



# OTTAWA VALLEY TRIUMPH CLUB

---

---

NEWSLETTER NO. 23

## Highlights of May 22nd, 1991, Meeting

The May meeting of the OVTC was held on Wednesday evening, May 22nd, at the home of our founding members Jane and Juliano Benco, in Nepean. A special thanks to the Benco's for their usual warm hospitality and thanks also to "Bernard" the cat for his comical antics throughout the evening. We had a good turn out with approximately 30 of our members in attendance.

## Carburator Tune-Up Clinic

Terry Dale, of The Old Car Factory (24 Bentley Avenue in Nepean), gave a Tune-up Clinic for SU (Standard Union) and Stromberg Carbs. Peter Corbett's and Clive Law's TR-6s were used as the demonstrators. Terry braved the voracious mosquitoes and the "helpful" comments from the sidelines to give the members a very informative presentation. Thanks again, Terry, for your time and effort on our first ever working clinic session.

## Canadian Classic Update

After the outdoor Tune-up Clinic session, we reconvened in the Benco's gameroom for a short business meeting. Malcolm Brown led the discussion on briefing the members on the progress in preparing for the Canadian Classic. Highlights are as follows:

- We've got only 29 confirmed registrations so far (ONLY 12 OVTC MEMBERS HAVE REGISTERED, SO FAR). Come on folks, alot of us are busting our tails on organizing this, so let's get behind the event and register. More of this in Malcolm's "call to arms" later in this Newsletter. P.S.-->Boat Cruise is already half full with 60 persons registered.
- Malcolm has written an article that will appear in the next issue of TTC's "Ragtop", promoting the Classic and updating members in both Clubs on the progress to date. Malcolm's article is included in this Newsletter.
- We definitely have Victoria Island for the Concours event.
- We have received British Flag plastic bags, as well as literature on Britain from the British Tourist Authority in Toronto. The pastic bag kits will also include a good assortment of maps and brochures on events and tourist attractions in the Ottawa area, courtesy of the Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority. British posters, flags and cardboard cut outs have been obtained to decorate the Registration Table area at the Chimo Hotel.

## OVTC Car Badge

Clive Law has taken orders from a number of our members for an OVTC car badge--priced around \$20-25. If you're interested in obtaining a badge, contact Clive at 820-7350 (home) or 236-7281 extention 232 (office).

### Manotick Sportscar Fair

Don't forget OVTC members, that Sunday, June 23rd, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., is the 2nd Annual Classic Sportscar Fair at the Manotick Arena. Bruce Young's TR-8 and Fred Pantalone's TR-2 will be our OVTC entries this year.

### Next OVTC Meeting

Our next meeting is on June 26th, 1991. Rather than the meeting being held at the Manordale Community Centre, we'll be getting together at the Canadian Tire Store, corner of Bank Street and Heron Road, where every Wednesday night during the summer there's a gathering of classic and specialized automobiles. Plan on arriving early (7:00 to 7:15 p.m.) so OVTC can get a good spot, front and centre, in the parking lot. See you then.

### **OVTC Spring Run, Sunday May 26, 1991**

- by Malcolm Brown

Despite some obvious blemishes in the forecast, the first official spring run by the OVTC to the Links-of-Tay golf course in Perth, was a great success. Eight cars in all participated from Ottawa, including 7 Triumphs (1 TR8, 4 TR6s, 2 Spitfires) and one non-Triumph. The latter was the backup/parts collection vehicle piloted by Wendy Threader. As previously arranged, the initial staging point was the Pinecrest shopping Mall. The cars, headed by Dave and Linda's TR8, departed Pinecrest just after 10 am for a leisurely drive to Perth. The convoy was met in Perth by Bruce and Mary Young's TR8. Bruce had reserved the veranda overlooking the golf course (and of course the parking lot!). Derek and Isabel Holbeche and Hugh Henderson also joined us from Perth. The food was great, the conversation lively and a good time was had by all. A special thanks to Bruce and Mary for arranging a very successful event and for their generosity in paying for far more than their fair share of the bill.

To Clive and Kathleen Law, I would like to bestow the perseverance award for enduring the wet return trip sans-top (Clive's new top is on order). Good timing Clive!

