

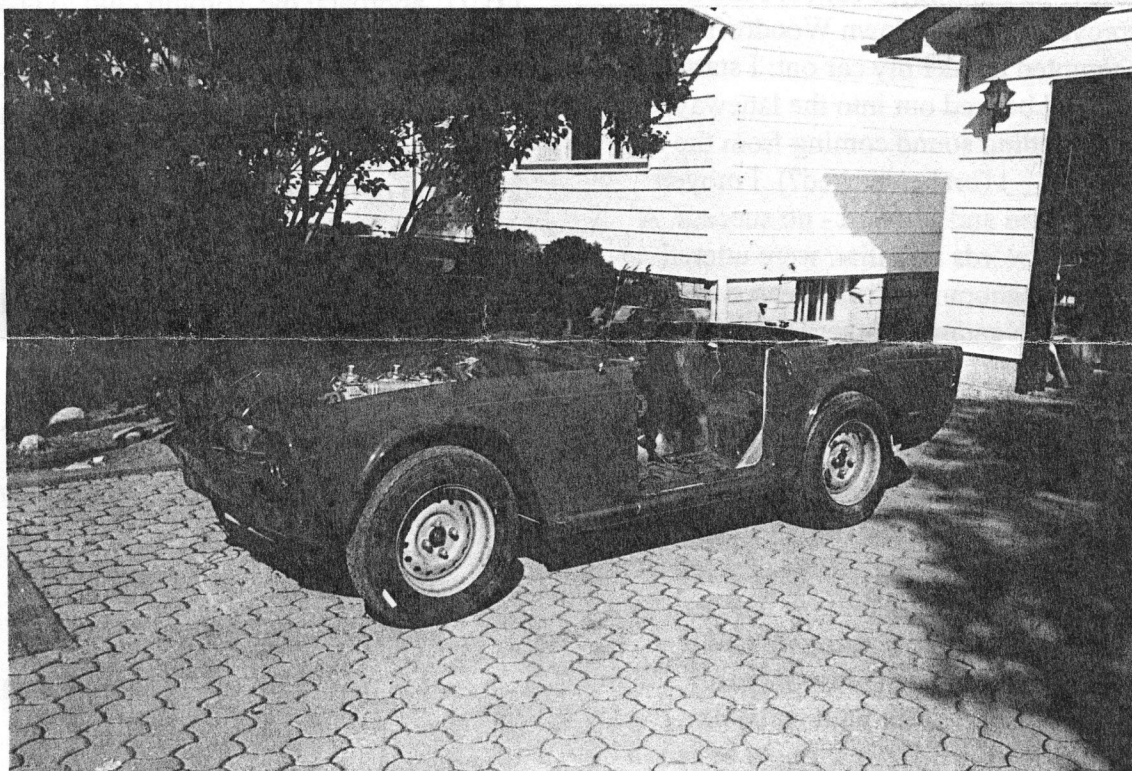


VERDRIVE

The Newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club

February, 1995

See you at Milano's !!



In This Issue:

- *February 27th Meeting at Milano's @ 7:00!*
- *Inter-Club Dart Tourney March 11*
- *"Triumph World" Magazine coming...*
- *"OIL DRIPS"*

Cover: I was at a loss as to what to put on the cover of this issue. At the same time, I wanted to make sure to remind everyone to be at Milano Auto Body for this month's meeting. When I came across a picture of my car freshly painted two years ago, I knew I had found a solution to both! J.D.

Editor's Note: (Julio) - The end of February is fast approaching and I swear I could smell & feel the awakening of spring. Either that or I have been spending too much time in my workshop. But honestly, on Saturday, Feb. 18, I did hear motorcycles roaring down Woodroffe. I was tempted to take my car out: I started her up and backed out into the laneway, with a grinding sound coming from the rear end. S__t (brakes locked?). I moved her backward and forward - no success. A few choice words in Italian were uttered (English neighbourhood) as I eased her back into the garage. Curses. John may yet be the first one on the road.

Editor's Note: (John) - I've been a busy boy this winter, trying to get things done around the house now so I'll have time to play this summer. So far, the living room has been redecorated with new baseboards added, a new kitchen countertop and backsplash are in, and the front spare bedroom is painted (all with valuable assistance from J.B.!). That ought to earn a couple of 'fun runs' this summer (provided the grass is cut, of course).

