

The TRunnion

TR Register Lea Valley Group

2011 Issue 4 (Jul/Aug)

LEA VALLEY GROUP COMMITTEE 2011

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MEETINGS VENUE

Unless otherwise specified, all Group Lunchtime Meetings are on the first Sunday of the month at The Cock Inn, 23 High Street, Broom, Biggleswade SG18 9NA (Tel: 01767 314 411), commencing 12:00.

(Plenty of parking space behind pub).

N.B. This is a 'lunchtime meeting', not specifically a 'lunch meeting' – food is optional and you don't need to book.

WEB SITES

TR Register: www.tr-register.co.uk
TR Forum: www.tr-register.co.uk/forums
Lea Valley Group:
www.groups.tr-register.co.uk/lea-valley

N.B. This new LVG site supersedes the old 'BrmmBrmm' site – please update in your browser Favourites list.

2011 EVENTS CALENDAR (subject to change)

*Events with an 'official' Lea Valley Group presence are shown in **bold type**.*

Please let me know of any other events that may be of interest to members and I will include them, plus any others I hear or read about as well as 'official' LVG events.

July 22-24: Silverstone Classic

July 27: Classics on The Common, Harpenden.

July 29-31: TR International Weekend, Harrogate.

Aug. 7: Bletchley Park Classic Car & Motorbike Picnic [*This replaces the August Group Lunchtime Meeting*]

Aug. 21: Olde Watermill Classic Car Rally, Barton-le-Clay.

See advert and registration form below.

Aug. 28: Little Gransden Show & Flying Display.

Apply to Paul Richardson for tickets or book direct.

Aug. 29: Knebworth Classic Show.

Apply to Paul Richardson for tickets.

Sept. 4: Group Lunchtime Meeting

Sept.18: Aviva Classic.

Sept. 24-25: KOP Hill Climb, Princes Risborough

Oct. 2: Group Lunchtime Meeting

Nov. 6: Group Lunchtime Meeting

Dec. 4: Group Lunchtime Meeting and AGM

2012: Your suggestions wanted NOW – old favourites, new events, new places.

EDITORIAL

This year's programme is well underway with LVG joining other groups at the Chiltern Hills Rally (Aston Clinton), Standard Triumph Marque Day (Duxford) and Luton Festival of Transport (wet, wet, wet!).

Fast approaching on the LVG calendar in the next few months are Classics on The Common (Harpenden), Bletchley Park Classic Car and Motorbike Picnic, Little Gransden Show and Flying Display and the Knebworth Classic Show.

Several of us with sporting interests will be attending the Silverstone Classic and, nearer to home, one I'm particularly looking forward to visiting for the first time is the KOP Hillclimb (Princes Risborough) with the possible added 'frissance' of at least one member competing.

We are planning to supplement our monthly Sunday lunchtime meetings with some evening runs to locations (pubs!) at the extremities of the LVG region. We hope this will provide an opportunity for the more isolated members and those who cannot make it to the Sunday meetings to meet us. If you are in this category, please contact us with suggestions for suitable hostelrys in your area.

It's perhaps worth mentioning that TRR membership is not a pre-requisite for attending LVG meetings and events, so if you encounter any TR owners who are not yet members, please make them aware that we will welcome them.

Our new website on the TR Register host is now accessible at www.groups.tr-register.co.uk/lea-valley and will play a more prominent part in local communication, so it is important

that members regularly check online for news and updates to events.

There is still a lot of work to do on this and I would welcome any comments or suggestions for additional content, especially photos of members and their cars and events.



BrianC

TRs for Eddie, England and St. George!

As reported in the previous issue of TRunnion, there was a fine selection of TRs to escort Eddie to the church as you can see from the funeral photos and short video on the new LVG website.

I felt this photo of Paul Richardson's appropriately be-flagged car typified the day.



