

SEPTEMBER 2026



BUICK

The Australian *Riviera*

ROA AUSTRALIAN REGION



SHARE THE PRIDE



Editorial

New format this month, as promised last edition, and as far as possible we have tried not to change too much . . well, not yet!

Our cover this edition is one of those Rivs that never will be, and there have been a few of them since the last real factory Riv rolled out of the Lake Orion production plant in Michigan on 25th November 1998, the end of the line for the 1999 model year Riviera.

Will we ever see another Riviera? Well, Buick makes comment from time to time about the possibility, so at least they haven't forgotten the name!

Perhaps when all this business about electricity and buzz generated by SUVs finally dies out, we'll all be back behind the wheel of some really great coupes again. Can't come too soon for some, probably you and me included!

We take a look at some predictions starting on page 5, including a RHD dashboard!

So, while we are looking forward, we stop and look back – way back to the first Riviera design with a comprehensive review starting on page 6.

Until next edition, please continue to Share The Pride!



G'day from the Regional Co-Ordinator

As I was thinking what to say for this issue of the Australian RIVIEW I could see from my study window the postie making a delivery into my letter box.

Included in the mail was my copy of the July/August 2026 edition of the International RIVIEW.

On the front Cover is a photo of a 1978 LXXV and the rear photo is a 1963 riviera with the ocean as the background.

Both are excellent photos of two completely different Rivs.

My 1965 Riviera was on the front cover of the Jan/Feb 2021 magazine.

Well, it's not really a photo of my Riviera, but an image of the hood with the reflection of the trees above my car.

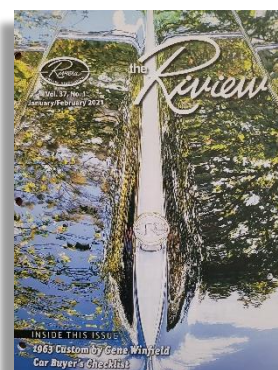
The picture is devoid of anything that resembles an automobile. No wheels, chrome, interior, doors etc. Even then, you don't have to guess to know what car it depicts. Definitely an unusual and most uncommon image for a front cover of a car magazine.

Naturally I got a kick out of seeing my Riv on the cover of such a highly acclaimed magazine.

If you are a member of the ROA, why not spend some time taking some photos of your Riviera, and let your imagination run wild, then send the results to Ray Knott.

The artist/photographer inside you is just waiting to be discovered!

Tom



Wimsey or Wonderful, The Tail

Thinking of getting into a Boat?

Of course, when I say Boat, I mean a boattailed Riviera!

Have you checked out the shrinking rear end pointy bit, and will that impact your choice of Boattail?

A lot of discussion has gone on about the vents in the trunk lid of the boattail and how it can lead to a gassing of the back seat passengers when driving but why worry about that when they look so cool, right!

The real issue is just how far you like your rear pointy bit to protrude.

The initial design has it extending way past the bumper bar line while the last of the three boattails has it rather more demurely sculptured.

Take a look and make up your own mind, but for me, extra pointy is extra good. Plus, you don't have to carry that much larger 1973 impact front bumper around!



4 x 4 Riv . . ?

We came across this advertisement for the new Riviera GS of 1966 and were taken aback somewhat by the setting in which Buick decided was the one to show off this last of the nailhead Buick Rivieras.

Were they pre-empting today's love of the go anywhere car, although I doubt any of the SUV's currently on the market would be able to get where this Riv is perched.

Apparently from an official brochure, we can't be sure due to the low resolution of the photo we have, we could not find it anywhere in the archives.

Do you know where it came from?

Let us know here at The Australian Rivview and then perhaps we can find a generous soul with a red Riv to recreate the scene . . .



A more usual Riv scene . .

A New Riv This Year . . ?

If you have been dreaming of a new Riviera, and by new we mean new from the factory, then you are not alone.

It seems that every year there are rumours of a new Riviera coming out of Buick, and by Buick we probably mean Buick in China.

With the cunning ability of AI these days you don't need much input for a realistic video to be made to show possibilities such as a new Riviera. We showed a video in our last edition, and this is another.

We came across this video on YouTube; it goes for just under ten minutes and contains some very well created images purported to be of a new 2026 Riviera.

The basic shapes have been seen before since Holden had a go at it a number of years before they were eliminated by GM and some of the newer images from Buick.