January 23rd Meeting:

We had a pretty good turnout for the middle of winter - about 20 people lived up to their New Year's resolutions to attend OVTC meetings in 1995. Apart from the special topics under their own headings

further on in this issue, the following items occurred or were discussed that evening:

We had the first Raffle Draw of 1995 - Dave Huddleson won a set of ratchet wrenches. Believe it or not, Dave says he's never had a set of these useful tools before. Judging by Dave's garage, that's about all he's missing, next to a hydraulic lift!

Clive asked to be considered for a 2-year term as President at the January meeting. He explained that it is his intention that the OVTC approach the Toronto club to host the 1996 Canadian Classic, 5 years after our successful 1991 campaign. The 1995 Classic is to be in Kitchener/Waterloo, and Clive wishes to provide a bit of continuity at the top of the totem, to ensure OVTC efforts are well-directed in this venture. Needless to say, the motion was carried. Congratulations, Clive!! You're our man!

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February '95 Meeting:

The February meeting will be held at Milano Auto Body (75 Aberdeen St., off Preston) on **Monday, February 27**, a half hour early -- **7:00 p.m.**! Joe Panuccio will be giving a talk on body work, painting, prepping, etc. Pat Zakaib's car is presently at Joe's, so we'll also be able to see how things are progressing on Pat's TR6.

Future Meetings:

Clive is already compiling a set of guest speakers for future meetings. We're hoping to arrange a visit to a machine shop in the near future as well, to see the sort of no-nonsense machining that can be done to earn a few more 'bhp' from our trusty, underpowered chariots. I'll have details on the March & April meetings in next month's issue. Stay tuned.

New (and familiar) Members:

Please welcome **Valley Hardware** as our latest corporate member. I originally mentioned VH back in September of last year, but our paths kept crossing until just last month. I bought all the stainless steel hardware from VH to reassemble my car after its rebuild, and there's nothing they can't provide, be it in fasteners or in service! Hopefully, someone from Valley Hardware could come and give a talk at a meeting! Again, welcome to **Valley Hardware!**

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While still on the topic of new members - a couple of OVTC 'alumni' have returned! Ron Audette and Harris Popplewell rejoined the club. The new (brand-new) member is Scott Miller - the owner of a '74 Spit, and a 1980 TR8 with 367 *original* miles on it! We'll have a story on the history of Scott's car soon.

We've also sent sample newsletters to potential members: Kevin West and Rick Bugnet, both of Nepean, and Brian Jones, in Pownal, P.E.I.!! Brian and Rick were referred to us by the British Car Council, as they were looking for Triumph Clubs. They've come to the right spot, eh!?

Dart Tourney set for March 11!

Start practicing - the Inter-Club Dart Tourney is coming up soon - March 11th, to be precise. The location is the same as last year - the King's Stag Pub, at the junction of Colonnade Road and Hwy. 16. Clive will be providing more details (Prizes, sponsors, etc) as the date approaches. Who knows, the way this winter's going, we might be able to drive our cars to it this year!

"Triumph World" - New U.K. Mag:

Tired of trying to find specific Triumph articles in all the big U.K. magazines at the local newsstand? Tired of seeing specialty magazines for Minis and MGs? Your prayers have been answered! Dave Huddleson had an advance preview of a new magazine - "Triumph World" - due to hit the stands worldwide. It'll be bi-monthly, so after having memorized each issue at the end of 2 months, there'll be a fresh new copy out to dog-ear with a vengeance!

OVTC and the Perth Connection:

OVTC members have made it big on the executive of the Tay Touring Club of Perth. Members Bob Thomas, Bruce Young and Hugh Henderson are the new President, V.P. and Secretary, respectively. They'll be adding an OVTC flavour to the Tay Club, without a doubt. Bruce adds that

his political goals are fulfilled in the #2 spot!

Calendar of Events for 1995 Season:

Pat Mills is really getting the hang of her home computer now, and as a result we'll be bringing you our Calendar of Events for the 1995 season. The first months (April and May) will come in next month's newsletter - we're just trying to firm up some dates for local and regional shows.