(Photo courtesy of John Chapman)

Oops - Another editorial senior moment

Apologies for incorrectly referring to TRR Treasurer **Merv Parkes** as Merv Manning in the Group Leaders' Meeting report in the last TRunnion. I believe Merv Manning was someone I worked with in a former life. Still, I'd be surprised if that was the only error in that TRunnion given the way it got thrown together! *[Jon Marshall spotted that one]*

*In case you missed my appeal in the previous issue of TRunnion to encourage more of you to contribute, I will be pleased to hear from **rebuilders**, **racers**, **rallyists**, **tourists**, **concours specialists** and especially **partners** and **new** or even **prospective** TR owners.*

Bletchley Park Classic Car & Motorbike Picnic - Sunday August 7th

We have received the following information on this event, which LVG is attending with Chiltern Group, so it replaces the August monthly meeting. A number of people have said they have been before and would like to go again, so in order for Peter Bowden to reserve sufficient space for the joint groups, please let me know if you intend coming.

Lynda and I went to the first Bletchley Park Picnic about 5 years ago and thoroughly enjoyed the tour and exploring the grounds, although there weren't many cars and bikes that year as the weather looked dodgy. I understand some schools are doing projects on the Bletchley Park World War 2 Codebreakers and Enigma machines, so for anyone with children involved in these projects, or interested in the history of computing, this should be an enjoyable and informative day out.

~ ~ ~

The Classic Car and Motorbike Picnic will be on Sunday 7th August 2011, 9.30am - 5.00pm

This annual event celebrates classic cars and motorbikes of all ages, shapes and sizes.

Owners and clubs are invited to bring their classic vehicles along and picnic in the beautiful grounds of Bletchley Park, the famous home of the WW2 Codebreakers.

Prices are just £5 per car and £3 per motorbike.

You do not need to pre book if you are coming with one car but if you are coming along as a group with five or more vehicles please call 01908 640404 to book.

I am sorry but I am afraid the policy is to not allow dogs on site at all with the exception of Registered Assistance Dogs, for Health and Safety and Wildlife Preservation Reasons.

Our cafe in Hut 4 will be open during the day.

Hope you enjoy your visit.

Regards, Sue

Bletchley Park Trust Information

tel. +44 (0)1908 640404

<http://www.bletchleypark.org.uk/content/museum1.rhtm>

News, Rumours & Gossip

Well, TRunnion is supposed to be a newsletter, so here's where members can let everyone know what they have been up to or are planning to do with (or without!) their TRs.

~ ~ ~

Lynda and I missed the May meeting as we were at the Bedfordshire Classic Car Show at Woburn, but I hear it was well-attended and we missed seeing Tony Jones' new acquisition (Porsche 944). However, he did come to the June and July meetings in a proper car – his 'other' TR3A just back on the road (white with mandatory stripe in red).

However, we were not deprived of a non-TR classic as John and Val Burningham

turned up in their beautiful red Jaguar E-Type, still running-in. Despite outshining the rest of us, John always seems to find some fault with his cars which I for one struggle to see. Personally, I feel more comfortable using a car once it has some patina, including the odd minor scratch or stone-chip and it didn't take me long to get to that state. Just drive it and enjoy it John and take it on a Sporting Bears tour to get the patina (but beware hump-back bridges with that nose!).

I was pleased to meet David Dawson with his immaculate red TR7V8. Like one or two other members, David finds it difficult to get to many meetings as he is often touring in Europe and seeing his car I have to concede that the V8 wedges are probably far better suited to this than the

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more TRaditional cars, especially as more of us succumb to the ageing process.

And proving that you don't need to have a TR on the road, or even own one to attend local meetings, Alan Britcher regularly arrives in lycra by bike.

Fortunately, he was still in a fit state to attend the July meeting after his London Bikeathon and I have since received the following email from Alan:

Big thanks are due to all the Lea Valley Group members who sponsored me on my recent charity bike ride in aid of blood cancer research. I set myself a modest target of £250 and I'm pleased to say that I have already surpassed it (once the money is all collected).

We trained hard and had no problems on the day. 52 miles at an average speed of 13mph. Not bad for a 63 year old on a mountain bike.

I have already paid in your contributions and they can be viewed on my JustGiving sponsorship page

<http://www.justgiving.com/Alan-Britcher>

For those of you who wish to contribute but were not at the Sunday meet at The Cock Broom - the page will remain open for a while yet!

Best Regards, Alan Britcher

~ ~ ~

We seem to be seeing a few new faces at the local meetings and it was good to see Julian Hensman and Magda with their TR6 for the first time at The Cock in July.

