

# THE CLEAR HOOTER!

THE NEWSLETTER OF CENTRAL COAST TRIUMPHS  
ALL BRITISH CAR CLUB



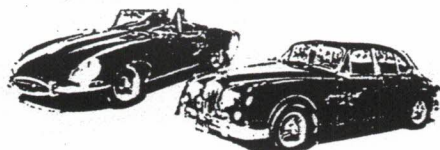
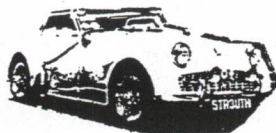
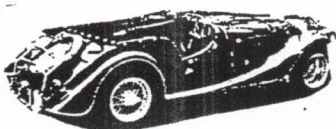
## GENERAL MEETING ATTENDEES

JUNE 7th 1995

Name	Driving
Daryll & Cindy Clark	Dodge Pick'em Up
Tom Crawford	Bummed-a-Ride
Tom Culbertson	TR250
Bill Czerwinski	'61 Morris
Claudia DieBolt	'70 Midget
Dick Doyle	'63 Sprite
Helder Fagunder	Toyota Pickup Truck
Ton German	Saturn
Don Greene	'57 Morgan +4
Ed Good	(passenger in above)
Paul Keener	'74 XJ6L
George Kinsolving	'70 MGB
Bob Klope	'69 SS396 El Camino
Jon Korbin	TR3
John Magnussen	'61 MGA
Jane McIlhaney	Taurus Wagon
Jason McIlhaney	TR250
Harvey & Marilou North	TRysler
Ellen Quinonez	Honda
Carol & Bill Rogers	TRoyta
David Skora	'54 Bently 'R'
C Darryl Struth	'85 XJ6
Herman & Helena Van den Akker	Chevy Van
Bob Youngdahl	Pickup TR-uck
Karen Zambory	'74 XJ6L

VOLUME 12, NO. VI

JUNE 1995



**CENTRAL COAST TRIUMPHS**  
**ALL BRITISH CAR CLUB**

FOUNDED in 1984 by Ms Lee Blomquist

A Chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register. Dues are \$20.00 per year payable in February to:

CCT All British Car Club  
P O Box 503  
Ventura CA 93002  
Attn: David McIlhaney  
Membership Chairman

**1995 BOARD MEMBERS/OFFICERS:**

**PRESIDENT**

C Darryl Struth (h) 805-644-6211  
(w) 805-656-3673

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Jane McIlhaney 805-642-4441

**TREASURER**

Don Greene 805-652-0330

**SECRETARY**

Tom & Teri 805-987-4629  
Crawford

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN**

David McIlhaney (h) 805-642-4441  
(w) 805-982-7937

**EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR**

Daryll & Cindy 818-887-5518  
Clark

**VOLUNTARY POSITIONS**

HISTORIAN Position Open

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Susan Raty 805-641-2607

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS**

Jon Korbin 818-345-6264  
Herb Friedman 805-984-3649

**AD CHAIRMAN**

Tim Mikel (h) 805-644-8690  
(w) 805-643-5621

**MEETING INFORMATION**

**MONTHLY GENERAL MEETINGS:**

**FIRST WEDNESDAY EACH MONTH**

7:00 pm

**HUDSON'S GRILL**

4722 Telephone Road  
Ventura CA  
Ph 805-642-4349

1995 Meetings

Jan 11	Feb 01
Mar 01	Apr 05
May 03	Jun 07
<u>JUL 05 !!</u>	Aug 02
Sep 06	Oct 04
Nov 01	Dec 06

**MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS**

are currently held  
SECOND WEDNESDAY of  
each month. MEMBERS ARE  
WELCOME TO ATTEND!  
Call one of the officers  
for Board Meeting location.

"THE CLEAR HOOTER" is  
published monthly.

**DEADLINE for "CAMERA  
READY" contributions**

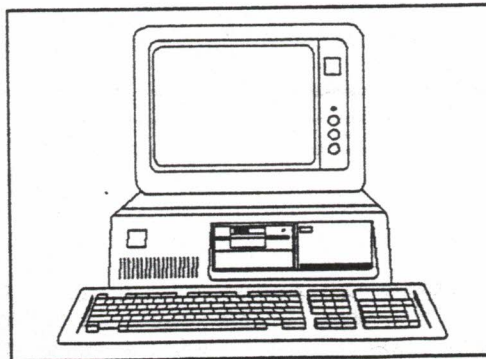
to the newsletter is the  
TUESDAY FOLLOWING THE  
GENERAL MEETING. Mail to  
Club's P.O. Box or contact  
any one of the officers.

**FOR NEWSLETTER CLASSIFIEDS,**  
contact Susan Raty  
(805-641-2607) or send to:

CCT All British Car Club  
P O Box 503  
Ventura CA 93002  
\* \* \* \* \*

**HAVE YOU MOVED????  
PLEASE LET US KNOW!!**





## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

### PRESIDENTS' NOTES

Another full room at the June general meeting. Too bad the events we put on don't have that kind of a turnout. That's o.k. though, the one's of us that do go on them, have a great time. Last Sundays' Austin - Healey Club, South Coast, Gimmick Rally was alot of fun. Four cars from Central Coast were there and all won something from second place to last - we covered the gamut.

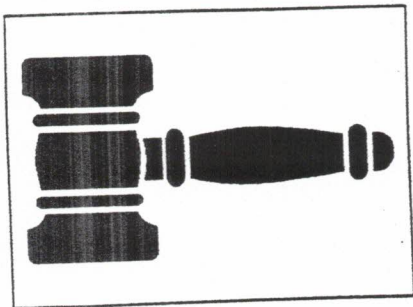
Coming up this weekend is the 7th. Annual Car Roundup, in Thousand Oaks at C.L.U. campus, presented by The Milestone Car Society of California, Inc. Then the following weekend there's Le Cercle Concours d'Elegance 28th Invitational in Brentwood. This is a benefit for the City of Hope. But why should I tell you all this? Read the "Calendar of Events" in the Hooter.

Oh by the way - our Ventura All British Day was a success. Thank to all that attended and helped out. Have to cut this short this time. Susan will yell at me because it's "deadline"!

**Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.** - Jim Ryan

Keep'em running!

C. Darryl Struth



### SECRETARY REPORT

JUNES MEETING WAS HELD ON WEDNESDAY THE 7 TH AT HUDSONS GRILL IN VENTURA AND BEGAN AT 7:18 CULBERTSON TIME.

PRESIDENT DARRYL BEGAN WITH A BRIEF SUMMARY OF RECENT CAR SHOWS AND RELATED EVENTS OF INTEREST TO THE CLUB.

FOLLOWING THIS, DON PRESENTED THE TREASURERS REPORT , STATING THAT THE CLUB NOW HAS OVER \$5000.00 IN THE SAVINGS ACCOUNT!!

THE MEMBERSHIP AND ADVERTISING OFFICERS REPORTS WERE WAIVED AS THEY WERE AWAY ON BUSINESS .

CINDY CLARK NEXT MENTIONED THE UP-COMMING SANTA PAULA AIRPORT EVENT AND ASKED THAT IF ANYONE HAD SPECIAL EVENT INFO FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO PLEASE ROUTE IT THRU HER OR DARYLL FOR INPUT TO THE NEWSLETTER.

OLD BUSINESS: DARRYL TALKED ABOUT THE OXNARD "VINTAGE EXPERIENCE", THEN OUR VENTURA ALL BRITISH CAR SHOW BRIEFLY. CLAUDIA EXPRESSED HER THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO HELPED WITH THE SET UP, RUNNING AND THE CLEAN UP FOR THE SHOW.

THE HIGHLAND GAMES WERE ALSO ATTENDED BY CLUB MEMBERS, WHO HAD A GREAT TIME AS USUAL.

JASON REPORTED ON THE TRSC GARAGE TOUR, WHICH WAS FOLLOWED UP WITH A BBQ OPEN HOUSE AT MARILYN AND JASONS HOME.

CAMARILLOS " GET YOUR HEART IN GEAR" CAR SHOW WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY CCTABCC MEMBERS AND WAS REPORTED TO BE QUITE FUN.

HARVEY LED A DISCUSSION NEXT CONCERNING TRIUMPHST 95 IN PALM SPRINGS, REMINDING EVERYONE THAT BOB STILL NEEDS VOLUNTEERS FOR CHECKPOINT CREWS, AND URGING ALL CLUB MEMBERS TO SUPPORT THE CLUB IN THIS WORTHWHILE EFFORT. BOB FOLLOWED WITH SOME OF HIS IDEAS ON THE RALLEY.