Fun Run plans for 1995 Season:

As many of you know, we have for the past many years met on Sundays at 2 o'clock to go on fun runs. Generally, this has been a matter of deciding which British Pub to end up at. Late last year, however, some of us made some unique trips: one weekend a group of 4 cars drove down to Upper Canada Village, another weekend we had the Hart Brewery tour in Carleton Place, while in the Fall a group of 3 cars drove to Pakenham and Calabogie. There were the fall "colour tours" through Westport as well.

What we're proposing is that if any members wish to lead a weekend tour to a specific site, we can put the destination, departure times or whatever details into the newsletter so we have larger groups on our runs. First and foremost, our cars are meant to be driven, and a sunny afternoon drive is ideal, especially when in the company of other Triumphs! Put your thinking caps on, and I hope to hear from you soon!

OVTC Grille Badges:

Remember - nothing goes better on a TR than an OVTC grille badge. Julio has 4 remaining, at a cost of \$40 each. The

perfect gift for your car. Call Julio at 727-8113 to buy yours today!

Membership Drive for 1995:

Several of our members joined up as a result of our placing a classified ad in the *Citizen* for a mere 2 Saturday issues last spring. We're likely going to do that again, but we think a real "media blitz" could help to increase our ranks to the near-100 mark we peaked at during the 'Canadian Classic' year of 1991. Clive said that if every current member were to recruit a new member, we'd easily be over the 100 mark. That is certainly an ambitious goal, but to make things interesting, Clive proposed at the January meeting that if anyone could sign up 5 new members, that person would earn one of the bronze OVTC grille badges.

We had 4 of these special badges made up when the original run of aluminum badges were cast; they weren't offered for sale, but were meant for such things as awards and trophies. Nonetheless, Clive insists that the first to catch 5 inductees gets the bronze medal! I know of a couple non-OVTC cars in driveways and garages around town - maybe I'll start there!

Some of us veteran members recall (or still have a few) Introduction cards. We used these to stick under the wiper blade of any TR we saw in our travels. It had the Club logo and a couple of lines about what we do, plus a spot where you could write in your name and number as a contact. A couple of these come in awfully handy if you happen to spot one around. (I wish I'd had one on me when I saw the Herald convertible on Laurier Avenue outside my office this past summer!). We'll also

contact the "Auto Trader" people, as they print club information free in their "Old Car Trader" issues.

"The Doctor is In":

Just bled your TR6 brakes or clutch and still wonder why they don't feel 'right'? The cause may lie in your pedals! Brian illustrated that the pedal shaft bush, pins and pin hole all wear on TR6s, causing them to move before the push rod assembly begins to operate the master cylinders. Even a little wear at this end translates into a fairly noticeable amount of movement at your foot. Brian says there are 2 potential fixes: (1) fill in the hole with a MIG welder and drill to size, as he would, or (2) buy a new pedal assembly - big \$\$\$.

Brian also pointed out another common TR6 fault (as if we've seen 'em all yet!). Ever notice that your accelerator pedal seems to have a lot of 'flop' to it, and how the pedal shaft (likely) flops all around when you're watching it under the hood? Brian says there are a pair of plastic bushes which started life supporting the pedal shaft as it passes through the bulkhead to the passenger side, but were likely vacuumed up when the interior was cleaned at 20k miles because the %#*@ things were no %\$(!# good. Now the shaft flops around against the bulkhead, adding yet another rattle to our cars, the same ones from the country which makes Rolls-Royce! Brian says the shaft must be removed to fit new bushes, which is near-impossible to do while the engine is in. Naturally, the TR4 system is better, and is what Brian would install if he had his choice.

Yet another weak area on Sixes is the 'bell crank' (part# 148960). This is the part of the throttle linkage that changes the

direction of motion from horizontal to vertical to operate the carbs. Take a good look - odds are, something is amiss here, causing some 'hesitation' when you blip the throttle. Don't think everything is the obvious problem, or you may be setting your Strombergs 'till the cows come home, with no gains.

Speaking of the carbs - Brian could go on for hours on these, but his main points on setting up Strombergs:

- set your ignition timing & valves first!
- the mixture is unlikely to be out, but check it first anyway.
- Balance carbs - undo throttle, to set them independently. Use a 'Uni-Syn' to check the air flow.



