



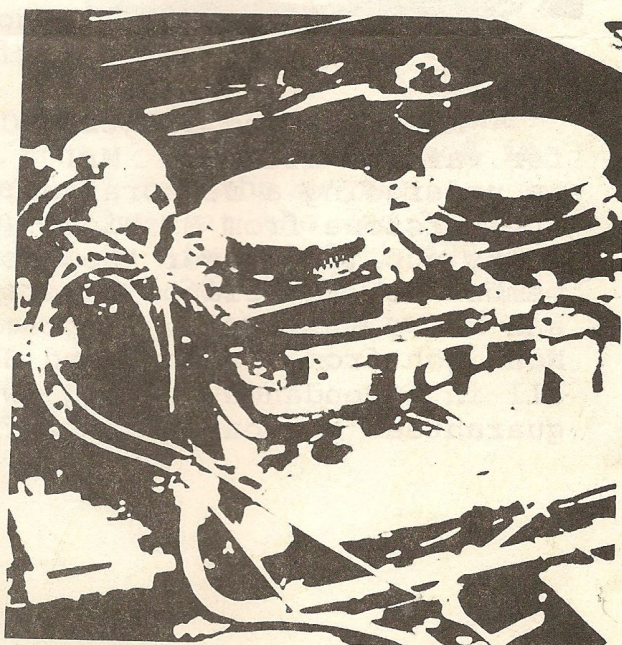
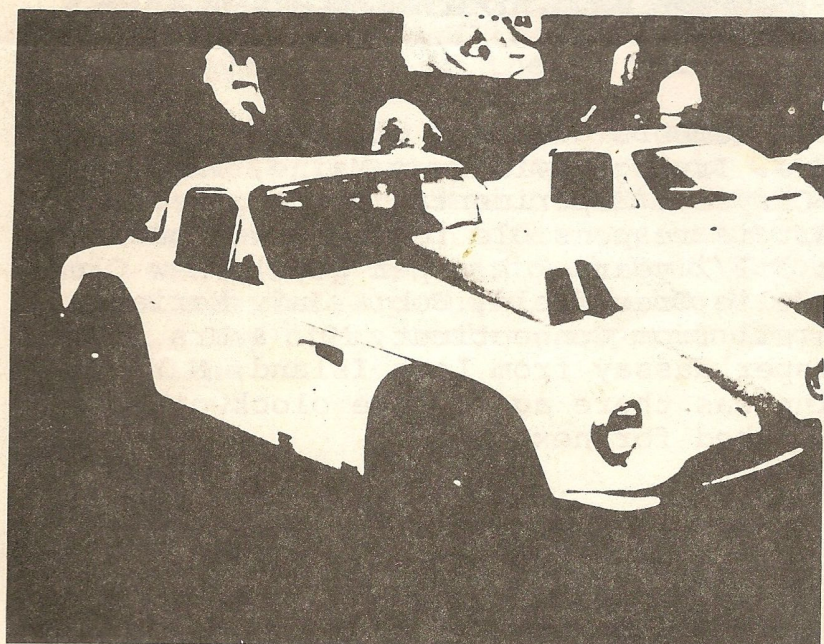
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Griffith Club of America