Basically, a loop of a few designs, interwoven with speculation about pricing, power trains and safety items, it is still not a bad few minutes spent in dream land. The bonus is that these are moving images and not just the usual stills that pepper the internet.

You can enjoy it [HERE](#).

If you also enjoy a challenge, you can count the number of different grilles seen in this ten minutes of Riv-dreaming.







The Riv Design – Ahead of its Time?

The Series One Riviera design often gets cited as a standout design and yes, we all know that it was originally designed to carry a La Salle badge and basically feed into the Cadillac marque history.

Well, that didn't happen and it became a Buick, you can read that history elsewhere.

What we wonder about was more to do with how the design came about given what the other makers were doing at the time.

It seems reasonable to believe that no matter what may have been happening in the various design studios of the day, the actual designers would have constantly been exposed to the style of the cars that filled the roads of the day and some possibly more by the future designs that they may have had access to within their own company structures.

For those of us who go digging for photos of the early clays of our favourite cars, you would all be aware that car designs begin well before an actual car appears in the show room, and the Riviera was no different.

One of the very earliest clays comes from February 1958, and so paper designs would have commenced well before that by the way. Clays are expensive and you don't waste time and money on them before you have a pretty good idea that needs to be transformed into a three-dimensional format. Remember, no computers in those days.

In this article we take a look at what may have influenced the early designs for the Riviera. This is of course without repeating the stories of Bill Mitchell and his encounter with fogs and Rolls Royce roof lines in London. You can read that elsewhere.

No, we will look at the then current car designs and then look at what other design studios were putting out to market at the time the Riviera debuted for the 1963 model year.

So, first let's take a quick look at three clays, one from 1958, one from 1959 and one from 1960. You can see the Riv development easily and what you may notice is that the famous rear roof line appeared immediately and not much else remained two years later.

What we noticed in that first clay was the similarity to the 1959 Thunderbird with all of its gaudiness and seemingly bolted on dag (as we might call it here in Australia).

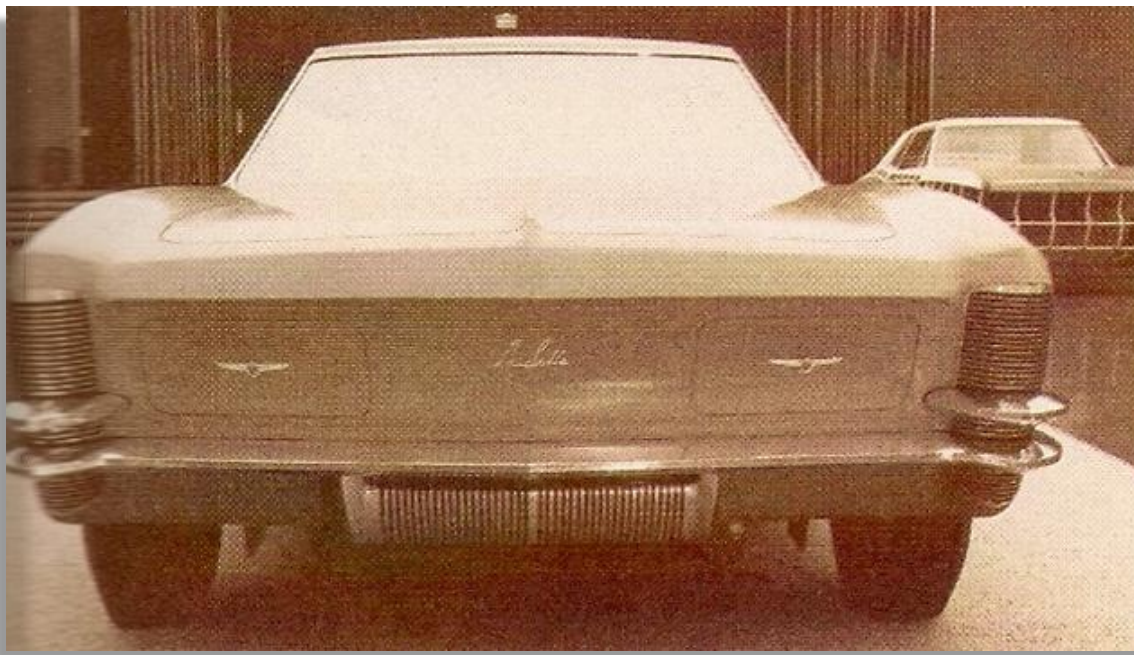


10th February 1958 and the rear roofline is already close. Below is what the Thunderbirds of the day were looking like.