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"OIL DRIPS" (by Julio)

- It pays to advertise! John Day mentioned last month that he was looking to borrow an engine hoist. Lo and behold, Dave Huddleson put John on to a source. Gord Robertson will also use the hoist to pull the engine from his TR6 to rebuild it. Sorry, Gord - looks like you'll have to settle for driving the 'E'-type another summer!
- Randy Hildebrandt wishes to announce his "Moving to B.C." Sale. Randy wants to save the moving men a hernia,

so he's got extra bits & pieces, large and small, that he wishes to dispose of (bonnet, doors, etc.) Sorry, Malcolm - Randy's not selling the o/d tranny! Give Randy a call at 825-7565 to see what is available from his 1976 TR6 donor.

- Harris Popplewell had written me a letter in reference to his TR6 - problems which in length read like "War and Peace". Hope you won the lottery or got a large inheritance. Just joking! Really, most of the items mentioned are fixable without spending a fortune. We'll check them out in the spring.
- Yours truly has finally finished polishing his spare set of SU carburetors and manifold. Damn, they look good! So good, in fact, that instead of installing them on my TR3, I decided to mount them on my basement wall! At least they won't get dirty! Must've breathed in too much aluminum dust - destroyed the brain cells. (*Now Julio AND his carbs are "off the wall"! John*)
- Shawn Hennessy is also busy porting & polishing his carbs after he saw mine. They'll look good in his TR3 (or his wall). Watch out for the dust!
- A note of thanks to Pat Mills for the picture & poem (featured in last month's Overdrive) which she had framed for me. Makes a great addition to my car corner (beside the carbs).
- I would like to make a scrap book of club members and their cars, so if you have a photograph, please send it to me with your name, model & year of car: J. Benco, 14 Kelvin Crescent, Nepean, Ont. K2G 3L9. Thanks!

- Mike Crawford threw a 'bodyshell-flipping' party, so he could begin scouring the underside before painting. The 'Barrhaven Boys' were all there (Mike, Brian, Martin, Malcolm) and yours truly. (P.S. - will the car still be white, Mike?!)
- Oh, by the way - Martin Harasek has ordered himself a set of triple Dellorto carbs! That oughta bury the ol' tach needle (further!).

Classifieds:

- 1981 TR7 convertible - Steve Lashley. This fuel-injected number is a rarity, so come on, all you speculators! Call Steve at 726-6724 for details.
- Randy Hildebrandt is having his "Moving to B.C. Sale." He's got a bonnet, boot, doors, wheels, seats - the list goes on! This stuff (ideally) has to be gone before moving time in May. Randy will be out of town until the 23rd of February, but will be at the meeting at Milano's. If you can't see him then, call him at 825-7565 after 6.

Technical article:

This month's features are more 'general interest' than technical. The first, from British Car, October 1991, combines British cars with another hobby - stamp collecting (P.S. does anyone know of any stamp with a TR on it?). The second, out of the latest Road & Track, describes the question faced when restoring a car - what is to be its end purpose? Enjoy them both.

Stamping Out British Cars

By Raymond Schuesler

Collectors of antique British cars pay a handsome price to own a classic model. Yet even the wealthiest collector can only corral a few because of the cost and space to store them. But there is a way to own a veritable fleet of priceless British cars, perhaps every one ever made, by collecting them on stamps.

For 150 years, ever since England invented the use of postage stamps in 1840, postmaster generals have commemorated the great events which shaped their history. British cars have been accorded such a distinction.

All the great masterpieces of British automotive history have been lionized on stamps: the incomparable Rolls-Royce, the little Siddeley, Sunbeam, Singer Nine, Frazer-Nash, Lanchester, Rover, Morris Oxford, Vauxhall, Hotchkiss, Humber, Chadwick, Thompson Steamer, and scores more, are all on stamps.

Stamps have become such a depository of historical data that if archaeologists from some future civilization excavated a 20th century stamp collection, they would be able to deduce the popularity and distinction of British cars and the part they played in our civilization.