DECEMBER 1977

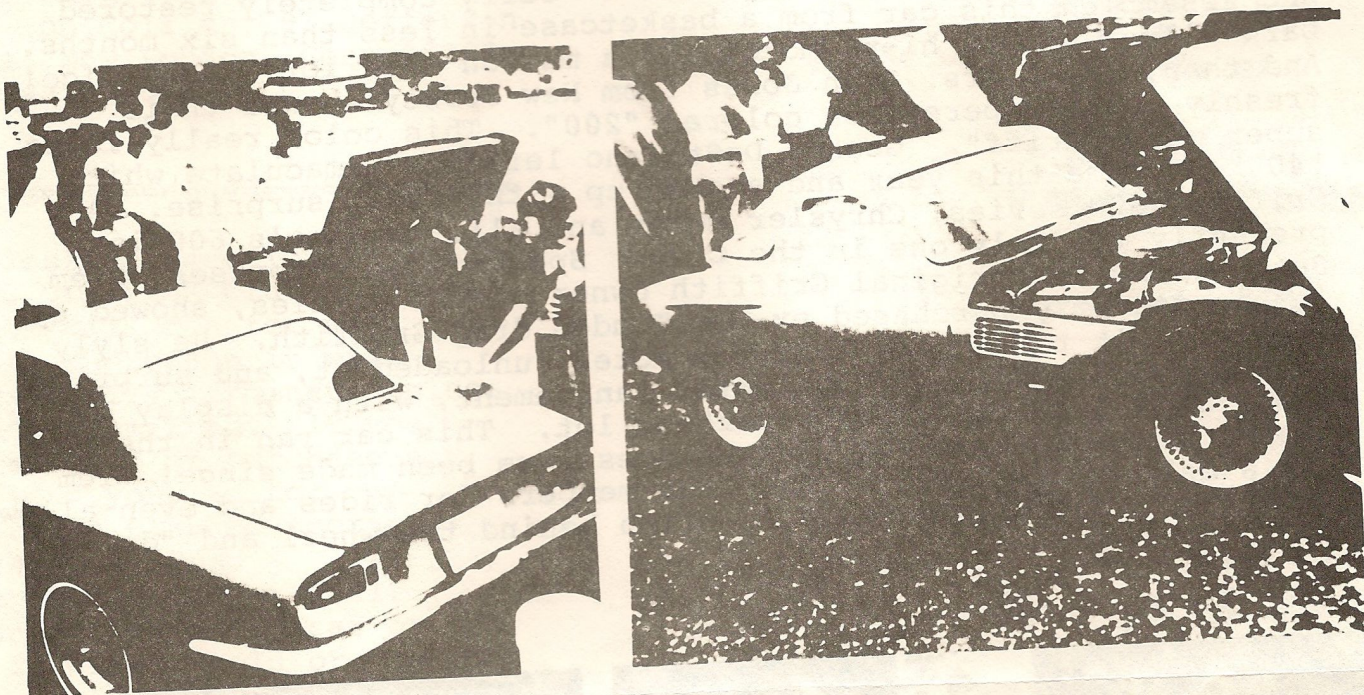
The Annual Meet attended by Griffith owners from throughout the eastern half of the United States was inspiring to say the least. Many new faces joined in with most of us "old timers" and kept us talking "Griffiths" late into the night.

The cars were super. Many owners who attended last year sans car had them restored and together this year, and boy were they together!! Like Danny Magnon's "200", it's first meet. Black with a completely chromed undercarriage, detailed throughout, dual quads and a LeMans cam spoke with a real rumble. Or, Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Latroverse's real early "200". Jerry completely restored and assembled this car from a basketcase in less than six months. Dark silver paint, hi-po motor and a maroon interior. Real nice! And then, Mr. & Mrs. Alan Jones from New Jersey showed their freshly painted persimmon colored "200". This color really looks super on a "Griff". George DeStefano left his immaculate white "400" at home this year and showed up with a real surprise. A Griffith 600 series, Chrysler motor and all. George's 600 is presently the only one in the Club. Speaking of surprises, Clem Beauchemin, an original Griffith owner in the sixties, showed up in his recently purchased ex-Tom Trudon drag Griffith. He slyly trailered it to the front of the motel, unloaded it, and surprised everyone, especially the motel management, with a display of smoke and noise through the parking lot. This car ran in the mid 10s on the strip and very few changes have been made since! Clem had a ball taking most of the Club members for rides and even allowing a few adventurous souls to climb behind the wheel and "do it" to themselves.

