



# The Ragtop

The Hill Country Triumph Club

November 2011



U-Joint Tech, Show Roundup, Drive to Dallas and as always, more!

# The Ragtop



Hill Country Triumph Club

November, 2011

## From your Editor,

Almost Thanksgiving already. I really thought I'd have time to enjoy and relax 2011 with my retirement from competitive cycling. Looking for work, school, and looking for a new place to live have put that thought to rest.

I have been able to attend more events this year, and have really enjoyed them. It wasn't hard, as I seem to average one event a year up to now... Rocketdog is still on the road, even after 24,000 miles of abuse/driving with me at the wheel. That activity has taken a toll though.

Unlike most Triumph owners, I have to do the work on my car in small bits, as I have no other car to rely on. So the head gasket will be done some evening asap, as well as a few other items. Cosmetics, as always, have gone to the back burner.

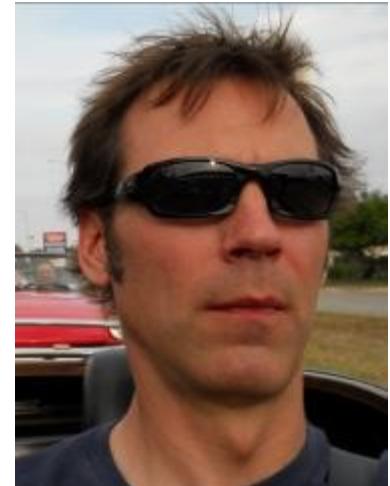
Yet through it all I do enjoy it. The lying gas gauge when it works, the leaky top, the again squealing

brakes. Worth all of the time? I think so. Worth the effort required to get a weekend's worth of gear in the car? Definitely.

Most of all it's worth it to me to just have a car I know inside and out, and enjoy the multitudinous experiences of using it every day. Not a day goes by when I talk to a total stranger about Rocketdog.

They ask how I do it with no radio or A/C. I tell them it's part of the charm. Which it is, and it also lets me roll back to a simpler time. A time where we weren't always as comfortable as we are now, when we had to work for a reward a bit differently, if not more.

*Mike*



Mike



Ellie



Rocketdog

All photos this page by Mike Jankowski

# The Inside Line

October - 2011

## Robert MacKenzie, President The Inside Line

Recently, and by recently I mean last weekend, I found myself driving on a wonderful road in a car that was totally unsuitable. The road in question was a twisty, two lane road in Colorado that went almost straight up, over a pass by a lake then back down into a valley on the other side. This is the kind of road I love to drive on. The kind of road Pam and I seek out when we are travelling.

The car in question was a Nissan Cube rental.

Now the Cube is not a bad car. It's not a great car, but not bad. It is very cube shaped, rather underpowered, with low ground clearance and tiny all-season tires, a great around town car.

The real issue I had was the road. Not only was it steep, narrow with lots of blind hairpins with certain death drop-offs and questionable (if any) guardrails, it was also partly snow covered with large patches of black ice. To be fair, the black ice was confined to the inner portions of the hairpins where the large snow covered trees had protected the road surface from the sun.

Did I mention that it was windy? Very windy. The kind of winds that like to make an underpowered, square car change lanes with no warning. Luckily there was no other traffic.

However; there were elk. On several occasions we passed groups of elk just standing by the side of the road, seemingly waiting for the right car to run out in front of.

It was cold too.

This was a 28 mile roadway, it should have taken 45 minutes. I struggled to maintain 20 mph for an hour and a half of stressful driving. When we got to the top there was a spectacular view of the valley. I did not see it as I was too busy fighting the wind so that



Photo by Susan Beth

we did not get to view it while sliding into the valley itself. I was told the view was very nice.

The trip down the other side was much better as the road faced the sun, and most, if not all of the snow and ice had melted. As we descended I was thinking the other cars that had rented over the years and which would have been more suitable for this portion of our trip when I saw it.

A Triumph.

A Triumph Herald.

A Triumph Herald convertible, coming up the road towards me. It passed me so fast I did not get a chance to see the driver, only noting that it had Colorado plates and was white with a black top. Suddenly the Cube was not such a bad choice.

Get out and drive!



Robert D MacKenzie



A Triumph Herald

# Betina's Minutes

Betina Foreman (I'm open to suggestions for a new title for this segment-Mike)

Mike Jankowski subbing for Bettina (or more accurately I don't think my email settings were properly set up after I changed formats)

Many club members arrived at Rudy's on 620 and 2222, some in their Triumphs. Bill Waller, Mike Jankowski, Jim Icenhower and others all flew the Triumph flag. After the meeting Phil McKenzie decided to install a new steering wheel he picked up. Dimly lit lot, steering wheel, replacement, bolts, many things to go wrong, not exactly phrases that should be used in conjunction with each other.

