

BRITISH SPORTSCAR ENTHUSIAST
(You know, the cute ones!)
NOVEMBER 1995 NEWSLETTER

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Tuesday, November 21st, 7 p.m.
Round Table Pizza,
SW corner of First & Bullard

NEXT EVENT:

November 19th Sunday 9:00 am	Club tour (run) to Raymond (thru Friant) Meet at McDonalds First & Nees 9:00 am
December 10th Sunday 2:00 pm	Christmas Party and pot luck at Kevin & Debilyn Molineaux 43446 Ranger Cir Dr (Yosemite Lakes Park), Coarsegold 642-4243

Questions? Comments? Classified ads? Contributors? Volunteers?
Unwilling recruits?

Contact:

Carol Lanigan, 435-0244 or 645-1841

Debilyn Molineaux, 432-7635 or 642-4243

SOME PERSONAL COMMENTS FROM THIS MONTH'S EDITOR:

A few more of you members should consider coming out for one of the weekend tours. I know its starting to get a little cooler now, but next spring (about late February) will soon be here, and if you haven't come out for a club "run", plan on participating! I know that often we have other commitments for the weekend, but if you find yourself with a free Sunday (or Saturday) and we have a run scheduled...don't wimp out...join the FUN! You'll see beautiful sportscars (there really are lots of them in the club), hear all those different, wonderfully sounding motors, drive thru some of the best scenery in the country (we are fortunate at how close all those neat country roads are), and best of all, talk cars with some of the best folks on earth (british car owners)!

Also:

Al F., we miss you! Hear you still got your "B".
Peter F., we miss you too! Still working on the spit?
Bob G., fire up that "A"!
Glen P., don't become a stranger!
Tom S., come on another run. Love to see that GT6 again!
Joe B., when you going to make a meeting?
Hank C., don't miss too many more meetings!
Chris H., Her Majesty wouldn't take kindly to missed meetings!
Dr. Eldon, take that "4" on a run, you might end up keeping it!
Bob M., That TD would look good on a run.
David M., maybe our clubs can meet sometime, somewhere?
Carol W., come by one Tuesday.

TOUR THROUGH THE FOOTHILLS
October 15, 1995

Last Sunday turned out to be a beautiful day for a country drive. The originally scheduled run up to Dinkie Creek was revised to a low country run through the foothills. Doug (TR6), Peter (Bugeye) and Rich (TR6) made up the brave, small group. (As we all know, to increase the odds, its smarter to run in larger groups of British sportscars because one vehicle will break down.) The gods were smiling...we all made it back!

We drove out to the end of Ashland and onto Watts Valley Road. The upper half of Watts Valley Rd becomes an enjoyable one-lane road through cottonwoods and oaks. We turned onto Burrough Valley road which took us through an expanding foothill community of big lot homes. Then we turned up Tollhouse Rd, and stopped for a rest at the tiny country corner that is "Tollhouse", to reintroduce blood into our throbbing posteriors. While there, Peter and I marvelled at what Doug had done under his car's hood (you should all see this, folks!)

Next stop was just up the road, at a turnout, under the famous "Tollhouse Traverse" rock climbing granite face, where there were two climbers in action to observe. On up the road to a very pleasant stop at small community school where we ate lunch, shared some of Doug's food (thanks Mrs. Hansen!) and solved a few of mankind's pressing social issues.

We continued up this very beautiful road (reminded me a little of the Bass Lake community) thru Alder Springs and Meadow Lakes, then down to Auberry. On this stretch, Peter took the lead and I brought up the rear. As we passed through Auberry, a CHP took position behind me, then pulled over with us when we stopped in a parking lot. Without getting out of his car, the officer looked over at me and thundered: "You're smoking too much! Folks up here won't like it! Fix it or park it!" I nodded ("Yes sir, your officerness...Mr. 40 caliber automatic!") then I climbed out to see the wisps of smoke coming from my tailpipe. Then he looked over at Peter and snapped: "You! You're driving illegally without a side mirror!" He then drove off in a cloud of dust and gravel. Doug looked over at Peter and I, and said: "Did he find anything wrong with me?" I said: "Yeah. He said your car was the wrong color (red)!" Cops in bad moods do wonders for their public perception.

From here we took the shortest way home, thru Prather, Academy, and onto Herndon avenue at Clovis. This was most enjoyable, we need to do a spring run over the same route with the spring flowers in bloom and carpets of green grass!

I also:

While stretching our legs at a convenient turn-out, on the last "run", and sharing thoughts on the fun of driving our pride-and-joy, Doug confessed that while behind the steering wheel of his TR6, he "feels like a 20 year-old"! What a coincidence! I made the same observation in a series of articles I wrote for the newsletter of another car club I belong to...and since I have a captive audience, I'll share that segment with you below.

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS and ASSORTED RAMBLINGS
by Rich Ramos

I'm closer to 50 than I am to 40. I'm a responsible husband and father and I think I now lead a relatively normal quiet life. (The Wife and her family are usually the cause of all the commotion around our household.) Triumphs are not the topic of conversation among my friends or fellow business associates. Most of the people I know are not aware that I have owned a TR-6 for the last 10 years. When they find out (because they've seen me in my TR on the road, or I may have mentioned it without intending to) I usually get a, "Really? YOU own a sports car!?" Sometimes I feel I have to defend that fact of my life, and it makes me wonder what it is about me that puts me in the "non-sports car type" category in other people's minds.

I'm of average height and the right weight, I've kept in shape, so visually, I'm not the wrong body to be squeezing into the body style of a sports car. Am I a little too old? Well, when I drive my TR I'm 20 again (aren't we all!). Although I think I have the sense of someone older, I couldn't enjoying driving it more than if I had owned the TR when I really was that age. Why the half incredulous reaction from my acquaintances and peers? If I had a Lexus, the reaction would be, "Hey, I see you got a Lexus...all right!"

It must be that people who have never owned a Triumph, or any true sports car, can't really imagine what that's like. So it's easy for them to assume that only irresponsible youths would ever put up with them, or someone who is older, maybe still single, trying to maintain the image of youth. I'd like to think that they perceive me as a sensible person yet are perplexed because they're convinced sensible people my age should see the folly of owning sports cars. Boy, are they off track (about sports cars being folly!). I do know a few people who had once owned a Triumph, MG or Healey. When they ask me if I still have my Triumph, they say it with a detectable gleam in their eyes. The magic never disappears once you've driven a real sports car long enough to where you're able to read its mind and anticipate its every response.

In responding to the initial question, I always seem compelled to include a justification. "Yeah, and it's really a lot of fun to drive." "It's a hobby of mine which is also an investment of sorts because it's always increasing in value." "I really bought it for my son before they all disappear or get too expensive to buy." "It's an endangered species and I'm nursing it back to health." The next question is always financial. They ask if it's costing a lot to keep it (sometimes), and if insurance is high (depends). But if I had an RV as a pleasure vehicle instead, wouldn't it cost more of both?

Then they start telling me all sorts of practical reasons why THEY don't have a sports car, or about the school chum that had a tattered one, or about the Mustang they once owned (egad...sports car?). Some of them manage to keep the conversation going with further questions, as if they're wondering if I have discovered something in life that they missed or are missing. At that point I know I've got 'em! I tell them how intoxicating it can get out on the road and of the attention one usually attracts. The conversation usually ends, not with a request for a ride someday, but with a sigh of sorts, a resignation to the status quo in their lives. It reminds me of myself, in those years prior to buying my TR-6.