



OTTAWA VALLEY TRIUMPH CLUB OCTOBER 1992

Editor's Babble:

All I can say is: WOW !! The British Invasion in Stowe this year was an incredible experience, and one we wouldn't have missed for the world. The number and variety of cars gathered together in one place was a sight to be seen. What made it best was the strong contingent of OVTC folk who went down. I was happy to note that the OVTC was the only solo club sporting a banner! Lori and I had a great time, and we plan to make it an annual excursion. Once again I've been encouraged to move my butt on readying my car for the road, and if I don't shirk, Stowe '93 might just see the Ontario plates 'MY SIX' in attendance.

OVTC Executive for 1992-93:

A healthy crowd of 29 members were on hand for our September 23rd meeting to cast their votes for our new executive. Well, actually the only voting which took place was for the job of vice-president (rumour had it Dan Quayle was considering it, so that resulted in some extra competition!). When the results were tabulated (ie. hands counted), Steve Challinor received the majority. Thus, the Executive for 1992-93 is as follows: President - Derek Holbeche; V-P - Steve Challinor; Treasurer - Jane Benco; Editor - John Day; Regalia - Pat Mills.

I'm certain all members join me in thanking Clive Law for his exemplary leadership over the past year. He did a magnificent job at each and every event, and I know from working with him on the newsletter that he truly enjoyed the members and activities of the club as much as anyone. *Bravo !!*

Barrie Classic Photos:

Hugh Henderson has once again worked his magic to bring you another panoramic photo of a *wiiide* assortment of Triumphs from the Seventh Annual classic at Barrie earlier this year. Prices for small photos (8" by 20") are \$19.95, while \$39.95 get you the poster-size 16" by 50" (roughly) beauty. See Hugh at the next meeting if you're interested.

British Invasion, Stowe, Vermont. September 18-20

A total of 9 Ottawa Triumphs journeyed to Stowe for the Second Annual British Invasion, and we are pleased to report that all 9 vehicles made it down to the States and back into Canada without serious mishap (and that's all I have to say on that). Of this group, we won a total of four awards: Clive received a First in the TR6 class against the toughest competition he's faced to date (jolly good show, C.L.); Dave Snasdell-Taylor and Juliano Benco received Second and Third place respectively in the TR2/3/4/250 class for their TR3's; and (Sir) Joe Lashley received the bronze for TR7-8 class. The OVTC crowd also showed the other groups how to have fun when the sun goes down (more so if they'd have had a band who knew 'Jailhouse Rock'). Look out next year, Vermont - Ottawa's coming for ya!

The assortment of Triumph automobiles present were enough to make a person drool. Unique among the assemblage were a Stag (Lori's favourite), a black 1952 'Mayflower', which reminded me of a miniature hearse, plus a 1974 TR6 with rare factory air installed. Amazing!

In addition to several rolls of film taken of the main show, parade of cars, etc. by those in attendance, we also have the name of a person who offered us a copy of the video tape he was making of the event. This may form the basis of a 'Stowe Night' at some future meeting. I'll keep you all posted.

New Members:

A hearty (and overdue) welcome to Rick Livingstone, who brings with him a 1973 TR6 (just in time for tips on winterizing). Also welcome Randy Hildebrand, also driving a TR6, of 1976 vintage. Cheers, mates!

I've also recently spoken to a couple of potential recruits, including one I met down at Stowe who asked for a copy of a newsletter to peruse, so

there may still be some new faces at future meetings.

Regalia:

Unfortunately, the goal of 25 orders for our embroidered club clothing was not realized by the Sept. 23 deadline, so we're afraid we must cancel the plan for now. Those who did place an order with Pat Mills will have their deposits returned. Springtime is likely the next opportunity for you to have a shot at this again - so much for Xmas. We have also considered the possibility of some other club items, but we would require a strong commitment from several of you to move on these. What has been considered is: (a) club lapel pins, and (b) OVTC grille badges. The cost to members of each would be roughly \$5, but we need a minimum order of 50. We are still considering this, but you may contact Pat at the next meeting if you are keen on the idea.

Let us not forget, we still have some other items, such as a pair of size XL sweaters, a few Gatsby hats and ball caps, plus window decals. Let's try to relieve Pat of these items, so that we can lighten the load on her suitcase.