### **Low-Tech Tips**

- by Malcolm Brown

Now that we are all enlightened about the potential hazards of silicon-based products to our paint jobs, why not try some Turtle brand **Vinyl Roof Wax** for your tops and tonneaus, instead of Armor All. Turtle wax provides a very shiny, durable finish, and above all, will not cause streaks when rained upon. It is available at CTC, as well as most other hardware outlets.

Armor All still seems to work best on getting that shiny 'wet look' on tires. However, here's a tip for getting your tires nice and clean before applying the Armor All. Try some regular, off-the-shelf laundry detergent. Just scrub it in with a brush or rag, and rinse. You don't have to scrub too hard either since laundry soap is pretty potent stuff. Have you ever washed your hands in laundry soap and gotten some in those minor cuts and scratches that are routine with working on Triumphs. It really stings! Laundry detergent gets tires nice and black, and really cleans up the red lines too. Oh, by the way, apply your finishing top coat of Armor All with a rag, instead of with the pump spray. Overspray can easily get on the your paint, and when you go to repaint, it will be forever on your nerves!

### **NOTICE: To Canadian Classic Motorsport Sub-Committee Members**

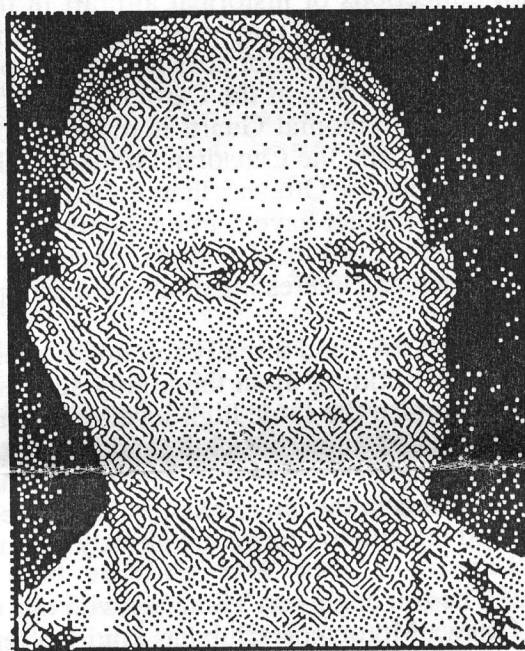
- by Malcolm Brown

As you are all aware, we have enlisted the volunteer aid of the Motorsport Club of Ottawa to provide their valuable experience in putting together a really top notch slalom event as part of the Sixth Annual Canadian Classic. This event will take place Thursday, August 1. So far, the start and finish times have yet to be determined. In order for the sub-committee to gain some prior experience in the running of a slalom event, Ron Woltman, President of MCO, has asked that members attend one of MCO's upcoming slaloms. The date is June 9, starting at about 10 am. Sub-committee members should try to get there a bit earlier to lend a hand. The location will be the Pinecrest shopping Mall, in the parking lot. Oh by the way, we have an agreement, in principle, to make use of the Carleton University Parking Lot #6, closest to Dow's lake, for our slalom. Our special thanks to Peter Emberley for looking into this on behalf of the club.

SIXTH ANNUAL CANADIAN CLASSIC  
 C/O Malcolm Brown  
 35 Roberta Cres.,  
 Nepean, Ontario  
 Canada K2J 1G5  
 (613) 825-0458



## The OVTC Needs a Few Good People



## SIGN UP NOW FOR THE SIXTH ANNUAL CANADIAN CLASSIC.....OR ELSE!

### 6th Annual Canadian Classic Registration Update

As of June 3, we have received 29 registration forms for the 6th Annual Canadian Classic. This translates to approximately 58 people. I am told this is comparatively low to registration for the 1989 Kingston event for the same time frame, but somewhat surpasses Peterborough. However, as we all know, Peterborough was only half the size of the Kingston. So far the OVTC is tied with the TTC with 12 registrants each. We have 3 U.S. registrants and 2 'Others' (i.e., a single registrant each from the Montreal Triumph Club and the Montreal Spitfire Club). This is certainly not what I would consider an overwhelming response, especially from our own membership. I would strongly encourage those of you who are planning to attend to please **REGISTER AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE**. A great deal of effort is being put into the planning and organization of the Classic and we are all building our hopes that this will be one of the best ever. However, in order for the Classic to be a success, we need your support. Also, in order for certain events to occur as planned, and for certain major sponsors to feel the trip to Ottawa will be worthwhile, we need as much advance notice of registration numbers as possible. So please, don't hesitate any longer. Take the General's advice and **SIGN UP NOW!**

TTC RAG-TOP ARTICLE - By Malcolm Brown.

