

WE must admit that Heralds and Vitesses are not really US. Not in anything resembling the standard production form (or even triumph production form) anyway. Our mate down in the saloon bar with his fancy lettering an' all got the usual fright when he tried out the 13/60 Herald the other month. The well-known tucking under might be well known, but it still comes as a bit of a surprise when it happens at sub-shopping speeds. (Actually we wanted a nice yellow one. . .)

But before all our Herald-owning readers get irked and go out and by Hotspotting-automotorcar or whatever the other magazine is called, we want to give two whole luvverly



With Peter Noad

Photographs by Brian Coe

pages of C & CC to the Herald appreciation society—just to show we care, really. (We have still got some Herald owning readers haven't we? Go on, own up to it.)

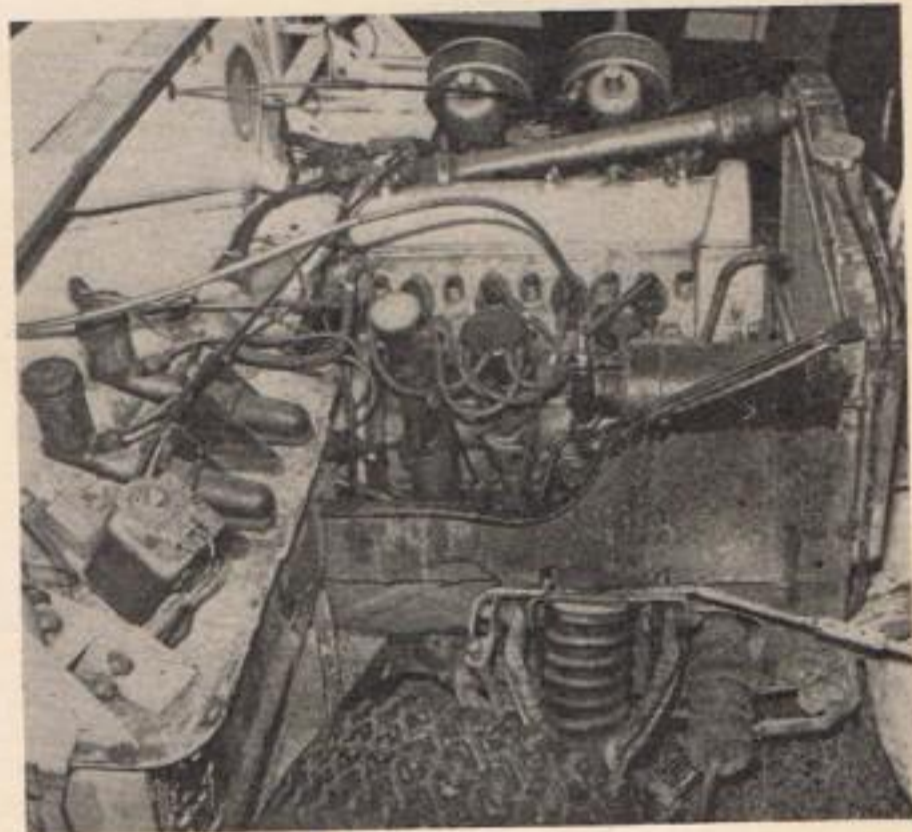
About a year ago it was, we told you about Bert Hopkins and his Ford Y type—the original roaring Fordy that amazed 'em all in the small capacity front engine/rear drive class. Now the self-same Mr. Hopkins has provided for our entertainment on the autocross scene one Triumph Herald. And the rear suspension is up tight and everything is alright, clean outta sight. What's more it's got traction, man, and takes off leaving the opposition to wind up springs and bounce around on solid axles.

This Herald actually belongs to Dave Hopkins, but his Dad can't resist driving it occasionally, too. He sold it a few years back and it did around 66,000 uneventful miles without ever experiencing an exhilarating yump, or a romp in the gunge. One careful owner, as they say. This C.O. duly brought his Herald back to Mr. Hopkins for its annual mot-ing, whereupon the jack went up up and away clean through the floor. Since it needed a rebuild, what better to do than make an autocross car of it?

