

THE RAGTOP

 HILL COUNTRY TRIUMPH CLUB

SEPTEMBER 1, 2009

In this issue

- RUST to RACE
- What Turned the Key and Got Me Started
- 45-27-67-47-4=67



- WELCOME TO THE CLUB
- MIKE'S FAVORITE TOOL
- RUBY REPORT
- BOB'S YOUR UNCLE



WELCOME TO THE CLUB

by STEVE JOHNSON, PRESIDENT

Well, we already have the hottest summer on record in Austin, and have taken over the second spot as the summer with the most days over 100 degrees. It has been and remains **HOT**.

Even with the 95 degree temperature, our Progressive Dinner was great. If you missed it, you must come next year. We will be having this one annually. On September 29th 18 of us got together at 4:00PM at Robert and Pam Mackenzie's for Refreshments. The appetizers inside were excellent, with a number of great selections. Outside there were Shish Kabob of beef, chicken, and vegetables to charcoal as we chatted with a pleasant breeze to keep us cool.



Delicious. We also had time to take a look at Robert's Spitfires. He has one he races which we've seen many times, and one he is getting ready to put back on the road that he bought new (it's very nice). His garage gives him great room, and of course the Triumphs take up ALL of the garage as they should.

We stayed on schedule and headed to Dinner at Bob and Barbara Kramer's. Barbara had Fajitas that were excellent of beef and chicken

that were out of this world. To go along with them members brought Fruit Salad, Beans, Potato Salad (very good), Pasta Salad, and Veggie Salad. We all went for seconds, and there was still food that was hot and inviting. Of course, Bob and Barbara's garages (several) are always full of Triumphs, and always interesting. There were three racing TR4's there in various states of readiness (their son also races). Bob was complaining that his TR6 was having to on the driveway now, so they may be adding on soon. There are other TR's in the out buildings, so I can't give you an accurate count of how many Triumphs are at the Kramer's, but I can tell you that even the project cars are very desirable in their current conditions. Bob and Barbara started the Hill Country Triumph Club, and have been working with Triumphs a long time. It certainly shows in their enthusiasm, knowledge, and collection of Triumphs.

After appetizers and dinner, WHERE were we going to put dessert? We'll after another great 1/2 hour drive we were at Greg and Alison Blake's. I was hoping for a light dessert and great conversation. We'll the conversation is always great as you know. The desserts Alison had prepared were outstanding, and there was a variety that was breath taking (I do like dessert). I can't possibly name all the desserts,



continued on page 3

continued from page 2

chocolate mousse, small Apricot Fruit Tarts in pastry cups, chocolate covered pecans, it went on and on. We also had the pleasure of meeting their children who were delightful. Greg's two car garage was his work area for the TR3. He races it, and showed the racing modifications and fabrications he prepared. The engine was almost prepped, with the last of the parts on their way.

Thanks to all the hosts, hostesses, and participants for an absolutely delightful evening. We'll have to make a run with Mackenzie's, Kramer's, Couch's and Blake's to watch them race. Texas World Speedway isn't that far away.

We would have had more participating. Karen Icenhower called Friday before the Progressive Dinner and said that Jim had come down with Strep

Throat. Jim couldn't even swallow ice cream. While we were at the Mackenzie's Candy called me. I was letting her rest her strained back, and she was to meet us at the Kramer's, but when she called she said that she was very sorry, but just couldn't make it. It hurts me just writing about it.

The Texas All British Car Day www.txabcd.org is our next major event. Please get your registration sent in as soon as possible. Early registration forms must be received by Friday September 18, 2009 to get in on the better rate. Or you can register at the event. Let's get as many Triumphs as possible out there. I had wanted to go, but Candy and I will be at a family event, and not able to attend this year. We might be able to escape some of the time and see you all there, but definitely will be there next year.

I'd like to see each of you at the club meeting Tuesday September 8th at 7:00 PM. We will be at a new location in the Brodie Oaks shopping center. It's called the Texican Café (707-1733) and is just across the parking lot from our usual Pok-e-Jo's. The Brodie Oaks shopping center is located on the Northwest corner of South Lamar and Ben White/Capitol of Texas Highway/Loop 360. Remember, you don't have to drive your TR to join us for the meetings.

Triumphantly,



Progressive Dinner Participants

- Bob & Barbara Kramer TR6 (Leader of the Pack)
- Phil and Dorothee Auldridge 1965 Corvette (Air-conditioned)
- Philip McKenzie and his son Spitfire
- Robert and Pam MacKenzie Spitfire (in the garage)
- Nel McPhail TR3A (Mike was at a Healey Ice Cream Run as President)
- Bob and Marilyn Skewis TR250
- Greg and Alison Blake TR3 (in the garage)
- Roger Bolick and Tina Logan LEXUS
- Greg and Suzy West Mini Van with Car Seat (Air-conditioned)
- Steve Johnson (Rode with the West's in their Mini Van... Cooool)

RUBY REPORT



Back in the driver's seat!

After a wonderful three week vacation/ work in Mexico, I am now back home.

Not much to report on Ruby. I did

get her out of the garage and on the road this past weekend. What wonderful weather we had.