SIXTH ANNUAL CANADIAN CLASSIC  
 C/O Malcolm Brown  
 35 Roberta Cres.,  
 Nepean, Ontario  
 Canada K2J 1G5  
 (613) 825-0458



Plans are well under way for this year's Sixth Annual Canadian Classic which is being co-hosted by the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club. As everyone is well aware by now, this year's event takes place in our nation's capital. With a metropolitan population of over 900,000, Ottawa offers many fine attractions that will provide fun and excitement for the entire family. Within the capital area, there is easy access to many world class attractions such as the National Gallery, Museum of Science and Technology, Museum of Civilization, and the National Aviation Museum which boasts one of the finest collections of historical aircraft in the world. Families may visit the Parliament Buildings, the old Library of Parliament and may view the many interesting statues and monuments adorning the grounds. The changing of guard, another major attraction, takes place each morning on Parliament Hill throughout the summer months. The parade forms at the Cartier Square Drill Hall at 9:30 and marches up Elgin Street to reach the hill at 10 am. The Ceremonial Guard is made up of two of Canada's most historic regiments: the Governor General's Foot Guards, and the Canadian Grenadier Guards. The old By Ward Market, originally layed out in Colonel John By's plans for Ottawa (then called Bytown), is a popular attraction for visitors. Since 1840, the street stalls of the old market have brimmed with seasonal produce and the old Market Building houses a wide variety of arts and crafts from local artisans. There are many fine restaurants and cafes, and Ottawa's large ethnic community provides many interesting dining and shopping experiences.

The 1991 event promises to be one of the best ever and a really top notch agenda has been put together by the folks from the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club. Building upon the highly successful Kingston and Peterborough events of 1989 and 1990 respectively, we promise the same high level of organization and enthusiasm. A great deal of enthusiasm has already been generated and numerous clubs and individuals from all over eastern Canada and the United States have been in contact with us expressing their interest. We are especially pleased to see that a lot of interest has been generated from our friends in the United States. We currently anticipate upwards of 150 to 200 participant cars to be in attendance... and registration forms are already beginning to pour in!

What's on for the 1991 Canadian Classic? The fun begins on Thursday with our motorsport event where Triumph owners can test their driving skills. The Ottawa Motorsport Club has kindly offered their assistance and expertise in putting together an exhilarating slalem event. After a hard day behind the wheel, what better way to end it than with a Thursday night British pub crawl. Don't worry about drinking and driving, we have chartered city buses to provide return transportation from the hotel to the various pubs.

Friday morning begins bright and early with the 'Tour de Gatineau'. The convoy will depart the hotel for a two hour picturesque tour through the beautiful Gatineau Hills along the Gatineau parkway. There will be a stop off where participants can take scenic photographs from the vantage of the Champlain Lookout. A professional photographer will also be on hand to take photographs of individual cars against the backdrop of the Gatineau Hills. Later we will stop for lunch at one of the designated National Capital Commission picnic locations. Participants are then invited to take part in a fun rally back to the hotel. The entire day is sponsored by our friends at Sporting Classics magazine. Friday night features an Ottawa River boat cruise with theme dance. This year's theme is based upon the infamous Monty Python Lumber Jack Song ('He's a lumberjack and he's O.K.'). This theme reflects Ottawa's heritage and early economy which was founded on the logging industry. So lets see those lumberjack outfits! Sorry, no broad axes or chain saws allowed on board. This event is limited to 150 so please book your tickets early.

Saturday will be the big day for the annual Concours D'elegance. We have reserved Victoria Island from the NCC with its spectacular view of the Ottawa River, the Parliament buildings and the Ottawa skyline. The National Air Museum will be used en-route to the island as an initial assembly point, and for a panoramic photograph of all the cars. Remember the Kingston photo! Judging for this year's event will include concours, participants' choice as well as the 'Soon to be Great' category for the most promising car. This will truly be a unique experience for Ottawa and the public is invited to experience the spectacle of over 100 vintage sports cars on display.