I was also very pleased to see a BRG TR2 which I didn't recognise in the car park when I arrived. Owner Graham Wade has had the car for 3 years and although not yet a TR Register member, is seriously considering joining. It's good to have another early TR in the group and in very nice original condition. I'm not sure we have any regular TR2s at the moment, although founder member Paul Howell had one similar to Graham's and of course both Paul and former Group

Leader Eddie Holden owned the ex-Gatsonides Mille Miglia TR2.

~ ~ ~

News of a possible additional event from Paul Richardson:

I have been sent details of a classic car rally at the OLDE WATERMILL, Barton-le-clay on Sunday 21st AUGUST. This is in aid of Cancer Research UK. I remember going there before with Eddie. This event caters for around 200 cars & has musical entertainment & a bar-b-cue. I just think it is somewhere different to go. Perhaps we could put it on the list of events? I think it is best if people book individually & we possibly meet up somewhere so we can go in as a group.

See separate advert and entry form in this TRunnion and check the LVG website for any further details nearer the event.

TRunnion Size **New, smaller versions available**

Are you one of the small number of members who have not been able to receive TRunnion by email due to either mailbox or download file size limitations of their ISP (including tesco.net) or because you are still using dial-up or a slow broadband line for internet access?

Just for you (and a few others!), I have been investigating how to reduce the size of TRunnion. I have now reduced the size of the version normally emailed to members and which is now posted on the new TR Register-supported LVG website (I'm still working on this, but it can be accessed if you are interested).

I also have a **very small** 'web' version that should be OK for dial-up downloads. It's about a tenth the file size of the original and should be perfectly readable - only the photos will be lower quality.

Let me know if you would like me to email the web version of the current issue to try.

Chiltern Hills Rally

LVG joined Chiltern and North London Group members at this annual Vintage Vehicle Rally, which also included a funfair, craft tent, autojumble and excellent hog-roast and beer tent!

For Lynda and I, this was our first visit, although a regular event for many of the group and despite the weather, which was intermittently wet, we were impressed, especially with the variety of cars, commercial and military vehicles. In addition to our combined group display, there were more TRs, plus a number of Spitfires, GT6s, Stags and other Triumphs dotted around the large field.

The autojumble made a pleasant change, as this aspect seems to be disappearing from many shows now, due to cost and the impact of eBay on second-hand car parts. I spotted several TR6 panels and a door going for very low prices and there were plenty of original electrical, brake and steering parts if you wanted to rummage.

The only negative aspect, apart from the rain, which persuaded us to leave early, was the poor marshalling of entrances and exits, resulting in long delays and one or two potentially dangerous situations, but still worth a return visit.

Thanks to Peter Bowden for inviting us to join his group and providing the photos.



Standard Triumph Marque Day

Chiltern Group leader Peter Bowden in wife Heather's Triton Green TR7V8 and fellow Chiltern members Dave and Jayne Broomhead with their dark blue TR6 EFI supplemented the LVG convoy of about 7 cars from Baldock services.



Also, joining us for the first time was Julian Hensman with his newly acquired green TR6 purchased only a month earlier.

John Lucas missed the convoy but, once again, made it to the event in his TR7, pictured below, and yet again, we didn't actually meet up (third time lucky maybe John?).



At least he got there, which is more than can be said for the guy in a Triumph 1300 stranded at the services with a broken windscreen. A couple of our members offered assistance but he was unable to find a windscreen supplier with the correct screen in stock, so sadly we left him awaiting a recovery vehicle. One advantage of a sidescreen TR is that if the screen breaks it cracks rather than shattering, so you can still see out to drive, or even undo the stanchion bolts or Dzus fasteners and remove the screen assembly in minutes.

Several other LVG members made their own way to Duxford, so it was a good turnout, especially as the weather was none too promising. It was also good to meet up again with former LVG regular Graham Shipman and Gloria Vitesse.

Another reunion for us, was with Lynda's TR4A which she sold last year. It was parked in the row opposite us and we had a good look over it to ensure it is being well cared for. I had already had some internet conversations with the new owner, so I knew that he had been doing the few little mods and fixes that I had planned to do, and he confirmed that he really loves the car as much as we, and its previous owner of 30 years did. It's his first classic car and he seems intent

on keeping it for a very long time.