It felt like autumn, a cool 94 degrees! I think my time in the Yucatan acclimated me to the heat.

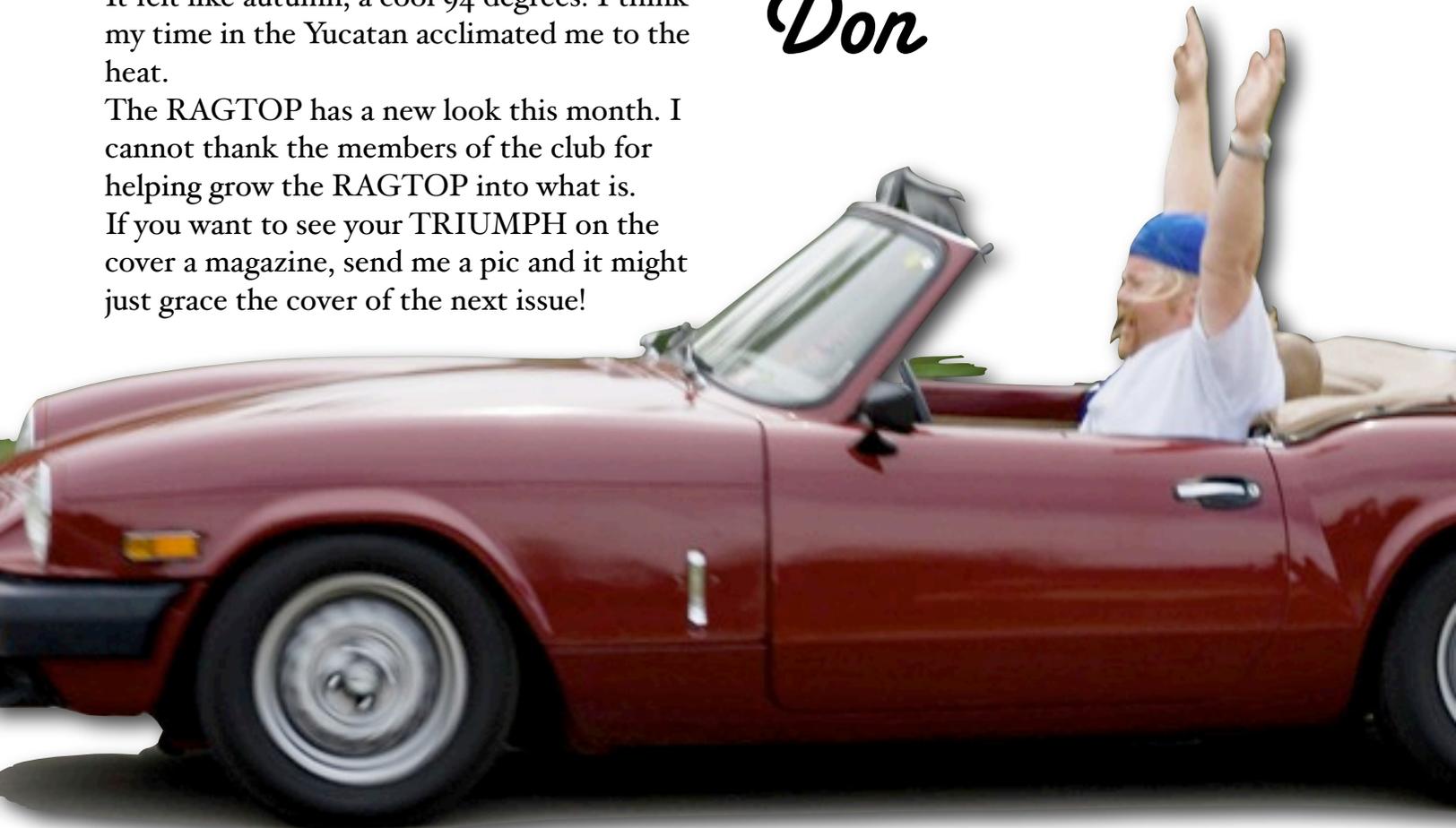
The RAGTOP has a new look this month. I cannot thank the members of the club for helping grow the RAGTOP into what is.

If you want to see your TRIUMPH on the cover a magazine, send me a pic and it might just grace the cover of the next issue!

I always welcome articles and photos. No need to use WORD or PhotoShop just send me your story in the body of an email, attach the photos and I'll do the rest. SIMPLE! This months issue is packed with tech-tips from Mike McPhail, Restoration and race car prep by Greg Blake as well as tracking down the history of a vintage TRIUMPH racer by Bob Kramer. Mike Jankowski tells his tale of how he caught TRIUMPH fever and more.

Enjoy the issue and hope to see you at the meeting.

Don



BOB'S YOUR UNCLE



Our monthly meeting was held at Rudy's on 620 again . . . what a great location to enjoy the evening with a full view of our cars in the parking lot and a full plate of Rudy's-Q! The meeting started more

or less on time as El Presidente was unable to attend and I was pressed into service. Things don't always start on time when I am in charge. We discussed the upcoming Progressive Dinner that is the premier event for August, and one that involved a lot of planning. Thanks to everyone in the three households that volunteered their home and time to welcome the wandering tribe.