However, prior to that fun, a meeting happened. TXABCD was discussed, mention of other upcoming events including this Saturday's (the 12th) Lucas Morelli drive and lunch.

I shall send out an addendum when I get my hands on the actual minutes.



An after meeting guest in the lot last month. No idea what this species is, but it took all my courage to get close enough to shoot a few pictures, as I'm not a fan of spiders.

## Georgetown Auto Tech Project: Spitfire U-Joints. Joel McKenzie works much too hard for the grade given...

Every semester in my Automotive Technology class at Georgetown High School, we are required to split into groups and do some kind of automotive maintenance or repair project. Rather than the usual oil change or brake pad change I convinced my friends to tackle a U-joint change in our Spitfire, nicknamed Twiggy. Having helped Mike Jankowski change the U-joints in his Spitfire (Rocketdog) and my Dad (Phil McKenzie) change the U-joints in our other Spitfire (Lola) I felt like I was now an expert at the job. My friends showed up at our garage in the morning and we started out by jacking the car up securing the jack-stands, removing the wheels and starting the disassembly of the half-shafts. As expected, many of the bolts were hard to remove, and the whole assembly was pretty dirty.



Once the half-shaft was out, I was very familiar with the process of hammering out the U-joint from the shaft and yoke. My friends were surprised at how hard we would pound the joint out with a hammer.



We were able to get the U-joint out of the half-shaft pretty easily, but of course, one of the U-joints would simply not come out of the yoke – no matter how hard we pounded on the U-joint. After working on Lola and Rocket Dog I was familiar with the next step – cut the &\*&%\$ing U-joint out of the yoke. My friends particularly liked this part.



The rest of the job went pretty smoothly. Having lots of hands and experience helped in pressing the new U-joints in. Since we had the half-shaft out, we went ahead and replaced the shock absorber (stock – original equipment!). By the way we only got an 80 on our project.... Our teacher apparently doesn't remember how hard it is to do this.

## Dallas, a Spitfire, and Back! By Mike Jankowski

When a trip to inspect a Spitfire morphs into bringing it back from Dallas, using a GPS for the first time, and being thankful I brought along a jacket.

We've all had it happen. A friend asks us to go along for a ride to offer an opinion on a car they are interested in. Of course this car, a 1971 Spitfire MKIV, was in Dallas. Always up for a roadtrip, I agreed to meet my friend Danielle at some horrifically early time. Something like 6:30 am.

It was cold that morning. Actually, it was possibly the first frost of the season. I had just changed the thermostat on my car, so I thought I'd be somewhat comfortable for the drive to Liberty Hill. I was, until the air bubble I didn't bleed out lodged in the heater. Suddenly I had 35 degree air blowing on my feet for the last 12 miles. Brrrrr.....

We got going as quick as possible, and



the drive to Dallas was uneventful. Except for me not being the most GPS savvy person, and a weak signal in the city when we needed it the most. However, we arrived and saw the car for the first time in person.

After a road test, and decent inspection, a deal was struck. It was agreed that we could take the car back to Austin that day to save us another trip up to Dallas. Other than a few details to be sorted, it is an amazing example of a MKIV.

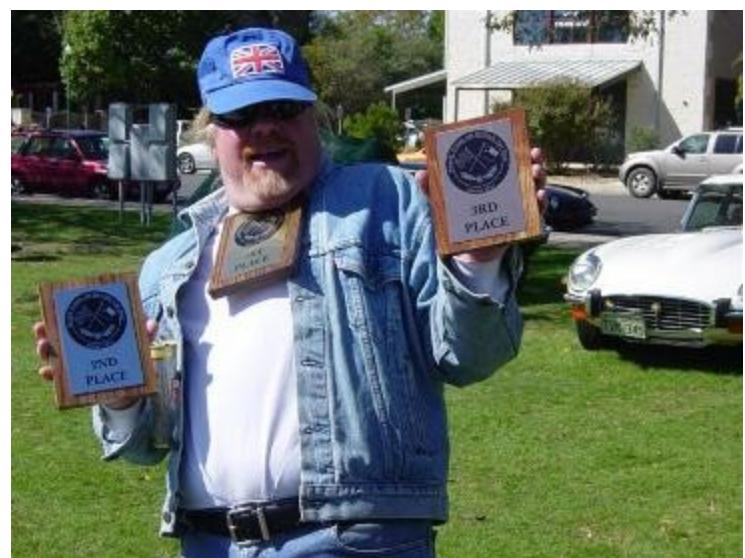
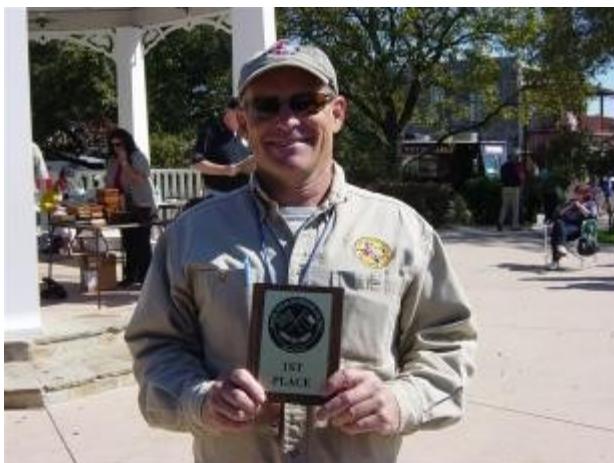
The drive back was a bit cold as the sun went down, but my trusty jacket and the heater which works perfectly kept me comfortable. The most fun I had was driving using the GPS to check my speed, as the speedo isn't calibrated correctly, so needs to be swapped out. I never knew how much fun a GPS could be with the ETA, voices, etc...