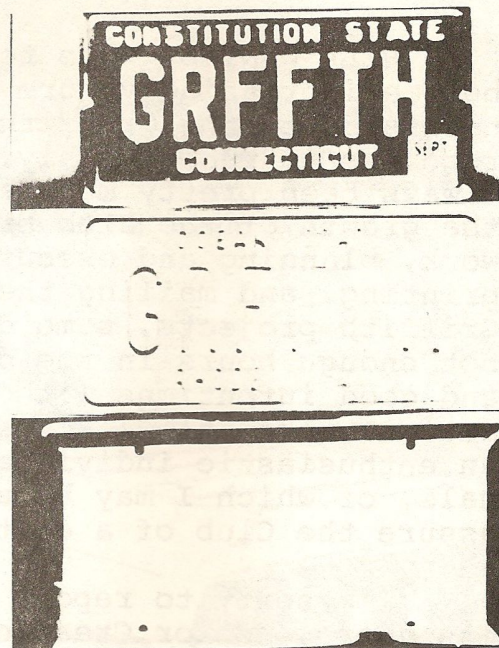
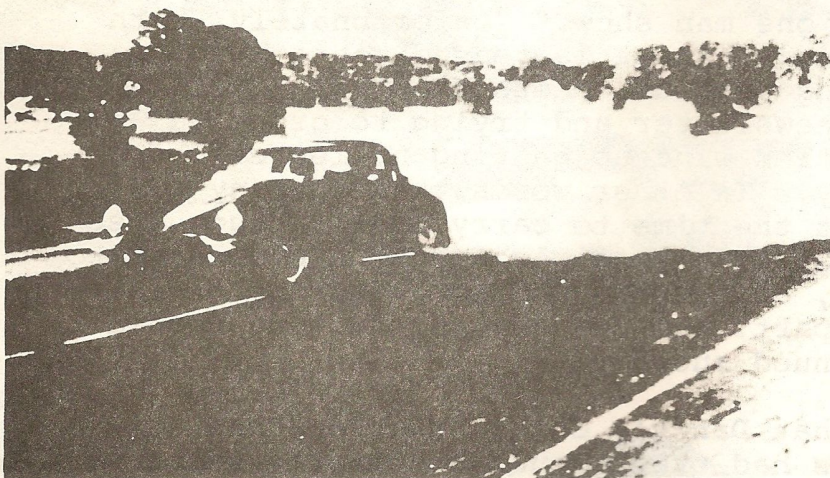


Bill Yogovitch was there representing the T.V.R. contingency of the Club! His 1970 Vixen has received an engine transplant. Where a 1600 Cortina motor originally resided, a 2000 cc overhead cam Ford motor now lives. Alright!! Bernie Burnett, President and founder of the Intermeccanica Owners Club was there with both of his Italias, a black roadster and a silver coupe. Michael Dodson, longtime Griffith owner-enthusiast motored up on a whim from Maryland and joined us for the day with his British racing green "200". Dean Pallas was freely giving rides and driving demonstrations in his wild "200". A real showman, he ought to charge admission!!

Fred McKenny overcame mechanical problems and motored down from New Hampshire in record setting time in his red "200". Alan Wolfe appeared briefly with the only "400 series" to attend the meet. State trooper, Gary Courtney had his "200" in attendance Saturday morning but shortly after reappeared with police cruiser and uniform. Spent the better part of the afternoon and evening watching over our cars. He probably had to wake up our less than enthusiastic Pinkerton guard.



Many new and longtime Club members attended without their cars for various reasons. Mr. & Mrs. Irving Davis from Maine, whose car is undergoing a restoration, Chrysler Experimental car engineer, Art Patstone from Michigan (Art is responsible for all the Road Tests published over the last 1 1/2 years. A super guy!), new Club member Bob Veneziano, Dave & Julie Greenfield, Bob & Judy Mariani and Mr. & Mrs. Brent Jacobson all from Connecticut, Mr. & Mrs. Dick Nonniech from Maryland and Jasper Kassay from Long Island, N.Y. were all in attendance. Craig Swinn was there again like clockwork and guarantees his car will be finished for next year.



Unfortunately, because of business obligations, Jack Griffith could not attend as planned. But, shortly before dinner a telegram was received from Jack wishing us the "Best of Luck". A pleasant surprise. But by far, the biggest surprise of the weekend was when a gentleman approached me and said, "Hi, I'm Jack Griffith Jr." Club members had a ball taking Jack for rides in their Griffiths while he in turn spoke of his recollections of the Griffith factory and automobile. He then surprised everyone with information on the new Griffith-Z-roadster. (See pamphlet.)

Sunday came all too soon and after a brief tour of the countryside everyone headed home. The Fifth Annual!! Number Six coming up.

