



OVERDRIVE

The Newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club

July 2002



Once again this year, the Sporting and Classics Auto Show (a.k.a. Richmond) was a huge success with well over 100 cars in attendance. Thanks to everyone who helped make it a great day.

NASS-BASH by Livia Haasper

(The second Spit-together of the North American Spitfire Squadron at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, 14–16 June 2002)

What do you do when the restoration of your Spit is finally finished, your e-mail buddies are begging you to show the car to them, you are now bored to no end for the absence of frustration and never ending emergencies and, without any second guessing, you want to spend the accumulated savings of your bank account on gasoline? You repair your damaged tow vehicle, you borrow a rusty float trailer, paint it, to make it look half decent, you quickly repair several unnecessary, last minute, break downs of your Spit. You then drive eleven hours non-stop from Ottawa to Ohio, to attend the second meeting of the North American Spitfire Squadron.

Wilf and I were also hoping to meet up with some Ottawa Triumph club members who were planning to spend a weekend at Mid-Ohio. They were hoping to enjoy the races and car show, but were not members of the Spitfire Squadron, but we were hoping to set up camp together. We didn't think we could make it in time for the NASS meeting. There were simply too many obstacles to overcome. We'd literally worked non-stop to finish the restoration of the "Firefly", and were facing some major repairs of the GMC camper, our support vehicle. We'd just discovered

that most of the transmission fluids of the van had drained, among several other serious problems. The question of the trailer, we had to borrow, also needed to be addressed. I'd sadly informed Howard Baugues and Joe Guinan of my doubts in getting all the jobs finished in time. I'd even begged [to no avail] to delay the Spit together until August. Then, one morning, I received an e-mail, pertaining the enlightening message from a spitter friend "Liv, &*&# this, you've worked so hard. Get your ass over here"... Well, what can I say? This encouraging comment brought tears to my eyes. It made me realize, that someone out there really wanted to meet Wilf, the "Firefly", and me. I decided, come hell or high water, this woman and her Spitfire, husband in tow, were going to attend their first NASS Spit-together.

This message was the reason, I was now at Mid-Ohio, camping near the race track with vintage racers of all makes screaming by me at an awful speed. Practice runs were already in session. I also realized that I was camping in a rather dangerous spot, at the last bend of a tight set of curves called "the key hole". This would be the spot where situations would get tricky, when things got out of control on the pavement. Never mind. Luck had brought me here, luck will keep me alive.

OVTC members Bob Thomas and Fran had already arrived and had pitched their tent, their TR6 gleaming in the bright sunshine. Shaun and Eileen Hennesey had also driven their van to this location, and were just unloading their beautiful, red TR3. Two Toronto Triumph club members were also scheduled to arrive. Wilf, somewhat in a patriotic frame of mind, was flying the Canadian Maple Leaf on the antenna of our vehicle.

It was 14 June. The North American Spitfire Squadron was about to commence their second annually Spit-together. Some of us, who had known each other only by e-mail correspondence, were going to meet in person, and we would also have the opportunity to admire each others cars. The Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course not only featured the Sprint Vintage Grand Prize but, as a special event, the 50's anniversary of Triumph cars was also celebrated this weekend. We were at the right place, at the right time. Strolling across the pit area of the race track, we suddenly spotted familiar faces. Howard Baugues, his wife Ginny, Sam Woods and his family, and other Nassers were watching the races. Joe Guinan was perched on top of the stands, enjoying the deafening screams of the racers in action. Heartfelt hugs were exchanged, talk was impossible, but our smiles expressed our happiness to have finally met. When the race was over, and talking was possible again, we all decided to meet at the Super 8 Motel parking lot for the customary drive-together.

Excitement and anticipation filled the air. 13 Spits, 1 GT6, 1 TR4, 1 Vitesse, and one rental car, driven up from Florida by Bob Kimball, were getting ready on the parking lot. Drivers and crews were busy, engines started, exhausts rumbled, as the long queue rolled into motion. The NASS troop, in all of it's strength and beauty, was winding its way through the rolling hills of Ohio. Fast pace, flashes of polished bonnets and wings of all colours caught the attentions of the citizens of Lexington, standing by the road side in awe of this spectacle. We drove to the historic Malabar State park. The drive was much too short, it should have lasted several hours, time flew by. We came to a stop and set up the cars in a long row for a group picture. Next, it was bonnets up... More pictures were taken, we were all having a very good time. The weather god had blessed us with the perfect day and a beautiful, blue summer sky.