Bob Kramer gave an update on the Texas All British Car Day for 2009 – our 19th year to participate with the other marque clubs in celebrating what we are all about. We will need some volunteers on the day of the show (Sunday the 27th) so, if you are inclined . . . please let Bob Kramer or Bob Skewis know if you are available. This year we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Mini – that lovable little beast that we would all like to own once in our lives. Our rallye on Saturday will be a Poker Rallye with a twist and will end at a catered BBQ dinner at a beautiful venue under some towering pecan trees. Visit the web site: www.txabcd.org to learn all about it and register early to save a little money.

There was some discussion of the National VTR in San Luis Obispo on September 30th . . . some of our members are going to make the trip of a lifetime. Still not too late to throw the bag in the boot and head west! Dean Mericas gave us an update on the Rolling Sculpture show at the Galleria in Bee Cave on October 25th. Volunteers are needed for that show too, don't be shy! The intrepid State Fair warriors, Bob and Bill will be heading for the TX-OU game on October 17th to

join with other British car enthusiasts for a show on the Fairgrounds. This show is hosted by the Jaguar Driver's Club of North Texas and is always a winner!

Barbara Kramer is very near to unleashing the members on the Land's End people and their extensive catalog. Once the club logo is finalized, members can order anything in the catalog and have the logo embroidered on it for a nominal fee. No need to coordinate with a group order – as little or as much as you want with no waiting to “get enough” people together. Thanks for your efforts, Barbara!

Bob Kramer shared some pictures of his newly acquired race car that is featured elsewhere in the Ragtop this month. He also passed around the National VTR magazine from last month that featured the show HCTC put on in Marble Falls. President Steve wrote the article and provided pictures from various sources that came together for a very nice spread. Congratulations to all who participated in the Spring event – everyone, from all the clubs in our Region!

We were glad to see our friends Dick and Sharon Kolbus come to the meeting. We don't get to see them enough since they have to travel from Taylor. Dick had a good harvest of sweet corn again this year, but harvest time happened to be during a meeting when we were “down south”. Better luck next year! If anyone is looking to relocate to the country side of life, the Kolbus' have a house on 10 acres for sale . . . and this one has a barn with a car lift as an added benefit. Thanks to the following members who braved the heat once again to bring their cars out for the party: Dean Mericas, Bob Skewis, Phillip and Logan McKenzie, Dan Julien, Harry Taggart, Greg and Susie West, and Bob and Barbara Kramer. I'll see you on the road . . .

Bob

The Hill Country Triumph Club, the 50th Chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR), was founded in 1990 to bring together the owners of Triumph automobiles in the Central Texas area surrounding Austin. In 1991, the membership decided to include other British car fans as associates due to lack of other clubs in our area that represent some of the other marques. As owners and lovers of our unique types of cars, we have a special kinship, which draws us together. Membership is open to anyone who is a British car enthusiast, with or without a car.

Annual dues are just \$15.00 per family group or address per year. We have dinner meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month and at least one other event each month. We encourage you to join and support us, even if you don't drive your car regularly. We also offer technical assistance if needed. One goal of the club is to help its members keep their cars on the road. Please call one of the club officers listed in the newsletter for more information about club benefits and spread the word about our club to others.

The Hill Country Club is a local chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR)/Triumph Sports Owners Association, which is open to all drivers of Triumph motorcars; a chapter of the Triumph Register of America, exclusively for TR2 through TR4A sports cars; and a chapter of the 6-PACK, dedicated to the enjoyment, preservation, and restoration of the Triumph TR250 and TR6 sports cars. Membership in these national organizations is encouraged. Visit their websites at www.vtr.org, www.triumphregister.com, and www.6-pack.org.

The RAGTOP is published monthly by the Hill Country Triumph Club. Material within may be freely reproduced providing Ragtop and the authors are credited. Any and all newsletter contributions are welcome. Deadline for submissions is the end of each month. Submissions may be emailed to don@dcphotos.com Car related classified ads are free to members and will run for three months unless otherwise instructed. Contact editor for other ads.

Membership Application



Name : _____

Address : _____

City / State : _____ Zip : _____

Home Phone : _____

Work Phone : _____

E-mail address : _____

Car Make : _____ Model : _____ Year : _____ Color : _____

Car Make : _____ Model : _____ Year : _____ Color : _____

How on earth did you hear about the Hill Country Triumph Club? _____

Please mail application and check payable to HCTC to:
Nel McPhail, 1105 N. Canyonwood Dr., Dripping Springs, TX 78260

OFFICERS

President
Steve Johnson
258.5340
president@hillcountrytriumphclub.org

Vice-President
Bob Baker
448.0093
bcbaker@austin.rr.com

Webmaster
Dan Julien
451.3102
dan.julien@alumni.utexas.net

Treasurer
Earl McGlothlin
292.3387
conniemcg@austin.rr.com

Secretary
Bob Skewis
892.4068
skewistx@att.net

Membership
Nel Mcphail
656.1456
membership@hillcountrytriumphclub.org

Ragtop Editor
Don Couch
680-3540
editor@hillcountrytriumphclub.org
www.dcphotos.com

MIKE'S FAVORITE TOOL

SEPTEMBER TOOL OF THE MONTH

This month I would like to feature not a tool as such, but something that I think you will find very handy...brand new, low cost distributors.

