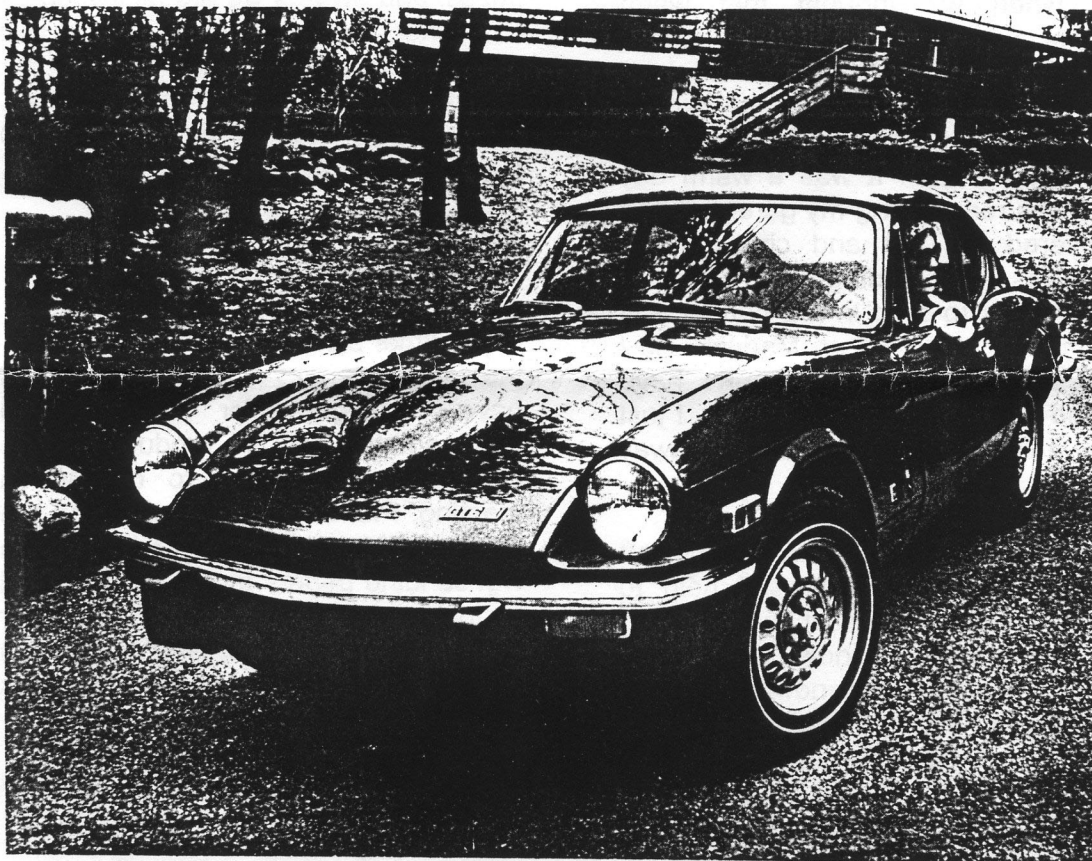




VERDRIVE

The Newsletter of the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club



It looks good in races too.

If the sleek fastback lines and the well-appointed interior of the GT-6 make it look like more show car than sports car, don't be fooled.

The GT-6 is the national E Class champion racer in SCCA competition. It has been the champion for two years running.


So if you're thinking of buying one, don't be afraid

that you're simply paying for style or the sumptuous reclining seats, or for standard equipment detailing like the walnut fascia and the self-defrosting rear window.

Figure you're investing in an all independent suspension system, a 2-litre, 6 cylinder engine, disc brakes in front,

rack and pinion steering, good acceleration and a good track record.

The good looks come as a bonus.

Triumph GT-6 

For the name of your nearest Triumph dealer, call 800-631-1971 toll free. In New Jersey, call 800-962-2803.

British Leyland Motors, Inc., Leonia, N. J. 07605

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, John Day

Just when we thought that warm weather was upon us, along comes some of the coldest temperatures of the winter. I did manage to get my car out for a spin in February, albeit on Saturday the 28th. It was a warm day and I was rearranging my garage. I had uncovered the car and checked the hydraulics (still holding), so it was a small matter to drop in the battery and set off. Gord saw me on Merivale, so I have a witness (earlier reports have Juliano out a week or so earlier). I just did a quick spin and put the car away again.

That brief taste of summer driving left me wanting more. It doesn't help to hear the western part of the province has been without snow for several weeks, and what little snow they get is quickly gone again. What's wrong with this picture? I'm sure the next warm weather we get will last us the whole summer through. There will be plenty of activities to keep us busy this summer, so start planning now. Cheers!

