The Bulletin

of the Triumph Wedge Owners Association

TR8 TRIUMPH WEDGE OWNERS ASSOCIATION TR7



Issue 75 Summer 2026



Putting miles on your car, Part 2

by President John Clifford

Well, this is my column for the Summer 2026 issue. The Board has made some efforts to help ease some of the load on our chief editor by assigning a couple of assistant editors to the process. We are still planning to publish the four issues per year that you are accustomed to. So please do continue to submit articles and photos (portrait mode for possible covers for the Fall—leaf peeping anyone—and Winter editions).

Since I wrote my last column, a variety of plans for this summer have seen some significant changes. First and foremost to those of us throughout the center of the country from Texas to the Great Lakes, we have had one of the wettest summers in a long time. From a Triumph and specifically from a TWOA point of view, this has resulted in a lot of plans being changed. In the big picture, the big national VTR event, scheduled for October, had to be cancelled. As had been reported in a number of venues, the host site in Kerrville, Texas got pummeled by a lot of rain in a short time which resulted in significant damage to several of the resort's buildings resulting in the closure for at least 6 months. This has been a quite a hardship to that part of the country for the second summer!

On a somewhat smaller scale, here in the Midwest, we have had more than enough rain to result in smaller, localized flooding (eastern Indiana) and lots more grass to cut every 5 days. Here in Dayton OH, our annual British Car Day was the first of August dawned with a wet forecast which turned into two hours of steady rain starting at 10 am, resulting in only about 100 cars showing up (instead of the usual 225+). It really was a wetter (not better) experience. It did allow a different way of judging cars based upon how well the water beaded up on the bonnets (see photo top of next page).

Our local club scheduled a club drive in late August which went to an event at a dairy farm, famous for their locally made ice cream. The event was billed as *The Orphans Car Show* which was where you are sure to see some car company names that are no longer in business and the surviving vehicles which are now "orphans", e.g. Triumph, MG, Pontiac, Studebaker, etc. (you get the idea). The four cars from our

Total TWOA Membership: 533

North America: 484 Overseas: 49

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Editorial contributions to the TWOA Newsletter are welcome and encouraged. Submissions should be emailed to editor@triumphwedgeowners.org. Materials are subject to revision as needed for publication. Unless otherwise specified, all correspondence will be considered for publication.

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Cover: Road and sky. Piper Aviation Museum, Lock Haven, PA. Pat Ledford.



club stayed until about 1:00 pm because it was hot and very humid with no shade. The plan was to head to a local winery not far away where we could go hang out there in the A/C, making a nice ending for the afternoon.



On to other items besides driving. Maybe like repairing or parts or tools. In the last issue of *The Bulletin*, a couple of the tech articles elicited some feedback from you the readers. The article on the various TR7 original distributors and what it might take to match their function if they were ever had to be replaced did get some attention, including from yours truly and my '76. Then the other item which caught some peoples' eyes was the challenge to open the bonnet in the case where the release cable had broken. The challenge to me would be how to do that without scratching the paint!

On to a replacement part topic which has been dragging on due to issues beyond our control, something may actually be moving forward on getting replacement sun visors made. As I write this, the damaged sun visor tooling that the prior trimming house (Aldridge) gave up on is travelling back across the pond to Newton Commercial in the UK. They think they might be able to resurrect or repair the tooling enough to start production of TR7 and TR8 sun visors again. Mind you, they might not be able to do the pocket where some of you hide $100 for emergency towing but we'll have to see what they come up with. The Stag visors some folks have fitted are really too short and cutting open and cleaning out an old visor and restuffing it with kitchen sponges just never looks right either. Fingers crossed. Thanks to Geoff Maggs and Jim TenCate for persevering with this little project.

That's enough for now, go spend some time with your Wedge(s) and start thinking about shows you might attend in the coming days!