The drive continued to the town of Lucas. We were amazed that all the electrics seem to be working perfectly. Nothing upset the prince of darkness on this perfect day. Under a sign, sporting the name Lucas, the cars and drivers assembled for a second picture session. Richard Campi was lifted up to the roof of a building for the opportunity of an overhead shot. Then, it was back on the road for more Spits/Sixes in attempts of flight, on the way to the motel. All of this had to be celebrated in true NASS fashion with a tail gate party on the parking lot of the Super 8 Motel, where people, if they weren't under their cars, fixing annoying ailments and leaks, were served champagne by the leader of the pack, Mr. Joe himself. Special evenings, like this one, don't come around very often in life, and when they do, they always pass by too quickly. Spitfire and GT6 owners have a lot in common. The party was proof of this fact. We had a blast.

Saturday proved to be of different adventures. Heavy rain pounded the Ohio country side. The clean and polished LBC's weren't so shiny any more, as they were making their way through the town, on their drive to the "British Car Show Down". 500 Triumphs were scheduled to attend this event. The Spitfire Squadron had been assigned their own corner, and members were setting up their cars in the true manner of sportsmanship. The admiration and comments regarding our beloved Triumphs never stopped, while the rain turned the grass into a soggy mess, the cars into dripping carcasses, and the drivers, well...into the same sort of condition. Our president, Joe, for the lack of proper rain gear, was slowly getting soaked to the skin. He resolved to wearing the good looks of a black garbage bag. Oh...drivers of convertibles aren't intimidated easily. The parade lap of hundreds of Triumphs around the race track was attended by all, and the weather god even held the down pour for a while, allowing the rag tops to be tucked away and the drive to be enjoyed. During the afternoon, the NASS awards were handed out. I was very surprised to receive second prize for the "Firefly" in her category. Life has it's rewards. We then proceeded with a 50/50 draw, and this lucky driver managed to win a beautiful black Triumph sweat shirt, sporting a Triumph Team logo. Wilf won 2 packs of Spitfire ale and coasters.

Sunday arrived with a crisp, beautiful morning, more races, and the "Concours d' Elegance" car show. All kinds of vintage vehicles were on display. An interesting experience indeed. A second parade was scheduled for all vintage exhibitors. This time, it was my opportunity to let the "Fly" fly. And, she was flying "with flying colours". In fact, she was flying down the tight set of curves, her swing axle swinging. G-force was taken it's effect on the passenger beside me, carrying the video recorder. I cruised by our camp site as members of the Ottawa and the Toronto Triumph club cheered me on. The "Fly" was racing across the straight, but then had to stop, because other Triumphs had slowed down on the track, and were blocking the way. On the second lap, she had a few more chances to show what she's made off, and she was doing just that. And, her driver found out, that racing isn't as easy as it looks, and how little experience she has in the attempt of maintaining any sort of speed on the race track. But, it was a great fun and unforgettable. Much too soon, the day came to and end. Our NASS friends had to leave for the long drive home. It was time to say goodbye.

The Annual Tierney Rally, Sunday 28 July by John A. Tierney

Teresa and Al Tierney have graciously agreed to host our rally once again this year. We will start at the Tierney residence, RR#2 Carleton Place, 9 th Line Beckwith Township. Here is the schedule for this year's event:

- Driver's meeting 10:00 AM
- First car out 11:00 AM
- Return estimated 1:00 PM
- Start Lunch BBQ 1:00 PM and to continue as the cars return
- Awards 3:00 PM
- Refreshments by the lake 1:00 PM -???

Feel free to bring your swimsuits for a refreshing dive in the lake. The event will be BYOB. Please contact John at 297-8440 or Teresa and Al at 257-7582 if you would like more information.

Please let the Tierney's (or John Day or Michael Graham) know if you are coming so we can plan accordingly.

Here are the directions for reaching the Tierney's:

- Take Highway 7 to Carleton Place.
- Turn Left at the second lights head south toward Smith Falls.
- Proceed south to Black's Corners approximately 3 miles, turn right onto Beckwith concession 9.

- Heading west on 9, approximately 5 miles to the Tierney residence on the right side (towards the lake). Note: if you get to John's Marina, you have gone too far, go back!
- The entrance to the driveway will be marked.