Terry Dale - Triumph Brakes; Storage

At our last meeting, Terry Dale gave a show-stopping (sic) demonstration of brake fundamentals. From the early days of horse-drawn carriages & MGs (little difference) to modern ABS systems, the most important aspect of braking is friction. Earliest automobile brakes were cable-operated but hydraulic systems, first offered around the 1920's, offered many advantages, such as reduced effort and reliability. Terry demonstrated the operation of drum and disk systems, explaining the pros and cons of each (by the way, how many of you were aware that a Triumph (TR3A) was the first production sports car to offer disk brakes?). Terry also pointed out that brake fluid is very fond of water, and water in brake lines leads to several problems, rust and corrosion being the most important. If your brake fluid is dark or dirty, flush the lines thoroughly. Terry recommends this every couple of years or so.

Terry also offered some helpful suggestions for winter storage for our loved ones, to help them love us come springtime. Rules to follow are:

1) Store the car where the temperature is stable. It can be colder, it can be warmer, but it is best if it does not fluctuate wildly.

2) Change the oil! Old, dirty oil is full of acids which can harm internal components. Oil's not just important as a lubricant!

3) Fill the gas tank to the brim, to keep air out. Condensation in the tank can lead to rust, which can lead to a rusted tank, contaminated fuel, contaminated carbs, ... You get the idea. Also, gasoline anti-freeze or some other gasoline stabilizer in the tank is a good idea.

4) Keep the battery charged up, whether or not you leave the battery in the car or not. Check the battery at least once a month, and put it on trickle charge to ensure it doesn't get too low, or you risk ruining the battery.

5) Grease all points on the car's suspension. The car is going to be stationary for a long time. Make sure it is properly lubricated.

6) If you insist on starting the car over the winter, be sure to let it run for a sufficient length of time to achieve proper operating temperature. Running a car for short periods can be harmful because it isn't able to burn off the acids produced.

Terry says that it isn't truly necessary to jack up a car for the winter, but it doesn't hurt either, and does reduce strain on shocks and springs.

(I'm also pleased to announce that Terry has kindly agreed to provide the newsletter with a small column on the care and feeding of our cars, beginning with the next issue. The topics will be Terry's choice, so he can maintain 'artistic freedom'. Our thanks in advance to Terry for this and all other support he provides.)

Winter Storage Facilities:

For those of you requiring winter storage for your cars, you may check out one of the following alternatives. For those situated in the west in particular, Derek Holbeche reports of storage facilities in Almonte. Prices are \$295 for the season, but a \$25 discount is available for OVTC members. Contact Derek at (613) 267-6676. If that is a bit too far, Janet Dallaire can offer storage thru Tippet-Richardson at around \$300 per season, in a climate-controlled warehouse. Phone Janet at Tippet-Richardson ('TR' for short!) for further info.

Fall Colour Tour - Oct. 18

The Boot'n'Bonnet Club's annual Fall Colour Tour takes place this year on Sunday, October 18. Cars are to meet in Athens, then journey to



ADVENTURES IN TOWING

CHAIRS PUSHED BACK from the table after dinner the other night, drinking coffee to recover from all that Mountain Red. Assistant Art Director Larry Crane and I found ourselves discussing a problem common to all of us who occasionally buy disabled, non-running "project" cars at the drop of a hat, or some less rational signal. Like me, Larry has bought quite a few cars that absolutely did not run, during periods of his life when he did not own a trailer or a transporter of any kind.

Meaning, of course, that the car had to be towed home on the end of a rope.

In comparing notes, Larry and I discovered we'd lived through dozens of similar towing adventures and that certain threads of disaster, nightmarish surrealism and refined technique ran through all of them. We had, in fact, gained such a wealth of towing experience that I thought it might be worthwhile to set down a few ground rules for younger readers who have yet to face the problem. The Classic Rope Tow is an old tradition, after all, and, like polo or Russian roulette, demands that certain formalities and conventions be observed.

For those who are new to the craft, the basic ingredients of any rope-towing adventure are (1) the rope, (2) the "volunteer," (3) the tow car, (4) the policeman and, of course, (5) a really horrible, worthless hulk of a car that someone else is thrilled to have dragged off his property, but which *you*, nevertheless, covet.

Let's examine all these elements, one at a time:

The rope. Some people will tell you to use a chain or a cable to tow a car, but that would be too easy and far too safe. In any classic rope tow job, the rope is, almost by definition, an afterthought, usually discovered hanging on someone's garage wall or moldering in the trunk of the disabled car. The rope should be as short and weak as possible. Shortness (4 or 5 ft is plenty) allows you to test the reflexes of the driver being towed and is therefore an important part of the game. The very thought of your brake lights suddenly flashing on at 60 mph keeps him alert, even at night—assuming your tow car *has* brake lights. Two points if it doesn't.