1959 Thunderbird, a model only a mother could love (sorry Ford fans).

By 1959 it was evolving and more of the final elements of the series one Riv have appeared in the front end, and the roof and windscreen seem to be well advanced. The La Salle front sidelights also have appeared and will remain, following some more tweaking of course.



The final clay photo on the following page comes from 18th May 1960. Hard not to be impressed with the design progress over these three years. It will be another couple of years before the Riveira hits the road and that provided the time to finalise the outstanding issues of the headlights, Bill Mitchel was still after hidden headlights stacked within the la Salle binnacles however that would not eventuate until the 1965 model, and the matter of who was going to build the Riviera once Cadillac passed on the design/build opportunity.



This photo above, from the pages of Retro Autos here in Australia.

Below we have the final 1963 Buick Riviera, released in late 1962.



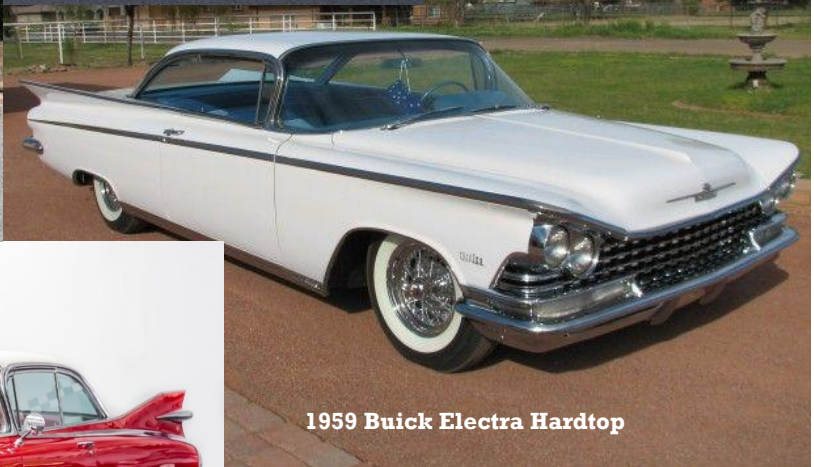
The 1959 auto world looked like these cars below at the time the Riviera was mid design. See if you can pick any of the current design clues that might have made it into the finalised Riviera design.



1959 Chrysler New Yorker hardtop



1959 Chevrolet hardtop



1959 Buick Electra Hardtop



1959 Cadillac hardtop

1959 Ford Thunderbird hardtop



Finally, here is what the other manufacturers (and other GM Divisions) were selling when the Riviera hit the market. What are your thoughts on the Riviera design compared to the other makes?



1963 Thunderbird Hardtop



1963 Chrysler hardtop



1963 Cadillac hardtop



1963 Buick Hardtop



Above: 1963 Chevrolet hardtop

The ALDI Riv Set

Here's a man in a dilemma of some concern. From the Australian coordinator, Tom Kunek, we received this distress message a little while back.

"My Son-in-law went shopping at ALDI and in the centre aisle saw a collection of model cars for sale.

One of the models was a 1953 Mack Tow Truck transporting a 1965 Buick Riviera. The model is a Maisto 1:64 scale.

My Son-in-law bought two of the models (one for him and one for myself). He would have bought more but there were only two on display.

My first reaction was surprise that the truck was loaded with a car of such high class and distinction!

Next was the fact that the truck and the Riviera are painted with the same stylish paint job.

My dilemma is, should I open the presentation box or leave it as is because the text on the box clearly identifies the two models. The Riviera has three different ride heights with adjustable suspension."

I would stop to talk more about Tom's dilemma, but I have to duck down to my local ALDI store!



More Model Rivs . . .

Tom Kunek must have caught a bug, the model Riv bug that is!

Here are a few more model 1965 Rivs that seem to have been attached to him recently.



Coincidence or Not ?

Following the installation of a new a/c compressor we noticed that the Riv had a new vibration at around 60 mph.

As the day rally progressed, so did the vibration.

Felt like a tail shaft universal joint so we took it to the workshop on the way home.

Turned out to be the alternator pulley. It is a double row pulley and one of the pulleys had some distortion on the pulley edge.