Veep's Peeps

by Vice President Larry McDonald

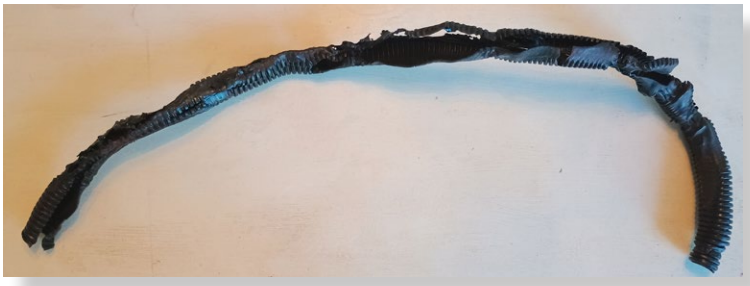
Greetings fellow wedgeheads. It's early September and my TR8 didn't see as many miles this spring and summer compared to previous years, for a number of reasons. First off, I bought a derelict 1998 Ford Ranger, replacing my 8 as my daily driver. I live in a "senior" community in eastern Tennessee (Crossville/Fairfield Glade). At 70, I'm one of the younger inhabitants. That said, I became convinced that it was only a matter of time before daily driving my wedge would lead to an accident.

Secondly, the summer weather around here was crazy. About eight weeks of almost constant rain followed by record-breaking/wilting heat and humidity. I bought my drop top wedge to drive with the top down...not to serve as a bathtub. The heat convinced me to forgo attending an annual all-British car show in Rugby, TN last month. Heat and age are not a good combination...for man nor beast...nor classic car.

Lastly, life (and age) prevented me from attending this year's VTR South Central Regional convention in Marble Falls, Texas. I just didn't have the will power to drive 1990 miles round trip.

Alas, a big October wedding in Kingsville, Texas (at the famous King Ranch) was to have prevented me from attending the 2026 VTR National convention. Sadly, mother nature (in the form of torrential rains and flooding in the Kerrville, Texas area) led to the convention's cancellation. My heart goes out to my former/fellow club members in the South Texas Triumph Association. Two years of hard work, in preparation for hosting the gathering, literally and figuratively were "washed away". Gut wrenching!

Not a lot to report in the way of car updates, other than an embarrassing self-inflicted battery "boo-boo" a couple of weeks ago. A faulty brake light switch on the derelict Ranger caused its battery to drain. Needing to drive it, I took the battery out of the TR8 and put it in the truck. Upon my return, I put the battery back in the 8. Something just didn't seem right when I did it...but I proceeded to connect the terminals. Immediately upon connecting the positive cable, smoke began billowing from under the hood. Ruh Roh! Have any of y'all ever switched battery cables around because you put the battery in



backwards? Fortunately, the only damage (that I've noticed) was to the wire connecting the alternator to the starter, which melted in half. Oh, boy.

From reading the past issue of *The Bulletin*, you are aware of Dave Massey's selection by TWOA's officers to fill the remaining term of former director at large, Chris Sharp. Belated congrats, Dave! (I echo John Clifford's thanks to Chris for his 18 months of service to TWOA. His passion for wedge cars is unquestioned.) I also echo John's comments regarding the caliber of candidates who "threw their hats in the ring" for consideration. All are highly qualified and dedicated TWOA members. Any one of them would be an asset to the board and, in turn, our club. In July, I had the pleasure of personally interviewing Kevin Turner (Illinois Sports Owners Association) and TD Hathcock (Red River Triumph Club). I was "blown away" by these guys!

As is my habit, I'd like to thank the many members who reach out to TWOA via our club website's webmail. Most recently, those include: Nigel Cosh, Roy Loving, Kevin Turner, Scott Rankin and Bruce Ammons. Keep those "cards and letters" coming in!

Until the next issue, as "Happy", the "Esso Boy" says...Happy Motoring!