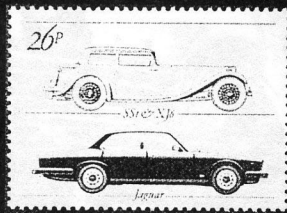
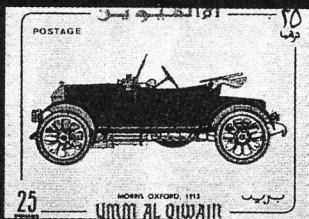
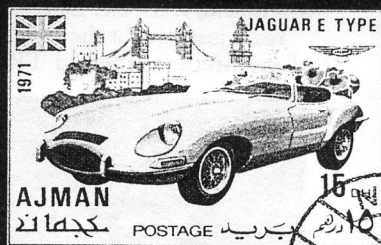
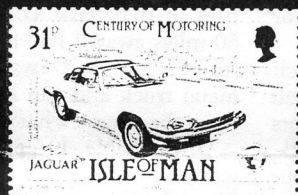
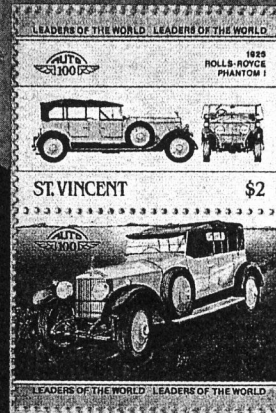
The British car predominant on stamps is the Rolls-Royce. Stamps of the Rolls-Royce are as superlative as the automobile in real life and no philatelist worth his stamp tongs

almost a complete history of English automotive production from the very first to hit the road to the most modern.

To start a collection, visit the library or stamp shop to peruse the Scott's Catalog of Stamps, a weekly available at the library, which lists all the new stamps planned and carries ads of dealers who specialize in the nationality of stamps you need.

Stamps, like rare British cars, do gain in value through the years, especially when they are in short supply or contain printing errors.

In 1918, a US airmail stamp of a Jenny airplane was printed upside down on a sheet of 100 stamps. Today one of those stamps sold for £148,000. ■



positions them on the same page with plebian cars. When Rolls rallies are held in Palm Beach and the Monterey Peninsula, you have only to open your stamp album to all the beauties that used to be, kerosene lamps and all, to recapture the time when only 25,000 were produced in the first 50 years, and be as much in Snob Heaven as anyone.

The stamps shown here are only a splendid skeleton of the history of the British car and many more can be dug out of the stamp catalogs to flesh out





SIDE GLANCES

BY PETER EGAN

Triumph, car of way too many uses

THE POSSIBLY LATE Ambrose Bierce tells us (or told us before he disappeared into the wilds of revolutionary Mexico in 1913) that experience is "The wisdom that enables us to recognize as an undesirable old acquaintance the folly that we have already embraced."

Apparently my old acquaintances are either not undesirable enough or else I'm blind to their faults.

Which explains why I found myself yesterday, while most red-blooded Americans were watching the Packers game, carrying a bunch of old Triumph parts from my workshop to our old horse barn. Bumpers, fenders, windshield, seats, etc. Dozens of trips.

Yes, I just bought the third Triumph of my lifetime, the old TR-4 men-

tioned here a few months back. It's the one that was resting in my friend John Helland's rented storage unit, covered with old furniture, family heirlooms of the lava-lamp class and boxes of unremembered memorabilia.

I resisted as long as I could, sleeping fitfully and dreaming of that nearly rust-free 1962 TR, listing on semi-flat tires in that dark, cold rabbit warren 60 miles away. I had fevered visions of its being hauled away by the scrap-metal truck and run through a shredder to become...what? A refrigerator?

Unthinkable. I could picture Jaeger gauges in the metal compactor, popping their lenses, and the chromed flip-up Le Mans-style gas cap snapping its hinges and groaning under the pressure. Or that lovely Michelotti

bonnet with its carburetor speed blister folding and bending.

