



OVERDRIVE

The Newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club

January 2002



B.A.R. opts for reliability for upcoming GP season

January Meeting Well Timed

Mark down the first meeting of the New Year as a must attend. Brian Mills has been busy over the last few weeks preparing for one of his technical sessions. This month the topic will be valve timing and just how do you get the crankshaft, timing chain, sprockets, camshaft, and valve train all working just like they are supposed to. Brian has done many engines before, but ran into some unexpected and unexplained problems while tackling Bob Thomas' TR6. The timing was just not right and even after about 4 hours of adjusting and fiddling it refused to time properly. That was a challenge to Brian and he just had to sort out what was happening. We will all benefit from his extensive research into the problems that can be encountered.

We should also be meeting and greeting with new members Wilf and Livia Hassper of Carleton Place. We will let them introduce themselves at the meeting, but in the meantime you can read about how Livia patiently waited for her Spitfire in her two debut articles in the newsletter. Livia enjoys writing and John and I are really happy to have her joining the club! Which is a good point for us to remind other members that they are free to submit articles, pictures, notes or other information that they feel members might enjoy reading about in the newsletter. After all, editors are supposed to edit and assemble the newsletter, not write the whole thing each month. Come on ... tell what you are up to or what you plan to do ... if its got to do with our cars we'd all be interested in hearing about your exploits.

Dart's Tournament

We will not be holding a Dart's Tournament this year. However, we have been in contact with members of the Landrover's Club and they have expressed interest in holding the tournament this year. We will pass on additional information as soon as plans are in place.

The Belated Wedding Present by Livia Hassper

It was a magical day in the month of June in 1967 when two young people got married. The place was Hildesheim, a small town in Germany. There was love in their heart and admiration for the, then ever so popular, Triumph Spitfire in their eyes. One day I will give you a red Spitfire the young man promised his bride, as they drove away to their two-day honeymoon in their little Volkswagen. As, with most marriages, the magic turned to practicality and reality and, during the next 34 years of their marriage, the purchase of the Spitty was delayed again and again.

First there was the priority for a car strong enough to pull a boat over the Alps to the Mediterranean Sea. Then, after the move to Canada, the family car had to be big enough to house the baby and the camping equipment. After that it was the need for a truck that could pull horse trailers and load at least 100 bales of hay. Following this episode, it was back to boats on trailers again. Now the son wanted to restore Suzuki off-roaders. And so it went on and on ... Once in a while one would glance at a British sports car drive by and uhh and ahh ...with admiration. One day you'll get a Spitfire the husband would comment on those occasions, This comments became the standing family joke.

For practicality, and to drive a cheap car the daily 100 km commute to Ottawa, for many years our family drove Hyundai Ponies. Their condition sometimes rather rusty due to many drives on heavily salted roads during cold Canadian Winters.

I was driving one of those rusty rattle boxes a few weeks ago, when I happened to stop by my husbands place of work. My husband was in the company of a new employee. He introduced me to the gentleman as I was getting out of the car. Is this another one of Wilf's rusty ponies? the nice man chuckled. Hell, yes, it is was my reply, He promised me a spitfire 34 years ago and look what I am driving I pointed an accusing finger at the family limousine. A Spitfire? quipped the new found friend I have one in my garage. It used to be my dads project, but its been sitting there for six years, since my father died. I should really sell it, its taken up all the space in the garage.

To make a long story short. My husband went to see it. The body restoration was already finished. It had been painted, although, over the years, the paint has suffered and it will have to be painted again. Mechanically the car needs a lot of work.



Worth the Wait!

We made an offer right away. These opportunities don't come twice in a life time. The purchase was a dream come true. It turned out that the car is a Mk3 1967, or course, that was the year that we got married. Could it be any other way?

The car came home one rainy October evening. I was out on the driveway for the longest time sporting a flashlight, inspecting my belated wedding present. People comment that mother has totally falling in love with a car, never been seen so happy in a long time, totally lost her mind, gone through a second childhood, mid-life crisis, is out during the early morning hours polishing components, has now even converted her son from off-road vehicles to sports cars, in other words gone completely mad.

What can I say? Its true. Thank god I am surrounded by a family of car nuts, they understand! We will be spending the long Canadian winter in the garage breathing new life into The Firefly. Hopefully, by May next year, she should be out on the road, behaving herself (that is the car, not me).