A great day resulting in a great car.

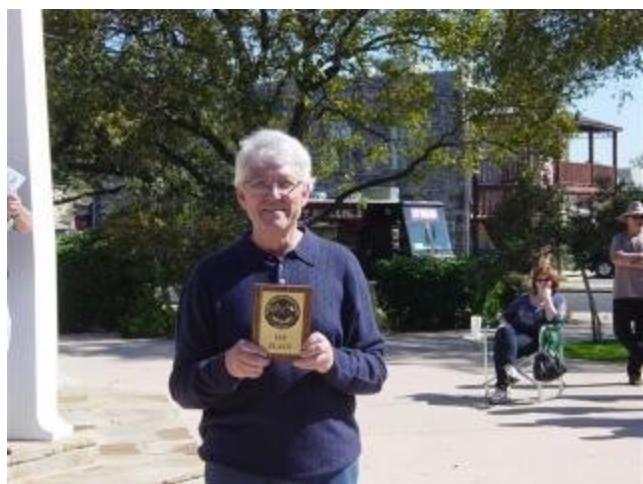
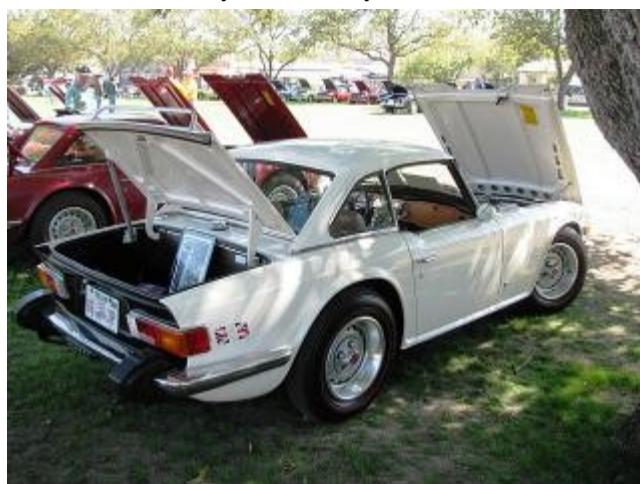


## Boerne Car Show : HCTC Weighted down with Hardware!

Here are some pictures from the South Texas All British Car Day in Boerne. Willis and Kathy Thorstad, Steve and Candy Johnson, Bill and Annette Waller and Mike and Nel caravanned to Boerne. There, we met Alan Palmer, Phil McKenzie and son, Don and Brenda Couch, Tom and Nancy Harrison. Six of us won an award!



(Anyone besides your Editor notice a resemblance between the above two characters?)



# Pay Your Dues!!!!!!

Please check the latest spreadsheet sent out by Nel. It says the month and year your dues are due.

## Hint:

If the year listed next to your name isn't 2011, you owe right now. Any quite delinquent members who haven't paid will be dropped from the roster.

Cost is \$15 per year per family. If you don't wish to renew, please notify Nel.

Mail your check made out to HCTC to

Nel McPhail

1105 N Canyonwood Dr

Dripping springs, Tx 78620

512-656-1456

[nmcphail@austin.rr.com](mailto:nmcphail@austin.rr.com)



Next month:

Spitfire comparison drive. Three Spitfires. Three drivers. Three opinions. Many Cokes consumed.