What's the big deal with this particular Herald, says you. Open the lid, we say, and whaddaya see? A Climax lump,

yet. Inserted by Jack Brabham Conversions Ltd. This was 395 smackers' worth of go-faster fire-pump that prodded the Herald up to 102 m.p.h., with a nought-to-sixty take off in 10.6. Jack's people ceased putting the firey bit in this particular hot rod in 1964, so it must be something of a Collectors' Item by now. But it's something that could take you by surprise—even the label on the back which proclaims "Herald 1200" is not much of a lie since it's only 20 c.c. adrift.

The Climax conversion involves a special front engine plate to enable the Herald engine mounts to mount the engine, and a special cast ally back plate to bring the engine and gearbox together. Enlarged rubber mountings are fitted at the rear end of the gearbox, but the box and internals are standard Herald—er standard-Triumph Herald that is. (All right, we won't use that pun again, promise!) The cogs seem to be taking it O.K.—or as O.K. as they usually take it



OHC motor cheers up the urge dept.

in Vitesses, which probably churn out the same sort or urge, anyway.

A different radiator is fitted, with a Kenlowe fan to blow the cool, and a new exhaust system. There's also an oil filter unit on the front cross member that wasn't there with the Herald lot. We mean the filter, not the cross member.

There are twin inch-and-a-half SU's, and the whole installation is very neat. And if people aren't all that impressed by the sight of overhead-cam motors these days, they will be when they see that this one's got a picture of crumpet riding a horse on the top.

Looking at the rear end—no, *not* the horse—we see that the camber is about zero. What we couldn't see is the demon tweak that achieves this. Apparently the formula is to remove number 4 leaf from the spring, and turn numbers 1 to 3 upside down.

Next, and most important, are the check straps, or if you prefer it, rebound limiters. These prevent the swing axles from swinging down to meet in the middle and do the Herald tricycle act. Apart from anything else, they eliminate the grinding away of the wheel nuts on the ground, and allow the treads of the tyres to wear out before the side walls. Also the drive shafts last longer, 'cos they don't suffer excessive bending loads. So there's three good reasons for having check straps if you want to go places with your Herald.

The said straps came off a Land Rover, and since even



... "And there's lots more opposite than you can use".

Land Rovers weren't expected to do anything so violent as autocross, they are fitted doubles. One end is mounted to the floor of the boot, suitably reinforced with angle iron, and the other end is attached to the outer spring clip. Armstrong Adjustarides also do their bit in keeping the back end at the back, and another chunk of angle iron across between the top mounting points for the shockers stops the boot from collapsing. When it's not doing that it acts as ballast and helps the wheels and ground to move at the same velocity. The battery is installed in the boot for the same purpose.

The wheel arches have been eased out to accept 5½ inch wide rims, which carry 165-13 G800 Ultra Grips at the steering end, and 175 ditto at the propulsion end. Dave has his eyes on some mag rollers to replace the steel ones soon—before the R.A.C. men finally say yer can't do that 'ere with wheels of widened steel.

Inside the car is still triumphantly standard, except for a

full roll cage, the manufacture of which occupied all of the Hopkins Easter hols. This is a precaution in case the drive shafts go, they said. (We feel that's not the *only* reason that people go downside up, but we won't press the point.) There's a nice fat padded bar across the top of the screen, with supports each side down the front edge of the door frames, and likewise by the rear door pillars. We wouldn't go so far as to say that it's invisible to the nude eye, but it is relatively inconspicuous, yet looks as though it would do it's stuff if the Need Arose. (Or even if the Need Befall, come to that.)

The Hopkins Herald conversion is by no means complete as of now. Plans are afoot, and will soon be in hand, for shortening the steering arms to get all that lock on quicker. One advantage of the Herald turning circle is that you've got yonks more opposite lock you can use, compared with other vehicles. Negative camber will also be acquired by shortening the upper wishbones. Then there's some perspex and ally an' all—so in due course we expect to see a Herald 1220 stirring up the Escorts and hairy Minors.

More from Peter Noad next month



Brabham label on bulkhead, Lady Godiva on rocker cover.



Triumphantly standard interior.