



TRIUMPH SPORTS CAR CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA
JOHANNESBURG CENTRE
NEWSLETTER



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From the picture archive
Gilroy's Brewery January 2009

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Please note that all contributions to the newsletter should be directed to John Dobbins, e-mail dobbins@iafrica.com by 25th of each month

Editorial

I hope you have all recovered from the festive season by now and have not broken too many of your New Year's resolutions!

The run to the Vaal with SAMCA was rather disappointing and rather "same old... same old...".

The January picnic at Glenburn Lodge was pretty well supported, considering the uncertain weather. Gino was in his Healey so I guess his TR6 was parked in!

It was great to see Alastair Kennedy in his magnificent TR4, John Craig and Ed Grondel in "Bluey", Eddie and Ada in the yellow TR4A, Gerald and Juane in "MadamTR". Pretoria joined us on this run and we had lots of time to catch up.

I'm sorry this newsletter is once again late but I have no Internet thanks to Telkom but luckily John Crowther has kindly come to my aid.

March 20th is this Piston Ring Swap Meet at Modderfontein so maybe you can find the parts you need or might need for the Nationals!

Regards,
John Dobbins.

From The Chairman

Pending

Events Calendar for 2016**February**

Tuesday 16th Noggin
 Sunday 21st Valentine's Run

March

Tuesday 15th Noggin
 Sunday 20th Piston Ring swap meeting, Modderfontein
 Sunday 27th Braai at VVC

April

Sunday 3rd Angela's Picnic
 Tuesday 19th Noggin
 Sunday 24th Run

May

Mon 2nd to Sat 7th National Gathering
 Tuesday 17th Noggin
 Sunday 22nd Run
 Saturday 28th Just Wheels Show at Muriel Brand School

June

Tuesday 21st Noggin
 Sunday 26th Run

July

Sunday 17th Scottburgh Classic Car Show, Scottburgh High School
 Tuesday 19th Noggin
 Sunday 24th Run
 Sunday 31st POMC Cars in the Park – Zwartkops Raceway

August

Tuesday 16th Noggin
 Wednesday 17th Quiz in Pretoria
 Sunday 28th Run

September

Sunday 18th Swop Meeting, Piston Ring
 Tuesday 20th Noggin
 Sunday 25th Run

October

Tuesday 18th AGM
 Sunday 23rd Run

November

Tuesday 15th Noggin
 Sunday 27th Run

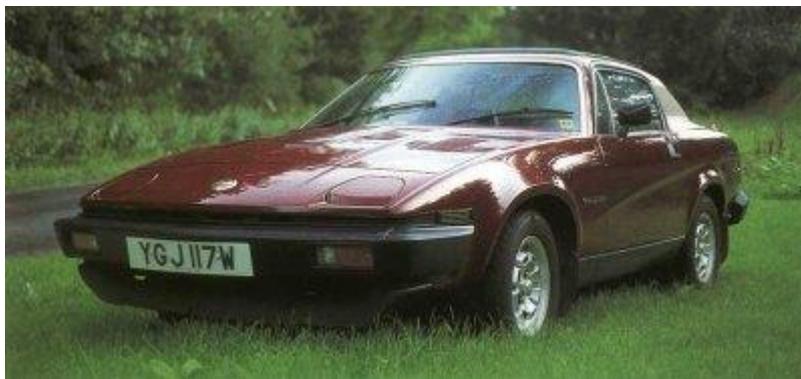
December

Christmas Lunch

Triumph TR7

The Leyland company gradually became Britain's native motor industry during the Sixties, successively absorbing Standard-Triumph, AEC, Rover/Alvis and, in 1968, British Motor Holdings (BMC with Jaguar). Thus it was that two old foes, MG and Triumph, found themselves under the vast new roof of British Leyland. One of its first undertakings was the Triumph TR7.

BL management was initially top-heavy with former Triumph executives, so Triumph was given design responsibility for the new firm's future sports cars, which would wear the Triumph badge, leaving MG out in the cold. An early result of this decision was a new program initiated in 1970-71 to create a single replacement for BL's two aging "big" sports cars, the MGB and [Triumph TR6](#) -- a modern design with worldwide buyer appeal and engineered for high-volume production. It emerged some four years later as the Triumph TR7.



Except for details, the rather odd "flying doorstep" shape of the TR7 coupe was unchanged through the model's troubled production run. Here, a 1981 British example with aftermarket sunroof.

Though it carried the famous TR initials, this new Triumph was completely different from the TR6 it would eventually oust from the line-up. Instead of a six-cylinder roadster with Italian styling, all-independent suspension, and body-on-frame construction, it was a British-designed unitized coupe with a four-cylinder engine and beam rear axle.

As originally envisioned, the basic TR7 platform would have spawned a whole sports-car family with engines ranging from a 2.0-litre four through a 16-valve version and on up to a 3.5-litre V-8, the light-alloy GM unit recently acquired by Rover. All would have fixed-roof coupe bodywork and were planned to be on the market within three years of the introductory four-cylinder model.