I would like to thank Bob Mariani for designing, as well as taking orders and delivering, the first batch of Griffith Club jackets. I'm sure everyone who placed an order with Bob is 100% satisfied. For those of you who missed out this time, keep your ears open. Orders will be taken on a once a year basis. Be sure to get your order in then! Thanks again Bob!

I'm happy to report that many Griffith owners are experiencing success in autocrossing their Griffiths. George Livergood in Texas was Class Champion in his "200 series" for the season. Tom Brosteau turned some very respectable times at the 2nd Annual Midwest Shelby Invitational Road Autocross in his Griffith 400. His times were up there with the best prepared 289 Cobras. Good show. Any other members experiencing success in competition drop us a line.

HELP WANTED: Due to a change in residence and job it has become increasingly more difficult for me to devote the time necessary to the Griffith Club of America that it deserves and requires to run smoothly. The Club has, since its conception, always been pretty much a "one man show." Unfortunately, with the growth of the Club bringing about increased secretarial work, planning and executing various "meets", writing, editing, printing, and mailing the newsletter and trying to organize Griffith projects, some duties wind up getting neglected. Just not enough hours in the day. In other words, having many ideas and good intentions without the time to carry them through just doesn't make it! I would like to possibly turn the Club over to an enthusiastic individual, or more preferably, a group of individuals, of which I may be a part, who can devote the time needed to assure the Club of a continued success.

I'm sorry to report that Danny's Color Creations has closed its doors. Color Creations had pretty much become the second "Griffith factory". On my last visit I counted five Griffiths in various states of restoration. Danny's knowledge and love for the cars was reflected in the many cars that received his touch over the last five years. It was very fitting that Danny's own Griffith was the last complete restoration to roll from his shop. Just in time for the Annual, I might add. I hope everyone joins me in wishing Danny the best of luck in the future.

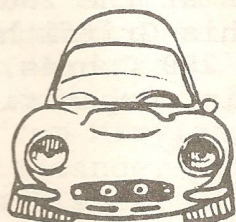
In the last newsletter I requested that anyone experiencing front lower trunion failures on their Griffs to please write in. A couple of failures have been brought to light as well as many more failures reported regularly in the T.V.R. Club newsletter. These failures are not just appearing in Griffiths. They have been showing up in V-6 Tuscans, Vixens, and Granturas. So, evidently it is not the increased weight or torque of the V-8 taking its toll. The general consensus at this point is that they are basically an overstressed component succumbing to fatigue. So keep them lubricated and looked after. I understand replacement trunions at T.V.R. are being tuft-ridged to increase their resistance to fatigue. If this is the case, it might be cheap insurance to purchase and "fit" a pair.

Well, that about sums it up. Thanks to Art Patstone for the Road Test and Bob Mariani for the Griffith-toons.