JOHN FOLLOWED BY OFFERING SOME NEW IDEAS FOR THE HOLIDAY PARTY THIS WINTER AND THIS WILL BE DISCUSSED AT A LATER DATE. ONE GOAL OF SUCH A PARTY WOULD BE TO HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR TRIUMPHST 96.

THE LONG OVER-DO " CLUTCH BURNING HILL CLIMB AWARD " WAS FINALLY PRESENTED TONITE TO THE WINNER TOM CULBERTSON ALONG WITH A HEARTY ROUND OF APPLAUSE. HIS NAME IS NOW ENGRAVED ALONG WITH ALL THOSE OTHER BRITISH CAR LEGENDS TO CONQUER " THE HILL" AND LIVE TO TELL ABOUT IT.

CLAUDIA WAS PRESENTED TONITE WITH THE FIRST " GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP" AWARD BY DARRYL AFTER GIVING UP HER FIRST PLACE AWARD AT THE VENTURA BRITISH CAR SHOW DUE TO A MIS-REGISTRATION GLITCH IN THE MG CATAGORY.

REMINDER—CLAUDIA AND JANE ALSO HAVE A SELECTION OF CLUB RELATED SWEAT AND T- SHIRTS FOR SALE AT GREAT NEW PRICES!

AFTER THE NIGHTLY MEGA- JACKPOT DRAWING THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:52 PM (CULBERTSON TIME STILL) AND THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY THE USUAL TIRE- KICKING / FENDER WARMING IN THE PARKING LOT.

SEE YOU NEXT MONTH,





EDIT . . . er, THAT'S ME!

Since I am running around like a "chicken with my head cut off" and have limited time to write this, let alone get the "Clear Hooter" published, all I have to say is:

PLEASE...PLEASE...PLEASE !!!

SEND IN YOUR NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS !!!

I AM GETTING DESPERATE FOR ANYTHING TO PUT INTO PRINT !!!

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE

*Susan Ratz*

CORRECTION TO MIS-PRINT IN MAY 1995 "CLEAR HOOTER", PAGE 6, SURFIN' SAFARI RESULTS

(as pointed out by Mike Moore, and respectfully so!):

Car #22

Driver was CONNIE MOORE  
Navigator was MIKE MOORE

WAY TO GO CONNIE!!!

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR WORDS

Greetings...and thanks for tuning in again. In this month's Hooter you'll find an application. As I mentioned last month (I think), I have relatively few applications on file and would like to have one for all of you. PLEASE take the time to fill it out and send it in to the club address so that we will have the information about that you sent in an application, don't worry about it. However, those of you who have been in the club all along may not have an application on file or it may be outdated. Please take the time to send in a new one. We appreciate it! Also, if there are any errors on your mailing label or on the roster which was in last month's newsletter, please let me know.

*cheers!*  
*Dave*





STORY  
TELLING TIME

"DRIVER"

Mike Moore, author

There is a story why my wife Connie wears the London Transit Authority "Driver" badge on her club jacket.

Connie and I attended our first Triumphfest at Pismo Beach. That Triumphfest I drove my first and only rally. I still have the key chain-with-a-photo-gismo the photographer who took our picture coming out of the Seacrest Hotel sold us. What happened? Why does my WIFE usually drive on tours?

She pointed out to me on that day, that of the returning cars where the husband drove, the lady navigator appeared to be unhappy. In some cases very unhappy. (This was most of the cars by the way.) What was happening, she went on, was that the male partner had probably expressed serious displeasure with the quality of navigation. Likely in strong terms. This then caused unhappiness and anguish about something that was intended to be enjoyable. We both knew she was right. We decided in the future to try doing what we each did arguably best; I would navigate; and she would drive.

While we haven't done any REAL rallies, business trips have luckily allowed her to accompany me to Europe, Britain, and the South Pacific. She has driven and I have navigated, typically from southern Spain to the Swiss-Italian border. The more complex the drive, the better this arrangement seems to work for us.

I got us lost in southern Spain, in the dark, on a two laned highway, in a dangerous area, almost out of gas, and not able to speak the language. I bet not too many people know that highway III near Valencia is actually Highway 3, and not to be confused with Highway 111 OR that the road to Genova in Southern France is not the same as the road to Geneva. So I have a few major navigational faux pas to my credit, but I've noticed that otherwise stupid and infuriating navigational mistakes become tolerable when I'VE made them. And the driver remains pretty calm too, and usually shows no outward signs of serious displeasure.

You might give it a try. Club activities may become more fun for the wife when she is a full participant instead of an incompetent navigator. And for men; you may find incompetent navigational mistakes aren't as big a deal as you thought they were when YOU navigate!

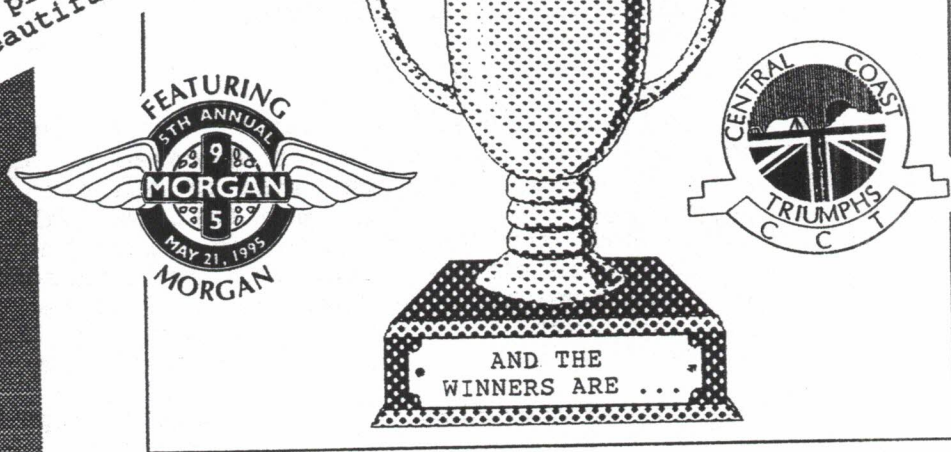
PS. Don't even think about women being worse drivers. Ignore it. It doesn't matter. I have learned who the better driver is in MY family. And her father (a truck driver) would be very proud!



**RECAP OF:  
VENTURA ALL BRITISH CAR DAY '95**

Well, boys and girls, as expected the 5th Annual All British Car Day was a huge success. We logged in close to 110 British cars including a couple British Off-road Armor Vehicles and 6 or 8 British Motorcycles. The food was good, the swapmeeters were swapping, the vendors were vending, the crowd was friendly, and everyone commented on how British the weather felt.

The turn-out in the Featured Marque category (Morgan) was much better than years prior, and World Renowned Actor Malcom McDowell drove down his beautiful +8 Morgan Roadster.



In the awards department there were 13 categories. The winners of each are listed below:

- MORGANS.....1st. place..Don Greene..'56 +4/4 pass  
2nd. place..Dennis Ashley..+4 supersport
- TRIUMPHS.....1st. place..Heide Van Den Akker..'63 TR-3B
- JAGUAR.....1st. place..Tim Mikel..'61 MK II
- HEALEY.....1st. place..George Burkhardt..Austin Healey BN8
- MG.....1st. place..Bert Milligan..MGTD
- LOTUS.....1st. place..Walter Okon..MK VI
- MORRIS/MINI.....1st. place..Rob McKeown..Austin Cooper S
- TOURING/SALOONS...1st. place..Robert Jackson..'57 Bentley SI
- BRITISH OFF-ROAD..1st. place..Michael Held..Armor Car
- OTHER SPORTS CAR..1st. place..Steve Vendt..Sunbeam Tiger MK I
- MOTORCYCLES.....1st. place..Michael Taggart..BSA Flattracker
- BEST OF SHOW.....C. DARRYL STRUTH..'63 MORGAN +4 ROADSTER
- GOOD SPORT AWARD..Claudia Diebolt for giving up her 1st place MG award due to a registration glitch.