Whilst we always enjoy the STMD as it is a good opportunity to see other models of Triumph and Standard, I don't think I'm alone in getting bored with static displays at Duxford. Although it's nearby and we enjoy the museum and odd planes in flight, you can't beat seeing the cars in action. Roll on next STMD at Prescott - back where most of us seem to prefer it (or maybe another hill-climb or sprint location?)

Luton Festival of Transport **(Wet, wet, wet)**

Another regular LVG event, although a first for me and a rare TRip out without my navigator almost resulted in a Lost in Luton scenario. It's many years since I last visited Stockwood Park and I decided to go via a different route from my more recent Luton visits. Bad mistake – Stockwood Park is very poorly signposted and I had to rely on rear-view mirror navigation from the indicators of an enormous pink 'Yank tank' which pulled out behind me at a roundabout. All fine until he suddenly made a right turn up a side street and then I was at the mercy of the Luton town centre. Despite a number of detours, I eventually found it and arriving somewhat damp, TRacked down Paul Richardson and Dave Randall already in position on the far side of the huge field. How early do you have to get up to beat these two?

As usual, I decided the weather would improve and elected to leave the car open, unlike the others. Second bad mistake! Whilst we were exploring the autojumble, the rain got much worse and many of the stallholders were already contemplating an early departure.

Nevertheless, other cars were steadily arriving and there were some interesting vehicles, including (unsurprisingly), a large gathering of Vauxhalls. The military vehicle display was particularly impressive

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and many of the owners had gone to considerable lengths to create atmosphere with military ephemera and even a dummy squaddy or two.

I also enjoyed the huge array of Minis, especially a group of elderly minis owned, customised and graffitied by younger drivers and prepared for a charity fund-raising tour. It was reassuring to see their enthusiasm and obvious pride in their cars whilst not taking the hobby too seriously (perhaps a lesson for some other classic car owners).

The highlight for me was the unusual small collection of Standards, especially Vanguards representing all Phases and a couple of 'non-standard' cars originally assembled in Australia as a van and a pickup.

Parked separately from the LVG contingent, I spotted a red TR3A which I didn't recognise and waited around in vain awhile in the hopes of meeting the owner. Lo and behold, when I got back to my car, there was Mike Timlett and Marian and it transpired that the car is the replacement for Mike's very nice Primrose TR3A! I was sad to hear that car had to be sold, but glad that it has been replaced by another TR3A, albeit with some work required. However, Mike is very pleased with the new car and says it drives better than the previous one and he is looking forward to getting it looking as good. Incidentally, I see that the primrose car subsequently made a good price at Anglia Car Auctions, so it seems early TRs are in demand and I'd better increase my agreed value with Towergate!

Other LVG members spotted braving the weather included Rob Taylor, Jean Holden, John and Val Burningham, Tony Jones and Mark Taylor.

By lunch-time, my car was becoming a trifle damp, so we loosely covered it with Dave's TR4A tonneau cover – akin to shutting the stable door after the horse

had bolted and not terribly elegant, but it did keep the worst out. Thanks Dave, although I did eventually put up the hood for an early departure. I arrived home in time to see that the Canadian Grand Prix was even wetter than Luton, but at least it ended in a long-overdue return to winning form by Jenson Button.

Lea Valley Group Website

As mentioned elsewhere, the new TR Register supported LVG website is www.groups.tr-register.co.uk/lea-valley and is the first place to check for any additional events or final details.

I have only recently started building this website and I am currently looking at how other groups are using the facility, and also at their newsletters and events in order to improve our own.

It has much greater facilities than the old site but will only be of value if group members use it regularly and provide input and feedback.

Please bear in mind that the Home, How To Find Us and Social Scene pages are maintained by the TR Register webmaster, although I can provide the input for him to update these pages. In particular, I have recently had some information added to the Home page about the Group.

The Social Scene page is simply a copy of the regular Group report, which used to go directly into TRaction, together with a photograph if supplied. Following the new look Social Scene from TRaction #250, this will be the only place that local group members will see the regular report in full. If this is a concern, then please address your comments to Steve Redway at TRaction.

