

## 2024 Auto Italia in Queanbeyan - 7<sup>th</sup> April

Words by Leon Cottle & Peter Atkinson, Photos by Leon Cottle & Vin Sharp

This was my fourth attendance at the Italian Car Association of ACT's 'Auto Italia'. What an amazing ensemble of all Italian marques. For lovers of fine Italian motoring engineering and design, the annual ACT Auto Italia is a must to attend. The Alfa Romeos are always well represented, and so too are Ferrari, Lamborghini, Fiat, Lancia, Delage, Maserati, Piaggio along with Ducati motorbikes and Vespa scooters. Any model and in whatever colour you like. A very enjoyable way to spend a day, walking around this impressive display of excellent Italian creativity.

The 2024 show celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fiat 850, the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Abarth and the 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Maserati. This year's event was slightly smaller in scale due to two days of heavy rain prior to the show, and even a few light showers on the morning of the event – which may have deterred a few entrants. The display venue was shifted to the Queanbeyan Show Grounds due to the weather. However, by mid-morning the skies cleared, and the sun shone brightly to highlight the wide variety of cars on display. What an amazing collection.

A star of the day was a certain well-known and loved Victorian 1961 Blue Giulietta ti - winning 'The Best Touring Alfa Romeo' Award and was placed in the 'Top 8' for the best of the event overall. Plus, Marie was placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 'Fashion of the Era' as well. Congratulations Vin & Marie. Their Giulietta ti also relished the snowy conditions along The Alpine Way on their journey back home after Auto Italia. Impressive!















One of the most unusual vehicles at Auto Italia was this tiny white 3-wheeled ‘mini truck’. It is a **Piaggio APE 3-wheel Vespa mini truck** (‘Ape’ being Italian for ‘bee’). Early models were cableless versions of the Vespa scooter with two rear wheels added and powered by an ‘awesome’ 3hp 50cc 2-stroke single-cylinder engine. By 1964 a cab was added and also a more ‘powerful’ 175cc engine. Its compact size allowed it to negotiate Italy’s narrow streets and to be parked easily. Only good for very small loads.



The 1961 Giulietta ti enjoys the snow on The Alpine Way after Auto Italia (like Italy’s Alps). (Photos Vin Sharp)