Death Trap to Rally Winner by Ken Richardson, Competitions Manager, Standard Triumph 1952–1961

I did not see the bob-tailed TR1 which I was supposed to develop until I examined it on the Triumph stand at Earls Court during the 1952 London Motor Show. When I saw the ruddy thing I thought "Oh my God, what have I let myself in for." After the show, there was a big press party at the works and journalists were testing the car up and down the road from 11 in the morning until 4 in the afternoon. Sir John Black asked me if I'd tried the car and when I said no, he said "Well, get in and see what you think." I went as far as the Service Department and back and that was enough for me. I drove it into the shop and Sir John Black, surrounded by others who were all very enthusiastic about the car, asked me what I thought of it. I said "It's the most awful car I've ever driven in my life. It's a death trap." Sir John went off to his office and about 20 minutes later I had a telephone call asking me to go and see him. This, I thought, was the end of my job with Standard-Triumph. But instead Sir John invited me to have a drink and then asked me if I really meant what I had said about the car. I said indeed I did for the chassis, brakes and steering were all wrong and the engine was giving no power.

"Right," said Sir John. "You have three months to get it right, for you fully realize we have already shown the car at the Show and it is supposed to beat everything." Sir John told me I could have whoever I wanted from the experimental shop and two or three drawing office people. We built a new chassis frame to replace the flexible Standard Eight frame used for the TR1. Walter Belgrove, the body designer, split the body down the middle, widened it by two inches and replaced the rounded tail with the eventual TR2 tail. In the meantime I was playing around with the engine. I was out every day and most nights with the car. We would put in about 12 hours testing at Lindley non-stop or go right up into Wales and back non-stop twice a day to see how it handled, perpetually changing the steering, brakes and dampers. We used to get up at 3 am of a morning then carry on working throughout the evenings. I used to get up as soon as it was light and test the maximum speed along a stretch of road on which we had marked out the kilometers and quarter miles accurately with a chain link.

The draughtsman who did most of the redesign work was John Turnbull, George Turnbull's younger brother, and together with Jim Parkinson he would work 20 hours a day. L.H. Dawtrey, the chief engineer, would come out with me in the evenings when I was trying the performance of the car and was a very great help in getting modified components made. One day Sir John asked me if the car would beat the speeds achieved by a Sunbeam Alpine at Jabbeke driven by Stirling Moss and Sheila Van Damm. I said I thought it could, and the next thing I knew was that Sir John said we were booked to run at Jabbeke at 7:30 in the morning of such and such a day. I was aghast, and asked what happened if on that particular morning it was raining or a high wind was blowing. Fortunately, it was the most perfect morning you could wish for with not a breath of wind, and after a false first run when a plug lead came off we averaged 124.889 mph in high-speed trim and 114.890 with the normal windscreen and hood erected.

By now the car was good enough to be put into production at the price which Sir John had quoted of £555, so it was an extremely cheap motor car, even for those days. The engine by the time we had finished developing it could be belted from here to kingdom come and you couldn't break it unless you did something stupid. The first competition appearance for the TR2 was the 1954 RAC Rally in March, which Johnny Wallwork won outright and Mary Walker the Ladies' Prize. This success made everyone at the works very competition minded and they decided to start a Competition department – which to my horror, for I'd had 18 years in motoring sport and really wanted to get out of it. The next thing that happened was that Gatsonides and I drove a TR2 in the Mille Miglia and we finished 28th out of 365 starters. We never had any trouble whatsoever and we just motored the whole way through beautifully, using only a quart of oil en route.

I now had my own Competition department, but unfortunately to staff it, I had to take men made redundant from other parts of the company. They knew nothing about competitions and they were all in different unions, so when somebody picked up the wrong tool there was an argument. I told the man he could forget unions while working in the Competitions department. As a result, all Standard-Triumph's 17,500 workers were threatening to come out on strike. So I advised the directors to close down the Competitions department at the works and to move it up to the Service department at Allesley. This was far better, for I could have the six or seven men I wanted from the service department and there was no further trouble.

From then on the cars were winning everything. I took six cars to the Alpine and all six finished. We won the team prize and five Alpine cups, my car being the only one not to win one when an insufficiently tightened wheel came off.

