

Brian Mills ... 11 June 2013

I am honoured that Pat and her family have asked me to say a few words about my dear friend Brian.

I first met Brian soon after buying my TR6 in 1998. I had some issues with the tail lights and asked some questions at an OVTC club meeting. The advice was unanimous ... give the "Doc" a call. A quick phone call the next day, and Brian immediately invited me to his workshop and fixed the problem in a few minutes ... all the while explaining to me what he was doing and why. This one act of kindness evolved into a close friendship between us. Over the years, Brian guided me through many major and minor rebuild projects on both my TR6 and TR3. He was always generous with his knowledge and eager to lend a hand. In the last few years, I was so happy to be able to lend him a hand with some projects on his TR4. I was even promoted at one point to "Apprentice" ... but there was never any question who was the "Master."

Brian and Pat have always been regular participants in car shows and runs, and are well-known throughout the British car community from the Ottawa Valley, to Kingston, to Toronto, and well beyond. Luckiest of all; however, were the members of the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club who have all benefitted from Brian and Pat's commitment to the club and to Brian's unwavering passion to share his knowledge about all things Triumph. Need a speaker for a meeting? Brian was always there for us. The list of topics Brian covered over the years was truly amazing ... brakes, fluids, transmissions, axles, suspension, and of course all things electrical. At our last regular meeting in May, he was excited to tell us about a new problem he had just discovered with regard to corrosion on grounding points on starter motors and generators. The list of his contributions is virtually endless. But, be it mechanical or electrical, Brian's approach was always the same. Do the research and get the facts right, document everything thoroughly, simplify the concepts, prepare visuals to make things clear, and entertain and educate us all. Rarely in life are we blessed with being able to spend time with someone who is so knowledgeable,

yet so totally committed to generously sharing what they know. It is no wonder that “in recognition of his outstanding service, dedication, and contribution to the OVTC,” Brian was presented with a life membership in January 2000.

What a great role model for us all.

Anyone who spent time with Brian will hopefully recognize these little “Brianisms”. I’m sure as you think about the good times you each spent with Brian, you will be able to add your own memories:

1. There is only one way to do it ... the right way.
2. If it is electrical, it is easy to understand, you have a device specifically made to test it, and it can be fixed.
3. No matter what you are doing, grab a Hilroy school notebook, and document every step and every measurement you make ... and don’t forget to draw a diagram.
4. There is a tool for everything, and if the right tool doesn’t exist, simply make it.
5. Before you start, it’s best to check the “book of words” to see what it has to say
... and definitely my favourite ...
6. Never buy one of anything if you can buy a whole box of them.

Brian leaves a large hole in our hearts and in the British car scene in Ottawa and beyond. He will be greatly missed ... but always fondly remembered.

Brian and Pat, thanks for being an important part of my life.

Mike Graham