Sincerely,

Randy

Randy Hartigan
Director
Bushy Hill Road
Deep River, Connecticut 06417

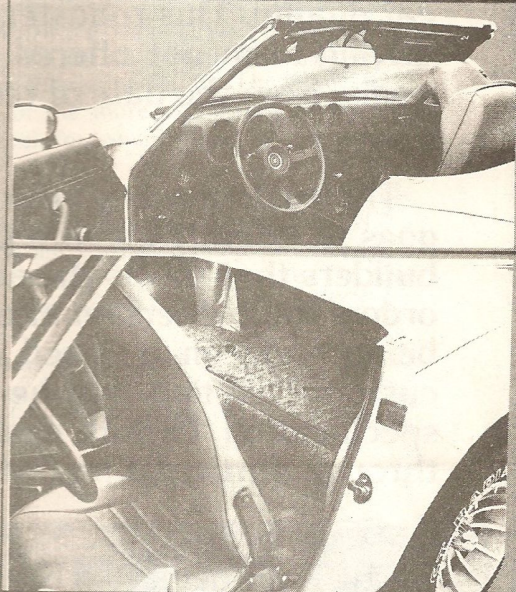
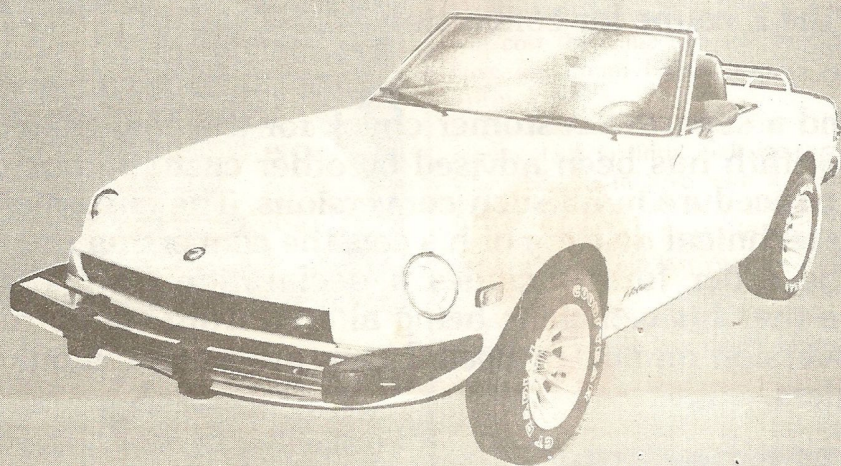
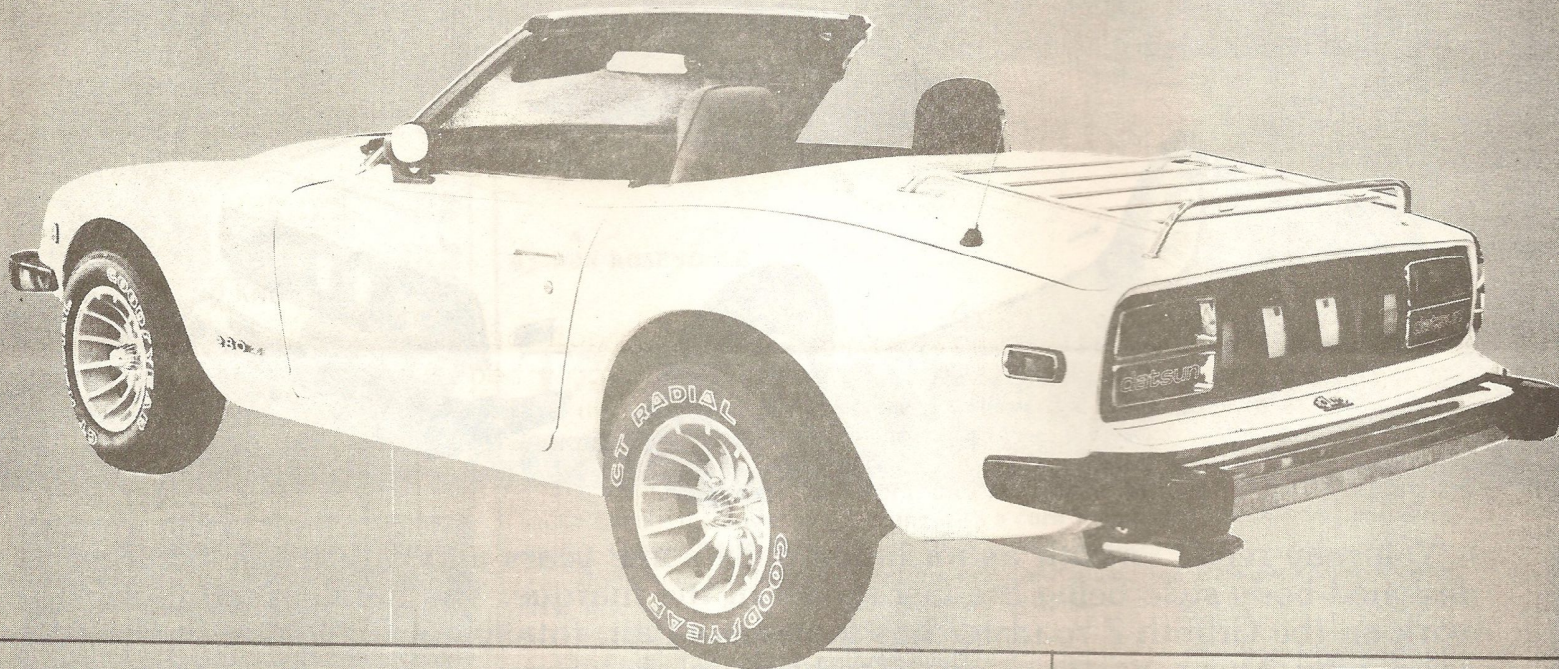


