



The RAGTOP



Volume 18, Issue 6, June 2005
www.hillcountrytriumphclub.org

Triumph Family by Bob Skewis, President



Hail and Farewell

I don't want to scare anyone away from the meeting on the 14th, but we will be holding "elections" for officers at that time. This is usually an informal "vote" with someone stepping forward and agreeing to buckle into the driver's seat and grab hold of the steering wheel for awhile. I have enjoyed my time behind the wheel for the last two years and I can assure the next president that they will have plenty of help from the TR Family backing them up. There are many dedicated Triumph enthusiasts that each take on a portion of the overall job and make life for the president so much easier. I think my greatest task has been to get to know the growing number of members and spouses - no simple job, considering the growth of the club and my limited short-term memory. We have a wide range of interests

and occupations including hi-techies, attorneys, photographers, salespeople, dentists, engineers and a few retirees that are thankful that those still working are contributing to their Social Security benefits!

While our membership may have some gray hair showing, we have been adding younger members steadily. I just passed out our club business card to a prospective member last Saturday that was out for a top-down Jeep ride with his wife (she had bought him a Spitfire for his birthday). They were driving by Pok-e-Joe's on 5th street when they noticed a group of beautiful British cars in the parking lot. This happened to be the end point of the Capitol City MG Club's rallye that was attended by 24 British Cars to kick off **Drive Your British Car Week**. While mostly MGs and TRs, there were a couple of Jaguars, our resident Morgan and one beautiful Healey. Our club did well with **Herb and Cindy Valliant** taking third place and **Bob and Marilyn Skewis** edging them out for second. Thanks to **Alan and Debbie Feretti** for organizing this cross-marque event!

Our own next event is the June 11th Fix-it day at the **Kramer lake house / Wet Sleeve Garage** that will be a continuation of the Clunk Clinic at the McPhail house. There will be no better place to learn more about the repair of your noisy half-shafts and the hospitality and lake swimming will be available to all who just want to take your car for a short drive and cool dip. *I'll see you there!*

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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 sent to: Carol Pennington; 105 Etta Place; Austin, TX 78753 or E-mailed to cpenn33@yahoo.com. Photos in jpeg format are always welcome. **Classified ads** will run for three months unless otherwise instructed.

Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

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

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

Please circle which method you would like the newsletter delivered: E-mail Snail Mail

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

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





We tried a restaurant where we'd never met as a club before, and so the May meeting found us at Hang Town Grill in Westlake. It was a fun and beautiful evening, which included eating

al Fresco. This provided the perfect vantage point for me to spot all of the little British cars. I hadn't been there long when I noticed a yellow TR7, but the occupants hadn't yet joined us on the patio. Soon, I was walking the parking lot looking for its owner, wondering if this was just a fluke. Much to my surprise, I quickly found Richard and Linda Knowles coming out of a store, doing some last minute shopping. This was the first meeting they had been able to make in quite some time, so it was a delight to see them again.

It was also good to meet new members Greg and Susie West, who recently purchased the beautiful blue, late-model TR6, that some of us had spotted on a car lot near downtown Burnet. Good thing they purchased it, because if we had driven by it just one more time, I might have made Mike get out the checkbook! I really miss our TR6. Even when my Mike was out of town, I would proudly drive it on my own. I haven't been able to perfect that in the TR3 or big Healey, not that I don't trust those cars. Maybe it has something to do with roll-up windows!

I've had this love of little British cars since my early college days, and upon my graduation from UT, my parents gave me a brand new TR7. According to my Mom, Dad always wanted a sports car, and I think he was reliving his youth through me. He would never admit that. Nor did he ever drive the car, but he and my Mom enjoyed many a ride in the passenger seat. I can still remember the grin on my Mom's face when she and I first drove the car home from the Triumph dealer in Ft. Worth to our house in North Dallas. I wasn't yet skilled at the standard transmission, and Mom made me turn the radio down so she could carefully listen and tell

me when to shift! What a hoot! After getting tired of all the Lucas electric problems, I sold the car when I was in my mid-twenties. A month or so later, the new owner came by my house to tell me that the car had burned up on IH 35, just north of Austin.

The next exciting car I spotted in the parking lot wasn't British, but was Bob and Courtney Baker's almost new, gorgeous Honda S2000. WOW, what a car! Okay Courtney, I'm still waiting for that ride!

