



RIVIERA OWNERS ASSOCIATION

ROA Australian Region Newsletter

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The Personal Luxury Car

In the late 1950's, GM began to feel the need for a person luxury car to compete with the highly successful Ford Thunderbird - a uniquely styled, two-door, four passenger car with an image of both comfort and performance. The design that became the first Riviera was created as a Cadillac model and its styling was reportedly inspired by GM styling chief Bill Mitchell's visit to London during the period, when he was struck by the sign of an elegant, custom-bodied Rolls Royce in the fog. He later said that "knife-edged" styling was what he wanted for the new model, but with a lower profile and a bit of Ferrari thrown in for performance. The design itself was penned by stylist Ned Nickles.

The production Riviera shared its bodyshell with no other model, which was unusual for a GM product. It rode a cruciform frame similar to the standard Buick frame, but shorter and narrower, with a 2.0 in (51 mm) narrower track. Its wheelbase of 117 in (3,000 mm) and overall length of 208 in (5,300 mm) were 6.0 inches (150 mm) and 7.7 in (200 mm) shorter, respectively, than a Buick Le Sabre, but slightly longer than a contemporary Thunderbird. At 4,190 pounds (1,900 kg.) it was about 200 pounds (91 kg) lighter than either. It shared the standard Buick V8 engines, with a displacement of either 401 cu in (6.57 L) or 425 cu in (6.96 L), and Twin Turbine automatic transmission. Brakes were Buick's standard "Al-Fin" (aluminium finned) drums of 12 in (300 mm) diameter. Power steering was standard equipment, with an overall steering ratio of 20.5:1, giving 3.5 turns lock to lock.



The Riviera's suspension used the same basic design as standard Buicks, with double wishbones front and live axle located by trailing arms and a lateral track bar, but the roll centers were raised to reduce body lean. Although its coil springs were actually slightly softer than other Buicks, with the lighter overall weight, the net effect was to make the Riviera somewhat firmer. Although still biased towards understeer, contemporary testers considered it one of the most roadable American cars, with an excellent balance of comfort and agility.

The Riviera was introduced on October 4, 1962 as a 1963 model, with a base price of \$4,333. Production was deliberately limited to 40,000 or less to increase demand.

With the same power as the larger Buicks and less weight, the Riviera had sparkling all-around performance: Motor Trend magazine found it capable of running 0 - 60 mph (0-97 km/h) in 8 seconds or less, the standing quarter mile in about 16 seconds, and an observed top speed of 115 miles per hour (185 km/h), although 125 miles per hour was feasible with a longer run. Fuel economy was a meagre 13.2 miles per US gallon (17.8 L /100 km; 15.9 mpg).

Inside the Riviera featured a four-place cabin with front bucket seats separated by a center console with floor shifter and storage compartment that was built into the instrument panel, and bucket style seats in the rear. Upholstery choices included all vinyl, cloth and vinyl, or optional leather. Popular extra-cost options included a tilt steering wheel, cruise control, power windows, power seats, air-conditioning, AM/FM radio, and wire wheel covers.

The Riviera continued with minimal trim changes for 1964 including the discontinuation of leather upholstery from the option list, differing mainly in substitution of the old two-speed Dynaflo-based Twin Turbine for the new three-speed Super Turbine 400. This was the first year that the stylised "R" emblem was used on the Riviera.

Changes for 1965 included the introduction of the Gran Sport option, which included the dual-quad Super Wildcat 425 V8, a numerically higher 3.42 axle ratio, dual exhausts, and stiffer, heavy-duty suspension.

Total sales for the three model years was a respectable 112,244. All in all, the Riviera was extremely well received and considered a great success, giving the Thunderbird its first real competition. This first Riviera is considered a styling landmark, and is quite collectible today.

(Extract from Wikipedia.)

2010 Australian ROA Meet Update

It is very encouraging to see the number of ROA members who have already booked their accommodation and registered for this inaugural *Australian ROA Meet* to be held in Coffs Harbour, 10 - 13 September 2010.

Being the first Australian event for ROA members, we welcome as many Rivas and their owners as possible to come along and join in what will be a great time of fun and fellowship.

You should all have received a Registration Form and an overview of the Meet. (If you have not received this, please contact us so this can be forwarded to you.)

There is no need to send in all of the payment at this time. You can send in the registration payment and send the rest later. This way, we will know you are coming and can put you on the list. As you can imagine, many of the venues require bookings to be made well in advance so it will help us to know as soon as possible how many members and guests to book for at the various venues.

If you are wondering why we have asked for payment to be made to B. & L. Hall ROA A/c, let us explain. The Australian banking system presents many difficulties in trying to open an account where the Directors of the organisation are not resident in Australia. As you know, the Australian Region is just that, the Australian Region of the ROA which is based in U.S.A. The easiest way to create an account dedicated to the ROA in Australia was to open the account with our name as the anchor. Rest assured, all books of account will be properly kept and all moneys accounted for. After all accounts have been settled for this Meet in September the books will be audited and published to all members.