Update on Sun Visors

by Jim TenCate

Well, it's a year late but I finally managed, with Brian Tilton's help, to get the sun visor tooling shipped off to Newton Commercial in the UK. Thanks to Geoff Maggs for keeping after me and Brian for expertly packaging it up. In the end I fussed a lot over exactly how to fill out the customs forms, had to look up lots of different categories the tooling might fit into, etc. and had to input repeatedly that the tooling was damaged and had no commercial use beyond its scrap value. Brian spent some time calculating that exact scrap value (of the brass) and we used that as value on the customs declaration. I'm happy to report absolutely zero snafus, it took just 5 days to travel across the pond.

Newton update: "I wanted to let you know how we were getting on with the tooling. We have done lots of test runs to help identify the effects the damage is having on the final product and it is quite minimal so we feel positive we can get this amended and up and running. We are also looking into sourcing both the pads and the metal rods so we can trial a complete sun visor." Wooo! I'm excited!

Gen Z's Attraction to Analog Classics: Why young people are buying classic cars in increasing numbers

by Kevin Turner

It's a fear and concern that I hear repeatedly from classic car owners and automotive club leaders—If there is a declining interest in classic car ownership, who is going to buy our classic cars when we are done with them? I'm here to tell you that the younger generation is getting fed-up and disillusioned with the digital life and are now looking for analog experiences, and that includes owning older cars. I'll explain.

Gen Z's Preference for Analog Cars

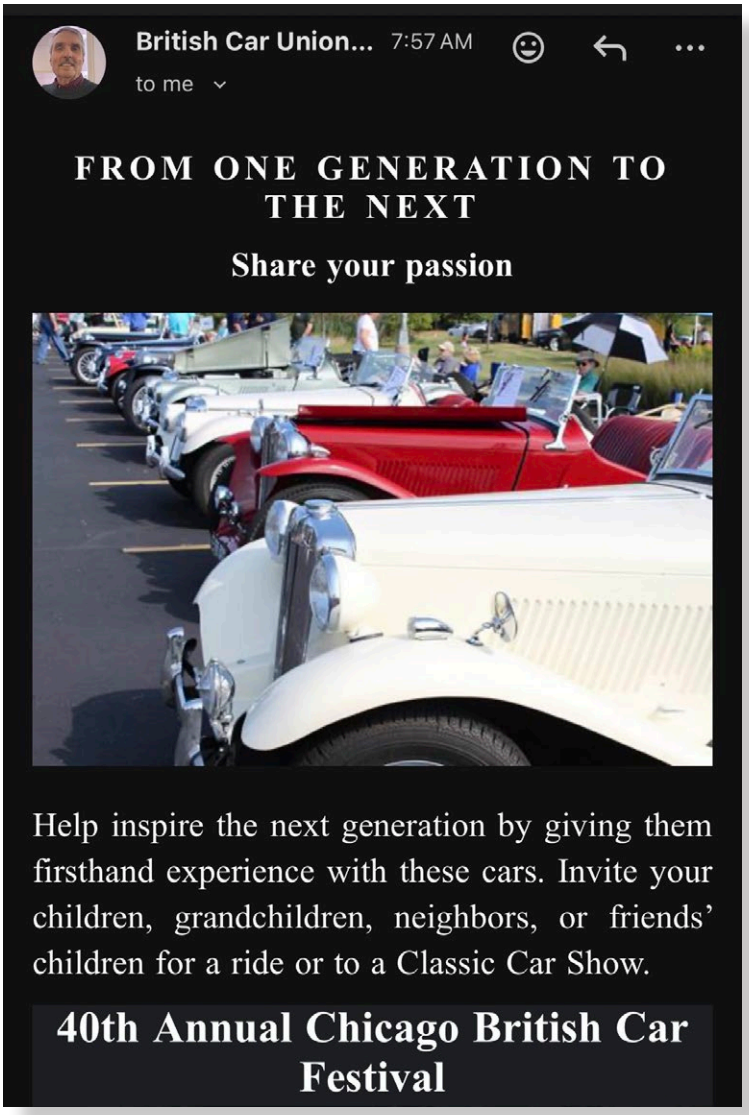
There is significant evidence that younger generations, particularly Gen Z and Millennials, have a growing interest in post-war vehicles, especially those from the mid-1960s to 2000 (25 years old), known as "modern classics". Recent studies conducted by Hagerty Insurance have shown that younger drivers are actually more interested in owning classic cars than older generations. For instance, one study found that approximately 60% of Gen Z drivers expressed an interest in owning a classic vehicle, compared to only 31% of Baby Boomers. The studies reveal that this trend is being driven by younger people's desire for autonomy with freedom from modern "corporate" systems, such as internet connected, controlled and tracked vehicles. They also want something the average person can easily maintain or repair themselves, known as the "right to repair" movement, not requiring specialized computer diagnostics.