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The customer buys the Z car and a separate customer check for the conversion goes to Griffith Custom Coach. Griffith has been advised by other custom coach builders that this is the accepted procedure in all such conversions. The customer orders the conversion after taking technical delivery of his car, the conversion then being done on a "used car." The order form includes a declaration from the customer stating that he is aware that his vehicle is being altered from standard specification. Griffith custom conversion on new or used Z cars are accepted only through participating Datsun dealers.

The Z roadster has been reinforced in the rear bulkhead area, the undercarriage and the windshield frame. The luggage compartment has been altered to give accessibility to the spare tire, tools, envelope containing the removable cloth top and bows, and luggage. It is fully illuminated with a courtesy light, fully carpeted and designed with two hideaway compartments. A variation of stripes, luggage racks, spoilers and flairs can be offered by the Datsun dealer in addition to the normal Z options. A removable hardtop is under consideration.

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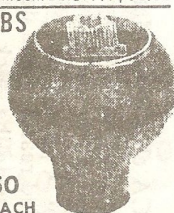
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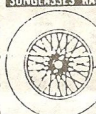
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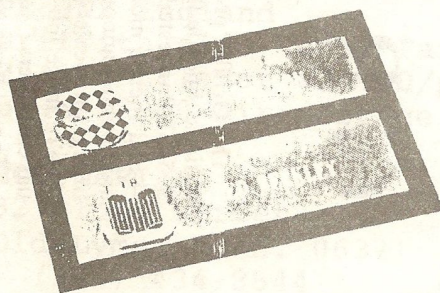
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GRIFFITH

Take one TVR coupe, add 289-cu in. of Ford power, name it Griffith and stand back

BY DON ROSENDALE

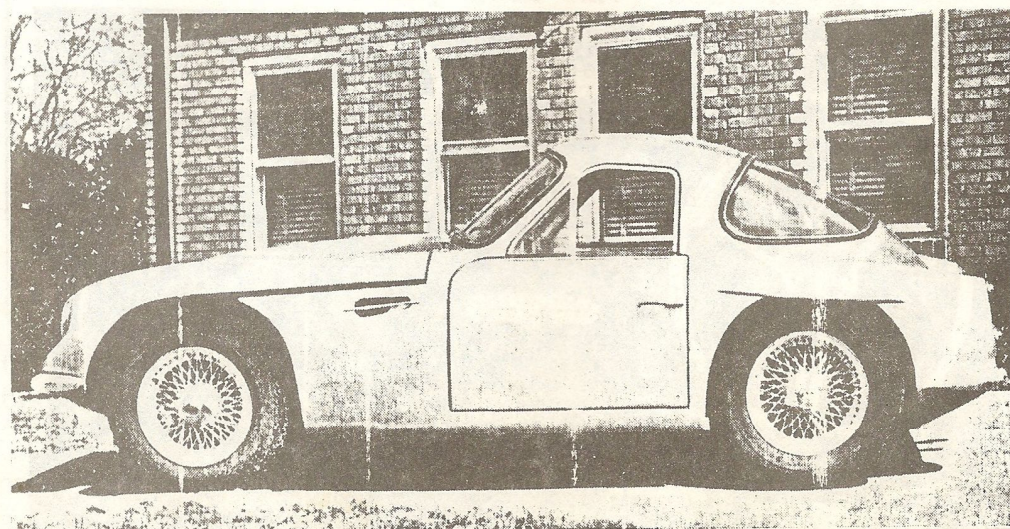
THE GREEKS HAD a word for it: Griffon—a mythical beast with the head of an eagle and the body of a lion. This angular coupe has an arched griffon on the name plate, but the name is Griffith, one of the growing number of cars turned out by small manufacturers combining muscular American V-8s with European chassis and coachwork.