The Lucas D22, D25 and D45 models have been used on many Little British Cars, and most of us probably have one in our garage. The problem is that many are just about worn out. The vacuum unit is the first thing to go. A new one is about \$75 and the correct unit is not always available for every application, and other things may need attention, too. The springs on the centrifugal advance mechanism are often stretched beyond use. The shaft is often bent and the top section rusted in place (remember how it says to put a drop of oil under the rotor...ah hah!) The quality of replacement points, rotors, and condensers is questionable. Many of us have had our engine die at the worst possible moment due to a cracked rotor. How about those lousy aluminum post replacement



caps or those old fashioned caps that require solid copper wires that are held in with little screws for which no screwdriver exists? The list goes on and on!

Let's take a look at your distributor! Is the cap clean and unmolested? Does each spark plug wire measure about the same resistance? Are the terminals burned? Does the carbon center terminal have plenty of spring? Does the rotor fit tightly and move back into position when the shaft is twisted counter-clockwise? Does it twist at all?! Is the point gap the same on every lobe of the cam. Do the contacts line up nicely? Does the vacuum unit move the contact plate? Does it hold a vacuum? Is the shaft loose? Is the wiring for the points and condenser in good condition? Is this any of my business?

Fast forward to the 21st Century... Pertronix has been making compact, economical and reliable electronic ignition modules for some time now. Their latest offering is a range of high quality replica distributors for the British car enthusiast.



continued on page 8

continued from page 7

They feature a built-in Ignitor module (replaceable), rotor and cap that takes push on wires. I have installed several of these wonderful items on a range of LBCs.

The D176600 is a vacuum/mechanical advance model that will drop right in many four cylinder engines, such as Austin-Healey Sprite, MG Midget, MG-B, TR3, TR4, and Spitfire. D177600 is the six cylinder version and fits nicely in Jaguar XK, MG-C, and Austin-Healey 100-6 or 3000. It is not such good replacement for stock Triumph TR6, since you don't have anywhere to connect your tach cable. However, some TR6s with Weber DGV's or SU carbs might welcome a distributor with a vacuum

advance connection. Models are also available with no vacuum advance (all mechanical), aluminum billet construction and the new Ignitor II module with dwell control. This works great if you have a replacement carb with no vacuum advance connection.

Not only are these plug-and-play, but they start at only \$155! Go to dealparts.com for the best prices.

Mike

**Faster, faster, faster, until the thrill of speed overcomes the fear of death...
Hunter Thompson**

BACK ISSUES OF THE RAGTOP ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE

just click here!

[BACK ISSUES](#)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Art Schoenig

Richard and Patricia Jankowski

Mike and Emily Barrett

FROM RUST TO RACE

Greg Blake

EDITOR'S NOTE

PART ONE of this article was originally published in the MARCH 2009 RAGTOP.

I promised PART TWO the next month but "Life got in the way". So, for our new members and so you don't have to search for your MARCH issue, here is the full story.

Don

TR3 conversion from rust bucket to CVAR group 4 vintage race car.

The car started out as a 1958 TR3A that my Dad and I refurbished back in the late 80's. The body tub stayed on the frame, we basically did a cosmetic restoration which was completed by putting the equivalent of an Macco paint job on it. The car was a great daily driver for a 16 year old, I was hooked on Triumphs.

Fast forward to 2004 and Alison and I decided we would be in one place long enough to restore the car properly. My plan was to take everything apart this time and give the car a little more than stock performance. I started by taking all of the removable panels off and put them in storage. Once I was down to the tub, the first order of business was replacing the floors, and inner sills both rotten to the core. This was done while the tub was still on the frame and one side at a time. I choose to go this route so as not to mess up a critical dimension.

Once I had the inner sills and floor installed, I focused on the frame and suspension. The existing frame had been damaged on the front end so I sourced a replacement. I blasted the frame and suspension parts and rebuilt the front end with a magic kit from TRF. This all went together pretty easily after I welded up several cracked areas on the "new" frame.



continued on page 10

continued from page 9

When it came time to do the rear axle, I started talking to Bob Kramer and the project took a turn for the better. Bob started telling me about CVAR and the potential to road race this car with other vintage cars. How cool would that be? I had always wanted to road race, but the thought of doing it in a Miata or RX7 just did not appeal to me. To have an opportunity to race a Triumph with other period cars...my wheels started turning. Bob helped me setup my rear axle (it is actually a TR axle housing with Chevy axles and bearings to avoid losing a rear wheel at speed) and the chassis was now a roller. I spent the next couple of months welding gussets and reinforcement plates at critical points on the frame and suspension pick ups so the frame could handle the sticker tires.



continued on page 11



The next task was building a rotisserie to put the body on to finish all rust eradication and to be able to transfer the tub onto the new chassis.