Younger car enthusiasts are drawn to analog cars that offer affordable entry points, are reliable, and have a proven history of longevity. They are seeking out cars that deliver driving pleasure via a direct connection between driver and machine, rather than providing computerized technological sophistication. British vehicles such as those made by MG, Austin-Healey, Lotus, and Triumph attract younger enthusiasts due to their mechanical simplicity, after-market parts availability, support, cult followings, and distinct character.

Gen Z is also pushing back against "digital fatigue". They don't feel good about owning expensive, depreciating modern vehicles that often rely on expensive sensors and experience premature mechanical issues. While manufacturers continue to produce cars with more electrification and driver assistance, the supply of analog performance cars remains fixed. This adds to their desirability and value, with many of them becoming "forever cars" that will be on the road for decades to come.

Why We Drive

Dr. Matthew B. Crawford is an American philosopher, mechanic, and *New York Times* bestselling author known for



his research into human agency, technology, and manual work. He serves as a senior fellow at the University of Virginia's Institute for Advances Studies in Culture. In his book, "Why We Drive—Toward a Philosophy of The Open Road" (HarperCollins, 2020), he argues that the appeal of driving is not primarily about transportation or speed. He proclaims that driving is one of the few everyday activities that demands genuine skill, judgment, and engagement with the physical world, and that modern life increasingly distances us from direct experiences. Crawford says unlike many digital interactions, driving requires a person to remain mentally present, with satisfaction coming from exhibiting competence. Gen Z does not want driving to be highly automated because doing so would remove much of what makes driving meaningful.

Other Benefits of Classic Car Ownership

In addition to the more philosophical reasons for the resurgence of classic car ownership among young drivers, there are many practical ones as well. The vehicles themselves can be more accessible, with the price of entry-level classics remaining fairly stable while used car prices in general continue to rise. Compared to modern vehicles with their high prices, electronic systems and inaccessible mechanical designs, classic cars can be maintained with a modest set of tools, access to YouTube videos, and basic knowledge. The community of classic car owners is known to be friendly, sharing, and open. When a young person buys a classic car, they can access car clubs and the automotive community at large for their experience with and knowledge of their vehicle.

Younger buyers are also being helped by access to online resources and auctions for researching and buying classics, such as Bring A Trailer and Cars & Bids. They don't have to search classified ads, bid against insiders, visit dealer lots or travel to see a car. Today, they can research a car's history, read a transparent comment thread, study high-resolution photos, and bid from a phone or computer. The comment sections on these platforms function as a kind of crowdsourced due diligence. This transparency suits younger buyers.

Conclusion

Today, younger people want to feel ownership and connection to the things that they have. This can be seen in other "return to analog" cultural trends among Gen Z, such as the resurgence of vinyl records, film photography, journaling by hand, mailing letters, print magazines, wrist watches, simpler phones, iPods, and more.