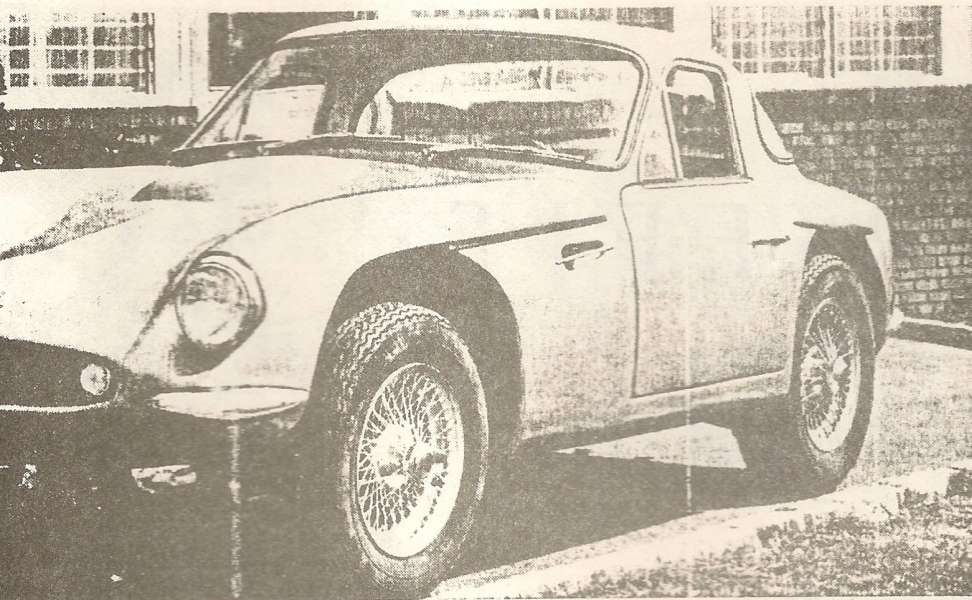
The Griffith, like the AC Cobra, uses the 289-cu. in. Ford engine. For a price under \$4000, the buyer gets a coupe with a curb weight of 1400 lb—500 lb lighter than a Cobra. Converting rpm to mph is an all-synchro 4-speed Ford gearbox. The suspension is all-independent via coil springs and the least expensive models have disc brakes only in the front, while optional versions will have discs on all four wheels. The steering is rack and pinion.

The Griffith will come in three models. The 200 series, priced at \$3900, has an English-made fiberglass coupe body that looks like a cleaned-up version of the TVR. It should, because it is. The 400 (\$5300) will use the same ladder-type frame as the 200, but will have a handmade Italian convertible body. The model 600 will cost the same but will be a coupe. Both of the more expensive models will have aluminum bodies with a special steel reinforcement built by Fissore of Turin.

The car takes its name from the man who supplies the assembly plant and the money, Jack Griffith. Jack was already a successful Ford dealer in Hicksville, N.Y., when he fell in love with a Jaguar XK-E. When Carroll Shelby produced the Cobra, Griffith switched allegiance and added Cobras to his Ford line. He also sponsored the AC Cobra in which Bob Brown came within a bent valve of SCCA's AP championship last year.

Along the way, Griffith developed a desire to build his own cars. He also hired Dick Monnich, a local enthusiast who had been importing and racing TVRs. The first Griffith-built car involved inserting a modified 289 Fairlane V-8 into a Ford





Falcon, along with disc brakes and other modifications. About that time, word leaked out that Carroll Shelby and Ken Miles had been tinkering with a Ford V-8 in a Sunbeam Alpine. Monnich's personal TVR was in the shop that day, along with a Cobra demonstrator. It wasn't long before the Cobra engine nestled inside the TVR. The transplant was a relatively simple one, as the Ford engine wasn't a great deal bigger or heavier than the MG engine it replaced.