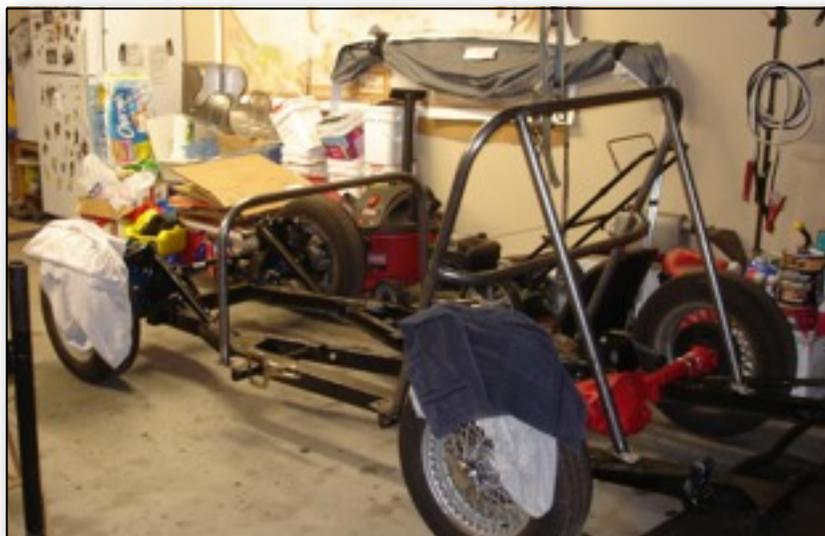


continued from page 10

The next item on the list was a roll bar. I borrowed a hydraulic bender from Roger Bolick. This thing was a beast it can bend 1.5" o.d. 0.120" steel tubing like tie wire. Most cages I have seen for a TR3 have the main hoop attached at the rear body mounts right behind the seats with rear braces that attach to the rear wheel wells. I never liked the idea of attaching a roll bar to the inner wheel wells, it just does not seem up to the task. I know of several that have been through a rollover and have done just fine, but I wanted all of my roll bar attachment points to be on the frame. So my rear braces go thru the rear bulkhead to the trunk floor where they bolt to a little stub piece that continues to the rear of the frame. There is also a front hoop under the scuttle that attaches to the front frame mounts thru the floor right by the A post.

Now that I had test fit the body and fabricated the main portions of the roll cage, it was time to start thinking about a machine shop for the rotating parts.

continued on page 12



continued from page 11

Bob recommended Performance Crank Shaft as he has been training them for many years on the black art of machining British bits. I did some disassembly and pre porting work on the head and brought all of the engine parts to be crack checked, machined, and balanced as appropriate. This was November of 2007. My plan was to finish final body work while the mechanical bits were off at the shop. Then final engine build after painting the car. All of this was supposed to take place prior to September 2008, the CVAR fall driver's school. I was being a bit naïve. Final body fit and metal work. Fenders were sectioned instead of flared. I wanted to keep the flat look of the fenders when viewed from the front or rear of the car. Most TR3 racers flair the fenders around the wheels slightly, I went the hard way by adding some metal near the flanges.



Continued on page 13 is the second half of Greg's article.



FROM RUST TO RACE PART 2

Greg Blake

continued from page 12

I spent the rest of 2008 and beginning of 2009 doing body work. The pictures above show the interior and the bottom of the tub painted in sealer, then base coat clear coat. The outside of the body tub and body panels were only shot in epoxy primer/sealer at this point. I had a lot of final panel beating and skim coating to do to get the waves out of the body. I was ready for final paint at the end of January. And if anyone is familiar with the schedule for CVAR, I had obviously missed my fall driver's school. The next one was scheduled for February 2009 and I WAS NOT GOING TO MISS IT!!!!

Notice no mention of the engine back from the machine shop yet!

I had actually picked up my engine bits a week before this photo. The block was sitting in the back of the garage patiently waiting to get built. This photo shows the fenders hanging on the body but actually they were shot with only a couple of bolts holding them to minimize paint lines from masking. If anyone is planning on doing this at home, buy me a beer and I'll give you some pointers and try and talk you out of it.

Final porting complete and cleaning one last time before installing valve gear. This is as large as you can go with TR3/4 valves without moving the valve centerlines. Notice how close the two are in the middle of the combustion chamber.

continued on page 14



continued from page 13

FINAL ROTATING BITS



Those are 87mm Wiseco forged pistons and Eagle SIR rods designed for a Chevy 350 long rod setup. Ask me details if interested. Basically a bullet proof rod for this motor very cheap requires machining on crank and special spacers for pistons.

Assembly pictures stopped at this point since I was pulling all nighters to make my deadline. My Dad came down from Dallas to help me install the engine 4 days before the school. Bob came by on the weekend before the school to help. He later told me that he did not have the heart to tell me I was not going to make it. I am glad he did not say anything, as any discouragement at this point might have stopped me dead in my tracks; especially from someone who had done this before.

I did the plumbing, wiring, and exhaust at night the week leading up to the school. I ended up taking Wednesday and Thursday off from work to finish the car. I fired it up at 4 am on Friday morning to drive it on the trailer. Alison and I then packed the truck and I headed off to College Station for the driver's school. I did not even have time to shower. I got to Texas World Speedway about 10 minutes late. I spent about 30 seconds telling Bob what my last minute issues were and by the time I had gone through my first driver's meeting Bob had those issues sorted. I can not thank him enough. We are very fortunate to have Bob and Barbara in our club. Barbara brought me a spare oil filter head from Bob's stash when she drove over on Saturday to watch Andrew Kramer driving in Bob's TR4a. Andrew was also taking the school that weekend.

continued on page 15



Feb 9, 2009 pistons in for last time, 11 days remain...



