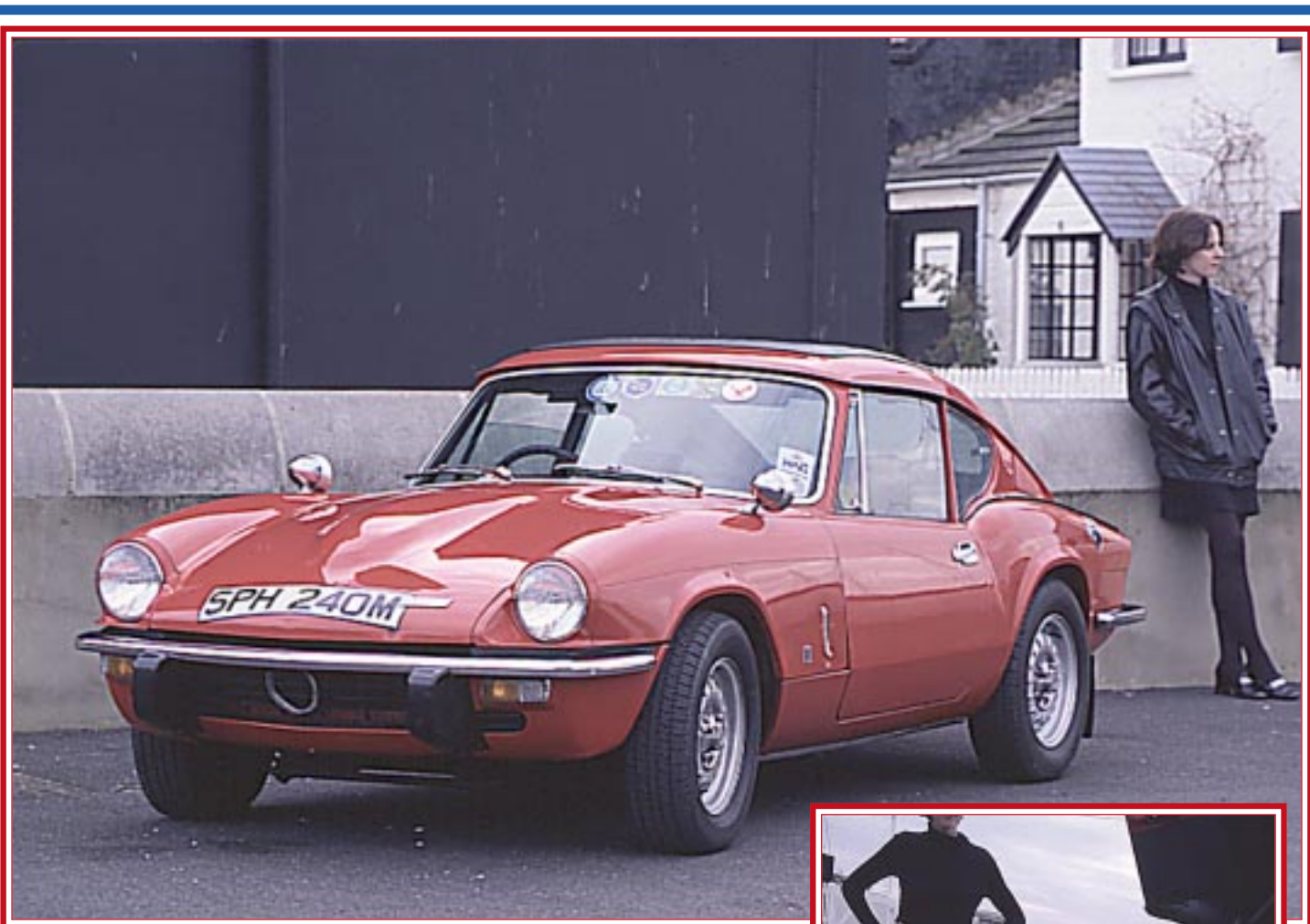
look at the idea of an inexpensive sportscar based on it. Michelotti worked on the idea and came up with an appealing design, but it was felt that the time was not right to push the project forward, and the experimental prototype gathered dust in the corner. However, with the advent of Leyland's involvement, it was hauled out, reappraised, and was soon approved for production. The first Spitfire, later to become known as the Mk I, was introduced in 1962. It was fitted with a 63bhp incarnation of the 1200 Herald engine (actually 1147cc). The Herald chassis was adapted for the

Spitfire, and given a rigid backbone by moving the side members to the centre. A problem of this arrangement, however, was that the car relied for its rigidity on the strength of the welded sills. Consequently, ignored and rusted sills would have a terminal effect on the car, and made any kind of good major repair a very expensive option.

The Spitfire was well received. It offered good sportscar motoring at an affordable price. The car's handling might not have been 100%, but then the Spitfire was not meant to be a leading



*The first Spitfire arrived in 1962. The Mk II, which came three years later, had a little more power, plus refinements to the interior. (Spitfire Mk II 1965).*



*Quart into a pint pot - the GT6's engine was encouraged to fit with the help of some complex plumbing. (GT6 Mk III).*





*Opposite and above - The Stag bears a family resemblance to the TR6, alongside which it might have consolidated Triumph's sportscar expectations, had market forces not been against it. (Stag 1972).*

facturer. The effects of the oil crisis hit at the crucial moment when Stag sales should have been consolidating. Had Leyland been in a healthier position, financially, there might have been hope. The Stag, however, had problems that could only have been solved by a redesign - an expensive redesign.

The US market should also have been a prime target for the Stag. However, the car's launch was delayed several times because US emission laws were tightened.

The original Stag, later to

be known as the Mk I, was fitted with a three litre V8 engine giving a power output of 145bhp. The engine had serious overheating problems, though, and just one overheating episode was enough to write-off the cylinder heads. These problems were even worse in the US where the climate compounded the problems, and where there were very few mechanics trained to fix the cars. These problems led to the US market being abandoned in 1973, the same year that the Mk II Stag was introduced. The Mk II

differed from its predecessor in having a slightly higher compression ratio. There were cosmetic changes too - coachstripes along the sides and black painted sills which later changed to bright metal. The Stag lasted until 1977, by which time just 26,000 had rolled off the production line - barely a third of the hoped-for total.

Although originally a Mk I, John Mumford's bright green Stag has many Mk II attributes, including its colour. Java Green was only available on the Mk II as production drew