The Group Newsletter, Future Events and Group Gallery pages will be maintained by me and I am relying on everyone to provide input for both TRunnion and the website, especially photographs for the gallery.

IT WEREN'T HALF HOT MUM!

Tibbles Tour

Tibbles Tour on June 26th was blessed with one of the hottest days of the summer, with temperatures in the 30°C range. Mind you, it was a bit of a mixed blessing – fine while driving at speed (a reasonable speed of course), but somewhat sticky at low speed or stopped at lights etc.

The Tour has been run by the Carpenters Arms club in Harpenden every summer for something approaching 20 years (nobody on the organising team can remember exactly), and traditionally starts at the Holiday Inn at Markyate for a full English breakfast, although the 60 cars were on liquid diet. Entries ranged from a superb pre-war Chevrolet (which was voted Car of the Day), through the usual 50's and 60's classics, to some modern beasts such Porsches and Jaguars. As the Tour is all in aid of local charities, the interpretation of the term "classic" tends to be fairly liberal. Some familiar faces in TR's were evident, including Paul Richardson / Dave Randall (TR3A) from Lea Valley Group, Mike Mercer-Deadman (TR3A) from North London, and in 4A's yours truly and the man who started it all, Mr. John Tibble.

This year, the first section of the 140-mile route headed west, to the Ivan Dutton Bugatti Centre near Thame. Ivan's son Tim was on hand to explain the finer points of all things Bugatti, using a magnificent Bugatti Royale coupe (or was it an Atlantique? – not up on Bugatti details) as an example. Sadly, right outside the entrance to the Dutton farm, two entrants on the Tour in Jaguar Mk. 2 saloons had a coming-together (the front one stopped, the second did by using the front one as a brake). The car with rear-end damage was driven home after a bit of panel-bashing, but the owner of the second was last seen on his mobile organising a recovery truck – just hope his insurance covers the repair costs (which will be substantial).

After this little escapade, we headed east again, for what has become another traditional stop on the Tour in recent years, the Jolly Coopers at Wardhedges near Silsoe. The pub puts on a splendid BBQ, but as the memsahib and I both were still full of full English, a cooling pint and a packet of crisps were deemed sufficient. Certain other TR crews seemed capable of demolishing everything on offer, though.

By this time the sun was beating down, and the crew of a full rally-prepared Mk. 2 Escort had our sympathies – all bare metal in the car, no heat insulation, and just two little holes in the fixed Perspex windows for ventilation (and to think I used to compete in similarly-equipped vehicles in the distant past – must have been mad).

The last section took us back to home turf, to Butterfly World near St. Albans. I must admit I didn't even know of the existence of this venue prior to the Tour, and since the heat now was at its height, I passed up on the Butterfly House itself (a large greenhouse which was apparently tropical inside). A short run then took us back to the traditional finish at the Carpenters Arms, where a fish & chip supper, cooling pints, and entertainment were all provided.

Congrats to John & Sue Tarbox for organising another successful Tibbles Tour – the next C. A. C. C. C. event is the Falling Down Tour on Sep. 24/25, based in Suffolk – the bad news here is the entrants will have to cope with my route planning on this one (but it should be cooler)!

Pete Muncer

FRIED IN A THREE (A)

Tibbles Tour Sunday 26th June 2011

The day dawned cloudy and chilly as we left Milton Keynes at 7:00 am to make our way to the start at the Holiday Inn, Markyate. It was misty as we came up the hill from the southern end of the A5D towards Brickhill and most of the way to Dunstable. We arrived at Markyate at 07:30, as usual we were the first to arrive (27.5 miles). Cars started arriving from 07:45 with Pete Muncer in his 4A and Mike Mercer-Deadman in his 3A the only people we knew. There followed a briefing in the restaurant, which included a good English breakfast. We were given the road book and a start number of 7.

We left at 09:10 via mostly country lanes and roads via Studham, Dagnell, Marsworth, Aston Clinton, Stoke Mandeville, Bishopstone, Haddenham, Thame, Shabbington to Ickford (38.35 miles).

This is where there was an unfortunate incident when a Mark II Jaguar decided to run into the back of another Mark II. The cars weren't drivable so were manovered into the car park. We spent a very interesting hour looking around Ivan Dutton's Bugatti Workshop, tea/coffee and biscuits were provided.