Checking valve geometry on Feb 10th



Checking thrust on crank Feb 7, 2009...of course I had to overnight some thicker thrust washers. 13 days to driver's school.

continued from page 14



Special thanks to the Hill Country Triumph club members for all the advice over the past few years. I plan to make this a street legal car and will do some of the driving events in it. My Dad also was a big help in all of this. He sacrificed several of his weekends to come down and help. He even came down for the driver's school to help take care of a page long list of issues the technical advisor wanted resolved before the weekend was over. Thanks Dad. Most of all, I thank my wife and two young children that have put up with me for the past year working all hours of the night. Alison has sacrificed many weekends to my hobby. Alison and I welcomed both of our children to the family during all of this. Will was born in September of 2005 and his sister Presley was born in January of 2007

Greg



Pictures at race Feb 20th



2009 TEXAS ALL BRITISH CAR DAY



EARLY REGISTRATION FORM

**Fun Rallye and Catered BBQ Dinner at
Sheets' Longhorn Ranch on Saturday**
Rallye free to registrants/Dinner \$12 now - \$15 Day of Rallye
Please join us in the fun!

Attending Rallye YES ___ NO ___ Dinner YES ___ NO ___

NAME: _____	
ADDRESS: _____ City/St/Zip _____	
PHONE: _____	E-MAIL _____ <small>(E-mail is for TXABCD notification & use only)</small>
MARQUE _____	MODEL _____ YEAR _____
COLOR _____	CLUB AFFILIATION _____

EARLY REGISTRATION MUST BE POSTMARKED BY SEPTEMBER 18th

EARLY REGISTRATION FEE: \$ 20.00

Rallye BBQ Dinner \$ 12.00 each
QTY _____ \$ _____

Event T-Shirts \$ 13.00
(Choice of FRONT or BACK design)
(Front) S M L XL QTY _____ \$ _____
(Back) S M L XL QTY _____ \$ _____
XXL \$15.00 QTY _____ \$ _____

Event Henley Shirts \$20.00 (button V-neck)
M L XL QTY _____ \$ _____
XXL \$24.00 QTY _____ \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Make checks payable to:
Dan Julien/ TXABCD 2009

Send registration to:
TXABCD 2009
C/O Barbara Kramer
8006 Bernard Street
Volente, TX 78641



Host Hotel: Car Show Rate \$94-\$99

Springhill Suites
2960 Hoppe Road
Round Rock, TX
512-733-6700



*Special rate ends Sept. 4th
*Check website for instructions for reserving discounted room rates

Waiver of Liability

I understand my passenger(s) and I are participating in the 2009 All British Car Day at our own risk, and agree not to hold the event Organizers, its members and/or the property owners including but not limited to the City of Round Rock, any associated entities or persons liable for any and all damages or injuries that may occur while participating in, traveling to/from, or in any way related to this event.

I understand that the Organizers cannot be responsible for the action of others and insist on care and caution throughout the event. Neither the organizers nor anyone else except me has insurance protecting me or my guests during the activities in this event.

Signature (1) : _____

Date: _____

Signature (2) : _____

Date: _____

Class:

For TXABCD use - Please do not fill in.

Car No

For TXABCD use - Please do not fill in.

What Turned the Key and Got Me Started

It isn't often I wonder about what made me do what and why, but a recent conversation got me to thinking why I am so enthusiastic about Triumphs.

It was at about mile 45 of a 60 mile bike ride with a friend when he threw this out at me:

"So why do you have a Triumph? As long as I've known you (over a year) it's always been in the garage. Why not some other brand of car or one that runs?"

Good questions. I really didn't have an answer. But I just mentioned how I liked the styling, and how they drive. With that, we suffered on, but I kept repeating those questions in my head, as well as the Dr Who theme song. Weird things happen to your mind in the closing miles of a bike ride... Since then I've thought long and hard why I like Triumphs, and where it came from. It's the culmination of many events, right back to my preschool days.

One Sunday, as my family was leaving church, we saw a Triumph Spitfire for sale across the street. It was white with a black top. I was 3 or 4 at the time, so I'm amazed I remember it at all. I can't recall if my dad said he'd bought it or wanted to. What I know is that soon after we had the Spitfire in our driveway. I've since learned it was a 1966. I thought it was the coolest thing ever, even if I did always call it the "Spitsfire".

There was a store we called the deli (which coincidentally, it was) that we'd run to occasionally. I can only recall going in the Spitfire once to it, but the ride is indelibly etched in my mind. I could barely see over the door, but the feeling of the wind in my hair and the sounds made the right impressions. I was fascinated by the green light flashing on the dash with a hidden clicking noise, the purr of the exhaust, and how fast it seemed we were going. I know there had to be other rides, but that's the only one I remember.