Dart Tournament – March 28

Plans have been made for the annual Inter-club Dart Tournament. We have received some terrific prizes from Obsolete Automotive, Moss Motors, Roadster Factory, 'British Car' magazine, Global Auto Care, Special Interest Car Parts, and others! The event is set for Saturday, March 28 at *Cory's on Conroy*. It's really quite easy to find: it is located in a strip mall at the corner of Conroy Rd. and Lorry Greenberg Dr. in the south end of the city. Pre-registration is between 1:00 and 2:00 pm, with eliminations beginning at 2:00. Entrance fee is \$5

per team of 2. We've invited the MG, Lotus, Jaguar, Austin-Healey and VW clubs, so this is a good chance to meet your fellow enthusiasts. After the darts, prizes, and awards we are all invited by the owner, Steve McDermid, to stay and enjoy an evening of "blues" with "Sugar Ray Buxton and The Triple Threat". They will be starting up around 8:00 pm. Hope to see you there!

MARCH MEETING

Same time, same place on March 23rd, the fourth Monday of the month. We have arranged for the Ottawa representative for 3M products, Pierre Seguin, to come out to our March meeting. Pierre will enlighten us on the world of 3M automotive products, from wet sanding papers to hand glazes and everything in between. We had a similar demonstration about 6 years ago, and it was really interesting, so don't miss this month.



REPORT FROM SOUTHERN CAL

Vivien and I recently visited Southern California, from San Diego to Los Angeles. As is our nature we were on the lookout for among other things, automobiles of interest. For those of you that have been there you know that the streets are full of the most beautiful and exotic cars in the world. At any given street corner it is not uncommon to see Porsches (and lots of them), Ferraris, Rolls Royces, Bentleys, Jags, and Mercedes. What did strike us was that most of the exotica on the streets were newer models. I guess they keep their vintage vehicles in reserve for the many classic shows that are on-going in the area.

One of our stops was the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles. Not knowing what to expect and perhaps expecting mostly American metal, we were surprised by the uniqueness of the displays. The Museum changes its theme on an ongoing basis and we just happened upon "DREAM CARS".

These cars were mainly one-off working models that were displayed at major shows in the fifties and sixties as concept cars. In most cases, these cars were then destroyed so that no royalties or commissions had to be paid. However some of the top executives at say Ford or GM would sneak a car into their garages either for their personal collections or to be sold in some private deal overseas. Of course over the years these would show up and be immediately recognized for their value, and hence displayed for the paying public. Most of the cars were two-seaters, or sportscars which in those days was a whole new theme for U.S. manufacturers. They obviously saw the

threat of the Italian and English sportscars and had to react accordingly. Some of the cars that were there included a Pontiac very similar to a Corvette, designed by DeLorean, but never produced due to the market that Chev had all to itself; a Chrysler designed by Italian designer "Ghia" which looked similar to a '62 T-Bird; a gorgeous Buick Belvedere, a two seater mini-version of a 1961 Cadillac, as well as many Dodge and Plymouth futuristic ventures. Oh, and there was the typical American metal there, too. A display of "muscle cars" from the sixties, including Viv's "most favourite" car, the Dukes of Hazzard's General Lee! (I'll pay for that comment - Ed). A number of vintage Indy cars, Hollywood Star cars and a display of "Hot Rods". Check it out if you are ever in L.A.

AND TRIUMPHS? We only saw a Spit on the roads, that was it! Any good deals on California rust-free Triumphs? See for yourself, the following come from a car trader picked up in Southern Cal:

- 1969 TR6, new wheels, tires, trunk kit, top, cover, shocks, runs strong, always garaged - \$7000 U.S. obo.
- 1965 TR4A restoration started, frame powder coated, susp. done, body ready to paint, \$3500 U.S.
- 1960 TR3, fact. metal hardtop, all org., 57k miles, needs cosmetics, rare to find orig. car like this, \$6950 U.S. firm.

Well, that's it from the land of cheap gas (under \$1.00/ gal.) and lots of cars, and yes, I'd be willing to go again for further research if you all would like to sponsor me!

EVENT CALENDER UPDATE...

Corrections and updates to last month's *Overdrive* listing of events will be in future editions as we still have a couple of months to go before things happen. There are a few events that do come up before the next newsletter and here they are:

- The Annual **Dart Tournament on Saturday, March 28th.** (See page 1 for details.)
- The evening before, on March 27th, the VW Club has invited the Triumph Club members to their Beer'n'Pizza night. It is at the Prescott Hotel starting at 7:00 p.m. They would appreciate an RSVP, so if you are interested please contact Ron Bell @ 224-5527, (leave message).
- On April 19th is the Ancaster Car Flea Market, near Hamilton.