Saturday night is capped off with the annual Awards Banquet and dance. In the spirit of summer, we are featuring an outdoor bar-be-que. Dont' worry about the elements. The bar-be-que will be set up under a marquee tent in back of the hotel. And besides, what better way to dine and dance the hours away than close to your car!

So sign up now folks for what will undoubtedly be a truly CAPITAL affair! Gumby, are you out there?

## Driveline

by: Peter George

Let us continue on with automobile electrics and return to that fateful Saturday afternoon so long ago ( this narrative is starting to sound like an old Lone Rangers serial ), when yours truly was on the point of buying a Morgan. My first quick inspection showed loose wires everywhere. A more thorough investigation revealed extensive damage. The voltage control unit was burned, the insulation on the battery cables had melted, the starting circuitry was just in strands of wires, and there were ominous signs of a near disaster behind the dash. This Morgan was Springtime bad news! A complete electrical re-wire would be necessary before a wheel would turn again.

I am positive that the owner had planned to connect into a live source behind the dash. Unfortunately, he did not realize that firstly there is limited fuse protection for these behind the dash circuits, and secondly these live circuits are continually powered through the control unit and ammeter. Obviously this gentleman wired a connection to ground from one of these sources and burned out his control unit. ( Everyone understands "a connection to ground". ) To avoid this possibility, I have changed my car's electrical system. The ignition switch has a dedicated feed from the control unit, and the ignition switch live side now feeds the light switch. In this secondary connection from ignition switch I have installed a good quality in-line circuit-breaker. Now the control unit has some protection, and I will not have lights that go out and stay out. The circuit breaker offers some light as it switches off and on until it remains off.

Next, I believe this gentleman did not know that the starter solenoid is simply a switching relay. A switching relay uses a manually energized circuit to switch-on another circuit which carries a greater current. You turn on the ignition key, press the starter button, and by doing so, the starter solenoid closes its primary circuit and the starting motor is consequently activated.

In his attempt to start the car so he could drive it to the local garage to be repaired, he did his next piece of nastiness. He burned out the starting circuitry. He did this by simply reconnecting the battery cable to the wrong terminal on the starter solenoid.

I must admit, I did admire the man's tenacity. He had created a problem and he was purposefully determined to make it worse. He was resolved. He would re-wire the car himself. His resolution remained firm until the last integral connection was undone. His defeat, as you have guessed, was heralded in the Toronto Star under the heading: "Cars For Sale". If this gentleman had followed my earlier recommendations, would he have had any problems? The car was still parked on his driveway late that Fall. For all I know, it could still be there.

Enough frivolity, let's get down to where the rubber meets the road and have a serious discussion on modifications, or as I prefer to call them, "enhancements" that can alter the anticipated characteristics of a car. And the first one I would like to elaborate on is the starting function. The ignition key is turned on, the starter button is pressed, and we all expect the engine to roar into life or at least, to give a sign that in a moment or two we will be mobile.

This is an anticipated response. There are enhancements that can definitely change these expectations. And it is these changes that can thwart a hot-wire artist.

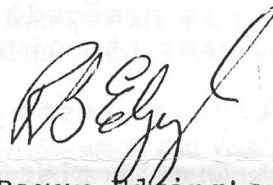
However, altering or modifying any existing automotive system is not always a straightforward simple task. Therefore, once again, let's review a few basics. Firstly, when changing a functioning system to behave in another manner, one can expect that monkey business can be serious business. Secondly, OFF/ON switches can be used on the grounded side of an appliance if that appliance and switch are isolated from the ground. Thirdly the longer the battery cable, the larger the diameter the cable must be.

Now, with these admonishments made, we can proceed. The first modification is an ON/OFF switch installed in the low voltage feed to the coil. However, please note that one must pay particular attention to the wiring techniques. This wire and switch arrangement must be camouflaged within the existing electrical harness system to prevent easy identification and resulting circumvention. The next alteration is a petcock installed in the fuel line. The valve stem is extended into the passenger compartment of the car, and the actual handle itself is hidden by the carpet on the floor. And, naturally, when you leave the car, you turn off the fuel. This little device, or gadget, works great. However, it can become tedious, continually turning a valve on and off. An electrically operated solenoid valve could replace this manual device. But then the aspect of simplicity is lost. The last modification I am going to discuss, and the one I like the best, is the installation of a remote cut-out switch. A cut-out switch is a device installed on a battery cable that totally, electrically, isolates the car from its battery. For a device of this nature to be an effective anti-theft device, the battery and switch must be located within a secured area. Now, this is not always possible so, to overcome this design shortcoming the device can be installed in an unconventional manner and in an obscure place. The switch is wired into the battery ground cable, and is located in under the body. Now for the ripple. The ground cable installation looks normal. But it isn't. The cable end anchoring point at the frame is different. The anchor point is electrically isolated from the frame and the ground cable continues on, out of sight, underneath the car to the cut-out switch. Naturally, at this point, the primary battery ground is established. And, obviously, this cut-out switch is mechanically operated by a push/pull cable.