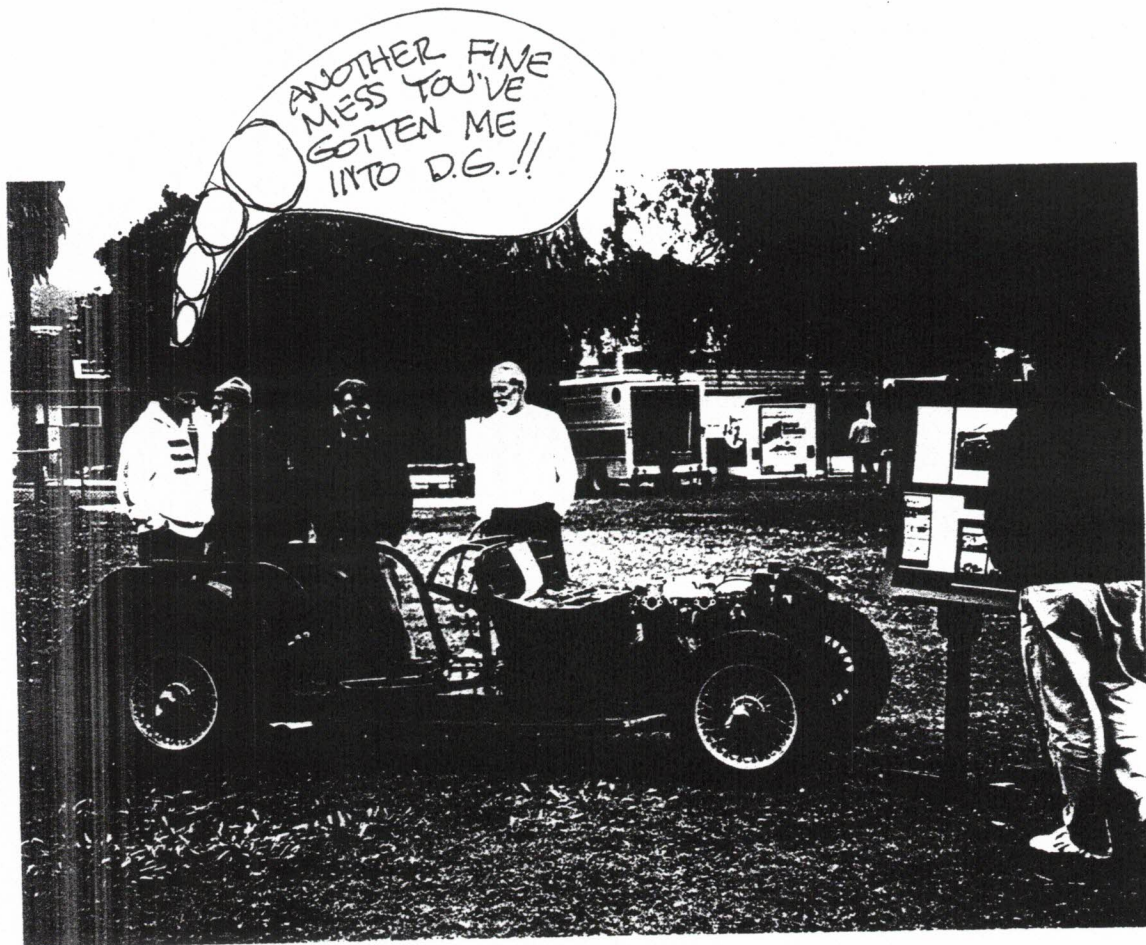
MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED!! SEE YOU NEXT YEAR...  
SAME TIME...SAME PLACE!!

*DON GREENE*



## VENTURA ALL BRITISH DAY

SPONSORED BY: CENTRAL COAST TRIUMPHS ALL BRITISH CAR CLUB



PROB KLOPES PROMISING  
'58 MORGAN +4 ROADSTER  
DISPLAYED AT THE 5TH  
ANNUAL ALL BRITISH CAR  
SHOW IN VENTURA..

P.S. IF SOMEONE HAS PHOTOS OF THE  
VENTURA ALL BRITISH DAY SHOW AND  
WOULD LIKE THEM CONSIDERED FOR  
SHOWING IN A FUTURE NEWSLETTER  
PLEASE MAIL TO THE CCT CLUB ADDRESS.



## SNEAK PREVIEW OF UPCOMING EVENTS

### TRIUMPH STANDARD

#### DEER PARK WINERY & AUTO MUSEUM

Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup>

Deer Park Winery & Auto Museum  
29013 Champagne Blvd  
Escondido CA  
619-741-8876

This is a joint event run between Triumph Sports Car Club of San Diego and SCTOA. Everyone will meet at the Shell station on Ortega Highway (State 74) and I-5 at 8:00 a.m. (Northeast corner)

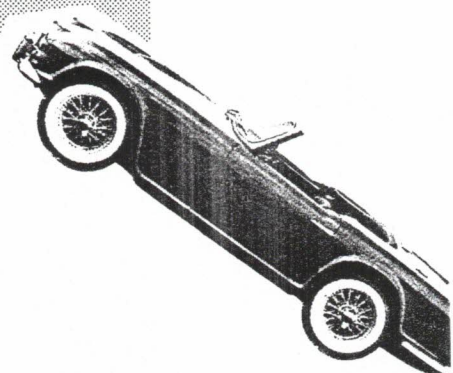
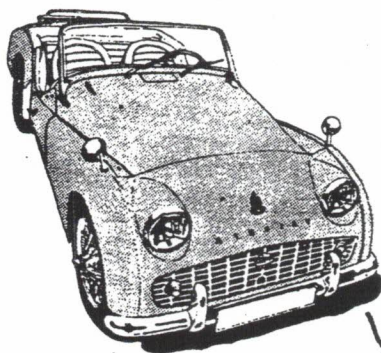
Buy your brunch at Deer Park or bring your own picnic lunch and buy your drinks there. The auto museum fee is \$4.00 per person.

#### To get there:

East on State 74 (Ortega Highway) to I-15 South  
I-15 South to Gopher Canyon Rd  
Gopher Canyon Rd turn left (north)  
Champagne Boulevard turn right  
continue to Deer Park, 1 mile on left.

If you get lost call the winery at the above phone number for specific directions. Please RSVP to Bob Reinhold

**PLEASE NOTE! DIRECTIONS IN FEB. ISSUE WERE INCORRECT. FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS TO WINERY.**



*Le Cercle Concours  
d'Elegance Inc.*

May 1995

Dear Antique or Classic Car Owner:

You are cordially invited to attend the Twenty-Eighth Invitational Concours d'Elegance benefiting the City of Hope National Medical Center and its Beckman Research Institute on Sunday, June 25, 1995, at the Veterans Administration Park at San Vicente and Wilshire Boulevards in Brentwood, California.

The 1995 Concours will feature the stately Duesenberg as its marquee car, and we would be delighted to include your automobile(s) in this select company. Exhibits will include a glimpse of the best of twenty four classes, ranging from antique and horseless carriages to race cars. In addition, we are pleased to recognize Bruce Meyer as the distinguished "Car Collector of the Year."

Please note that on your entry form is information about the VIP luncheon and awards presentation viewing area. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to socialize with celebrities, judges and other car enthusiasts. You will find, also, that the awards presentation viewing area provides select seating during the trophy presentation. However, seating for both the VIP luncheon and viewing area is limited, and no tickets will be sold the day of the show, so make your reservations today.

To confirm your participation as a car exhibitor and to reserve your seats for the VIP luncheon and awards presentation viewing area, simply complete the enclosed entry form and send it along with your check made payable to City of Hope, no later than May 26, 1995. If you have any questions or would like additional information about this unique Concours, please call me at (310) 410-1022.

We look forward to seeing you on June 25!

Sincerely,

Fred Bogardus, President  
Le Cercle Concours d'Elegance

encl.

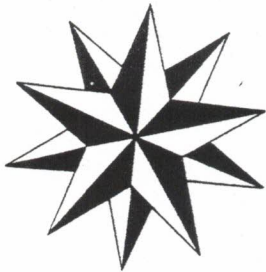
P.S. Make your reservations now for this unique event benefiting the City of Hope! Please return your entry form and check to Fred Bogardus, 7946 Dunbarton, Los Angeles, CA 90045



19800 MacArthur Blvd. #380, Irvine, CA 92715-2433 • (714) 622-1900 • FAX (714) 622-1910



**EVENT OF THE MONTH**



Festival News

**MOSS BRITISH CAR FESTIVAL**  
 To be held at the "Flag is up farms" Buellton, California.  
 East Highway 246 between Buellton and Solvang.  
 July 14th- 15th-16th, 1995.

**This three day event is open to all types of British cars.**

The program includes Rallies, Slalom, Funkhanas, and many other fun driving events. A Giant Car Show with prizes and trophies for numerous British Car categories will be held Sunday the 16th, the last day of the festival. All categories of British cars are welcome, pristine and not so pristine, Sports cars, Sedans, 4x4s, Buses, and Taxis, if its British, bring it !! Entry fee for car show only is \$20.00. Three day participation fee, (Paid before 6/30/95.) is \$40.00.