We were soon joined by Richard Ceraldi in his GT6, Clif Blanchard and his Spitfire, Harry Taggart in his recently restored TR6, Roger and Julianna Bolick in their TRuck, Bob and Barbara Kramer in Godiva, Sam Dixon and neighbor Carol Pennington in Carol's TR3, Herb Valliant without Cindy in his TR7, Don Couch, Bill Waller, Dan Julien in his TR6, John Vuksich, Andy Bruner & his daughter, and last but not least, Johan Carl. I apologize if I left anyone or their car out, but my memory and note-taking isn't as good as it used to be!

I'll see ya'll on the road!



Attention Members:

If you have given Nel a membership check in the past few months that hasn't cleared the bank, please be patient. We are in the process of setting up a new bank account and the checks will be deposited as soon as possible.

Would you like to help the club save postage and printing costs (and the beautiful pine trees in east Texas)? If so, you may choose to receive your newsletter via E-mail or download it from our website. We currently have 12 members who have elected to receive their newsletter via E-mail only. The club thanks you!

Not only will you help save trees and club costs, you will be able to see The Ragtop in living color.

If you would like to discontinue your paper copy and receive an electronic version, please let Carol Pennington know. You may E-mail her at cpenn33@yahoo.com.

Web Sites:

Vintage Triumph Register	http://www.vtr.org
British Motor Heritage Group	http://www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk
Triumph Register of America for TR2-TR4A owners	http://www.triumphregister.com
6-Pack—USA Club for TR6/TR250 owners	http://www.6-pack.org
Triumph2000/2500/2.5 Register	http://www.t2000register.org.uk
Stag Owners Club	http://www.stag.org.uk
TR Sports Six Club	http://www.tssc.org.uk
International Spitfire Database	http://members.cox.net/spitlist
Friends of Triumph Racing	http://www.fot-racing.com
Texas All British Car Day	http://www.txabcd.org
Texas Triumph Register	http://www.texas triumphregister.org
South Texas Triumph Association	http://www.sotxtriumphassn.org
Red River Triumph Club	http://www.RedRiverTriumphClub.Org/
Central Oklahoma VTR	http://www.okctriumphs.org/
Green Country Triumphs of Oklahoma	http://members.cox.net/gctok/
British Motoring Club of New Orleans	http://www.bmcno.org
Portland Triumph Owners Association	http://www.portlandtriumph.org
Tyee Triumph Club (Seattle)	http://www.tyee triumph.org/
Triumph Travelers (N. California)	http://www.triumphtravelers.org
Southern California Triumph Owners Assn	http://www.sctoa.org
British Motor Club of Utah	http://www.britishmotorclub.org
Moss Motors Parts	http://www.mossmotors.com
The Roadster Factory Parts	http://www.the-roadster-factory.com
Victoria British Parts	http://www.victoriabritish.com
APT Instruments International (gauges)	http://www.gaugeguys.com
Overseas Speedometer	http://www.speedometer.com
British Wire Wheel	http://www.britishwirewheel.com
Rimmer Bros	http://www.rimmerbros.co.uk
Classic Motorsports Magazine	http://www.classicmotorsports.net
Spitfire & GT6 magazine	http://www.triumphspitfire.com
Hemmings Motor News	http://www.hemmings.com
Canley Classics Triumph Parts and Museum	http://www.canleyclassics.com/
Spitfire Tips	http://www.geocities.com/MotorCity/Speedway/1080/spitfaq
British Car Week	http://www.britishcarweek.org

If you have any web sites in your favorites that you think would be helpful to others, please E-mail the editor at cpenn33@yahoo.com.

This is Your Last Chance for The 2005 TRA National Meet!

Uncle Sam (and the TRA) Wants You!

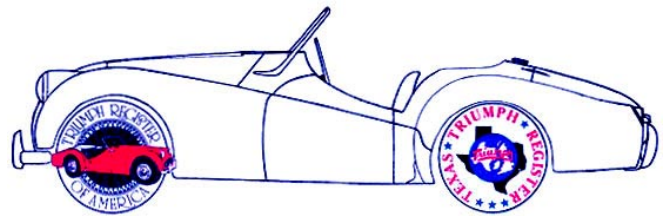
This coming weekend is not only Memorial Day, but it also marks your last chance for raffle tickets for the great prizes, and the last chance to pay the fee for the TRA National Meet. If you get your registration now, you will still get **7 FREE** raffle tickets. The registration rate of \$65 which includes transportation and festivities for you and a guaranteed top seating for the Branson Belle riverboat and show (if selected), and your choice of dinners at the Awards Banquet (if selected).

The prizes that have been donated thus far are some really nice prizes. These are not small, inexpensive, throw away prizes. In case you haven't heard, some of the better ones include a car top of your choice from Robbins Auto Tops, a crystal desk ornament with a hand carved TRA logo from Branson Embroidery, a walnut steering wheel and horn assembly from Classic Sports Cars, and the grand prize is a **pair of tickets on Continental Airlines** to any destination in the continental U.S., Alaska, Canada, or the Caribbean!