The renewed interest in analog classic cars reflects Gen Z's re-discovered attraction to the emotional side of driving. The appeal of a roaring engine, the feel of a manual transmission, and the satisfaction of driving well a car without automation is gaining traction with younger drivers. It is also being driven by factors such as the high cost of new cars, and the relatively attractive economics of maintaining and owning a modern classic. As the automotive landscape continues to evolve, it will ultimately be the pleasures of driving that assures us there will be a market for our cars among younger generations.

Often times young people are brought to new experiences through connections with family or friends. In the automotive space, we need to create opportunities for Gen Z to get involved with classic cars and to engage with like-minded people that can help to make classic car ownership easier and more fun. By doing so, we can develop an upcoming generation that will continue our cherished legacy of classic car ownership for many years to come. Examples include invitations to club events (mechanical, rally, display, or track), free first year club memberships, mentor programs, tool lending, community outreach programs, or even just engaging more actively with Gen Z at car events. As classic car owners and automotive enthusiasts, it is incumbent upon us to address this task and take on this challenge.

CONTEST! Favorite Drives

by Your Editor

We've had some pretty interesting drives written up to date. Here's my request: I'm always looking for a handful of great photos to go with a favorite drive. It doesn't take long to put together, just about 5 paragraphs and a lot of photos. That's about the minimum you'll need. More is always welcome of course! I can do the heavy lifting as needed. Just send me photos and text and I'll take care of the rest. But, lots of photos are essential. A word of warning: all the photos really should have a TR7/TR8 in it, no Prius photos please! Scenery is better with a wedge-shaped car!

Without further ado, here is our sixth contest entry from Pat Ledford! Send me yours! editor@triumphwedgeowners.org



Two Triumphs, Three Days, and the Back Roads of Pennsylvania: A Three-Day Allegheny Mountain Road Trip

*by Pat Ledford**

The Idea for the Trip. The editor of *The Bulletin* was looking for articles from club members about their favorite drives. When my son, Kevin, asked about taking a road trip through the Allegheny Mountains using the Bucktail Trail through Elk County, I decided it was a good opportunity to combine both.

The plan was simple: three days on the back roads of PA, two Triumphs, and plenty of time to enjoy the journey rather than worry about getting somewhere quickly. I would start from my home in New Wilmington, PA, while Kevin would make the trip north from Joppa, Maryland, on his Triumph Tiger. Yes, if you haven't guessed it's a Triumph motorcycle.

We planned to meet in Ridgway and spend the weekend working our way through some of the less-traveled roads of the Allegheny Mountains.

Friday — Heading North. Friday morning I left New Wilmington in the TR8 and headed east and north on Pennsylvania Route 208. The first town I passed through was Volant, PA, where I stopped for a photograph of the TR8 at Volant Winery.



From Volant I continued on PA 208 toward Emlenton. Crossing the Allegheny River gave me a good view of the high I-80 bridge spanning the valley. It was a good reminder that, even on a road that was mainly getting me from one place to another, there were sights worth stopping to see!

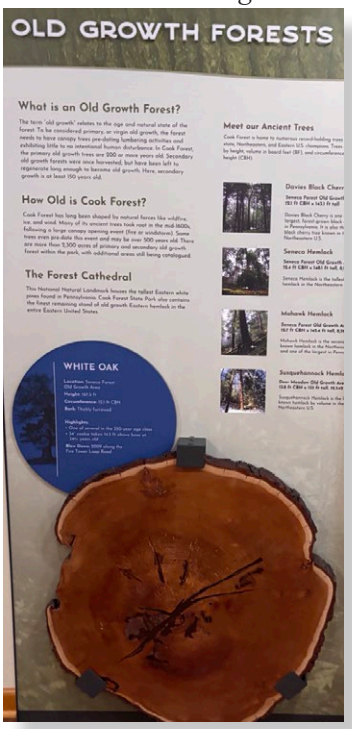


I continued on PA 208 to Shippenville, where I left the route and picked up U.S. Route 322. I then turned onto PA Route 66 and continued north into the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains. Near noon I stopped at *Lost in the Wilds Brewing*, a place my wife and I had heard was popular. Unfortunately, the food truck was closed that day, so lunch had to wait.