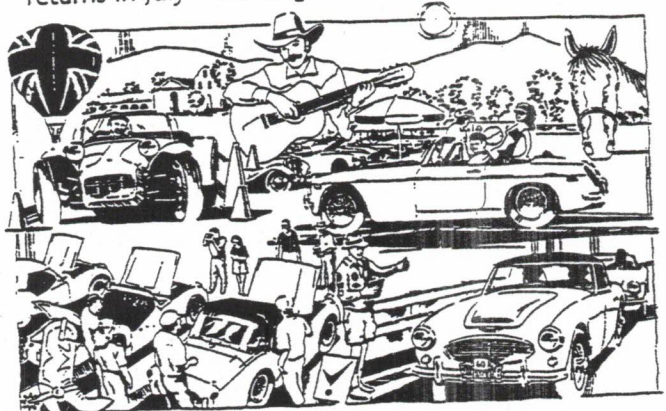
Spectators are welcome. Admission is \$10 a car, bring the whole family. Gates are open at 8am. Lots of easy parking.

Each participating registration will include free raffle ticket/s, for a **FREE ROUND TRIP TICKET FOR TWO, ON BRITISH AIRWAYS , "The world's favourite airline" TO LONDON ENGLAND.**

We are also pleased to announce that in the Saturday program **Mr. Norman Nock will conduct a Lucas Tech Session.** Mr. Nock who served his apprenticeship with Lucas in England, as well as being part of the Lucas Race Team in the 50's, was transferred to Toronto Canada as the Technical Representative for them. Norman will give a tech talk on the working principles of Lucas Equipment as fitted to British Cars and will be open for any and all questions on the subject. Mr. Nock owns and operates "British Car Specialists" in Stockton, Ca. with his son David and Daughter Sheila.

For Further information contact Harry Haigh,  
 Tel # (805)967-4546 Fax#(805)964-3685

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR July 14 15 16 1995  
 The 3rd Annual **MOSS BRITISH CAR FESTIVAL** returns in July with longer days and warmer nights!



Don't miss the fun with something for the whole family.

- Beautiful Santa Ynez ranch location
- BBQ, live bands and dancing
- Rallies, both fun and navigational
- Slalom
- On-site RV parking and camping
- Car corrales and show
- Tours, sight-seeing and hayrides
- Funkahana and much more

**Clubs! Make this your July event.**

Club hospitality areas available • Pinewood derby racing • Rallye teams



For more information & registration packages, call or write Harry Haigh  
 Moss Motors, Ltd.  
 British Car Festival  
 P.O. Box 847 • Goleta, CA • 93116-9988  
 800-235-6953 • 805-967-4546

**MOSS BRITISH CAR FESTIVAL MONEY SAVING NEWS BULLETIN**

By special arrangement from the Moss Motors Festival Team, for those of you not wishing to RV or camp, you can reserve a room at the **Wind Mill Ramada Inn, Buellton for only \$45 Thursday night, and only \$60 a night Friday and Saturday.** This is an excellent deal, July is the busy time of the year and motels are filled to capacity in the valley area. So, book early and save! For this special low price and reservations call 1-800-WIND INN and tell the operator you are with the Moss Motors British Car Festival group.

**JULY !!**



# DEFEATING the TRIUMPH

The Decline of the British Sports Car Empire

by Timothy R. Whisler

*How the English  
automotive  
industry lucked  
into a lucrative  
U.S. franchise  
without knowing  
why, and then  
threw it away*

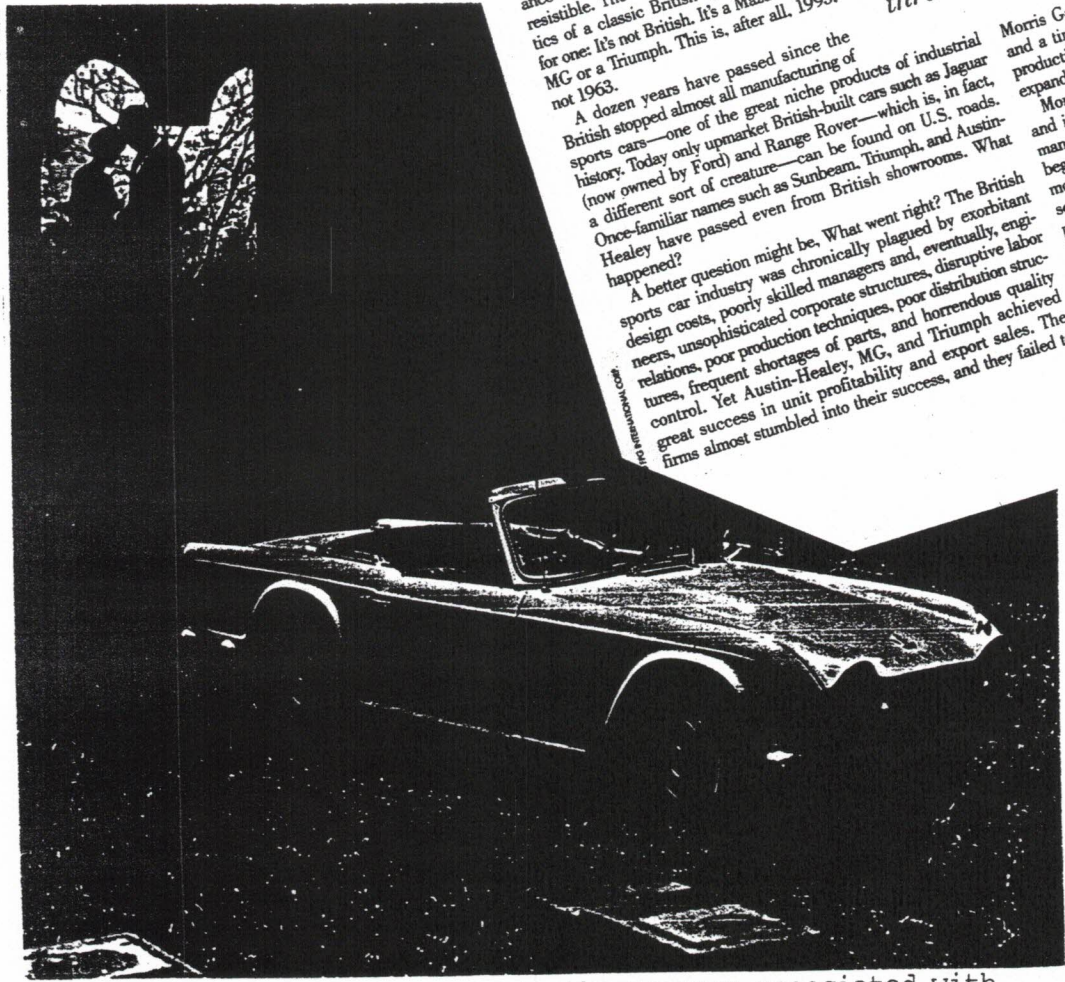
You've seen the advertisements. The car is a trim little two-seater, perhaps British racing green, with its convertible top lowered to reveal an interior that is at once Spartan and cozy. Its jaunty styling evokes wind-blown freedom and quick adventure, and the manufacturer's promise of high performance and a modest price seem almost irresistible. The car has all the characteristics of a classic British sports car except for one: It's not British. It's a Mazda, not an MG or a Triumph. This is, after all, 1993, not 1963.

A dozen years have passed since the British stopped almost all manufacturing of sports cars—one of the great niche products of industrial history. Today only upmarket British-built cars such as Jaguar (now owned by Ford) and Range Rover—which is, in fact, a different sort of creature—can be found on U.S. roads. Once-familiar names such as Sunbeam, Triumph, and Austin-Healey have passed even from British showrooms. What happened?

A better question might be, What went right? The British sports car industry was chronically plagued by exorbitant design costs, poorly skilled managers and, eventually, engineers, unsophisticated corporate structures, disruptive labor relations, poor production techniques, poor distribution quality, frequent shortages of parts, and horrendous quality control. Yet Austin-Healey, MG, and Triumph achieved great success in unit profitability and export sales. The firms almost stumbled into their success, and they failed to

recognize what their real strengths were. As those strengths wore away, the industry's institutions proved impossibly rigid, and the companies couldn't meet the challenges of changing market conditions and emerging competition. The story contained lessons that Detroit appears to be slowly learning. The British mass-market sports car is dead and buried, but its passing can still teach the Americans something.

