

Triumph Herald, Australian Style

A Different Slant on the Herald

Written by Dale Hickman

Many thanks to Dale Hickman of Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, Dale.Hickman@tres.tas.gov.au for providing the pictures and text below. Dale sheds some light on an Australian version of the Herald unfamiliar to most of us!



Dale Hickman's 12/50 Coupe. Note the Vitesse 1600 bonnet with the Triumph badge and TRIUMPH lettering in front of the chrome bonnet strip.

I have a 12/50 Coupe (everyday car) and a 12/50 saloon (awaiting full restoration). Both of these are the Australian-assembled versions, which were fitted with the Vitesse 1600 bonnets and disc brakes as standard. The Coupe came with the twin carb setup as standard, while the saloon has the single Solex. I have been told that all Australian-sold Coupes (presumably 1200s as well) were fitted with the twin SUs.

It is interesting to note that it appears the 12/50s were not specifically marketed as a Herald in Australia as they do not have any Herald badges — simply the 12/50 badge on the boot and a Triumph badge on the dash in place of the Herald badge. My Coupe was manufactured in March 1965 from an exported CKD kit in November 1964 (after the production of Coupes ceased). It is also fitted with the early smooth roof [as opposed to the later style, with its "ribbed" sail panels].

I have found that there is little information published about the Australian version. The only article I have seen is a reprint of a Road Test from a "Wheels" Magazine in 1964. It is reprinted in the Brooklands Road Test book "Triumph Herald 1959-1971". This article is on the saloon version but it does mention that the 12/50 range started with the introduction of the Coupe. As far as I am aware, a convertible version was not offered.

The 12/50s were assembled by AMI (Australian Motor Industries), who later went on to concentrate mainly on assembling Toyotas in Australia. Several years ago they finally were totally bought out by Toyota. Consequently, all the Triumph records were discarded, but these are now with another Triumph fanatic. I have spoken to him and he has verified that my car is original.

I been able to obtain from him some details of Herald production by AMI. The following chart lists the various models, years and numbers produced:

	948 Saloon	948TC Saloon	948TC Coupé	948TC Conv.	1200 Saloon	1200DL Saloon	1200 Coupé	12/50 Saloon	12/50 Coupé
YEAR									
1959	1758		406						
1960	3920	1174	2439	747					
1961	1065	196	777	205	7				
1962				8	85	953	5		
1963					55	501	130		27
1964						112		202	93
1965								80	24
1966								6	
Total	6743	1370	3622	960	147	1566	135	288	144

The details of my cars are:

12/50 Coupe

Commission No: GB14387CP

Engine No: GD13691HE

(AMI) Body No: C64069

12/50 Saloon

Commission No: GB10687DL

Engine No: GD13645HE

(AMI) Body No: X64135

[Note that Commission numbers of these 12/50 cars are in the GB series, which, according to Triumph factory literature was used primarily to designate the Herald Mk. II 1200 "Export" model; this same series was used to identify later Triumph ("Sports") 1200 models in the United States. The GD prefix for the engine numbers denotes an engine to 12/50 specification. The earlier AMI-assembled 948 series Heralds carried unique Commission and engine numbers, with a KA prefix for 1959 and a KB prefix for 1960 and later cars.]

Features unique to the Australian 12/50:

- fitted with Vitesse 1600 bonnet

- disc brakes standard (type 12 calipers but fitted with dust shields)
- no cubby box lid
- both saloon and Coupe had separate temperature and fuel gauges (“Jaeger” white with black writing)
- water valve to heater located on head rather than heater body
- different sill tread plates fitted
- moulded rubber footwells for front seats in place of carpet
- different wheel trims
- sunshine roof was not fitted to either model
- Coupé had the earlier type smooth roof
- no Herald badges
- badging
 - the 12/50 badge on the bootlid on the saloon is positioned identically to that on the UK model, but on the Coupe it is angled — presumably using the same mounting holes as the Coupe script badge fitted to other Coupes.
 - The saloon had two-tone paint with the roof painted a different colour to the rest of the car.
- Australian versions were not fitted with the rubber bumper insets but rather had a smooth chrome capping on them (different from that fitted on Vitesses). The saloon was fitted with these front and back. I am not too sure about the Coupe as mine only has it fitted on the front. The rear bumper is simply painted. If it was originally fitted it must have been beyond replating when the car was rebuilt.
- front turn indicators are the inside lens on the Australian cars — all pictures of UK Vitesses I have seen show the amber lens to the outside.

Above information provided of courtesy Andrew Mace, Vintage Triumph Register President and Triumph 10/Herald/Vitesse (Sports 6) Consultant herald948@aol.com on 3 May 2016, at 11:26.

For more information, visit Vintage Triumph Register website: <http://vintagetriumphregister.org/>