Cook Forest — A Walk Through History. I continued on toward Cook Forest and stopped at the Cook Forest Visitors Center. After spending the morning on the road, it was worth getting out of the TR8 and learning more about the forest surrounding me.

What caught my attention was the age of the forest. Cook Forest contains old-growth timber, with some trees more than 200 years old. Standing in the Visitors Center looking at the displays gave me a different appreciation for the landscape outside. I wasn't simply driving through another stretch of Pennsylvania woodland; some of those trees had been growing there for centuries. Some of these trees might have been saplings when the Pilgrims arrived!



After the Visitors Center I stopped for lunch at Cousin Basil's Restaurant, then continued north on PA 66 through Marienville and Kane. From Kane I turned onto PA Route 6 and continued toward Kinzua Bridge State Park.

Kinzua Bridge — Stop and See the Mountains. One of the interesting things about traveling through the forests of northern Pennsylvania is that, if you want to see the scenery, you have to stop. Much of the time the road is a tunnel of trees, with little to see to either side. As I traveled farther north and east, the forest became even denser. In places there was an almost vertical hillside on one side and a steep drop-off on the other, separated from the pavement by little more than a guardrail. That was one reason I had built several stops into the trip. You could drive for miles through beautiful country and never really see it unless you pulled over.



This historic railroad viaduct was partially destroyed by a tornado in 2003 and is now the Kinzua Bridge Skywalk.

Kinzua Bridge was my last planned stop for the day. From there it was time to point the TR8 toward Ridgway, where I would meet Kevin. He was making the trip north from Joppa, Maryland, on the Triumph Tiger.

The plan was to spend Friday night in Ridgway and get an early start Saturday morning. Friday had been about working our way north, exploring the back roads and making stops along the way. Saturday would be different. We were going to head deeper into the Allegheny Mountains and begin the narrower, twistier roads we had really come to explore.

Saturday Morning — The Brew Bank. Friday evening ended in Ridgway, where I met up with Kevin and the Triumph Tiger. Dinner was at the Brew Bank Brewing Company, an unusual restaurant and brewery located in a former bank building.

The old woodwork and character of the building have been incorporated into the restaurant, while brewing equipment occupies part of the former bank space. Breakfast the next morning was there as well, making the Brew Bank an unexpected bookend to our overnight stay. With breakfast finished, the TR8 and Triumph Tiger were ready to go. The easy part of the trip was over.



Looking for Elk. Our original Saturday destination was Lock Haven. At only about 98 miles from Ridgway, that wasn't going to make much of a three-day mountain road trip. We decided to add some miles—and, more importantly, some mountain roads.

We headed into the Elk County State Forest and stopped at the Elk Country Visitor Center. Of course, when you visit Pennsylvania's elk country, there is one thing everyone hopes to see: elk.

Elk, however, don't necessarily cooperate with a tourist's schedule. If you're lucky, you may see a herd in the fields or along the roads. If you're not lucky, the Visitor Center has an elk waiting for you.



The Bucktail Trail and Hyner View. Leaving the Elk Country Visitor Center, it was time to start some serious back-road fun. Because we had detoured to the Visitor Center, we turned north to pick up PA Route 120, the Bucktail Trail.

The road lived up to its reputation. Speeds were generally in the 35-to-45-mph range, but speed wasn't really the point. The road climbed and dropped with the terrain, with tight curves, constant changes in elevation, and very little traffic. With the TR8 and Triumph Tiger, we could settle into the rhythm of the road.

As we were coming out of what we thought was the best part, we decided to make another stop. We turned off PA 120 onto Hyner Run Road and then onto Hyner View Road.

Hyner View Road is only about four miles long, but those four miles seemed considerably longer from behind the wheel—or from the seat of a motorcycle. The road climbs steadily and twists back and forth up the mountain. In places, I thought my driveway was wider than the road.