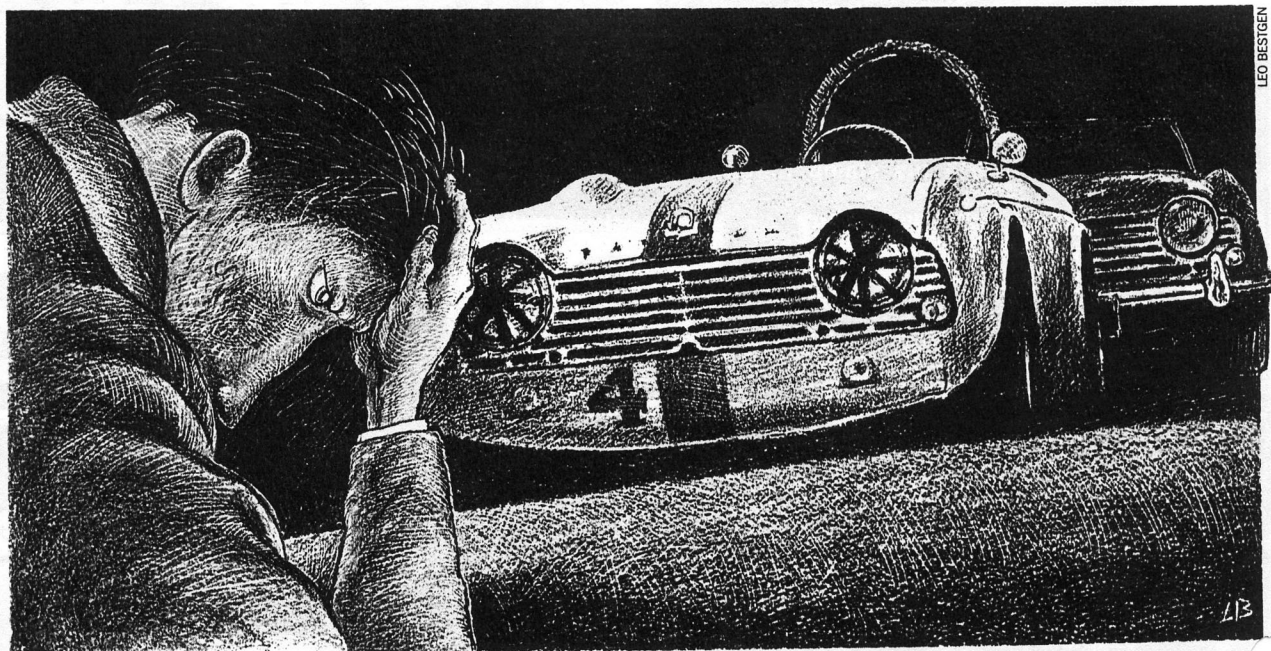
Nightmarish stuff.

Not only nightmarish, but immoral. As any up-to-date theologian will tell you, knowingly destroying, or allowing to be destroyed, an old British sports car is a sin. Turning a Triumph or an MG into a refrigerator carries exactly the same penalties in the afterlife as turning a 1000-year-old redwood into a Jacuzzi deck or an A-frame realty office with plastic flags. The wrath of the Almighty is terrible indeed, in these cases. As well it should be.

Ever notice how some people just drop over dead?

Now you know why it happens.

Still I resisted. For two whole months.



Then John called and said, "We have to clean out that storage unit. If you would just get the car out of there, you can pay me whenever you want."

Okay okay okay. I've been around long enough to know when a car has my name on it. Longer, even.

So one Saturday morning I hitched my trailer to the Ford van and drove north to Wisconsin Dells. There I met John at the Country Kitchen restaurant. John was disguised as a swamp because he'd been goose hunting all morning. His camouflaged clothing may have fooled the geese, but I found him easy to spot against the background of glittering Bunn coffeemakers and orange vinyl upholstery.

We drove out to the storage unit, aired the Triumph tires and rolled it with some difficulty (sticking right rear brake) into my trailer.

On the way home I was crossing the Wisconsin River bridge when a large semi sped by and rocked my van and trailer with a great blast of wind. The side awning on my new Pace trailer popped open and instantly ripped off in the wind. I collected the parts along the Interstate and threw them into the back of the van, while muttering General Grant's shrewd observation that "Life is just one goddam thing after another." The awning was the same price as the TR-4: \$750.

When I got home, I unloaded the Triumph, took a few "before" pictures of it in the yard, and rolled it into the garage. I jacked it up, set it on four tall jackstands and stood back to take it all in:

Robin's-egg/swimming-pool blue (a clumsy repaint from long ago—brake lines, wires and all); shot interior; wrong seats (MGB); no rust except in the front left footwell and rocker panel, which both need replacing.

I started the engine, and it had 4 psi of oil pressure and a rod knock to wake the dead. It sounded like a crew of lost submariners deep in the Mariana Trench signaling for help with ball-peen hammers and pipe wrenches. I shut it off. Quickly.