Ivan Dutton Ltd are specialists in the restoration and maintenance of Bugatti Motor Cars. Victor Dutton the current managing director's grandfather, was a riding mechanic with the works Salmson racing team in the early twenties. Later, having started his own London mews garage, he gained a reputation for working on Bugatti and other fine motor-cars.

Ivan's career in the motor trade began when, upon finishing his apprenticeship in pattern making, he joined the workshop of the Chequered Flag quickly becoming foreman and experiencing the sights and sounds of the golden age in British motor sport.

During 1963 he started his own business and competed in his first motor race in a MK1 Jaguar. This interest in motorsport led to Ivan becoming the British Production Saloon Car Champion in 1973, but the oil crisis of the late seventies ended his professional racing career. The enthusiasm of the Bugatti marque nurtured by his father whose stories of Brooklands between the wars led to the formation of the restoration company in 1979.



Ivan's career in racing Bugattis began in 1983 in a Type 51, followed by years of racing a succession of Type 35B models. He now owns a Type 51, which he runs in significant historic racing events. With the arrival of the new millennium and Ivan's sixtieth birthday, he felt it was time to retire and pass on the reins to his son, Timothy.



We left here at 11:15 with the temperature at 28°C. The route was carefully planned to use country roads and the road book was detailed in Tulip format. We were one of the first cars to

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leave Ivan Dutton's and could therefore use a little more speed not having to follow the earlier other cars. We proceeded via Long Grendon, Chearsley, Winchendon, Oving, Whitchurch, Stewkley, Soulbury, Little Brickhill, past Woburn Golf Club, Woburn, Ridgmont, Ampthill bypass, Flitton to Wardhedges.

The lunch stop was at the Jolly Coopers. We arrived at 12:15 (42 miles). A BBQ lunch was available for those that wanted it. A cool refreshing drink was very welcome and most people sat in the garden in the shade. A very relaxing lunchtime was had by everyone.

We left at 13:50 via Silsoe, Clophill, Gravenhurst, Shillington, Meppershall, B655 to Hitchin, Great Offley, Kimpton, Shaws Corner, B653 Sandridge Smallford with a quick blast along the A405 to Chiswell Green St Albans. We arrived at Butterfly World at 15:20 (52 miles). By now the temperature was well over 30°C. One or two cars were suffering from fuel evaporation and overheating.

What an interesting place although I would have preferred the National Rose Gardens which were next door.

The £27 million project was conceived by Clive Farrell, a butterfly fanatic and lepidopterist, whose dream was to create a tribute to the butterfly and a dedicated centre for the preservation of this fragile and beautiful species.

Building work began in September 2008 and once completed in the winter 2012 it will be the biggest butterfly experience in the world. The tropical butterfly house will this year house over 600 tropical butterflies.

We left here at 16:50 via St Albans, Redbourn, Harpenden to the Carpenter's Arms (10 miles). We spent the next 2 to 3 hours in the garden of the pub with cool drinks followed by a fish and chip supper. Most people being local had been home to shower and change.

A very good event, with a varied selection of cars from Audi R8, Rolls Royce, Bentley, Jaguars to our 3A. We left the Carpenter's Arms at 19:30 for home via Redbourn, A5 to Dunstable and Milton Keynes. We drove a total of 201 miles with the car behaving perfectly. No overheating except for the driver and navigator.



Paul Richardson, with a great deal of help from my navigator David Randall.

Many thanks to Pete and Paul for those two articles. I'd have enjoyed the Bugs (4-wheeled, as well as winged). I know how much time it takes to produce something for the newsletter, so it is much appreciated by the editor, and I hope by other members. It's encouraging that quite a few of us are TouRing regularly, albeit on different events, but in company with a variety of other cars, both classic and modern. It's interesting to compare notes with owners of other marques on these events and surprising how much common ground there is between drivers of widely differing cars and backgrounds. Lynda and I plan to supplement our SBMC tours with a CACCC tour or two.

Perhaps the archive photos on the following page, showing a sample of some of the LVG events, will revive the taste for similar activities. I will be interested to hear from anyone that can fill in any of the background or identify people and cars in these.