TR7 styling originated at BL in Longbridge, not at Triumph itself, with an off-hand sketch by designer Harris Mann -- "off-hand" in that it wasn't a serious proposal. But his "bubbletop wedge" shape appealed to management, and they stuck with it all the way through to production despite, some say, sage counsel to the contrary. What emerged was by no means as graceful as Giugiaro's Lotus Esprit or any of the Italian supercars it tried to emulate, being stubby and wide, almost as cartoonish as Mann's original drawing. The interior was nicely done but rather cramped, thanks to a very bulky dashboard, and though the trunk was useful enough, there was little in-cabin stowage space.

Production economics and corporate politics dictated chassis components and driveline be taken from the BL bins. The engine, for example, was an enlarged version of the Triumph-designed 1.7-litre SOHC four supplied to Saab for its period 99 sedans (since re-engineered by the Swedes, who still build it for their current 900 and 9000 models). It also showed up in

Triumph's small Dolomite sedan, a rear-drive derivative of the earlier front-drive 1300/1500, for which a twin cam 16-valve version was developed (but would never appear in a TR7 as planned). The standard gearbox was a 4-speed manual, but there were two options: an overdrive 5-speed (borrowed from Rover's big SD1 hatchback-sedan series) and British-built Borg-Warner 3-speed automatic.

Chassis specs were conventional. The all-coil suspension employed front MacPherson struts and a live rear axle located by radius arms. Steering was the expected rack-and-pinion, brakes servo-assisted front discs and rear drums.

Still struggling to come to terms with more automated manufacturing, BL set up TR7 production at its brand-new Speke plant near Liverpool. It was a big mistake. The workforce not only had no experience building sports cars but, egged on by ever-stubborn union leaders, tended go on strike even more often than other British factory workers. Not surprisingly, workmanship was highly variable and production erratic, neither of which did anything for sales.

Properly put together, though, the 7 was a much sweeter-handling TR than the 6, about as fast, and more practical if less romantic. But the oddball styling, indifferent quality control, and the tarnished reputation of British cars in general took a big sales toll, especially in the United States where demand would never meet expectations.

After yet another management shuffle, BL closed Speke in 1978 and shifted TR7 tooling to Triumph's Canley plant near Coventry, a process that left a six-month gap in production. Things were uprooted again just two years later, when the TR7 was sent to Rover's Solihull facility in the face of BL's large, continuing cash shortfalls and its ever-more desperate need to economize.

Hoping to turn the TR7 around, BL issued a smart new convertible version in 1979. Bereft of the coupe's foreshortened roof and dippy side window line, it looked miles better, and BL attended to details inside and out. But none of this did anything for sales. Neither did the planned V-8 derivative, which arrived the following year as the [TR8](#).

Because by then, it was all over. With BL's waning American sales, continuing huge losses, and soaring development costs for new mass-market family models like the Metro and Maestro, Whitehall stepped in and nationalized the firm, which remains on the dole at this writing. This brought another new management team and yet another recovery plan that included doing away with sports cars. The TR7 thus went to its grave in October 1981, shortly after the MGB and Triumph Spitfire had been killed off; the [TR8](#) went with it, of course.

It was a sad end for the once-great TR, and Triumph itself was gone by the mid-Eighties. Alas, neither is likely to make a comeback.

Something to smile about ~~~~~

A jump lead walks into a bar. The barman says "I'll serve you, but don't start anything."

A dyslexic man walks into a bra.

A man walks into a bar with a roll of tarmac under his arm and says: "Pint please, and one for the road."

Two aerials meet on a roof, fall in love get married. The ceremony was rubbish but the reception was brilliant.

Two cannibals are eating a clown. One says to the other: "Does this taste funny to you?"

Man with a strawberry stuck up his bum goes to the doctor. The Doctor says "I'll give you some cream to put on it."

"Doc, I can't stop singing 'The green, green grass of home'."

"That sounds like Tom Jones syndrome."

"Is it common?"

"Well.....it's not unusual....."

Two cows standing next to each other in a field, Daisy says to Dolly "I was artificially inseminated this morning."

"I don't believe you," said Dolly.

"It's true, straight up, no bull!"

Two hydrogen atoms walk into a bar.

One says, "I think I've lost an electron."

The other says, "Are you sure?"

The first replies, "Yes, I'm positive."

Answer phone messageIf you want to buy marijuana, press the hash key...."

A man takes his Rottweiler to the vet and says "My dog's cross-eyed, is there anything you can do for him? "

"Well," says the vet, "let's have a look at him" So he picks the dog up and examines his eyes, then checks his teeth. Finally, he says "I'm going to have to put him down."

"What? Because he's cross-eyed? "

"No, because he's really heavy"

Two elephants walk off a cliff boom boom!

Apparently, 1 in 5 people in the world are Chinese. And there are 5 people in my family, so it must be one of them. It's either my mum or my dad or my older brother Colin. Or my younger brother Ho-Cha-Chu. But I think it's Colin.

I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day but I couldn't find any.

I went to the butchers the other day and I bet him 50 quid that he couldn't reach the meat off the top shelf.

And he said, "No, you're right, the steaks are too high."

My friend drowned in a bowl of muesli. He was pulled in by a strong currant.

A man came round in hospital after a serious accident. He shouted, "Doctor, doctor, I can't feel my legs!"

The doctor replied, "I know you can't, I had to amputate your arms"

I went to a really energetic "Seafood Disco" last week and pulled a mussel.

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly; but when they lit a fire in the craft it sank, proving once and for all that you can't have your kayak and heat it.