The name MG Car Company was registered by its proprietor, William R. Morris, in 1930, but the company's operations began in 1911, when Morris opened a car sales and repair shop in Oxford known as (hence MG), Morris was an entrepreneur sales and repair shop in Oxford known as (hence MG). Morris was an entrepreneur, but he realized that mass production using common components was fundamental to expanding output and lowering costs. Morris increasingly focused on volume car production, and in 1922 he appointed Cecil Kimber, a versatile motor man, to manage Morris Garages. The following year Kimber began modifying the engines and bodies of standard Morris models. Initially indifferent to Kimber's MG sports cars and sedans, Morris soon came to regard them as an important part of his arsenal in a battle with Austin and Ford. Demand for MG customized cars increased throughout the decade, and in 1929 production was moved from Morris Garages to a disused tannery in the nearby market town of Abingdon. Morris believed, as did most British car makers, that the key to healthy domestic sales lay in offering a model in every



1960's promotion photo suggests the romance associated with the British sports car.

FALL 1993 • MUDACITY 17  
(re-printed)



market segment. His marketing strategy was similar to that of Alfred Sloan at GM: As a British buyer's income and family increased, he could move from a mass-market Morris to a higher-priced Riley, just as an American could trade in his or her Chevrolet for a Buick. By offering its own upgrade, MG could sell a car that had "a 20 percent improvement in performance and a 50 percent increase in price," according to John Thornley, the general manager of Abingdon from 1952 until 1969.

The cars were seldom seen in the United States before 1946. After the Second World War, as Abingdon moved from assembling tank and airplane components back to cars, the restoration of the wider British economy was impeded by shortages of raw materials and hard currency, especially dollars needed to buy food and other essential commodities. The Labour government decided that British industry must earn those scarce dollars through a campaign known as "Export or Die."

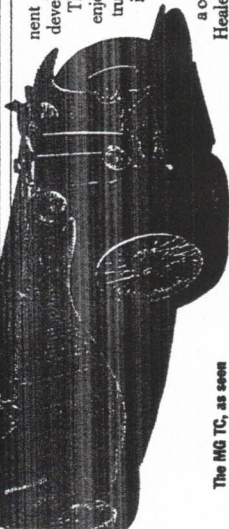
The government pressured the industry to export 70 percent of its output to hard-currency markets and then placed restrictions on domestic car sales to secure compliance. Despite the wartime destruction of European competition and Detroit's inability to meet U.S. demand, the British motor firms, including the Morris and, later, the Nuffield, Organisation (Morris had become Lord Nuffield in 1934 and, in 1938, the Rely, MG, Morris, and Wolsey companies fused), were unenthusiastic about selling abroad. Some firms had exported within the empire before the war, but now they had to establish distribution structures and product image in unfamiliar markets like the United States. Today comprehensive market research projects and massive advertising campaigns would precede entry into such markets, but in 1947 Nuffield simply shipped a number of cars to the United States and waited to see what happened.

The Nuffield board anticipated that its small sedan, the American-styled Morris Minor, would gain a large market share as a substitute for scarce Detroit models. The car was a huge success in England, but its appeal didn't hold up overseas. British sedans might have looked like U.S.-built cars to Englishmen, but to American buyers they were small, cramped, noisy, underpowered, poorly sprung, and prone to break down. Moreover, they were expensive compared with their American rivals and had few dealers selling them. The "export or die" campaign did work, however. From 1947 until the early 1960s England was the world's leading exporter of automobiles and stood second only to the United States in total production. And the MG TC sports car, not the Minor, became Nuffield's best seller in the United States. The car was introduced by American GIs who had brought their MGs home after the war, although the model was familiar to British consumers, Americans had never seen anything like it. It was an accidental sensation: the MG offered unique driving characteristics and classic styling. The compact design, with convertible top, was a sexy, intelligent alternative to more practical sedans. While the car's engine might have been unimpressive compared with Detroit's units, the MG-TC offered much higher levels of steering, road holding, and braking, combined with a stiff suspension system. It all made for an exceptional driving experience. The MG was a differentiated product that created a market niche and distinctive image. As such, MG sales were not hindered by a price that was higher than a U.S.-built mass-market sedan's. In 1949 an MG TC cost \$1,875; a base-model Chevrolet was priced at \$1,329.

In the absence of competition MG had the luxury of developing its T series sports cars through incremental innovations. The TD (1949-53) and TF (1953-5) offered slightly reworked cockpits, including the essential left-hand drive, and reworked body panels. All the models utilized virtually the same chassis, body style, and engine that could be found in prewar designs. While MG essentially held a monopoly in the moderate price segment and Jaguar offered upmarket sports cars, the middle price segment was left vacant, a position filled in 1953 by the Triumph TR2.

Once again circumstances, rather than strategy, played a large role in this development. Triumph, based in Coventry, had been a successful producer of upmarket sedans and sports cars before the war. The company went into receivership in 1939 and lost its plant to the Nazi blitz, and the Standard Motor Company optimistically purchased the name in 1944. But a succession of Standard-Triumph (ST) models achieved few sales in any overseas market during the late 1940s, and the company's failure in

**A 1950s pamphlet lauds the MG TD Midget. The ad copy is accurate: Postwar British sports cars had triumphed everywhere.**



**The MG TC, as seen in a 1950s lobbyist's guide. The TC started the U.S. sports car craze when GIs fell in love with it during World War II.**

the United States was especially doleful. The situation became critical in 1950, when the government announced that the Korean War rearmament forced it to ration steel and that quotas would be based on higher export sales.

In 1952 the Ministry of Supply suggested that ST concentrate upon its recently developed and largely exported farm tractors. The ST chairman, Sir John Black, replied that the firm was developing a new range of car models for export. In fact, Black had ordered the construction of a sports car prototype only one day earlier.

The Triumph sports car was conceived in a period of severe material scarcity, a condition that generally prohibits new model development. At the time of the model's unveiling, a decidedly cool reception from the press suggested that the model might be stillborn. After six months of further development, the company launched the TR2 sports car. This sleek body rested upon a chassis and suspension borrowed from existing Triumph volume cars, and the high-performance engine was actually a modified version of the unit developed for the previous Vanguard model; it also fitted in the firm's tractors. While no advertisement would reveal the mundane nature of these components, the use of common parts, even if slightly altered, was the key to producing these semi-specialist sports cars at moderate cost.

This lesson of common components was then forced upon MG. The Nuffield Organisation's traditional policy of offering a wide variety of models had been accompanied by a strategy of using an equally wide range of engines, and the company's cost structure combined with the low export profit margins and material scarcities to reduce the firm's profits. By the early 1950s it had become increasingly clear to Lord Nuffield, now in semiretirement, that his once-imposing empire was too small to achieve increasingly important economies of scale in manufacturing. In 1952 he reluctantly agreed to a merger with his hated rival, Austin Motor Company. MG and the other Nuffield badges became part of the British Motor Corporation (BMC), a holding company that fell under the dictates of the Austin managing director, Leonard Lord.

Lord refused to integrate the two companies, insisting that only the three Austin-built engines be used in BMC's wide model range, including sports cars. As a result, through the early 1960s BMC regularly achieved an efficient scale in engine production. The strategy lowered sports car compo-

nent costs, increased annual output, and facilitated the development of a wider range of models.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s BMC and Triumph enjoyed an effective duopoly that was almost too good to be true, allowing them to compete on the basis of design and image instead of price. (The Japanese Datsun and the Italian Fiat posed little threat.) Periodically the British manufacturers launched new models to maintain a competitive edge, creating a design spiral. MG and Austin-Healey (introduced in 1952, when Lord agreed to produce the designs of the Healey) were generally the first movers, specializing in bold, almost revolutionary designs. Triumph responded with an evolutionary program, developing its robust designs gradually. Their contest for North American market share (where about 80 percent of output was sold) spawned models priced from entry to upmarket, as they matched levels of engine performance, cargo space, and interior comfort.

Consistently the annual leader in sports car sales, MG remained in the traditional moderate price segment. Its T series was replaced in 1955 by the sleek MGA and MGA coupe (1956-62). The MCB (1962-80) proved to be the best-sell-

**Two American enthusiasts pore over maps spread out on the nose of their new MG in the early 1950s.**

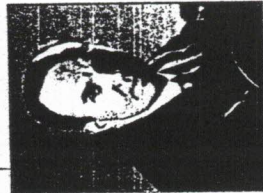


ing British sports car with more than 520,000 units built during its eight-year production run. Austin-Healey completed the BMC range by offering the upmarket Austin-Healey 3000 (1952-67) and the introductory Sprite (1958-71), which shared an engine with the Mini to lower costs. The "bug-eye" Sprite was restyled in 1961 and launched together with an MG clone using the resurrected Midget name.