As I'm sure you've heard, we have scheduled some terrific drives, a winery tour, a poker rallye, a fun-khana, an incredible autocross, and four nights of action packed events beginning on Wednesday night for the early attendees. Plaques will be awarded for winners in the poker rallye, the fun-khana, and of course, the autocross.

I want to make one more plea to you folks "west of the Mississippi River". We haven't received as many registrations as we had hoped to get from you. As I have continued to say, this is the first TRA meet ever to be held west of the Mississippi, and it may never happen again! So I urge you to take advantage while you can. You won't be sorry!

The schedule of events, registration form, contact information, and links to all Branson information can be found on our website at www.TexasTriumphRegister.org. It's also available on the TRA website at www.TriumphRegister.com, and on the VTR website at www.VTR.org. **Don't wait for the prices to go up - get your registration in NOW!!!**



2005 TRA National Meet Schedule of Events

Thursday, June 23:

7:00 AM–10:00 AM	Early Morning Breakfast Run
9:00 AM–12:00 Noon	Registration, Hospitality, Auction Items Drop-off
2:00 PM–6:00 PM	Registration, Hospitality, Auction Items Dropoff
7:30 PM–11:00 PM	Branson Belle Riverboat Dinner and Show
On-your-own	Scenic Drive – South
On-your-own	Scenic Drive – West
On-your-own	Stone Hill Winery Tour
On-your-own	Attractions and Shows of Branson

Friday, June 24:

7:00 AM–10:00 AM	Early Morning Breakfast Run
8:00 AM–4:00 PM	Registration, Hospitality, Auction Items Drop-off
10:00 AM–11:15 AM	Judges School
11:30 AM–12:30 PM	TRA Membership Meeting (Members Only)
1:00 PM–4:00 PM	Poker Rally
5:00 PM–7:00 PM	Welcome Dinner
7:00 PM– 9:30 PM	Lucas Olympics
7:00 PM–10:30 PM	TRA Auction
On-your-own	Scenic Drive – South
On-your-own	Scenic Drive – West
On-your-own	Stone Hill Winery Tour
On-your-own	Attractions and Shows of Branson
On-your-own	Car Wash and Bath Time

Saturday, June 25:

6:45 AM–7:45 AM	Judges' Breakfast
7:45 AM–9:00 AM	Concours and Participants' Choice Set-up
9:00 AM–12:00 Noon	Concours and Participants' Choice Shows
1:30 PM–5:30 PM	Autocross
7:00 PM–10:30 PM	Awards Banquet and Raffle
On-your-own	Scenic Drive – South
On-your-own	Scenic Drive – West
On-your-own	Stone Hill Winery Tour
On-your-own	Attractions and Shows of Branson
On-your-own	Car Wash and Bath Time

*** Registration, Hospitality, Auction Items Drop-off at the Dutton Inn.**

How I Was Introduced to Triumph Sports Cars

By John Vuksich

So where did my TR-3 really come from? OK, I bought it off eBay, and it was made in England, but where did it really come from?

I was at baseball practice, 1968, playing second base at Prince George County High School. A county school where the ball field started life as a cornfield, barely escaped, and fronted the county road. One day, announced by the distant sound of angry sewing machines screaming, two bug-eyed Austin Healy Sprites raced by, bumper-to-bumper at 55mph. This was golden age of American big iron (my buddy Ron had a 389 GTO), but I never forgot that picture of those two Sprites.

After high school, it was off to West Point where my two older brothers were already in attendance. Since half the family was in New York when my father had to retire from the Army the same summer I entered West Point, mom, dad and my sister moved to Cornwall, NY, six miles from school. Having them there was great: my sister ran more booze to cadets than any Tennessee moon shiner ever dreamed, and mom would host as many as 13 cadet dates during football weekends. Yeah, mom and dad ran the military academy equivalent of the hole-in-the-wall hideout for cadet outlaws.

During these dark days, cadets were forbidden from owning cars. So every year, perhaps as an offer of reconciliation, there was a spectacular car show at West Point where dealers would show every piece of metal that a 21 year old, auto-starved male could want. No Volvo station wagons here. And local banks gave cadets a \$4,000 car loan at virtually zero interest. Danger! Danger! money, hormones and sheet metal, all strengthened by four years of denial! Graduating seniors could buy a car and take delivery in March, but not before. They were permitted to begin driving their cars in April.