There are more sophisticated and intricate devices that could be used, such as momentary switches, sequencing solenoids, and timing relays, but they are entering the realm of James Bond, and the name is "Peter George", not "Q".

There are still more wrinkles that can be made. Maybe we can explore these in a future article. Have a good day. Good night MQG ELB.

Well, that's about it for another issue of the OVTC Newsletter. Thanks again to my Admin. Assistant, Gloria Ray, for typing this up for the Club again this month. How about we invite Gloria and her husband Bob, to join us on the Ottawa River Boat Cruise and Theme Dance, Friday, August 2nd, during the Canadian Classic, as a small way of expressing our appreciation of her efforts in typing each and every Newsletter since our Club was founded.



Barry Edgington  
OVTC Newsletter Editor

P.S. Don't forget folks, the next meeting of the OVTC will be held on June 26th, 7:00-7:30 p.m., in the parking lot of the CTC Store at Bank and Heron.

## Perth

We were a sad looking group, assembled as we were in the nearly vacant parking lot at the Pinecrest Shopping Centre. We all had our necks craned skyward as if our combined prayers would convince the gods that we were deserving of blue skies and sunshine. We were gathered to take part in the first official run of the year, to Perth Ontario for a Brunch hosted by Bruce Young.

Following Lynda and Dave Huddleson's TR8 (Power, A/C, Cruise etc. . .hardly what you would call a hairy-chested British sports car!) we snaked towards Bell's Corners, then on to Richmond Road (aka the road to Richmond). Thanks to Dave's map, which he received free of charge from Kentucky Fried Chicken, not only would we never get lost, we were never more than five minutes from a KFC outlet!

As usual at these events TR6s predominated, Malcolm and Lynn Brown attended in their award-winning car, Peter Corbett and fils Pierre added a touch of class to what would otherwise merely be a vulgar rabble, Adrian and Judy Wright drove in from Manotick to join the convoy, and yours truly braved the weather with daughter Kathleen. Representing the Spitfires were new member John Dallaire, and Jeff Threader. Jeffs wife Wendy piloted the chase car with daughter Jennifer as navigator.

As four of the seven Triumphs had recently had complete engine overhauls, and three of us were still in the break-in stage, we enjoyed a pleasant country drive at the exhilarating average speed of 42mph.

We were met in Perth by Bruce Young who so ably organized the brunch at the Links O'Tay golf course, and who picked up the tab for the first six members (talk about an incentive to attend). Meeting the Ottawa crowd at the club house were Mary Young, Derek and Isobel Holbeche and new member Hugh Henderson. Following our lunch we followed Bruce and Mary to the park that has been put aside for a static club display at the Perth Anniversary celebrations. Several of us toured the Young residence prior to returning home at our leisure.

By the way, the gods completely ignored our prayers and it rained for the entire return journey.

## The Runs to the Swan

The club has had two Sunday runs to the Swan Pub at Manotick. These informal gatherings were started by several members last year as an opportunity to get together and have a short, albeit pleasant, Sunday drive. This year some members, notably myself, Peter Corbett and Juliano Benco (all TR6 drivers) have standardised the run to start at 2:15 from the Manordale "Clubhouse" every Sunday. If two or more members show up then the run is on, if only one member shows up then that member runs on his own or goes home.

The first Swan run was May 19. This run was attended by myself, Peter and Juliano. The following Sunday was pre-empted by the Perth outing but the run was re-established on June 2 when 5 cars showed up. In addition to the hard-core trio, we were joined by Martin Harasek (TR6) and friend Heather and by David and Lynda Huddleson

(TR8). Juliano showed up in this TR3 to add a little diversity to group. At the Swan we met Jeff Threader (Spitfire) who was hosting his brother-in-law.