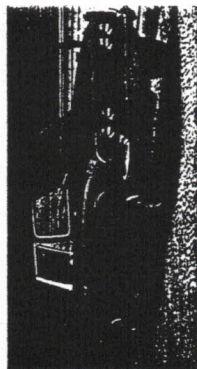
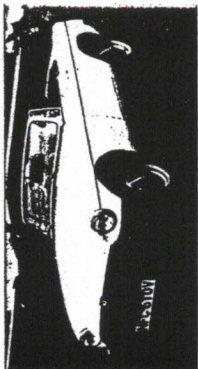
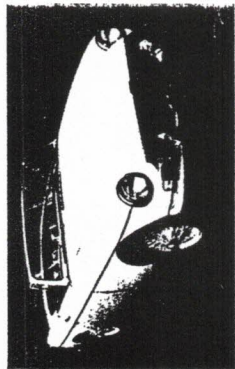
The Triumph company's development strategy reflected a chronic shortage of capital. Incremental innovation—slight modification of the body, better engine performance, improved braking—transformed the TR2 into the TR3 (1955-57), TR3A (1957-61), and TR3B (1961). But the changes weren't substantial enough; Triumph never achieved the popularity of MG. The company continued its tradition of relatively minor modifications with the restyled TR4 (1961-65), the more powerful and comfortable TR4A (1965) and TR250 (1966-67), and the TR6 (1968-74), which retained the six-cylinder engine and most of the body panels fitted to previous models.

If the TR6 could be traced to the original Triumph sports

**Top: William R. Morris, Lord Nuffield, founder of Morris Garages. On the strength of MG's profits, he also founded Nuffield College at Oxford. Above: Cecil Kimber, MG's brilliant massager and inventor. Both photographs date from the 1930s.**







Top to bottom: The sleek MGB, shown in 1962, was the most popular British sports car. By 1970 the MG's silhouette had been cluttered with cumbersome bumpers, hastily attached in compliance with the new American safety requirements. The successful 1970 Triumph TR6 had a chassis similar to Triumph's original sports car. The hapless Triumph Stag was a misguided attempt to update the look.

range even though export sales tend to have low margins as a result of higher distribution and financing costs. MG and Austin-Healey also returned large unit profits from North American sales, yet BMC annual profits declined steadily. As early as the mid-1960s it was clear that British-built sports and volume cars were on divergent paths.

Many economic historians have argued that the rigid social and economic institutions developed in the nineteenth century impeded the implementation of mass-production techniques in Britain. Whether this is true or not, those same institutions were well suited to the production of sports cars and other niche motor products. The sports car makers success had stemmed from differentiated model design and characteristics, little interference in operations by the corporate staff, the use of common components—especially engines—to keep manufacturing costs down, and traditional British labor-intensive production methods. But by the 1960s, when these production methods had become a burden, the firms were terribly slow to abandon them.

Abington, which was BMC's sports car assembly plant, lacked even rudimentary machinery. The car body, produced in BMC factories, was pushed by two workers to each work station, where engines and other components were fitted with hand (and eventually air powered) tools. This method provided the flexibility needed to assemble six different low-volume models with output controlled by a piecework payment system that was used in all BMC and Leyland plants until the early 1970s. Measured daywork payment required careful management of variable costs, but Abington could adjust labor inputs and work speeds to meet changes in demand with little cost penalty. The obvious disadvantage of this assembly method was limited annual output.

Compared with the Dickenson assembly at Abington, production at Triumph looked positively modern. It was similar to that used for volume cars, and roughly balanced mechanical and labor inputs allowed Triumph to earn unit profits even though the annual output of a particular model was about twenty to twenty-five thousand units. The Spitfire and GT6 were so similar to the Herald and Vitesse that the cars were assembled on the same track, and this sharing of production costs enabled the Spitfire to be priced between the Midget and MGB. The higher price of the TR series permitted assembly on a dedicated mechanized line.

However, by the latter half of the 1960s many of the production difficulties that bedeviled the British mass producers were evident at Triumph as well. Productivity was reduced by overstaffing, old machinery, poor build method and supervision, and increasing labor unrest as the unions muscled their way in. The problems resulted in and were exacerbated by frequent component shortages at Triumph and MG.

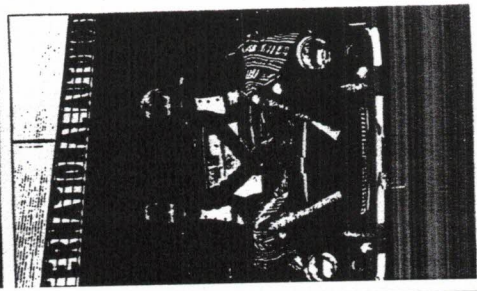
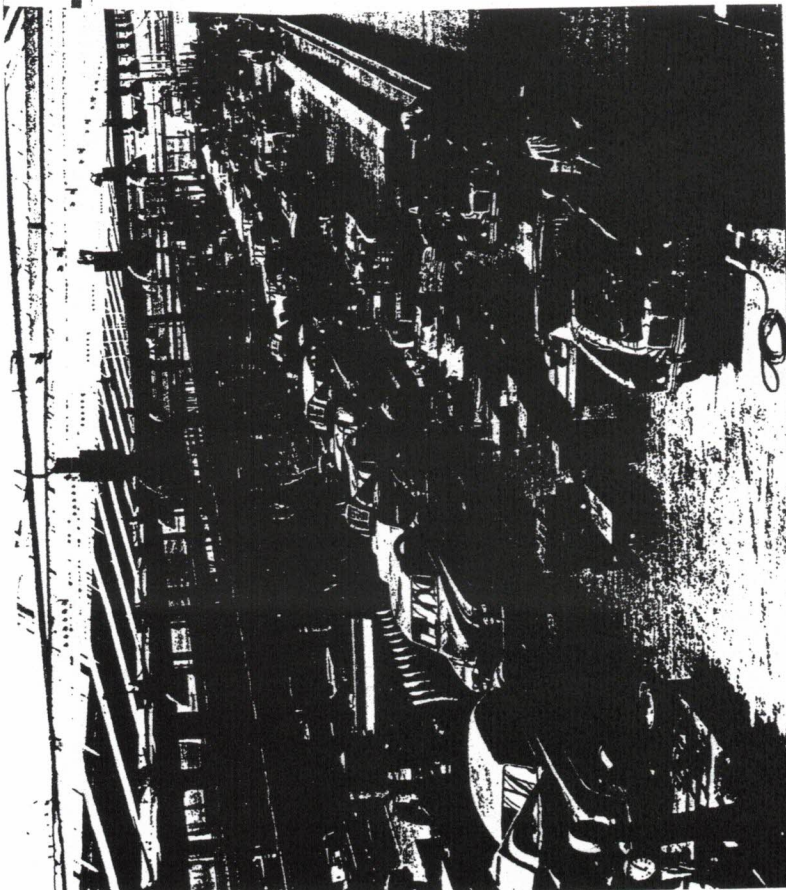
Other weaknesses were becoming apparent: Neither BMC nor Triumph had been able to construct viable distribution structures in overseas markets despite their early entry into the U.S. market. Sales and service facilities were especially

car, the Spitfire (1963-80) emerged from the Triumph Herald sedan, one of the most versatile designs in British motor history. The Herald's floor pan and engine, the two most costly components, formed the foundation for the sports cars. The sedan and sports cars even shared many major body panels, and the Spitfire and GT6 (1966-77) were identical except for the latter's hardtop, minor trim, and six-cylinder engine shared with the Vitesse, a high-performance version of the Herald.

ST bet everything on the Herald, gambling that the new sedan would capture a significant share of the mass market. Severe quality problems, however, led ST to the brink of bankruptcy in 1960. The following year the Leyland Motor Corporation, Britain's largest producer of trucks and buses, purchased the firm and immediately abandoned the mass-market strategy, stressing increased utilization of existing capacity and balanced labor and capital inputs. Equally important, Leyland committed capital to develop ST's designs for the Spitfire, GT6, TR4, and an upmarket sedan range.

In 1963 Leyland-Triumph reported a profit and acknowledged the importance of sports cars in the company's continuing turnaround during the mid-1960s. At the time Triumph sports cars had the highest unit profits of the firm's

Above: An interior view of MG's famous and very imperfectly mechanized Abington factory in the early 1960s. Below: The British twins Susan and Jennifer Baker atop the hood of an MG sedan at the 1963 International Automobile Show in New York City. Ford's Mustang was then about to challenge MG.





**TRIUMPH TR7**  
The shape of things to come... out to steal the American road.

British Leyland's disastrous TR7, inset. The car's weird geometric design is emphasized in an advertisement by a head-on shot inscribed within a diamond. The TR7, built to replace all other British sports cars, wiped out the industry instead.

the output of a virtually unsalable car. The car's poor image condemned the more innovative convertible and high-performance versions, which were launched in 1979.