Don't forget to get your accommodation booked as soon as possible. The Park Beach Holiday Park is a great venue and the management are extremely helpful and supportive of this *Inaugural Australian ROA Meet*. They are holding a number of units at **DISCOUNT PRICES ONLY UNTIL EASTER** for our group. Accommodation may be available after this date but cannot be guaranteed and may not be at the discount price. When you book make sure you **state you are with the Buick ROA group**.

Come along and join in the fun - we look forward to meeting you all at Coffs Harbour.

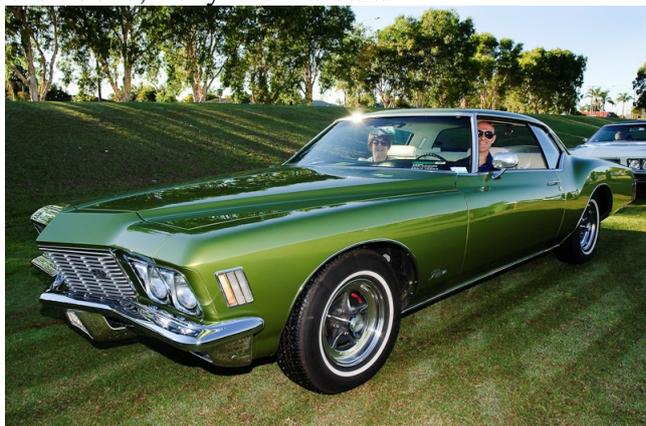
P.S. Registration form attached.

The Lime Mist '71

Congratulations are in order to Tony and Barbara Gentilcore, of Sydney for their excellent article in the latest issue of "the Riview".

After all the work (and cost), the 1971 Riviera boattail is now a beautiful car which Tony and Barbara should be very proud of.

Well done, Tony and Barbara.



Buick Nailhead Motor Warning!

Don't let your Buick Nailhead Motor seize! (This motor in ALL '63 to '66 RIVIERAS)

John Barker, a long time member of the Queensland Buick Club, had two nailhead motors destroyed some years ago. He discovered that the idler gear shaft in the nailhead oil pump (see photo) over time works its way up above the pump until it hits the crankshaft.

At some point after this starts to happen this shaft will be snapped off by the crankshaft destroying the oil pump and starving the motor of oil. As the main drive shaft for the oil pump fits into and is driven by the distributor, the distributor can also be wrecked.

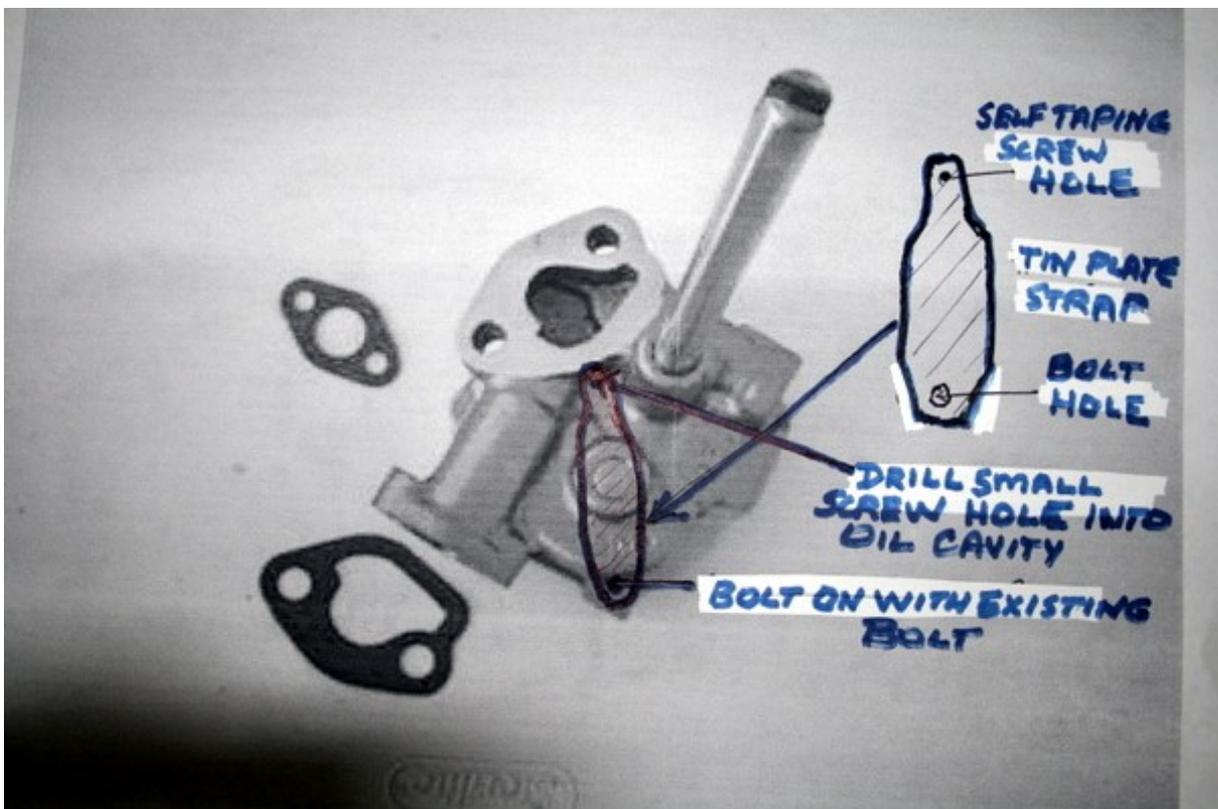
John kindly removed the oil pump (a long and difficult job without removing the motor) on our two nailhead motors and we found the offending gear shaft had started to rise up by 5 mm on one pump and 7 mm on the other.

