

## Imp GT restoration

John Hill, Perth, Western Australia

I joined the Imp Club back in April last year after buying a 1968 Imp GT. The Imp GT was the Australian market equivalent of the UK's Sunbeam Imp Sport.



John Hill's first Imp in 1968

This is not my first Imp. In 1968 I bought my first Imp (my second car). At Christmas 1968 I drove it 4,500 km across Australia from Sydney to Perth and that was when there was 1,500 km of dirt road between Ceduna in South Australia and Norseman in Western Australia. The Imp made it requiring only one radiator clean out on the Nullarbor Planes.

I owned a total of four



Imps in the 'seventies including one built for racing at Wanneroo raceway but didn't get to the track as I met my wife-to-be that year the car became our deposit for our first home.

I now live in Perth, Western Australia with my beautiful wife of 53 years. The Imps were just a memory until 2022 when Ian Scott from the Imp Group in Perth told me about a barn find in Melbourne, Victoria: an Imp GT which had been stored since 1996. It had been stripped of paint and etch primed rather poorly but fortunately there was no rust damage. I could hardly believe that I could find such an Imp. I drove across from Perth, approximately 4,500 km and returned with the car on a trailer which I had built in Bendigo, Victoria.

On returning home with COVID 19 I stripped it down to a bare shell and prepared it for paint along with all the running gear. Speedy Spares in



With relatively little work required to the shell it was soon in primer



John's Imp arrives home on trailer. First impressions are excellent as the shell was rot-free  
All photos: John Hill



Resplendent in Milano Blue Pearl



Suspension components repainted



the UK were very helpful in supplying a lot of the parts I needed while Frank Schoenberger here in Oz supplied rubber seals for the complete car.

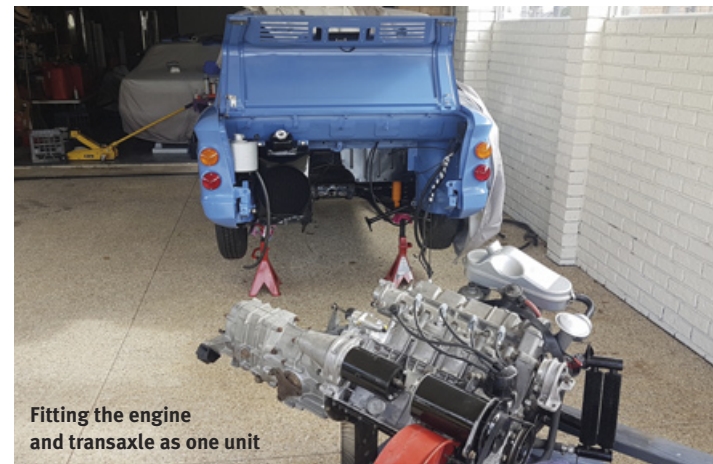
I chose Milano Blue Pearl as the colour for the car with a beige interior. The car was very original and was complete with almost all the parts and trim which was amazing as sourcing these would have been extremely difficult.

I painted the car at home where I made a temporary spray booth in my car port and am happy with the finish. I worked through our winter to get the Imp finished before Christmas. The car had its original

carpets so I was able to use these as a template to make new ones. I also sewed-up a new headlining with good improved insulation. I fitted inertia reel seat belts to the front and lap diagonal belts in the rear. I made a custom dash and centre console with extra gauges mounted under the heater box. I also fitted a Bluetooth radio with four speakers and roof-mounted powered arial. Apart from this and a set of Dunlop 12" alloy wheels (which I purchased from Andy Bryson who was invaluable for many spares and much advice along the way) and shorter front springs to give some



New headlining was sewn-up



Fitting the engine and transaxle as one unit





Split backrests on GT

negative camber the car is standard.

The engine was in good condition. However, I did remove the sump and check the bottom end and replaced the head gasket and overhauled the carburettors. I fitted an electric fuel pump and had the radiator recorded for better efficiency and it

appears to work well. The brakes and clutch are all new. I have fitted small struts to the back window as the original stays were worn out.

I made my Christmas deadline (just!) and the car was licenced on the 23rd of December.

The club is amazing and so is the mag!



Gorgeous interior



A set of period Dunlop alloys complete the restoration