At that point the design, production, and degree of market competition of the TR7 and BL's struggling volume cars were virtually the same. It follows that the sales, output, and unit profit results were also similar. Clearly BL could not adapt to capital-intensive manufacturing methods and a sophisticated corporate structure. In fact, there was an increase in productivity and capacity utilization rates when TR7 production was moved to smaller, more flexible, less mechanized plants in 1977 and again in 1979.

Such rigidities affected the fate of Austin-Healey, MG, and the Triumph Spitfire as well. The Sprite was one of the few models eliminated in BL's rationalization plan. The planned phaseout of the other models and the acute shortage of capital led to expedient modifications, such as the MG's massive and singularly unattractive bumpers, to meet the 1975 U.S. collision and exhaust regulations. The Spitfire and the MG range were already outdated compared with the new Mazda RX-7 and several volume cars, but desperate alterations further reduced their appeal.

Only low sales of the TR7 and convertible tops kept the older models in production. Although MG sold a postwar record of 34,794 units in the United States in 1977, time and circumstance were catching up. Reduced sales—caused by the U.S. recession of 1979-80, the appreciating value of sterling against the dollar, and BL's mysterious decision to retain unique engines after the cancellation of its sedan counterparts—raised costs considerably.

Cloned out of Europe by its underdeveloped distribution structure and unwilling to raise prices to the level of the fledgling TR7, BL cowered the older models in the midst of the 1979 corporate consolidation plan, and production dwindled to a halt the next year. Depressingly low sales in the wake of the MG and Spitfire withdrawal left the TR7 expendable. In 1981, during yet another corporate rescue plan, the sports car of the future became history. The British finally surrendered the niche they had created.

Austin-Healey, MG, and Triumph achieved their great successes when they were part of small, simply structured firms that permitted a large degree of operational freedom. It's true that by 1968 the world motor industry had long bypassed the Victorian methods of Abington and the semi-mechanized techniques of Triumph, but BL's greatest failure was not its attempts to implement new processes but the rapidly with which it abandoned everything it had been doing right. Big is not always better, especially when a firm lacks adequate expansion resources and concentrates upon its weaknesses to the detriment of its strengths. Detroit might take note—and indeed, may already have begun to. \*

Timothy R. Whisler earned his Ph.D. in economic history from the London School of Economics and Political Science and is an assistant professor of history at St. Francis College in Loretto, Pa. His 1971 MG Midget is in the shop for repair.

plants supplied by dozens of manufacturing facilities. MG and Triumph were placed in two different divisions, while the component producers and sales staffs were situated in yet two others. As day-to-day minutiae overtook strategic concerns, inertia and confusion overwhelmed the firm.

In a desperate, misguided move, Stokes initiated an ambiguous and naive rationalization plan. New sports models built in brand-new plants with modern capital-intensive methods would gradually replace the existing models manufactured with labor-intensive techniques. Employment would not have to be reduced despite increased mechanization and decreased model offerings, since the new models would be produced in high volume, and the successful sales of each model would finance the next, overcoming the capital constraints.

The plan quickly collapsed. The new mass-market cars, hastily designed and poorly built, did not sell, and BL was forced to return to old models to preserve domestic and export market share. Sports cars became even more vital as steady U.S. sales provided badly needed income.

British Leyland's next misstep, the introduction of the Triumph TR7 (1975-81), vividly revealed the problems that eventually ruined the company. Amazingly, the model was intended to replace the entire sports car range. The project inevitably ignited a rivalry between MG and Triumph divisions since the firm refused to merge the two design teams. Perhaps more serious, BL failed to recruit and retain engineers. In the past sports cars had been designed by "practical men" who had learned their trade through experience. But these practical men did not have the expertise to meet the challenge of making cars that were safer, more fuel-efficient, more reliable, and less polluting than the standard models. The scarcity of engineers in Britain, combined with a historic suspicion of university graduates, left BL with few engineering resources at a critical time.

As a result, BL abandoned its innovative design when it was most needed. The TR7 was a poor attempt at imitating Datsun's Z series. The controversial styling and the undistinguished attributes, along with horrendous product quality, provoked tremendous sales resistance despite a price that was considerably lower than the Datsun's (\$5,100 against \$6,359). After producing 32,743 units during the first full year of TR7 production, only 22,939 units were built in 1976, compared with 28,681 MGB units.

Only the company's projected high annual sales of the TR7 (more than any British model had ever achieved) justified the use of dedicated capital-intensive production techniques and unique components. Failure to meet sales targets caused low capacity utilization and productivity rates and, consequently, the disastrous combination of high variable and fixed costs. Moreover, the poor build method and haphazard supervision that resulted from the firm's engineering crisis further raised the cost structure. Management's attempt in late 1976 to reduce variable costs by bringing the labor force in line with output resulted in a strike. It lasted a full year, but in effect the dispute simply reduced

the British Leyland Motor Corporation (BL) appeared to strengthen the British position. BL, however, faced enormous problems: aging and overlapping models, declining market share, outdated and scattered production facilities, a discontented and overmanned work force, inadequate distribution structures, and limited investment capital.

Furthermore, that same year the United States introduced rigid standards for car exhaust emissions and car safety. The legislation had a profound effect on British sports car manufacturers, who had to either suspend U.S. sales or abruptly modify their cars. That caused the market share to drop even further. BL's CEO, Donald Stokes, believed that the firm's weaknesses could be overcome by establishing a multi-divisional structure. The sports car line companies and their parent firms had a tradition of entrepreneurial and personal management and were used to working with a large degree of operational freedom. That legacy, however, had prevented the development of the middle management skills necessary to supervise and coordinate the activities of a multi-divisional firm. Partly in response to this deficiency and partly because of his nature, Stokes often intervened in trivial operational matters.

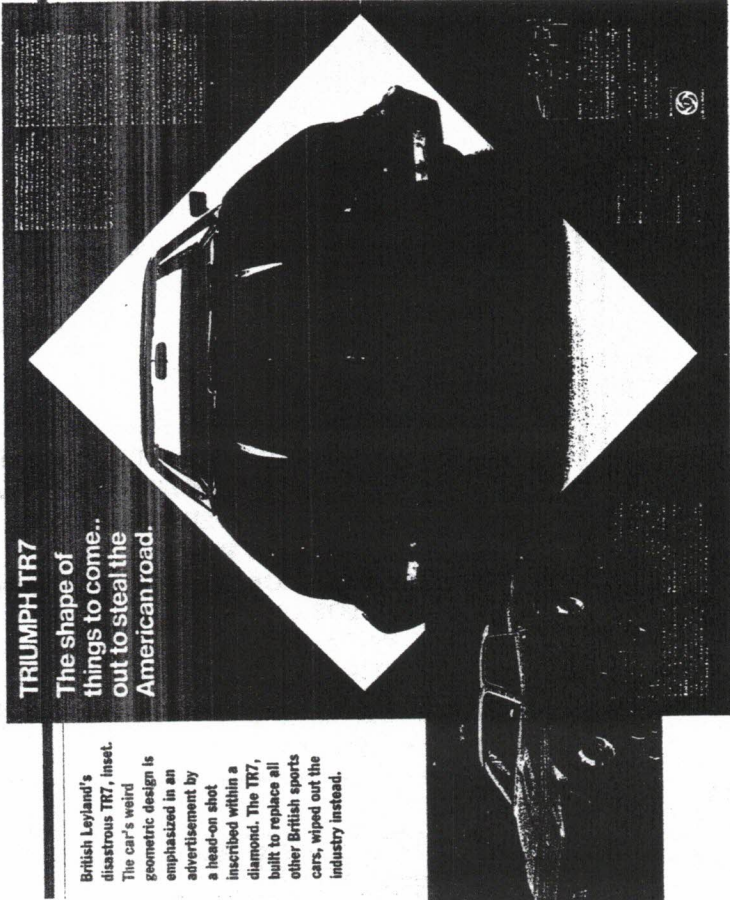
There was plenty of opportunity for confusion. In BL's sports car division, seven models were assembled in two

significantly, the Corvette—receded as Detroit attempted to increase sales by developing the size and comfort of the models. Nissan's Datsun Z series presented a more serious danger. The 1969 Datsun 240-Z offered a greater level of innovative mechanical and design characteristics, including high product reliability—which had perpetually eluded the British—at a price slightly higher than that of the established competition (1970 prices: Datsun \$3,647, TR6 \$3,375, MGB \$2,875, Spitfire \$2,395, Midget \$2,279). Two years after its debut Datsun became the best-selling sports car in the United States and a year after that it was outselling MG and Triumph combined.