John has now fixed this problem on a number of nailheads (including our two) by tapping the shaft down and then cutting a tin plate strap to size, bolting one end under an oil pump base bolt, then tightly pulling the strap over the exposed top of the shaft and screwing the other end with a self tapping screw into a hole drilled into the pump casing where the oil cavity is located. The strap is then tapped down into the shape of the top of the pump so that the shaft can not rise again (see 2nd photo).

It is important while doing this job not to empty the oil out of the pump as it would then suck air and very importantly not to allow any metal shavings from drilling the hole to remain on the pump or get into the oil.

In summary, a difficult job to do without removing the motor but well worth it to save a motor.

Brian Hall



Suppliers and Repairers members have been happy with

If you have had a job well done from a repairer, then why not let others know about it. Send in details of your good experiences so they can be printed here.

Annvid Auto Upholsterers,
24 Smith Street,
Capalaba. Qld. 4157
Tel: 07 3390 3444

Mt. Cotton Auto Electrics,
57A Island Street,
Cleveland. Qld. 4163
Mob: 0429 193 815

Note: This is not in any way an endorsement of these businesses. It is just giving members leads to businesses that other members have had a good experience with.

Market Place

Wanted: 1965 Riviera in good condition. Andrew Plowright ph.0418 416 123

For Sale: 1 x 1968-69 n/s fender with small marker light, excellent cond., no rust or damage.
1 x 1966-67 headlight motor, good working order, includes one flexible coupling.
3 x 1968 rear side marker lights (tri shield design).
1 x 400-430-455 waterpump used or will trade on any 1965 parts.
Steve Moore 02 6884 9904 Email: riviera.1965@hotmail.com

Have a Laugh

Ain't This the Truth

As I am now about to click over into the Senior Citizen age group, I would like to leap to the defence of those people in Australia who are also in the SC category.

Senior citizens are constantly being criticised for every conceivable deficiency of the modern world, real or imaginary. HOWEVER, upon reflection, I would like to point out that it was NOT the senior citizens who took:
the melody out of music, the pride out of appearance, the courtesy out of driving, the romance out of love, the commitment out of marriage, the responsibility out of parenthood, the togetherness out of the family, the learning out of education, the service out of patriotism, the golden rule from rulers, the nativity scene out of cities, the civility out of behaviour, the refinement out of language, the dedication out of employment, the prudence out of spending, the ambition out of achievement, or, God out of government and school.

And SC's certainly are NOT the ones who eliminated patience and tolerance from personal relationships and interactions with others!! And we do understand the meaning of patriotism and remember those who have fought and died for our country.

Letters to the Editor

Send in your letters with any Riviera news in your area. We'd love to hear from you.

Ed.

Thank you for your support - much appreciated. It is encouraging to see ROA Australian membership increasing since the Australian Region has been started. *Brian and Linda.*

Articles Wanted

Got a story about your Riv? We'd love to hear from you and other members would love to read your story. We welcome Australian R.O.A. members stories and photographs. Please e-mail to us at :

brianhall.hall@gmail.com or post to : Brian & Linda Hall, P.O. Box 383 Cleveland Qld.4163

New Members

A big warm R.O.A. welcome to the following new Australian members of the R.O.A.

Wayne Benedetti, 105 Hogans Drive, Bargo. N.S.W.2574 - 1966 Riviera

Wayne Harris, P.O. Box 644, Walkerville. S.A. 5081 - 1967 GS

Membership

Please encourage any Riviera owners you meet to join the R.O.A.

It's simple, just log on to the R.O.A. web site :- www.rivowners.org

Australia Regional Coordinator

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