Rules, smules! Many cadets in my oldest brother's class just had to have their machines

delivered early. Outlaws I tell you! And these beasts: Jags, Corvettes, Triumphs, Shelby Mustangs, Porsches, etc. all ended up at hole-in-the-wall. Brother Greg bought a TR6. With so many cars, keys just had to be left at the house to manage "parking". I got access to them all! Jay Leno would have envied my stable.

The problem with living in dreams is that each dream comes with a wake-up. Graduation for the class of 1970 came, and my stable went. But one year later, good news! Brother Greg was being sent to Viet-Nam, and the Triumph was coming home to me. During the summer of 1971, my training events included parachute school at Fort Benning, Georgia and "third lieutenant" duty with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The TR-6 was mine for the whole summer! With that car, I chased Myra Jean into the mountains of North Carolina, and assaulted the beaches of Panama City in Florida. Top down, sun & wind burned and just damn cool. Remember, every dream comes with a wake-up; my sister went off to school at Vanderbilt, and took the TR-6. I love my sister, but she took the TR-6.

Two years later, I graduated from West Point, but did not buy a car during the car show. Following graduation leave, I reported to Fort Benning for basic infantry officer training. One day in the local used car lot I saw a Dino Ferrari that begged me for a good home. Quick call to mom and dad for a little help with some cash and she would be -Hello? Hello? Mom? Dad? Hello? Another dream of youth crushed!

Two days after learning the limits of my parents' love, the Army gave me a check to cover the added costs of living while attending training. I took that \$650 check back to the used car lot and traded it for a 1958 bug eyed Sprite. Rage at my parents? Nope. The devil made me do it? Nope. It was that baseball field from 1968 and confirmation from so many other British cars. I drove that little car as my primary transportation for three years! Filled her up on six gallons. Parked in spaces for motorcycles. Screamed at 55 mph, the national speed limit. Froze in winter, roasted in summer. Can life be better?

In 1977, it was Fort Benning again, but now for the TOW missile course. And once again, in a used car lot was something I just had to have, a 1970 911S Porsche. I still have the car. I know that when I sell her, I will become officially old. She hasn't run in 12 years, but I'm still hanging on to her defending my youth.

The two cars were different. Do you recall the book "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance"? Two friends, each with a motorcycle. One friend's motorcycle world was inside the machine. He knew every technical aspect of his love. The other friend's motorcycle world was outside the machine being part of a landscape, riding the motorcycle without the slightest knowledge of how the machine worked beyond how to operate it. For me, the Porsche was the machine to know inside. The engineering is superb. I spent years tinkering on that machine. But the British cars, for me, are for driving on that perfect day on that perfect road. They place you center stage inside a piece of visual art and the rest of the world is just your stage prop. They make life right.

I stumbled into EBay Motors one day and looked at Triumphs for no particular reason. I pictured my 16 year old nephew and his stunning twin sister in a TR3 heading off to wherever they head off to. And I thought: they must taste old British sports cars. So I bought my TR3, that's where it came from. Whitney learned to drive it in first and second. Jack learned to handle the car well. And Jack helped rebuild the front end, modify the front brakes, and then swapped the transmission with Mike McPhail. But the magic didn't catch. I'm sorry for their loss. But I am happy that I have a TR3 now. They're not making any more of those, and you can always find replacement 16 year olds.



John Vuksich
347-0560

Drive Your British Car Rallye



The Line at Pok-E-Jo's



Second Place Bob and Marilyn Skewis



First Place Mark Barrington and Lorne Parks

DYBCW Treasure Hunt Rallye

By Alan Ferretti

The Drive Your British Car Week Rallye was a brilliant success. There were 25 cars, 24 participating in the Treasure Hunt and the rallye-master's MG, representing the best of several British marques. We had ten Triumphs represented by TR250, TR3, TR6, TR7, and Spitfire models; ten MG's represented by TF, MGA, MGB, and Midget models; three Jaguars represented by XK8, XJS, and XKR-100 models; a Mini Cooper; and a 1930-something three-wheel Morgan.

All the different marques and models made for quite a feeling of excitement at the driver's meeting. It felt like a small car show prior to the rallye start with everyone checking out the other cars as they drove in. The weather cooperated nicely at the start, with cloud cover providing some relief from the heat. This was short lived though, and by about an hour into the rallye the clouds were gone and the Treasure Hunt turned into more of an endurance adventure as the temperatures climbed into the 90's.

This rallye was different in two respects - it took place right in the center of the city and the format was a Treasure Hunt. The "treasure" being hunted was the names of the State of Texas Office Buildings located within certain boundaries on a city map. The object was to write the names on an answer sheet and locate the buildings on the map. The team with the most correct answers in one hour and forty-five minutes would be declared the winners. One point was given for each correct answer and one point deducted for each incorrect answer. A score of twenty-seven was perfect, based on a City of Austin Map dated September 2004.