When in the 1958 Alpine the organizers abolished the 2-litre class so that our TRs were competing directly with the Austin-Healeys, I wanted more torque low down but could not get permission from the directors to increase the engine capacity. So with Jim Parkinson's help we put in the Vanguard sleeves, sand cast the pistons and used the engines in the Alpine without anybody knowing it. It proved a much better engine and beat the Austin-Healeys to win the class. Later the engine was put into production as the 2.2 litre.

The cars themselves were never very special. In fact, we used to sell them at the end of the season and I'd then ring up and ask for six more off the production line. They would be delivered to us the next day and then we used to strip them completely and build them to Rally standards. They were meticulously built in every way and then we would just leave them alone, apart from a bit of supertuning. Anybody could have a similar car to the ones we were using, which led to a terrible argument with a character who asked us to prepare his car to works team standard. When he came to collect it he said: "I bet it's not like your cars." So I told him to choose any one of the works cars which were also new, and we'd take his instead, which more or less convinced him. Most of the drivers were very good, in fact I think I had all the good drivers before anybody else, before they went to BMC.

I enjoyed my 10 years with Triumph very much. They were jolly nice people to get on with. Grinham ordered that nobody, but nobody, was to interfere with me or my people. What I wanted done I had done and nobody could change it.

John Day's Literature Review

At the Richmond show last month, I was exploring some of the automotive literature that Glen Robinson had for sale. I came across a small hardcover book entitled 'How to Operate a Motor Car.' The title of the book seemed somewhat ironic; after all, any person from the age of eight knows, from observation if not experience, how to drive a car. Well, I understood a little better when I opened the book – the copyright was 1918!

The book gives several glimpses into the accepted thinking of the early days of motoring. With that in mind, I'd like to provide little glimpses into the way the motoring public viewed this relatively new technology. The first excerpt deals with the complicated issue of – turning corners!

From p. 65: "In turning corners, slow down; don't try to swing around too sharply, throw out your clutch and let the car coast or glide around the curve. Remember *always* to sound your horn when approaching another vehicle or when about to turn a corner, as well as when there are pedestrians or intersecting roads ahead. When turning a corner, don't swing across the whole width of the street. In turning to the right, hug the right-hand curb; and if turning to the left, keep to the right across the intersecting street, and then, swinging to the left, continue along the right-hand slide." Can you imagine the noise that would result, with today's traffic, if we continued to honk our horns at pedestrians and oncoming traffic? Oh, and the italics? It was in the book already.

Oil Drips

A couple of familiar Triumphs have changed hands in the club, and should be making more of a presence on the roads from now on. First off, Dean Hummel, who was at the May meeting to see what model he preferred, has bought (ex-OVTC prez) Joe Lashley's TR8. Dean was quite impressed with the local fraternity of TR8 owners, and I mentioned to him that Joe was considering selling his. After some investigating and a test drive, Dean was hooked (and so he should be). No doubt Dave, Paul, John et al. will show Dean the secret TR8 owner's handshake, too!

Secondly, John Day has sold his TR3A and related 3A spares to Tim Dyer. After being inspired by Joe's parting with his TR8, John said "If Joe can do it, so can I". Tim had been wishing to have a 3A driver while he and son Jason worked on their restoration project 3A, so the extra chassis, shell and spares won't go amiss, either. John had finally reached the conclusion that having 3 Triumphs side-by-side in the garage was an unmanageable situation for working on any one car, so it was time to act. John now intends to do some long-overdue repairs on the TR6, such as rebuild the suspension, and install the ANSA exhaust he's had on the shelf for the past 6 or so years!

Upcoming Events

18 August. BBQ at **Ken Shillette's** home near Long Sault. Details to follow.

25 August (10:00 to 4:00). **Boot 'n Bonnet British Car Day** in Kingston City Park. This year the show is celebrating 40 years of the Triumph Spitfire. For more information check out their website at <http://www.bootnbonnet.org/>

Membership Dues

This is the time of year when a majority of our membership have their dues expiring. Please expect a separate e-mail in the near future, or a note with your hard copy if that is how you receive the newsletter. Please send your payment for the next year to Vivien Kaye at the address on the back page of the newsletter, or at the next event (the Tierney Rally) if you will be attending. We hope you will remain a part of the best car club in the area — the OVTC!