Not sure how that happened but it was quickly resolved by the mechanics and it's all good again now.

Did it happen when they installed the compressor, well it does sit right below it and they did fit two new belts, but did they cause it or was it a coincidence. We may never know.



ROA 65 at the doctors.

1965 For Sale **SOLD**

Opportunities to purchase a 1965 Riviera come along only occasionally.

The editor of The Australian Rivview is in need of more garage space and has offered his 1965 for sale to make room for more cars, well actually cars he already has but needs to accommodate.

His 1965 was imported into Australia in 2011. First sold into Arizona, the Riv still has the desert radiator and is a rust-free example of the breed.

It features the Deluxe interior in doeskin colour and was repainted in the USA to its current white colour. Factory wheel covers feature the spinner design and are bolted on to the rims. Australian approved seat belts have been fitted at import.

401 (325 horsepower) nailhead engine and TH400 gearbox standard. Replacement custom rear coil springs fitted to facilitate luggage carrying ability.

Everything works on this Riv, and it has only just had the a/c compressor replaced with a Sandon rotary replacement unit that mirrors the original GM unit.

Still has the factory BUICK radio but also sports an under dash modern unit with Bluetooth connectivity for phone etc. Speedo is showing 41 143 at the time of photography, second time round we understand.

Paint is shiny but does require some attention for the fastidious buyer.

Offers around [REDACTED] considered.



For more information please contact
John at ausriview@gmail.com

Deluxe interior in
excellent condition





Registration plates
not included . .
sorry!



Suppliers and Repairers

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.

Dan's Classic Auto Parts of Portland OR -
www.dansclassic.com

BJ Panel Restoration and Fabrication,
Thornlands. Qld.

Bill - 0403 120 921

(panel beating, rust repairs, fiberglass repairs, modifications)

Bill works in conjunction with -

Carr Creation Auto Refinishing,

Graham Carr - 0411 588 272

Thornlands. Qld.

(spray painting specialists).

Annvid Auto Upholsterers,

24 Smith Street,

Capalaba. Qld. 4157

Tel: 07 3390 3444

Mt. Cotton Auto Electrics,

Mob: 0429 193 815

Spectrum Rubber and Panels Pty.Ltd.

P.O. Box 328,

St. Marys. N.S.W. 1790

Tel: 02 9623 5333 Fax: 02 9833 1041

Email: sales@spectrumrubber.com.au

Website: www.spectrumrubber.com.au

Tim Harper has advised the following -

Repco now stock K & N filters for Rivas.

The K&N E-1360 Air cleaner suits single carb Buick and Riviera applications from 1965-1967,

see listing:

<http://www.knfilters.com/search/applications.aspx?Prod=E-1360>

Note: There was a Dual Quad filter, if you can't find listing try by Dimensions.

The K&N HP-2003 oil filter suits Nailheads and Rivas up to 1978, check listing:

<http://www.knfilters.com/search/applications.aspx?Prod=HP-2003>

Go to www.knfilters.com and click on BUY you get a list of suppliers and installers for your Australian postcode.

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.

members have had a good experience with.

The Market Place

For Sale:

See next page for details.

We will run ads until advised to withdraw them. Please ensure that when your items are no longer available you let us know so that we can ensure the freshness of the information contained within this section of the magazine. Many thanks!

Market Place



FOR SALE 1964 Buick Body Service Manual. All series including Riviera, Special, Skylark, etc. Good condition \$65.00

1964 Buick sales booklet. Covers all Buick models including Riviera and Special, 64 pages, all colour. This is a large booklet 14" x 10.5" on quality heavy paper (there were two versions printed). Good condition \$100.00

1965 Buick Chassis Service Manual. 43000 and 44000 Special and Skylark. Good condition \$80.00

1965 Body by Fisher Service Manual. All Buick inc Riviera, Special and Skylark. All Chevrolet inc Corvair and Monza, Pontiac, Oldsmobile and Cadillac. Good condition \$120.00

70 Years of Buick by George Damman, features every Buick model (inc export versions) up to 1973, black & white, good condition \$75.00

Automobile Quarterly Vol 19#2 includes the "Riviera Reborn. The story since 1963" 22 page story, all colour on Buick Riviera from 1963-1981. Mint \$40.00

Automobile Quarterly Vol 18#2 "Riviera by Buick. The early years of a styling pacesetter" 22 page story, all colour on 1949-1962 Riviera series by Buick. Mint \$40.00

And for the Pre-War guys

A pair of Lucas SLR700S 7" driving lamps in good condition, 6V or 12V (currently 6V globes, one needs replacement after testing) . Will need brackets to fit whichever Buick or other vehicle. These came fitted to my 1938 Buick. \$130.00 pair.