Debb and I thought there might be some advantage to those participants that worked downtown, but given that the winning score was a 19, only a 70% correct score, there was plenty of room left at the end of the day for them to have been beaten. The second and third place finishers both had 18 correct, with

the difference being in the map placement of the buildings. This was a very challenging rallye, and it came down to how well the driver and navigator communicated, as it always does, and how much heat the team could endure.

Awards were handed out at Pok-E-Joe's following the Rallye and lunch. The third place trophy went to Herb and Cindy Valliant in a Triumph TR7, Second place went to Bob and Marilyn Skewis in a Triumph TR250, and first place went to Mark Barrington and Lorne Parks in Mark's MG-TF. This was the official unveiling of Mark's TF - he's been working on the restoration for a few years now. He did a beautiful job on it and I doubt it will be the last award he receives in this brilliantly restored example of British motoring heritage.

Congratulations to all the participants, everyone was a winner for coming out and promoting our hobby and this year's Drive Your British Car Week. We also hope you now have a better understanding of what makes up our Capital City downtown area and why it's so special to those of us lucky enough to live here. On behalf on Debb and myself, the Capital City MG Club, and all the British Car Clubs of Austin, thanks to all of you for making this a lot of fun and a great day for Driving Your British Car!



Rallye Master Alan Ferretti

"I'm looking to buy a Triumph TR 250, preferably one that is drivable but could use restoration." 04/05

Bob Baker
512 448 0093
bcbaker@austin.rr.com

Hello,

My name is Aaron Alter and I represent BK Automotive in Houston, Texas. We are a one stop full service custom, fabrication, restoration, and acquisition shop that specializes in building TV / movie replica cars (star cars) for movie car museums and dedicated collectors. On behalf of BK Automotive I would like to personally offer you and the rest of the members of your club a 10% discount along with a free estimate on a vehicle requiring any type of special attention.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and I look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Sincerely,

Aaron Alter
BK AUTOMOTIVE
4051 Hollister rd
Houston, Texas 77080
713-996-9655
aaronbkauto@sbcglobal.net
www.bkauto.net

Beautiful 1959 TR-3A Triumph Roadster for sale. General Robbie Risner bought his pride and joy new in Spain & owned this car until I bought it from him 10 years ago. Red with black interior, rare factory hardtop, chrome wire wheels, overdrive transmission, new brake system, other new work done recently. Runs great! A very handsome driver! Car: \$15,500 Hardtop: \$750 Both: \$16,250
Steve Richards (512) 264-2007 02/05



Hill Country Triumph Club Shirts, Sweatshirts, and Hats are always available!

Shirts are 100% combed cotton pique tri-color pullover "JERZEE" golf shirts. Sweatshirts are 95% "Lee" hooded with muff pocket. Shirts, hats, and sweatshirts have the HCTC logo embroidered on the front. Shirts and sweatshirts are \$25.00 and hats are \$15.00. Buy yours at the next meeting or event!

You can also take your own garment to be monogrammed with the club logo to Monograms Today, Simon Bedoya, 1738 W. Anderson Lane, Austin, 451-2871.

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Hill Country Triumph Club

2005 Events



JUNE 2005

- 11 **Fix-It Day at the Kramer's, 9 AM;** See your E-mail for directions or call 512-250-9498.
- 14 **Hill Country Triumph Club Meeting, 7PM.** See location below.
- 23-25 **TRA National Meet Branson, MO.** See page 5 for information.

JULY 2005

- 12 **Hill Country Triumph Club Meeting, 7PM.**
- 26-30 **VTR National Convention, Rockford, IL** Visit <http://www.vtr2005.org/>

AUGUST 2005

- 9 **Hill Country Triumph Club Meeting, 7PM.**
- TBA **Blood Drive and Summer Party,** More info to come.

OCTOBER 2005

- 1-2 **Texas All British Car Day, Round Rock;** <http://www.txabcd.org>
- 15 **Houston All British Motor Vehicle Expo, Trader's Village** <http://www.tradersvillage.com/events/hn/05-britexpo.html>

Hill Country Triumph Club
1105 N. Canyonwood Dr.
Dripping Springs, TX 78620
Address Correction Requested

The next meeting will be June 14th, 7PM, at a la Carrera in the Balcones Woods Shopping Center, 11150 Research Blvd. Take 183 north, exit Duval, loop back south on the frontage road. 345-1763.