All members are encouraged to come out on Sundays for this enjoyable run. We usually assemble at 2:00 and wait for stragglers, leave at 2:15 and are normally back by 5:00.

### Concours Committee

On Tuesday May 28, the Concours Committee met at Brian Mills' house and finalised many of the details for the Concours section of the Sixth Canadian Classic. Although a full report will be included in the next newsletter, I want to take this opportunity to thank Brian Mills, Joe Lashley, Bruce Young, Derek and Isobel Holbeche, Craig Holbeche and Hugh Henderson for all of their input and hard work.

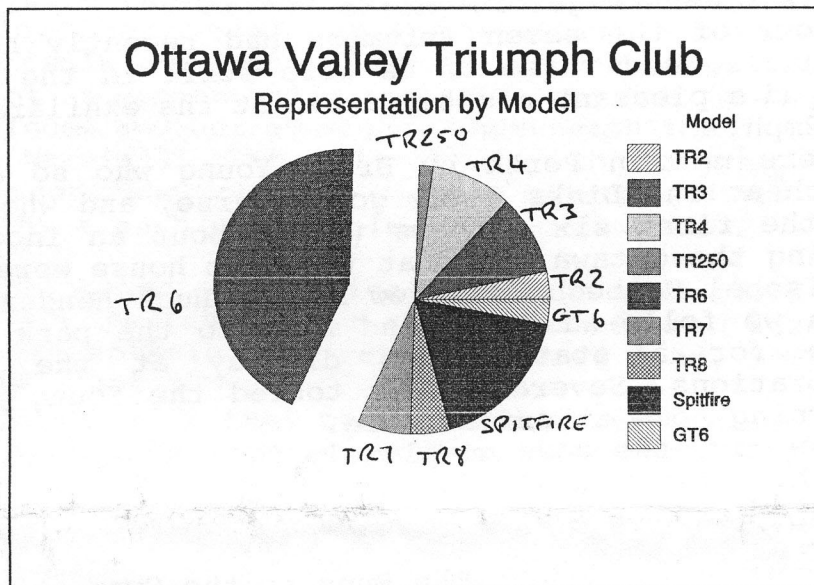
### Membership Report

Total membership 53 regular, 1 Corporate

Since our last meeting, we have lost one member from non-renewal, and are waiting for almost a dozen other members to renew. I heard from one member that he wasn't sure if he would renew because he didn't think it was worth twenty bucks!!! When I asked this member how often he attended meetings he replied twice! This guy had never volunteered to do anything for the club and had never written anything for the newsletter.

No wonder he didn't get anything out of the club, he never put anything into it !!! This club can only be as enjoyable as the membership makes it. Not everybody can write an article on a technical topic, or volunteer to do something during working hours, or even attend meetings because of job commitments, but just about everyone can cut out a funny cartoon about cars and send it to the newsletter editor, or describe a drive in his TR, complete with a litany of mishaps, or . . .

On a slightly more upbeat note, the graph shown here is a representation of the cars owned by the membership. It will come as no surprise that TR6's form the majority, but some of the other numbers may come as a surprise.