Fast forward a few years, we had moved, and the Spitfire was in our back yard. It was my ticket to

hours of fun. I pretended I was racing at Le Mans, or wherever. Yet soon we were selling the car, my favorite car. I was pretty upset about the whole thing, but never told my father until only recently. Subconsciously I'm pretty sure that's when I decided I'd own a Triumph.

Every so often, my father would tell us or me some story from the days when he had his TR3a from new. From the "biggest deer he never saw" to "the cop pulled me over because he wanted to buy a 3a and had some questions", to the gymkhanas, rallies, and going to race tracks all over the northeast. As I got older, he relayed more and more of the experiences, and most of them were pretty funny, or just plain fun sounding.

When it was coming time for me to get a car at the end of high school, I really wanted a Triumph. Unfortunately, college, cycling and Triumphs don't mix. I got a Chevy Citation 4 door hatchback instead. Hey, at least it was a 4 speed... I kept reading and planning, and one day, it happened. I got a Triumph. For several years whatever Triumph I owned was my everyday car. I lived in Indianapolis, IN, those years, with all of the fun weather that comes with it.

I had to sell my Triumphs when I moved back to New York, and decided I'd had my fun, and wouldn't want one again. Years later I was driving back from Lake Conroe the same day Texas All British Car Days ended, and saw Triumphs, Austin Healeys, and MGs headed the other way. Three months later I bought my current Spitfire. It's been a wonderful experience, and I've met so many great people along the way. Maybe it's genetic, maybe it was nurtured, either way, it's been an incredible journey. What was the pivotal moment that turned your key and got you driving a Triumph?

Mike Jankowski

45-27-67-47-4=67 by Bob Kramer

I last reported about the new TR4 race-car in the Kramer family in the July RAGTOP. At that point we knew a few facts about the car, some true, and others not so true. It was reported to us that the car was a race car from new. With a VIN No. of CT3500L I thought that there was a possibility that this car was something very special, maybe a factory rallye or Group 44 race car, but no such luck. I ordered up a Heritage Certificate from the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust and found out that the car was delivered to Standard Triumph Motors Inc, of Jacksonville Florida, shipped on January 31, 1962. She was topped off with a white top, outfitted with a Blue leather interior and adorned in Powder Blue paint. She came with the rear seat option as well as whitewall tires, heater and windscreen washer. I came to find out that the first owner was a Jacksonville doctor who probably had it built to his order, thus debunking the race car from new story.

I learned these facts from Joe Hines. He is a pretty credible source since he converted the car to race trim himself, recruiting a well known Morgan racer to build him a race engine. Joe built the car to compete in the 24 Hour Daytona Continental race in February 1967. His co-drivers were T.J. Kelly (the engine builder) and C.C Canada. All three of these guys raced throughout the 60's in many venues. Joe even tried to qualify for the Daytona 500 and T.J. Kelly was a very well known in the SCCA with his Morgan. In 1967 the car raced the 24 Hours as No. 45 and the trio completed 186 laps but DNF'd for some unknown reason. Race information and results can be seen at: HYPERLINK "<http://www.racingsportscars.com/results/>



[Daytona-1967-02-05.html](http://www.racingsportscars.com/results/)"

The story didn't end there. Joe then took the car to Sebring in April 1967 for the 12 Hour race. This time the car was numbered 27 and Joe had C.C Canada, T. J. Kelly, Whit Tharin and Wilbur Pickett as co-drivers. The engine failed after 77 laps and Joe and C.C didn't get a turn behind the wheel during the race. Both Whit and Wilbur had long racing resumes. Whit Tharin raced Formula Vee's, holding the track record at VIR and Wilbur Pickett

continued on page 21



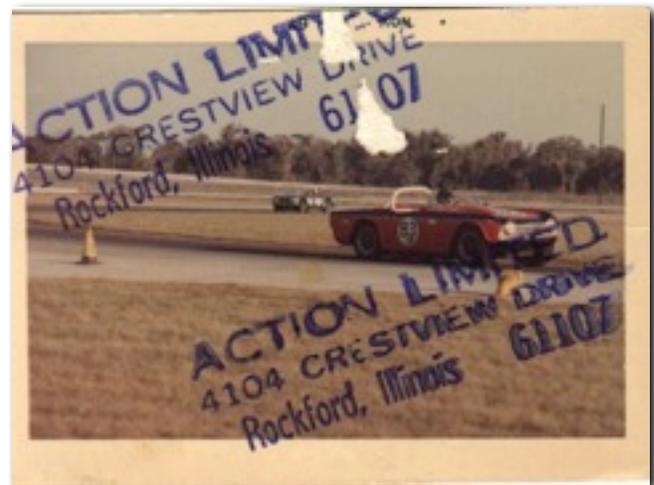
continued from page 20

D PRODUCTION – ARRC DAYTONA 1967

Position	Driver	Car	Starting Position	Laps
1	Jerry Thompson	Stinger	3	23
2	Stuart Marcus	Triumph	10	23
3	Gil Littell	Jaguar	4	23
4	Dennis Pillar	Triumph	9	23
5	Russ Simon	Jaguar	20	23
6	Willie McKemmie	Elva	14	23
7	Jack Oakley	Triumph	13	22
8	Joe Carter	23	22	
9	Joe Hines	Triumph	16	21
10	M. Needham	Triumph	15	21
11	Tom Varner	Triumph	6	20

endurance raced a variety of Porsches, Ferrari's, Corvettes, Alfa and Camaro's. Saving the wet-liner engine for the duration may not have been in their skill sets. Data from this race can be seen at: ["http://www.racingsportscars.com/results/Sebring-1967-04-01.html"](http://www.racingsportscars.com/results/Sebring-1967-04-01.html)