Over the next decade Nissan maintained its market share through rapid development and efficient distribution of the Z series. The Japanese, however, weren't ready to drive the British from the market altogether. Instead, by offering more power, amenities, and passenger comfort in successive Z models, Datsun moved its sports cars upmarket in price and image (1975 prices: Datsun 280-Z \$6,284, MGB \$4,350). Coincidentally, Datsun's misguided provision for and the Europeans' slow reaction to U.S. legislation banning convertible cars (which was never actually enacted) resulted in a British and Italian duopoly in a shrinking open-car market segment.

The merger of Leyland-Triumph and BMC in 1968 to form

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Odometer \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

V.I. \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_ Tab \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM	O.K.	AMOUNT	ITEM	O.K.	AMOUNT
Finish			Transmission		
Fenders			Universal Joints		
Glass - Lights			Differential		
Upholstery			Muffler & Exhaust Pipes		
Mats Carpets			Shock Absorbers		
Radiator			Tire Condition:		
Wheels			RF % LF %		
Hub Covers			FR % LR %		
Bumpers			Spare %		
Battery			Engine:		
Generator			Smog Dev.		
Starter					
Steering					
Brakes			Grease & Oil		
Clutch			Lighten Car		
Top			Clean-up		
Front End					

EQUIPMENT ON CAR: Radio  Heater  Air Cond  Reconditioning \$ \_\_\_\_\_ X X X  
 Type Trans. \_\_\_\_\_ Handling \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 P/ST. P/B P/W P/SEATS \_\_\_\_\_ APPRAISAL VALUE \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Book Value \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Bal. Owning \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ALLOWANCE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Ads are available to non-members for a fee of \$5.00 for 3 issues. Please mail payment and ad copy to the Club address. Thanks !!!!

FOR SALE: Early MGTD XPAG ENGINE, disassembled, 90% complete (no crank), \$800, Tom: 805-987-4629.

FOR SALE: '74 MG GBT, white, looks & runs great, recent new motor, \$2850, Haley Fisk: 805-963-4849.

FOR SALE: TR3-A/TR3-B SOFT TOP used, \$35. Tonneau cover, black, needs zipper, \$25. TR250 original hub caps, mint condition, \$100/ea, TR250 orig steel wheels, \$35/ea, Herman Van Den Akker: 805-526-9526.

SPRING CLEANING SALE: Parting out TR Spitfire & GT6. GT6 engines \$50/ea (3 avail), Spitfire bonnets \$50/ea (3 avail), plus wide assortment of parts for both cars, Bill: 805-687-9851.

FOR SALE: '65 TR SPITFIRE CONVERTIBLE, needs trans work, no top, runs good, restore or parts, call 805-644-0543 or 805-648-5745.

FOR SALE: MGTD TRANSMISSION, later model, rebuilt, \$350, Tom: 805-987-4629.

FOR SALE: '88 SPITFIRE 1500, rebuilt engine, Best Offer. Scott: 805-499-6885.

FOR SALE: '67 TR2000 SEDAN, color Gold, needs Trans, Best Offer, Michael Stephenson: 805-653-5755

FOR SALE: '74 JENSEN HEALEY CONVERTIBLE, 4-Speed, 2L Lotus with Weber carbs, fresh valve job, A STEAL at \$3500, Howard: 805-485-7023.

FOR SALE: SNUGTOP HARD TOP, for MGB. George Kinsolving: 805-525-4940.

FOR SALE: '74 MGB MIDGET, 1275cc, 5 new tires, runs excell, 38 mpg, \$2250, Ron: 805-933-2206.

FOR SALE: '65 JAGUAR 3.8 S-TYPE SEDAN. Very good condition, rare, appreciating classic. LHD, auto, chrome wire wheels. ALSO complete PARTS CAR (RHD, 4-sp), \$5500/ offer for both cars, Lee Maxwell: 805-649-1212.

FOR SALE: '77 SPITFIRE 1500, Red OD, some rust, front-end rebuilt at 90K, \$1500, Tom Hicks: 805-388-1000/805-388-8789.

FOR SALE: '75 SPITFIRE, Needs 1500 engine block, \$500, Dick: 804-484-1140.



1995

S M T W T F

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE.....

3  
SAT

TRSC GARAGE TOUR WEST VALLEY TOUR.

7  
WED

MONTHLY MEETING 7:00PM HUDSON'S GRILL

11  
SAT

FATHER 'S DAY GIMMICK RALLY HOSTED BY AUSTIN-HEALEY CLUB, SOUTH COAST.

14  
WED

BOARD MEETING AT HUDSON'S GRILL, 7:00PM.

24  
SAT

DEER PARK WINE TOUR /CAR MUSEUM WITH MORGAN + 4 CLUB. SEE DETAILS IN THIS NEWSLETTER OR CONTACT BOB REINHOLD 714-830-4427.

JULY.....

1-2  
SAT-SUN

VINTAGE AUTO RACING WILLOW SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL RACE WAY ROSAMOND NORTH OF LANCASTER. CONTACT DARYLL CLARK 818-887-5518.

5  
WED

MONTHLY MEETING 7:00PM HUDSON'S GRILL.

12  
WED

BOARD MEETING AT 7:00PM HUDSON'S GRILL.

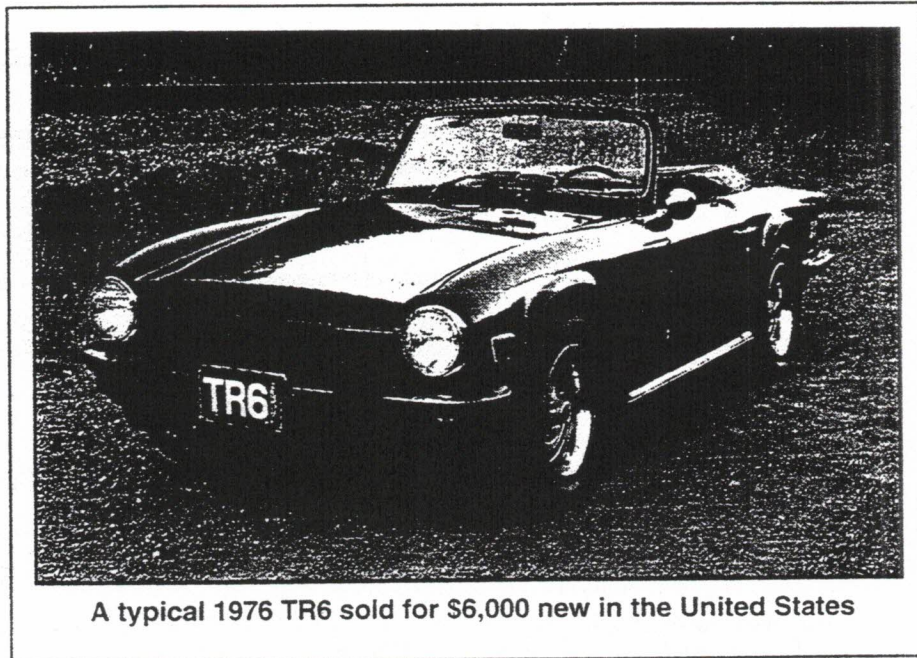
14-16  
FRI-SUN

MOSS MOTORS BRITISH CAR FESTIVAL. AT FLAGS-ARE-UP FARMS IN BUELLTON CA. INFO IN NEWSLETTER OR CONTACT DARYLL OR CINDY CLARK 818-887-5518.

26-30  
WED-SUN

VTR NATIONAL MEET IN ILLINOIS. CONTACT CINDY CLARK CONTACT CINDY CLARK 818-887-5518 FOR INFO. AND REG. FORM.

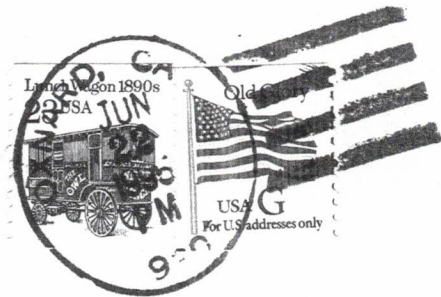




JOHN MATRAS PHOTO

A typical 1976 TR6 sold for \$6,000 new in the United States

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All British Car Club  
P.O. Box 503  
Ventura, Calif.  
93002



**FIRST CLASS**

Ron & Carmen Kibbe  
862 Yale St  
Santa Paula CA 93060

Forward and Address Correction Requested