Late breaking news from Bob Thomas:

- July 18 and 19 Pittsburgh Vintage Races, Pittsburgh, PA

These are the third oldest vintage races in North America, after Monterey and Watkins Glen. The race festival runs July 12-19. There is a large (400 car) British Car Show on Saturday, July 18th. More info to follow at next meeting.

- July 30 - August 3rd Toronto Triumph Club 13th Annual Canadian Classic, Sarnia - Point Edward, Ontario

Graham Robson is confirmed as the speaker for the Friday night BBQ and get-together. The event program is as follows:

Thursday evening: Registration and welcome party

Friday: tour of Lambton County

Friday evening: BBQ

Saturday: Classic Concours

Saturday evening: Awards Banquet

Sunday morning: gymkhana, run by the Detroit Triumph club

Sunday afternoon: Trip to RM Restoration Shop

Monday: return home after a great weekend!

Note that Bob Thomas and Jeff Patterson will be attending this event if you want to coordinate travel plans. More info to follow.

- August 7-9: TRF Summer Party, Armagh, PA

This is a great event that includes drag racing, a gymkhana, mountain tour, concours and much more! Anyone wanting to travel together should contact Dave Huddleson.

- September 11-13 Watkins Vintage Grand Prix, Watkins Glen, NY

This is the 50th anniversary of the first Watkins Glen Grand Prix. It will be a very special event this year. Anyone who registered for the show at the track or any of the festival events will have a position held for them until April 3rd. After that, registration is open to everyone. Racing is Saturday and Sunday at the track. The Vintage Racing Festival takes place on Friday in the downtown area. Bob Thomas will have accomodation info at the March 23rd meeting. If enough people want state park campsites, Bob can book a block of them together, as long as he knows by the June 22nd meeting. Both Bob and Jeff Patterson will be attending this event, in case you would like to coordinate travel plans.

The MG/Triumph Question

Peter Egan — Road & Track

After flying back to the Midwest for my high school 20-year class reunion last week, I stayed on for a few days with my old high school friend and college roommate, Pat Danelaw. It was a double reunion of sorts because Pat owns one of the few cars I genuinely regret selling, a 1971 MGB.

He bought it from me in California four years ago and drove it back to Wisconsin. Pat recently finished restoring the car, and it looks like new. After the reunion, we spent several pleasant days motoring around town and through the summer greenery of the Midwest - a nice change from the summer brownery of California. I felt the sun on my face and listened to that nice, hollow exhaust note and decided that history doesn't really repeat itself; it just simmers, with an occasional rise in temperature.

Pat and I both bought our first sports cars in the spring of 1968 after spending the winter going to college during the day and working together on a night shift unloading Coca-Cola trucks to earn the necessary money. Pat bought a red 1960 MGA in beautiful condition for \$650 from a man in Madison. I bought a British Racing Green 1957 Triumph TR3, in slightly less beautiful condition, for \$450 from a seminary student in Milwaukee.

The TR3 was less expensive partly because the engine ran on only three cylinders out of a possible four. The seminary student told me the engine had a burned valve. I bought the car anyway, figuring I'd learn all about valve jobs. Pat and I sputtered 150 miles back to our hometown on three cylinders, laboring painfully over every hill. When I got home, I discovered there was nothing wrong with the valves, but the engine had one bad sparkplug. I installed a new plug and the car ran like a bat out of hell.

On four cylinders, the TR3 was truly a fast car. Some previous owner had fitted it with the J.C. Whitney Big Bore High Compression Kit - oversized wet

liners and pistons that added more grunt to what was already a very torquey engine. The car quite easily burned rubber in the first couple of gears and lunged down the road fast enough to leave the cam and lever steering five or six twitches behind the latest veer. I drove the Triumph everywhere those first few euphoric weeks, flying down country roads and changing flat tires about every half hour, as hard cornering poked loose spokes through my tubes.

A few weeks later, Pat drove up in his new (used) red MGA. It was a beautiful little car with steel wheels, new Michelin radial tires and no rust. We cruised out of town to the Ridge Road - our own little slice of Road America - and I got behind the wheel for my first drive in an MG.

In those first few miles of driving, I was absolutely stunned. The sheer, overwhelming lack of horsepower emanating from beneath the M little tongue-like hood was breathtaking. I didn't know what to say. After two weeks in my punched-out TR3, I felt as though I'd stepped out of a Cobra and into a Fiat 850 Spider. The MGA simply did not go.