Similarly, if you have any photos of LVG events, ancient or modern, please send them to the editor. High resolution is not essential, as I will downsize to fit TRunnion. I realise many interesting old photos will be hard-copy prints but I can scan these and return them.

LVG out and about - From the archives



(Does anyone recognise themselves, car or friends?)

Members' Stories

This feature is intended to encourage members to introduce themselves by way of TRunnion, so to set an example, I began by including the story of my current TR3A (to be continued).

I know many others have stories to tell, not only of rebuilds or major projects, but how they became ensnared by this strange TR-addiction and how they use their cars – touring, competing, concours, etc.

It would also be really interesting to hear from newer (and, maybe, even younger) members and some of those who do not, or cannot, regularly attend local meetings.

Views of wives, girlfriends and partners would be especially welcome.

TR3A Rebuild - Brian Chidwick

For new readers: I started this article in early 2005 and have decided to complete it for the delectation of Trunnion readers. As was evident from the photos in the previous instalments, the car didn't look in bad shape for an everyday TR. However, we soon received a major shock and after some serious soul-searching, had to bite the bullet and go for the total rebuild!

Having overcome the trauma of escalating cost and timescale, I was now looking forward to actually getting involved in the project by doing as much of the unskilled work as possible.

Part 3 - Body Surgery

In March 2006 all removable outer panels and the rear axle were collected from TRGB and brought home for stripping and painting. Much frantic activity was necessary to complete within a couple of weeks in order to keep up with Tim's impressive and rapid work on resurrecting what was left of the original bodyshell.

This led to what I described on the TR forum as **'Experiences with a stripper'** as I sought advice from those who had TRavelled this particular rocky road before me. The following extracts are from that thread (<http://www.tr-register.co.uk/forums/index.php?showtopic=6955&st=0&p=45120&hl=nitromors&fromsearch=1&#entry45120>) which contains a lot of further useful advice:

~ ~ ~

Whilst the main body shell of my TR3A is away being rebuilt by the professionals, I have been tasked with stripping all the external panels and doors to bare metal. Oh what fun I've had discovering the multitude of repairs they have suffered over 46 years?! Outer surfaces should have been easy - "Just use Nitromors and scrapers", they told me.

Well, Nitromors doesn't seem to be what it used to be when I last used it (but what is nowadays?). Despite the claim to strip up to 15 coats, it struggles to get past the top coat of cellulose. A second liberal (and expensive) dose may deal with the primer, but when I get down to original factory red primer it fails miserably. I don't know what Triumph used, but I suspect it was the same stuff my Dad used to bring home from red-leading ships. It certainly sticks like the proverbial and the only way I have been able to remove it is with a 3M stripping disk on an angle-grinder, or a blowtorch.

Inner surfaces are even more entertaining, with the additional obstacles of Hammerite and underseal to negotiate before getting down to the original BRG paint (still in excellent condition in places and it was nice to be able to compare it with the current Triumph Racing Green/Conifer). I discovered Nitromors works well on Hammerite but has no effect whatsoever on the underseal. The only way to deal with this seems to be the blowtorch - quite spectacular with the now dried Nitromors still present. The black fumes are exceedingly toxic and I

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really wish I had worn a mask. That also applies to the copious areas of filler I have encountered, some of which I was responsible for many years ago, but a lot more was obviously done by previous owners following accident damage and tin-worm attacks. The white dust clouds emanating from the stripping disk probably grounded a few planes at Luton airport.

I'm about two-thirds of the way through this exercise and nearly out of Nitromors, stripping disks and Calor gas, so before I re-invest in more of the same, does anyone know a good stripper?

Wow, I'm overwhelmed by the response - it seems many others have learned lessons the hard way and I'll try to respond to as many of the points raised as I can.

The main body tub was blasted and (zinc?)-primed prior to starting the reconstruction which is now well underway at TRGB.

We decided to try to salvage as many of the outer panels as possible, since they fitted. Cost of buying and making repro panels fit as well would probably far exceed the cost of repairing the originals. Most of the panels were known to have had some local repairs done in the past and (as suspected) the underseal covered a multitude of other sins. We decided not to blast these panels, partly because of horror stories I had heard about potential rippling (unless done very carefully) and also because I was told that the grit just bounces off underseal.