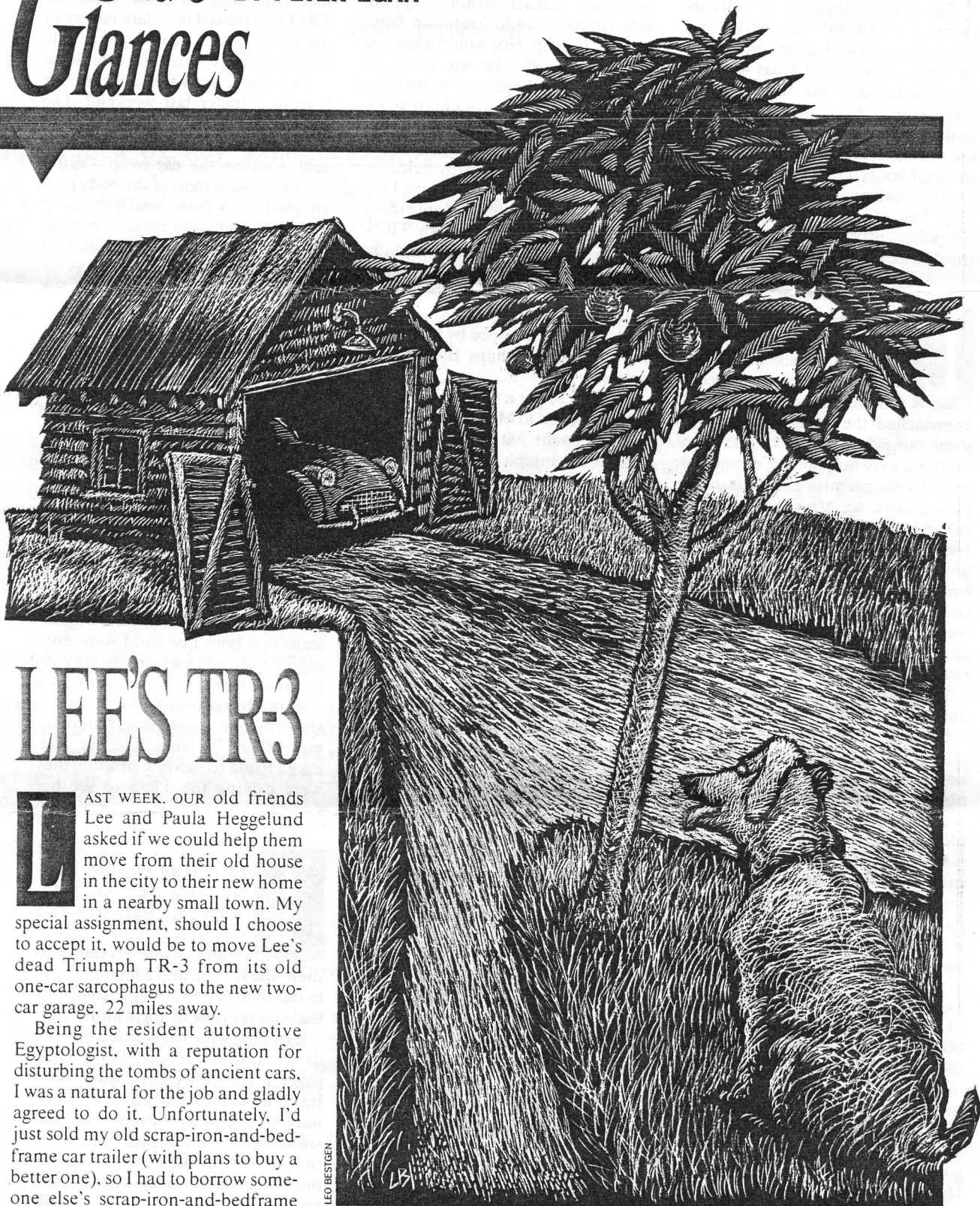




# Side Glances

BY PETER EGAN

(Thanks to Juliano Benec for submitting this article  
Good Reading - Editor)



## LEE'S TR-3

**L**AST WEEK, OUR old friends Lee and Paula Heggelund asked if we could help them move from their old house in the city to their new home in a nearby small town. My special assignment, should I choose to accept it, would be to move Lee's dead Triumph TR-3 from its old one-car sarcophagus to the new two-car garage, 22 miles away.

Being the resident automotive Egyptologist, with a reputation for disturbing the tombs of ancient cars, I was a natural for the job and gladly agreed to do it. Unfortunately, I'd just sold my old scrap-iron-and-bed-frame car trailer (with plans to buy a better one), so I had to borrow someone else's scrap-iron-and-bedframe

LEO BESTGEN

car trailer, which of course had an electrical hookup that didn't match the wiring on my van.

The census department tells us there are 750,000 car trailers in America, each with a unique wiring harness. My van had a flat 4-prong connector, while the trailer had a huge round 6-prong socket that looked like something NASA could use to connect the space shuttle to its gantry. I hooked these disparate connectors uselessly together with a large ball of electrical tape to fool the police, planning to use the Electrical Idiocy Defense if stopped.

**L**UCKILY I WASN'T and arrived unmolested on Saturday morning, ready to move the Triumph. I backed the trailer into the driveway, climbed out of the van and approached the garage doors with some misgivings.