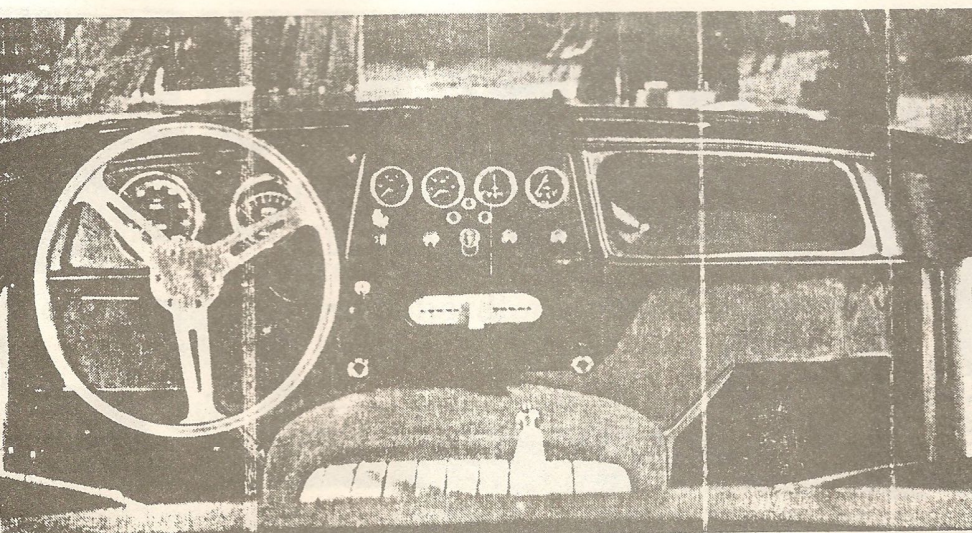
When Monnich took the Falcon-with-a-Cobra to Dearborn for testing on the Ford track, he also took the TVR-Ford along. Not long after that, Monnich was in Blackpool, England, talking business with Grantura Engineering, manufacturer of the TVR.

"We've signed a contract for all their chassis output," Monnich says. "What cars are sold in Europe will be known as TVR-Griffiths."


It was decided to offer the basic TVR coupe, cleaned up a bit, as the least expensive model in the line. The other models were designed by British designer Trevor Fiore (also known as Trevor Frost) and executed by Fissore. These will have the 271-bhp high performance engine as standard equipment as well as electric windows, reclining bucket seats and dash-mounted electric ride control, à la Rolls-Royce. They'll also be a few inches longer and about 200 lb heavier than the fiberglass bodied coupe. All three models will have 72-spoke deep-dish wire wheels.

The first 200-series Griffiths were shipped over for the New York Automobile Show after being completed too late for their planned debut at the Geneva Show. Only one coupe made it to the New York Coliseum however; the other was mashed when a packing case was dropped on it.

The chassis for the Fissore-bodied cars are also built in England, then sent to Italy where the body panels are added. After that, the cars are shipped to the Griffith plant, where the Ford engine, gearbox and other bits of the drive train are added.



with former SCCA champion Mark Donohue driving. Plans include a front-engined Griffith roadster for Donohue to campaign in modified sports car events. The front-engined car, using a standard TVR chassis, will give away a lot to the more sophisticated rear-engined designs, but Monnich figures it this way, "By using the stock chassis, we'll be able to translate lessons learned in racing to our production models more quickly. And I think we'll be pretty quick. With the Cobra last season, our drivers were usually within a second or so of the absolute track record. Our race car will have just as much power as the Cobra, it'll be a lot lighter, and I think we can make it handle better."

Jack Griffith has the money, the factory, the idea and the horsepower. Time will tell whether he has the secret ingredient that makes a car a success. 

GRIFFITH

The Griffith project shouldn't founder for lack of funds or business knowledge, inasmuch as Griffith and Monnich have \$250,000 invested in their Syosset, N.Y., plant and inventory—and there's more where that came from. Before there was any public announcement of the car, Griffith had started lining up dealers. At the New York Show, he admitted, "We're more interested in dealers right now than in individual customers."

The factory will also be committed to a racing program

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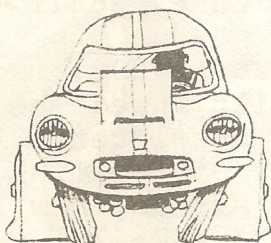
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The classified section is open to all Griffith Club members. All ads will run for two issues, whereupon it will automatically terminate unless it is resubmitted. If you want to sell or purchase any item send your ad to:

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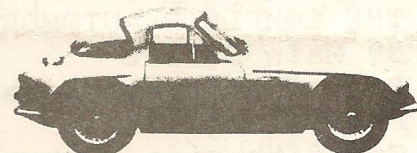
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