I can't wait to take the little red Flitzer out for a spin with the top down, the wind blowing in my face, the mascot, her highness, Ms. Nugget, long haired Dachshund, with her designer shades on and the long ears wildly flopping about. Wont it be grand when Im just cruising around, and some part breaks down, and Im on some lonesome highway (they are all lonesome around here), and I don't know what to do, and I have to hitch hike home, beg some stranger for mercy? And wont it be adventurous when a rain squall hits, and I cant get the soft top on quickly enough and get soaked to the skin? Yes, old British sports cars provide all the diversion and entertaining one needs in his golden years of life. Not only that, it will also keep your friends and the mechanic son busy with little favours, like rebuilding an engine. Oh, isn't life wonderful? Thank you, Wilf, for my belated wedding present. I think I'll get a cell phone ...

How-to Books on Restoration

A recent visit to the library paid dividends, as John Day discovered a couple of interesting Haynes manuals. The one was titled Car Bodywork Repair Manual, and contained chapters on welding and cutting, panel beating, and painting. There were also chapters on bodywork repairs, plastic repairs, glass fibre, and improvements such as soundproofing. The other book was a restoration manual for classic car interiors. This book has chapters on stripping an interior, maintaining leather, repairing seats, facias and cappings, trim panels, headlinings, carpets, and soft tops. There are plenty of good pictures each step of the way. Makes me almost want to get ambitious with the TR3A!

A Return to High Prices, Perhaps?

A recent magazine article indicates that the 1930 Bugatti Type 41 Royale, one of six in the world and the former personal car of Ettore Bugatti himself, is to be up for sale in April 2002. The same car previously sold in 1987 for a record 5.5 million pounds sterling. The price this time is expected to top 8 million. Could Triumphs be far behind, you ask? Time will tell. One sign might be a classified ad in a British car magazine, asking just under 20,000 pounds (over \$45,000) for a restored TR3A. Ouch!

Downside of European Union

It seems that British scrapyards, for decades the source of many a spare part for classic cars, are themselves to be scrapped, as rules governing scrapyards come into effect this year. Traditional scrapyards will be replaced by ATCs, or Approved Treatment Centres. Junked cars at ATCs will be environmentally cleansed and drained of fluids before being crushed. The prohibitive cost of converting a standard yard to an ATC will force many existing yards to close, and there will be no provision for cars scheduled to be scrapped, be it a typical late model or a decades-old classic, to be plundered for parts. First the Euro, now this!

A New Museum for Triumphs

A museum for rare Triumphs is under construction at the new HQ of British Triumph specialists Canley Classics, in Coventry. There is the Macau GP Spitfire, the 1960 RAC class-winning Herald, and others. Perhaps Andrew Miller will check this museum out on his next (pleasure and) work tour in future. For more information, people can check out www.canleyclassics.com.

One Spicy Italian Meatball!

Renowned Triumph specialists Revington TR in England have come up with some modifications to a Triumph Italia that would have Doc Mills looking under the hood and underneath at the chassis and suspension. The over-bored 2218cc engine uses fuel injection and engine mapping, and with a fast road cam achieves 130 bhp at the rear wheels, and records a 0-60 time of 6.0 seconds. The rear drums have been converted to discs. The steering is now rack and pinion. The final price tag on the Italia? A cool 35,000 pounds. Again - ouch!

John Day's EBay Insanity of the Month

It's been a while since I've reported on any of these. There are usually silly little purchases on a daily basis, where

someone pays more on Ebay for a used part than they could have a new NOS part, but this one deserved (dis)honourable mention. A person recently bid as high as \$355 U.S. dollars for an NOS black-and-yellow 'bumblebee' top radiator hose. That's right - just the hose, and just the one. Not even the complete set! I hope this guy wins whatever Concours he enters. But then again, I hope he doesn't! Idiocy shouldn't be rewarded.

Christmas with Spitty by Livia Hassper

This is for all the spouses, who are quietly, (or not so quietly), waiting in the side wings, and, may be in need for some entertainment.

The giggles started when I was e-mailing Andre Rosseau; and I just had to inform him that an elephant had just do doed into the Survivors water well. This kind of information is simply too important to be withheld from the public, and so is this essay. If you readers of Overdrive want to hear about the continuing odyssey and adventures of the rebuilding of the Firefly read on. So here goes

I'm absolutely giddy with joy. The holidays are finally over and I have survived. I now have time to play. The wire wheels, after bead blasting and a final sanding, are ready to be primed and painted. The only casualty are my finger nails, which are non-existent. This is not a happy site for a guitarist who needs nails for a decent appergio.