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](http://www.vtr.org), [www.triumphregister.com](http://www.triumphregister.com), and [www.6-pack.org](http://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 [mikeragtopeditor@gmail.com](mailto:mikeragtopeditor@gmail.com). Car related classified ads are free to members and will run for three months unless otherwise instructed. Contact editor for other ads.

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# Membership Application



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Car Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Car Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Color: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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Please mail your application and check payable to HCTC to this address:

Nel McPhail, 1105 North Canyonwood Dr

Dripping Springs, TX 78620

# HCTC Classifieds

It's time for HTC members to rediscover Art's yard before American Hoarders does. He has, 2 Spridgets, 3 Spitfires, 3 Triumph Heralds, Singers, Humbers, XKEs, a TR6, a TR3 and More. There are huge piles, (actually small barns), of extra parts. It's time that Art admits that there are three times more projects than he will ever finish or drive. About half the cars need new homes. Some of these autos are in terrible to horrid condition and can scare the wrench out of your hand to look at, and some could be your dream car with a little love and elbow grease. Reasonable offers are going to be accepted from members that might want to buy a project.

Please contact Art Schoenig at [artschoenigco@sbcglobal.net](mailto:artschoenigco@sbcglobal.net) for an appointment.

## FOR SALE:

I would like to sell a -74 TR6 long block, partially disassembled \$175.00

I am also looking for a 4 prong square Hazard switch, for a 71/72 TR6

Ben Skoldeberg

e-mail or cell 512 750 4230

[ben@txsunandshade.com](mailto:ben@txsunandshade.com)

## FOR SALE:

•1963 TR-4 Restoration in progress, Rebuilt Engine, lots of new parts \$3800.00 obo

Contact Don Couch for more info (512)-680-3540

## FOR SALE:

Spif up that Spitfire with a pair of 1972 GT6 High Back Seats. \$150

Contact Richard @ (512) 413-11

## 1971 GT6 FOR SALE:

90% restored, needs to find a loving home, \$4000,

Allen Monroe 512-786-9570

**FOR SALE: 74' TR6 basically a stock looking TR6-very clean**

5,500 miles Mimosa w/ Chestnut interior (paint job approx. 3 years old) rust free

Strong engine (Ron Harrison just replaced the clutch & a few other items listed below)

- new red (Hella style) horns •fairly new top (~2 yrs old)
- brake master cylinder (2 yrs old) •windshield (2 yrs old)
- new clutch slave cyliner •approx. 30K miles of tread left of Michelin Redlines

asking \$13,200 (\$12,500 w/out the new leather Miata seats)

Questions, call Jim Wells @ 254-780-1464

email: [jimanddiana@clearwire.net](mailto:jimanddiana@clearwire.net)

**1978 SPITFIRE CONVERTIBLE FOR SALE - \$4750. (San Antonio)**

\*\*\*\*Price Reduced(Was \$5750.)\*\*\*\*New upholstery and c/v top.

4spd.,no rust,orig. brown paint .Rebuilt weber carb.,headers.

New plugs,cap,rotor,back brakes,belt,hose and u-joint.

Licensed and inspected.94000 miles.Excellent investment,

Call Mike @210-744-6453 for more details and pictures.

**FOR SALE: TR3 With reluctance, Anndel is putting her TR3 on the market. This was a complete ground up restoration, overdrive transmission.**

Andy Home 713-975-0098 Cell 832-372-9804

**1980 Triumph TR7: 61,000 miles, new top, new tonneau, Crane electronic ignition, Crane coil, manual choke, electric fuel pump, electric fan with adjustable thermostat, all gauges work (even the clock),**

halogen headlights, workshop manual, car cover, licensed and insured, good tires. Super reliable!  
**\$5100. PRICE REDUCED! Help me clean out the garage!**

If you desire pictures, or have other questions, please contact me.

Rick Jankowski

(843) 705-7243

**FOR SALE:**

TR6 wheels with worn redlines, good hubcaps and trim rings. Small dents in a couple of the wheels.

Will sell both for \$450 OBO. Andy Reed 303.478.5658

I have a few leftover Spitfire parts, such as rebuildable master cylinders for clutch and brakes, a decent steering wheel, etc. I don't want to move this stuff, so I am going to put all my extra bits in a big bucket. You want them, give me \$25. You get the bucket, too!

Mike Jankowski

mikeragtopeditor@gmail.com

Car related classified ads are free to Members and will run for three months unless otherwise instructed. Non-Members ads are \$5.00

Contact editor for other ads.

**Don't forget, back issues of The Ragtop**

**are available on our website:**

**<http://www.hillcountrytriumphclub.org/newsletters.php>**