Long ropes are a hazard because, unless both cars follow the same arc through a corner, the rope tends to scythe down pedestrians on street corners, at just about knee/shopping-bag level. It also allows two cars to end up on opposite sides of an intersection during a red light, with 40 ft of rope stretched across the road in front of oncoming traffic. This actually happened to me, and it's no fun.

Having the rope as weak as possible permits it to snap every half-mile or so, giving you a chance to really see the country you are traveling through and to get to know the people. This is especially nice in Manhattan. When it comes to snapping every few minutes, nothing works quite like baling twine, though badly weathered clothesline is a close-second.

The "volunteer" comes next. I use quotes around the word because no one who allows himself to be dragged around in a wrecked car on the wrong end of 4 ft of

rope is mentally competent to volunteer for anything. But you don't want just anyone whizzing along behind you at 50 or 60 mph in a car that probably has no brakes. You want someone with a poor understanding of the American legal system.

The tow car. It goes without saying that the tow car should run better than the car being towed. Otherwise you've got them turned around. In my case, picking the worst of the two has often been a hard decision, and I've made a few bad calls. For instance, I once tried to tow a 1959 TR3 with a 1961 Mercury Comet. In 1971.

Then there's the policeman. The policeman's role in all this is to stop you about six blocks from home, after you've towed the car 150 miles, to explain that what you are doing is unsafe. But first he is required to get out of the squad car, scowl at the much-knotted tow rope, put his hands on his hips and say, "What do you think you're doing here?"

What you are doing here is so painfully obvious that you must always avoid answering this question, so as not to sound like a wise guy. Your job is to tell the cop, "We're just towing the car a couple of blocks. We picked the car up from Jimmy's house, around the corner, and now we're taking it to my house, just up the street." (A really short tow always seems less criminal than a long one.)

The only problem with this lie is that the cop may offer to escort you to your house, which is "just up the street," and you always feel a bit foolish pulling into the driveway of a total stranger, ringing the doorbell and trying to convince the woman who comes to the door in a bathrobe and curlers to pose as your mother and let you in, while the cop looks on from his squad car. If she slams the door in your face, you then go back and tell the cop, "Mom's really mad. She doesn't want us to have a car. She said we'd have to sleep in the garage." At this point the cop, who knows you've been lying all along, will usually smile to himself and drive away. That, or throw you in prison.

The last element is the car you are towing back to your own home—the very root of the problem. Neither Larry nor I can offer any advice on what sort of car you may wish to tow home, as we've been so indiscriminate in our own choices as to lose all credibility. As long as it has no brakes or driveshaft and dog-tracks severely, the rest is up to you. The important thing to remember is that, no matter what else you do to the car when you get it home, you must never, but never, take its wheels off. It is critical that the old wreck remain a roller. That way, the next owner can drag it off your property with a simple piece of rope.

'Gallagher House' in Portland. Phone Juliano Benco at 727-8113 for more details.

CAR MART:

I have the following information on available Triumphs for anyone who wants something more:

Bruce Young reports that Terry Finnegan (who operates an insurance office in Perth) is selling a pair of TR6s plus an additional TR6 engine, all for \$7500. Bruce had no further details, but it shouldn't be too hard to contact Mr. Finnegan himself.

Greg Kerr has the following available: a 1965 TR4, with 40k miles and in original condition. The frame and body are in excellent condition as the car is from the U.S.. The car also has wire wheels and a new top, and requires only new carpets and minor detailing. Interested parties can phone Greg at (705) 457-3989 for particulars.

Contributions to the Newsletter:

Thanks to all of you who have submitted various articles, cartoons and the like. These will make compiling the newsletter a fun and interesting responsibility for me. I encourage the membership to feel free to contribute their own written works if they have the urge. This could be anything from reports on meets attended to personal experiences with repairs or restorations, or something to that effect.

Time Capsule

1959 AUSTIN-HEALEY 3000 Mk I. Just repainted over original paint. Mechanically excellent. Overdrive, wires, hardtop. 36,000 original miles. Must sacrifice for \$1095 or best offer. Terry Dale, 2400 Carling Ave., Apt. 805, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

(RAT, June '66)

(P.S. Terry - is that one still available at that price? Ed.)



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