But the view at the top was worth every foot of the climb. From the overlook, the roads we had been traveling seemed almost insignificant compared with the size of the landscape. The mountains stretched out in every direction, with the West Branch of the Susquehanna River winding through the valley below. The road was the adventure, the *stops* were the reward.



Lock Haven and the Piper Aviation Museum. After a quick lunch, we continued to Lock Haven. We still had some time before checking into the motel, so we made another stop at the Piper Aviation Museum. Yes, that's my car on the front cover of this issue of *The Bulletin*.

Lock Haven was the original home of the Piper Aircraft factory, and the museum tells the story of W. T. Piper, his family, the company, and the development of the famous Piper Cub. It was an interesting tour and a nice change of pace after spending most of the day in the mountains.

The museum wrapped up the day's touring. We checked into the motel, took showers, and then went looking for dinner. Not knowing the area well, we took the simple approach and went to the closest pub we could find. After a meal and some conversation about the day's drive, we headed to the hotel.

Sunday — Taking the Long Way Home. Normally, when a trip is over and I'm heading home, I prefer the shortest and quickest route. In this case, that would have meant getting on I-80 west and driving directly home. But I wasn't in a hurry.

After two days of back roads and mountain scenery, I decided there was no reason to abandon the roads that had made the trip so enjoyable. Sunday morning I left Lock Haven and began working my way west toward U.S. 322. What surprised me was the route I ended up taking. To reach U.S. 322, I traveled through the southern part of the Allegheny Mountains on PA 144 and PA 53. I hadn't expected these roads to be much of a highlight, but they turned out to be almost as much fun as the Bucktail Trail. The roads continued to climb and fall with the terrain, with sweeping curves and long undulations that made for great cruising. Even after connecting with U.S. 322 in Philipsburg, the fun wasn't over. I eventually picked up PA 208 outside Clarion and continued west toward home. By then I had completely abandoned the idea of getting home as quickly as possible. I was simply enjoying the road and the drive.

I finally arrived home after lunch—tired, hungry, and realizing that I had driven straight through without stopping for lunch. It was probably time to call the trip finished.

A Great Weekend. Three days, hundreds of miles, two Triumphs, and more Pennsylvania back roads than I could have covered on a normal weekend.

The trip had started with a simple idea: take the Bucktail Trail through the Allegheny Mountains. Along the way, the route became much more than that. There were small towns, forests, rivers, historic sites, mountain overlooks, an aviation museum, and roads that seemed to get better the farther we traveled. And perhaps the best part? We didn't have to hurry.

Sometimes the best way to enjoy a road trip is to leave the interstate behind, slow down, and see where the road takes you. For a three-day trip through Pennsylvania's Allegheny Mountains, the TR8 and the Triumph Tiger turned out to be a pretty good combination. It really *was* a great weekend.



T.P.A. PAINT Revisited

by Jim TenCate

*[Editor's note: We should probably define TPA for those of you not "in the know", TPA stands for **T**hermo**p**lastic **A**crylic lacquer and had been used by GM for many years before BL and Jaguar decided to use it in the late 1970s and early 1980s.*]

Why do another article on this and why now? Lots of "new" cars are coming out of the woodwork (eBay, Bring-a-Trailer, etc) with their original TPA paint, cars stored for years maybe! Plus, there are more than a handful of cars already out there being driven (you know who you are) which still have it—and with paint jobs these days costing a small fortune or more, keeping a nice TPA paint car looking good is now a "cost effective" option instead of a new paint job. (I'd also like to remind everyone that a VTR Concours judge will not ding you for old, faded, but original paint.) There's another reason this article is timely. David Elsberry's original research was done back in the days of early Google and there's so much more to learn nowadays. There are lots of new paint-care products on the market too that we can discuss. So, if, like me, you've decided to embrace and keep your old TPA paint (or if you find a car with its original paint) don't run away, this is the article for you.