As the miles rolled by, however, I began to see that the MG was not entirely without merit. The car made nice noises, shifted gears better than anything I'd driven before or since and felt like a little fighter plane with its leather-trimmed cockpit, albeit a rather slow, WW1 fighter plane. Furthermore, the MG had a feeling of oneness, of having been put together carefully and tightly, its seams and joints leaded and welded rather than bolted and wired. My TR3, by comparison, had a lot of raw edges, scuttle shake, loose joints, wind leaks, rain leaks, bare wires, rattle and jounce. It was windy, fast, stiff, noisy, crude and fun, where the MGA was soft, rounded, compact, precise and fun in a subtler way. Switching back and forth I didn't know which car I liked better. Preferring one over the other was a matter of mood. But the distinct characters of both cars were

fixed in my mind. The Triumph was a hot rod; the MG had more finesse.

As a mechanic, I later worked on and drove the next generation of MGs and Triumphs, the TR4 and MGB, and after those the GT6s, TR6s, 7s and 8s. Right into the next decade, these cars followed the same basic personality profiles of their forebears. The MGBs got a little faster, a little softer sprung and more civilized but kept that tight, one-piece feel. All the Triumphs featured lots of engine, big tires and slab-style bodywork bolted together rather indifferently. And they remained faster than the MGs. (We are leaving the Spitfires and Midgets out of this for now; this is a story about Big Iron.)

Somehow the personalities of the owners who came into our shop also meshed with the character of their cars. For instance, we used to have a running joke among the mechanics that if the owner of a TR6 didn't have a leather sport coat and cowboy boots, we wouldn't work on his car. While the marque attracted its share of forthright Anglophiles, there was also a strong streak of Texan running through the ranks of Triumph owners. Some, I think, were just taking a short rest on their way to Corvette ownership.

MG owners tended to be a bit more purist in the grand string-back driving-glove tradition, or else were eccentrics of the sort who wore one earring (even in 1975) and had bandana-clad dogs named after minor San Francisco poets of the North Beach area. I remember being offered a large lump of hash in exchange for an MGB tuneup by one customer. I declined, being high on parts solvent at the time.

Sadly, both cars are gone, along with the philosophies, engineering and construction techniques that made these two affordable, fun British roadsters so different and yet so appealing. But, looking on the brighter side, there are a lot of good used MGs and Triumphs still floating around at remarkably low prices. And, after driving my old MGB at the reunion last week, I may be forced to buy myself another one. Unless I find a good clean TR4, I'll have to think about it. An MG would have more finesse, but a Triumph, after all, is faster. (Reprinted with permission.)

FEBRUARY MEETING

Our guest speaker for the evening was Ned Loughrey of "Bytown British", a sponsor of *Overdrive*. Ned described his business to us which is the service and maintenance of not only Triumphs, but all sportscars. He and his mechanic are currently working on an MGB body rebuild, a Healey motor rebuild, a Jag's fuel injection and some other smaller projects. He does however, still have room for Triumphs in need of attention. Thanks for coming out Ned.

FOR SALE

- TR6 Parts for sale:
 1. Chrome header and gasket, \$100
 2. Alternator, \$45
 3. Early TR6 upper and lower gasket set, \$80
 4. Two SU Carbs, \$25
 5. Two Tail lights, \$40
 6. Factory manual in hardcover binder, \$65

Contact Bob Thomas at (613) 267-4561

- TR7 Parts for sale:
Engine, transmission, body shell and many other parts. Contact Bob Thomas at (613) 267-4561

Bytown British

1003 Cummings Avenue
Ottawa K1J 7S2
(613) 744-4900



Ned Loughrey

*We'll keep your
sports car on the road!*

The Ottawa Valley Triumph Club is comprised of approximately 75 members. The Club meets on the fourth Monday of each month at the Manordale Community Centre, Knoxdale and Carola, at 7:30 p.m. Meetings include technical seminars, video presentations, restoration techniques and much more. The Club also publishes a monthly newsletter, *Overdrive*, which is distributed to members. *Overdrive* is also exchanged with newsletters from other clubs. The OVTC Executive at present is comprised of:

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Bob Thomas <i>Vice President</i> 267-4561	Paul MacDonald Steve Bourne <i>Events Coordinators</i>	Jeff Patterson <i>Membership</i> 839-2891
	226-2512 253-0739	Gord Robertson <i>Regalia</i> 226-5033 groberts@nrcan.gc.ca

Membership is open to all individuals and companies interested in Triumph sports cars.
Membership is \$30.00 per year (June/May) per household and \$60.00 per year, corporate.
Please send membership application to: 114 Delaney Dr., R.R. 2, Carp, ON K0A 1L0

The OVTC is a member of the British Car Council and is affiliated with the TR Register (UK)