Joe wasn't done with the car yet. T.J. Kelly rebuilt the engine and Joe raced it in enough SCCA qualifying races to make it back to Daytona for the American Road Race of Champions (ARRC) in November 1967, the SCCA National Championship. He qualified in the Southeast Division, and completed the race running as No. 67, finishing in 8th place, reporting that nobody had anything to compete with the Thompson Corvair Stinger. Most interesting about this event is a TR4A that missed the race. That car is none other



than my TR4A. Bob Stewart, from Baton Rouge, brought the car to Daytona as an alternate from the SCCA Southwest Division, hoping to race if others dropped out. He got to practice but didn't get a starting slot. Just as we suspected, we have a picture of my Red TR4A in the infield portion of the Daytona

continued on page 22

continued from page 21

track with the Joe Hines car in the background. How cool is that?

The story then picks up with the picture that is posted at:

<http://virhistory.com/vir/69-jul/scca.htm>

Joe Hines sold the car to a fellow named Robert Johnson of Aiken, South Carolina. He sent in a couple of pictures to the VIR History webmaster. In the pictures the car is still wearing the SCCA No. 67 and the contingency decals from the ARRC at Daytona. The SCCA holds both Regional races and National races. Racing at the National level requires a greater commitment and I have been told that at the time the SCCA issued permanent race car numbers to National competitors. I hope to be assigned 67 in CVAR.

I haven't been able to locate Robert Johnson but as previously reported he sold the car to Ott Jensen from Pittsburgh, PA. He raced the car for a couple of years in the Steel Cities Region of the SCCA most times as Car No. 47, with minor sponsorship from Gulf Oil.

The rest of the story gets the car into the hands of Dennis Shea who restored it and vintage raced it in the SVRA. Ott sold the car off to a George Haynes who eventually sold the car to

John Forrester who started the restoration. John sold it to his buddy Dennis who finished it.

The 2 car KRAMER FAMILY RACING team debuts at Texas World Speedway September 19th and 20th. Come on out.

Bob



The cost of racing hasn't increased in 30 years. Back then, it took everything you had. And it still does.

continued from page 10

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE:

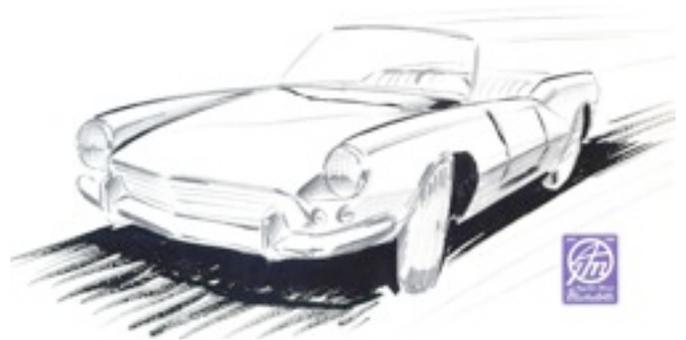
- 1978 SPITFIRE 1500 - fresh paint job - powder blue. ready for reassembly \$2900.00 obo
 - 1969 GT6 needs restoration, paint, interior \$1000.00 obo
 - 1963 TR-4 Restoration in progress, Rebuilt Engine, lots of new parts \$3800.00 obo
- Contact Don Couch for more info (512)-680-3540

2004 HARLEY DAVIDSON FXDI FOR SALE \$10,000 obo :

- BATTERY TENDER, CLYMER REPAIR MANUAL
 - CRASH BAR, EXTRA MUFFLERS
 - HIGHWAY PEGS, RACK, FOOT PEGS, GRIPS
 - DUAL SEAT, SISSY BAR w/ EMBLEM
- Contact Don Couch for more info (512)-680-3540

SPITFIRE PARTS FOR SALE:

- Have misc. SPITFIRE 1500 parts for sale
 - motors, four speed gearbox, diffs,
 - wiring harness
 - bulbs, bolts and more
- Contact Don Couch for more info (512)-680-3540



THE RAGTOP - SEPTEMBER 2009



Calendar

SEPT 8th, 2009

HCTC meeting - Texican Cafe, Brodie Oaks

SEPT. 26 - 27

TXABCD - ROUND ROCK

OCT 17th

State Fair show for all British cars.

Jaguar Club of North Texas



1105 N. Canyonwood Dr.
Dripping Springs, TX 78620
address change requested



The next HCTC meeting will be held Tuesday, September 8, 7 PM, [Texican Cafe](#), in the Brodie Oaks shopping center, Northwest corner of South Lamar and Ben White/Capitol of Texas Highway/Loop 360, Phone 512-707-1733.