There were no Pharaoh's curses or hieroglyphs promising instant death to intruders, so, after a moment of respect for the past, we untied an old piece of rope that held the latches and swung the creaking garage doors open wide. Cold, damp air breathed out like something from a crypt, and warm spring air swirled in. Sunlight cut through the dust in heavenly rays, and there it was:

On four flat tires, a pale yellow-and-rust 1959 Triumph TR-3A, buried under a thick patina of time-grunge and garage debris. Old bleach bottles sat on the hood amid a rat's nest of drop-cord and tank-heater wire; random pieces of lumber rested on the roof. The floor around the car was cluttered with disintegrating cardboard boxes of musty Triumph parts. The boxes were right where I'd put them 17 years ago, the last time we had helped the Heggelunds move. So was the car.

Ah, Lee's car. Lots of history here. Lee Heggelund, my old friend: chemistry whiz, science teacher, blues fan, racing buff, avid co-paddler of canoes and climber of peaks, married to Paula, the former college roommate of my wife, Barbara. The four of us double-dated in college, whenever Lee came up from Chicago to the University of Wisconsin. He bought the Triumph right after he graduated from Northwestern.

As a student teacher, he'd often drive into Madison on the weekends to see Paula. Neither rain nor snow nor wind leakage around flapping side curtains would keep him from making the trip. Nor would a flat tire on Interstate 90—the one where he pulled over and opened the trunk as a semi roared past, wind blast snapping the fragile pot-metal hinges on the TR-3's trunklid and sending it cartwheeling into a nearby field.

When Lee told me this story, I explained that virtually the same thing had happened with my own TR-3, only in my case it had been the bonnet that blew off. The hinges, of course, were of the same fine design and material. We also noted that both cars were stopped by the side of the highway. Perhaps there was a pattern...

When Lee got a full-time teaching job, he moved to Madison. He rented an apartment with no garage and drove his Triumph 12 miles to school every day. Unfortunately, the car often failed to start on cold mornings. So Lee got in the habit of setting his alarm clock at three-hour intervals and getting up twice during the night to start the TR and keep it warm.

He would put on boots and a jacket over his pajamas, crunch through the snow, start the engine (barely), do one lap around Camp Randall Stadium to generate some heat, park the car and go back to bed. For three hours.

I told Lee that my own Triumph wasn't that hard to start.

"Yes," he said with an ironic grin. "but you didn't install the J.C. Whitney Big Bore High Compression Cylinder Liner Kit."

By spring, the starter had worn out, but Lee's apartment was on a steep hill, so he would simply coast downhill and let in the clutch. Naturally, he couldn't park the Triumph and shut it off unless his destination provided another steep incline. Otherwise he had to use the arm-wrenching hand-crank to start the engine. At one point, I wondered if Barb and I should move to a hill so we'd see Lee and Paula more often.

Eventually he had the starter rebuilt, several times, "by some people who said they were experts."

Lee commuted to work for several years with the TR-3, but road salt, age and high miles finally got to the Tri-

umph. He retired it in favor of an American sedan with roll-up windows, a real heater and trunk hinges that didn't snap off in the wind. The TR-3 was parked in a dark corner of the garage. And, except for the two moves, it's been stationary ever since.

As we unloaded the car from our borrowed trailer last weekend, Lee asked if I thought it could be restored.

"It would be a terrific project," I said, looking the car over. "You'd have to replace most of the body panels, put in new floors, and it probably needs a complete mechanical restoration. On the other hand," I added, "I don't think you would get much for the car if you tried to sell it."

"Oh, I'd never sell it," Lee said quickly.

I was glad to hear those words. Functionally, the Triumph is used up. It has given its best years, and I have doubts that Lee will ever find the time to restore it. He's a busy man, with classes to teach and children to raise.

But restored or unrestored, it's nice to have the Triumph around. What's left of the car is really only symbolic, a reminder of both good and bad times.

Of those two, the bad times may be more important. I think it's significant that both Lee and I were driving TR-3s when we were dating Paula and Barb, the women we eventually married, and that our respective marriages have lasted for more than 20 years. Lee, in fact, asked Paula to marry him while they were driving the TR-3 to see her family.

**T**HE CARS WERE really a kind of test, an ongoing hardship that tried the long-suffering patience and character of our future brides, while revealing to them the foolish and romantic flaws in our own personalities, providing a realistic preview of their lot in life.

Couples who have dated in old, drafty unreliable cars know each other a lot better than those who travel in warmth and comfort. Ordinary cars tend to preserve our illusions, while Triumphs, like most other forms of adversity, bring out our worst for everyone to see. And also our best. 