Can send photos of any item, email rodney_b@live.com.au or

sales@victortimberandfasteners.com.au

or 0450 626 684

Will post at cost. Thank you, Rodney

For Sale: BUICK 455 Stage 1 Big Valve Heads. Stage 1 valves with heavy duty valve springs. Excellent bolt on horsepower upgrade. Pair are in excellent condition and very rare. Can organise freight at buyer's expense or able to drop off at freight depot. Pick up Melbourne 3023 Price \$3500 Andrew Liapis andrewliapis@gmail.com

Wanted: 1964 Front bumper and lower valance panel below the bumper and a secondhand rotisserie for a 1964 restoration project. Darren Berry 0423375214.

For Sale: 1969 Riviera Billet rear lower control arms, electric headlight actuator conversion, POR 15 undercoated, 18x8 American Racing wheels (original mags included) Rebuilt 430/4 Buick motor, Solid Body, No Rust Many photos and videos available. Car in the USA. Contact Rupert Ellis wideglide94@gmail.com Cell Number: 214.733.3132

For Sale: Wheel Centre Hubs \$70 each, Re-chromed Console Cover \$80. Range of second hand and new control arm bushes and tie rod ends and idler arms. Factory new a/c compressor still in sealed gas. New a/c pressure valve. New front disc brake assembly conversion with master cylinder and pressure proportioning valve. Digital radio conversion for 68-69 Riv from Antique Car Radio Conversions in the US. Email for information: ari.blinn@hotmail.com

1965 Model Kits For Sale: Rob Rooders has listed scale model kits for the 1965 Riv on Facebook. If you are interested go to Facebook and look for 1965 Riviera kits or connect with Rob at lonewolf_surf@hotmail.com

For Sale: Headers to suit 455 from Speedway Motors, Dougs Headers part # 447020R \$1500 Jim Harkess Contact at qual1770@bigpond.net.au

Wanted for 1968 Riv: bumper bar, bonnet, grill bits and pieces for headlights. Rex Boag rex.boag@gmail.com

BUICK Disc Brake Conversion Bracket Kits (63-70 Riviera, 61-70 Electra, LeSabre, Invicta and Wildcat) (these bracket kits are designed to use 71-76 Riviera rotors and calipers) View details and pricing at www.mako.com.au Tony Gentilcore 0408 964 217 email: tonyg@mako.com.au

Parting Out: 1967 Riviera. Bucket seats, floor change, factory disc brakes, car full of parts, no motor or gearbox , Call Doug Hawkins 0418 631 233

For Sale: 1968 Riv. The car has been rubbed back close to bare metal body is straight with the exception of the passenger door. Motor is fresh & powerful car that runs and drives. Needs paint & interior work mainly the driver's seat.

For Sale: 1971 Riviera. Professional restoration 12 years ago. Runs and drives nicely. Asking \$55k. Contact Peter Hughes 0417296764

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.RIVOWNERS.ORG

This e-magazine is produced under the auspices of the Riviera Owners Association USA and the Buick Car Club of Australia Qld Inc. to cater for the needs of car enthusiasts with an interest in the Riviera produced between 1963 and 1999.

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It is a medium created for the exchange of stories and ideas. Its aim is to support enthusiasts in Australia in the preservation and use of the Buick Riviera built between 1963 and 1999.

The editors welcome contributions at ausriview@gmail.com

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.

DON'T FORGET, IF YOU DO SELL YOUR RIVIERA, LEAVE DETAILS ON JOINING THE ROA IN THE CAR

Crazy (?) Facts About the 1969 Riviera

Here's an interesting video regarding the 1969 Riviera and 20 Crazy Facts You Never Knew about it!

Well, perhaps you did, but it may still be worth a look.

Of course, by crazy facts, they mean things like the Riviera was the most expensive model in the Buick line up that year with a base price of US\$4,701.

If you want to know the other nineteen crazy facts, enjoy the video [HERE](#).