After an appropriate period of arm-chair viewing and general appreciation, I began, a couple of weeks ago, the complete disassembly of the car. No gradual quagmire of a restoration this time, drawing me in deeper and deeper. I'm going into this one with my eyes open. Everything needs restoring, so I might as well just do it. And I have been, every evening.

Interesting working on a TR-4 after a couple of years restoring an MGB.

The TR-4 is a more primitive design, with its separate ladder frame and body, and is engineered with less finesse and thoroughness than an MGB; it's really just a '53 Chevy pick-up with bucket seats, low springs, a 4-cylinder tractor engine and a roadster body. Elemental, my dear Ferguson.

But, in many ways, it's also easier and a little more pleasant to work on than the MG. Everything is open, accessible and dead simple. The TR-4 is a big Erector Set of a car, held together by several score of easily reached bolts. The windshield lifts off, the dash is removable, fenders unbolt, etc. Very few hidden corners or dark chambers. It's like disassembling a child's Radio Flyer coaster wagon; what you see is what you've got. Its basic, rugged simplicity is its real charm.

And, after all these years, it's still a very good-looking chunk of car. Its chiseled rear lines combined with that flowing cape of a hood and understated front fender curve continue to engage the eye. Slab-sided and basic, but nicely balanced. If cars were guns, the TR-4 would be a Colt 45 Automatic, 1911 model. The Triumph is essentially from the John Moses Browning school of design—artfully squared off, rounded where necessary and slightly overbuilt.

At the moment, however, those chiseled lines have been largely disconnected from one another and are being stored in our old horse barn, which fortunately has no horses in it, old or otherwise. Seems the major body panels of a TR-4 just about exactly fill one empty stall.

The rest of the car now sits in my workshop, stripped of virtually everything but engine and transmission. Tonight I'm pulling the drivetrain out, and after that I'll lift the pan and center body section off the frame. I'll sandblast and paint the frame, rebuild the suspension and then attack the body itself.

And now comes the quandary: What to do with this car?

It would make a nice street restoration, of course. I picture it with green paint, wire wheels and a black interior. It's been years since I've seen a clean, restored TR-4 on the road in these parts, and I'd like to do my part to reverse that shocking state of affairs.

On the other hand, I keep thinking what a good-looking vintage racer a TR-4 can be. I grew up on the clean, beautiful SCCA racers of Kas Kastner and Bob Tullius' cars in Group 44. White paint, alloy wheels, low wind-

screen. No convertible top to worry about, no heavy heater core, windshield, window glass or bumpers. The minimalist in me likes the vintage-race-car idea. The time and money saved on civilized road equipment could be spent on Carillo rods, porting and polishing, adjustable shocks, anti-roll bars and competition springs.


A third and more expensive option is to turn it into an E Production SCCA racer. Full race everything. I went to the Runoffs last year and there wasn't a single TR-4 entered, what with Jack Wheeler's car being laid up with crash damage. E Production would be rewarding, except that SCCA Production car rules are now so loose that extreme reengineering of the car is called for. It's a major commitment, and I already have a good SCCA racing car in my Reynard FC.

At this point, I haven't decided which way the car should go. But my dawning, momentum-gathering impulse is to build a somewhat mildly tuned vintage racer that could occasionally be driven on the street (or back to the hotel from the track) or driven in some of the long-distance vintage rallies around the country.

Medium compression, header, Webers, medium-hot cam, porting and polishing, strong bottom end, anti-roll bars, roll-over bar, wood dash, nice nearly stock interior, 87-mm wet liners and pistons, etc. A tough raceable car not tuned to the nth degree, built as you might have built a TR-4 to run the Mille Miglia, had TR-4s been around at the time. Or Le Mans, for which they were around.

I used to read about the Jaguar and Aston-Martin teams driving their Le Mans cars from the hotel garage to the track, or up and down the highways at night to break in a new engine, and the notion of a roadable racing car has always had an appeal. I came into sports-car racing in the early Seventies, when production cars were already so specialized, low-slung and overtuned that they could barely be driven to the starting grid, much less out to dinner.

It might be fun, for the first time ever, to have a sports car that fulfills the promise of sport and the function of a car. I think we lost something when those two concepts were separated, and a 1962 TR-4 might be just the car to bring them back together.

On the other hand, E Production is a great class...and a dead-stock TR-4 makes a fine-looking street machine...

Nigel Shiftright • Automotive Anachronism in "Laps in Time"



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