After the first couple of days hard labour I did scan the Yellow Pages and WWW for local chemical stripping companies but couldn't find anywhere convenient. Given the transportation problem and having no idea how safe the process or reliable the chosen company would be, I decided to press on. However, if/when I ever have to do this again I would seriously consider

using a recommended chemical stripping company, although I have reservations about the long-term effect on the metal.

It seems to me that the hard way is the safest way and, although tedious and time-consuming, it does have the benefit that you are in control at all times. In my case, the underseal was rock-solid and totally immovable without serious heat. Cost of Nitromors, gas, wire brushes and stripping disks is probably still well below the cost of professional chemical stripping or blasting.

I hadn't considered the potential effect of scratches and scoring on the final paint finish, assuming the primer-filler would deal with these, so I will be more careful with the remaining panels - just the front apron (worst of the lot!!) to finish and then the bonnet, bootlid and spare wheel cover.

Given the timescales, I will have to stick with Nitromors as that is easily available locally. However, the POR-Strip looks like a better option for future projects so I will include this on my next order from Frosts.

Many thanks for all responses, which I'm sure will help others about to tread the same path.

heliguy, on Apr 29 2006, 08:56 PM, said:

I would never take a panel to a sandblast company unless the operator had the skills and the experience of doing body panels before.....

Mitch,

That's precisely why I decided to do it myself the hard way. Mind you, given the state of some of the panels revealed beneath paint and filler, a blaster probably couldn't have made them much worse!

MikeF, on Apr 30 2006, 11:08 AM, said:

...be very careful using a torch on fillers, but especially after applying solvents like Nitromors. Solvent fumes can react to be

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extremely toxic in a torch flame and you could suffer permanent lung damage. For the same reasons no smoking when using solvent materials as the fumes going through the burning ciggy are reacted in just the same way.

I would certainly agree with that. The brief experience I referred to earlier in this thread was enough to remind me of the dangers. Fortunately I was working outside and managed to get out of the smokestream fairly quickly before inhaling too much, but I can still taste it a couple of weeks on. It's all so easy to ignore obvious safety precautions when working at home and doing things which one has got away with for years.

~::~

I have to admit I had no idea how much sheer, boring hard labour this would be and the inner surfaces were particularly time-consuming, especially the doors and front apron. Some of the panels were in decidedly marginal condition and we elected to scrap the RHS front wing as not economically repairable, although I did eventually sell this to a much more determined home-restorer prepared to finish stripping it and then beat and weld it back to life (I must check whether he ever finished it!).



During this exercise, the original BRG colour was found beneath the underseal inside one of the front wings but the decision was made to keep it Conifer as it had been resprayed that colour by a previous owner and remained so for most of its life. It was also the same colour as our previous TR4A which I owned when we met and went on honeymoon in.



Whilst well entrenched in the dirty hard labour, there was just time to degrease, strip and paint the rear axle and propshaft with black Smoothright before returning them with the stripped panels to TRGB and checking on progress at their end.



Footnote: In the unlikely event that anyone wants to catch up on earlier instalments, just email me for copies or download from the LVG website.

Little Gransden Airshow

Howard Pryor of North London TR Group has reserved tickets for 30 cars in the usual spot. Please contact Paul Richardson **as soon as possible** if you want tickets for this event.

The Olde Watermill Dickensian Shopping Village

Classic Car Rally

Sunday 21st August 2011

10am – 5pm

Registration Form

Please complete the following details (Block Capitals please)

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Post Code:.....Tel no:..... Mobile no:.....

E-mail address:.....

Vehicle Make & Model

.....

Special Features & Brief History

.....

.....

Approximate time of arrival

.....

Please return the completed registration form to:

Mandy Bromwich,

The Olde Watermill Dickensian Shopping Village,

Barton Mill Lane,

Barton Le Clay,

Beds

MK45 4RF

Any queries regarding the Classic Car Day please contact Mandy on 0845 8720507(option 3)
or 07967 199642

We look forward to seeing you.

Thank you for registering

Please enclose your £5.00 per car entry fee for Charity

All proceeds to Cancer Research UK

Please make any cheques payable to the The Olde Watermill Events Company