John's Ebay 'Sting of the Month'

This month's proof that some people have too much spare cash is that a 1960s brochure (all of 8 pages) on the Triumph Italia sold for \$314 on Ebay. Sure the U.S. dollar isn't what it once was, but that's still a hefty price for some glossy paper. I would hope that it was an Italia owner who bought the brochure, to go with the car. That would be partly excusable. I contacted Steve McCutcheon in Toronto after the sale, and he said he didn't see that one. He has an original in Italian (which is more fitting, anyway) for his Italia. Steve added that his Italia is at the upholsterer's now, and should probably be ready for Bronte this fall. Cool!

For Sale/Wanted

1962 TR4 for sale. The car is red with black interior and has 67000 miles on it. The car is a good driver but is not a show car. I have had the car for about 12 years now. I rebuilt the motor and transmission about 5 years ago, they have less than 5000 miles on since rebuilt. If anyone is interested in more info or would like to see the car they can contact me: Rick Phenix, phenix.r@forces.ca, rphenix@sympatico.ca, Work Phone (613) 992-5357, Cell Phone (613) 761-8528, Work Fax (613) 996-6782, Home Phone (613) 824-0219.

Wanted — **Windshield for TR7.** I am looking for a windshield for a Triumph TR7 drop top. Don Bryant, (613) 831-0888, Cell: (709) 682-9045, Don.Bryant@xwave.com

1963 Triumph Herald coupe. Car has been in storage for 25 years and is in need of restoration. For further info e-mail ajdayman@tcc.on.ca

1973 TR7 with half of restoration completed with a running restored engine new wiring and restored brakes. Complete body but needs a restoration project. Price is negotiable at \$3350 obo (Renfrew Area). Contact Bonnie at 613-752-2976 or email breid@renc.igs.net

Parts for Sale. I have a touch too many parts more than any one person could ever use. Any one needing anything for a TR4 short of interior parts, because I just have enough to put my three cars together. But, I have tons of everything else, including a lot of TR250 odds and ends such as a full drive train, which I think is similar to a TR6, as well as other bits that came off a car I just parted down. As far as the TR4 goes, I have everything from IRS to fixed axle. I am also able to get TR3 parts as well. Any of the parts can be bought as they sit or can be sandblasted, primed, or fixed and cleaned. Feel free to give a ring any time 613-838-9630. Neil.

1980 TR7. Convertible needs a new home. Third owner bought in 1992. Very good condition. Never winter driven. Brown in color but ready for a new coat. No rust just paint cracking. Interior tan in acceptable condition. Entire dash intact with no scratches or breaks. Wooden steering wheel and shifter. 5 speed, dual carbs, dual exhaust (chrome tips). Entire brake system including hoses redone last year. Changed alternator, starter, and radiator over the years. Top in excellent condition but zipper on window needs repair. Approx. 90,000 km. Asking \$4,500 negotiable. Will drive out of storage May 1st and be ready for annual tune up. Selling because I have no time to use or baby anymore. Tel (613) 291-5084 Ottawa area, please contact Atul.

1980 TR7. We recently purchased a 1980 TR7 convertible and are in the process of restoring it. We're hoping to find a parts car with matching interior upholstery items somewhere among your members — any suggestions? Please contact Dave and Terry Brown (terry@adbro.com).

Rare Herald 948. 1962 Triumph Herald Saloon, completely restored in excellent condition. Fiscal reality forces sale! \$6,100.00 with safety certificate. Ottawa (613) 721-6127. Dave Delcorde

1980 TR7. It is in good condition. Never been winter driven. Body and motor and transmission all good — has been maintained on regular basis by Eric at English Motors on Bell Street. The upholstery needs to be re-done. 613-729-2366. Jeff Gould

Michelin Redline tires (4) for TR6, worn tread but sidewalls not cracked. Could be used for show or as spare. Make an offer (I will be very reasonable — I need to make room in my basement) Alain 742-1557

Wanted. Heater Coolant Valve for 1975 Triumph Spitfire . Mine is leaking rather badly and is causing me grief when I would really like to get the car out and running. Bob Samuel (bobsamuel@sympatico.ca)

Our Sponsors

British Auto Sport (Fred), 3354 Dwiggin Avenue, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. Tel: 1-888-485-2277 Authorized distributor for TRF, Moss, Victoria British, and Panasport.

British Car, PO Box 1683, Los Altos, CA, 94023, USA. The American magazine for Triumph enthusiasts who love English cars. To subscribe call: 1-800-949-9680. Mention the advertisement in our newsletter and get one extra issue free. Rates: 1 year (6 issues) \$22.95 USD, 2 years \$39.95 USD.

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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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