I'm sure the experts among us have been through various stages of restoration, but for me this is the first time I'm involved with this kind of work, and my family is determined to make me a believer out of me. Therefore I like to share my joy with you. The truth is, I have fallen in love with my little car and, if I can, I like to spend every minute in the garage breathing life back into the little lady.

Over the holidays, when people usually throw themselves into the craze of decorating and cooking, this woman could not get inspired, would not even make an attempt of putting up a Christmas tree. Instead of dreams of sugar plums I had visions of carburetors, crankshafts, transmission seals, head gaskets in my head ... need I say more?

I tried to get into the Christmas spirit, I honestly did try. I made a date with my husband to meet in the city to get the kids presents, buy some wine, the works ... Spitty didn't want me to leave, the car keys were nowhere to be found. My better half waited in vain. He finally came home to find me sitting by the door and my keys in his car, behind the seat.

On Christmas eve my husband, was in the garage working his magic on the Firefly. I was busy in the kitchen. Come and look at these break lines , a call from outside and a good excuse for me to escape house wifely duties. I was eager to look at the new developments under the car, so I forgot the cranberry sauce simmering on the stove. Just as Im under the vehicle inspecting the lines and a broken exhaust manifold, all fire alarms go off in the house. Panic stricken I scrambled of the garage floor hitting my head on the rocker panel. Both of us were racing into the basement where thick smoke engulfed us. On top of the landing my old Dachshund , eyes bulging in terror, awaited her rescue. The mad dash to the windows and doors began, the frigid winter air felt good in our lungs. With a brave attempt of heroism we managed to extract the pot from the stove. The cranberries now resembled the smoking debris of lava rock, Mount Helen in miniature scale.

Im happy to report that the inspection of the brake lines revealed two very disintegrated sections. We also discovered a hole in the frame that needs repairs. Yes, one can never be too careful about those things ... accidents happen.

Clearly, the Christmas spirit needed to be restored in the Haasper household. After a thorough clean up it was time to bake. Isn't this what moms are suppose to do for the holidays? I did my duty, and the only mishap was the spilled box



Livia and Wilf with Spitty

of baking powder. However, I was tempted to cut little Spitfires out of the dough but decided against it. One has to show maturity once in a while. I also gathered all my patience and baked a lemon chiffon cake, grandmas recipe. The white stuff plus the lemon was already in the food processor when I added the three tablespoons of salt. I managed to rescue the thing, nobody noticed.

On Christmas eve the opening of the presents revealed a sweatshirt for Wilf and, Hallelujah, a tool bag with British tools, plus a flashlight, from my loving son and daughter in law. How thoughtful is this? When I break down next summer, during an evening cruise in the Ottawa valley, I will be able to get my doctors bag out, repair, lets say a starter motor, by myself and have a colour- coordinated flash light on board to illuminate

the scene. My sweetheart Wilf actually created a shifter knob for me on the lathe, out of some rare African wood, sporting the engraving of a T .The plastic knob simply wouldn't do.

The best part of Christmas took place on Christmas day. After the kids left we had the time to play with the Firefly. To the sounds of Jesse Cook, Oscar and Ottmar (hey, Jesse, do you know how difficult it is to rumba under a spitfire?) in peaceful tranquillity we dismantled the last mechanical parts, inspected, cleaned many little component, honed the cylinders, and welded a little here and there. I was even allowed to sand and paint a few small parts (got the colours mixed up only once)and polish a little chrome, and, as a treat, finished of the last piece of slightly salty lemon cake, served on the workbench in elegant dishes. A contented sigh escaped my lips as my fingers lovingly caressed the beautiful lines of my beloved Spitfire. Ahhhhhh young love, my childhood dream come true, my youth revisited. Keep on spitting, Livia.

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The Ottawa Valley Triumph Club is comprised of approximately 65 members. The Club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Manordale Community Centre, which is located at the corner of Knoxdale and Carola Roads in the City of Ottawa. Meetings include technical seminars, video presentations, restoration techniques, and much more. The Club also publishes a monthly newsletter, *Overdrive*, which is distributed to members and exchanged with other car clubs.

Membership is open to all individuals and companies interested in Triumph sports cars. Membership is \$30.00 per year (June/June) per household and \$60 per year, corporate. **Please send membership applications** to: OVTC c/o Vivien Kaye, 1710 River Road, Manotick, ON, K4M 1B4.

The OVTC is a member of the British Car Council and is affiliated with the TR Register (UK)

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