Let's first revisit the original TPA article and the cars that inspired it. You're probably wondering, wait, there was another TPA article?! Yes. Log into the TWOA website and go find TWOA Issue 15, June 2011:

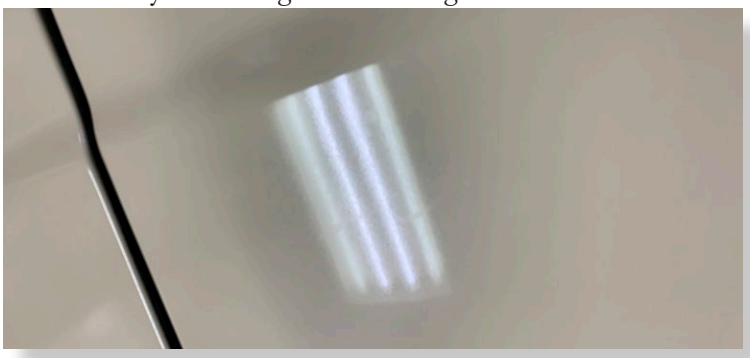
triumphwedgeowners.org/newsletters/TWOA_Issue_15.pdf

and download or read it online if you haven't. (Or, if you're like me and your internet is down, you can just go find that issue amongst your paper copies.) David Elsberry, the author and a Past Prez of TWOA, had done plenty of research on the paint, talked with body shop people, read lots and lots on forums, and the two of us spent weeks accumulating all that for the article. David decided to strip the TPA paint off his TR7 and repaint it after being unhappy with his ability to bring the TPA back to anything looking reasonably good. His car was Poseidon metallic. Me? My original Platinum metallic car's TPA paint was pretty awful when I got the car back in '88 and I had mine restripped and painted clear-over-base back around 1990. Both those paint jobs have held up well. My second TR8 had original Platinum metallic TPA and I fought like crazy to get it back to looking good (see photo, left). Summary? Several of the common TPA metallics used back when the cars were new (notably Platinum, Persian Aqua, and Midas Gold) may cost you a lot of elbow grease to "look good"—although David Huddleson's Persian Aqua car is perhaps an exceptional counter-example. Generally, the solid color TPA paints are a bit easier to "shine up" I think. Some of you have seen my TPA Aran Beige TR8 at Triumphest (and it was on *The Bulletin* cover a few issues back too). Yes, I'm keeping that car's paint original and *not* spending $$$$ money on a whole new paint job! I have some photos of the Aran Beige car's paint to share for this article so let's get to it.

What new things have we learned about TPA paint? Back when Google, Bing and their ilk were all the rage, it was pretty amazing to search websites for information with these search tools. With AIs these days, "searching" and "researching" is a whole new world and frankly mind blowing for me. At the very minimum asking ChatGPT to hunt up whatever it can find about TPA paint yields at least an order of magnitude more stuff. For example, it found several old Jaguar Service Bulletins that deal with TPA paint, it found a dissertation someone wrote about how things fell apart at Castle Bromwich (including a nice discussion about the "new" TPA paint process), discussions in forums I'd never think to look in, even some articles written in French, German and maybe Slovenian(?!). As icing on the cake, I had the AI read David Elsberry's old article and see what it thought we needed to point out now in light of all the new information it had just found for me. I took careful notes and am now writing this up for *The Bulletin*.

Did we get anything wrong in that original article? What did I learn that's new? In our original article, it may have seemed that TPA was a whole new paint formulation and BL failed miserably by using it. Not so. We didn't write that up very well. In fact, thermoplastic acrylic lacquers (like DuPont's "Lucite") had been around as early as the 1950s. By the 1960s, GM was painting virtually all of its cars with acrylic-lacquer topcoats. The attraction was excellent gloss and especially good appearance with the increasingly popular metallic pigments of the day. I also learned that GM's process for applying TPA was pretty involved. A 1965 Corvette engineering document on the process is pretty daunting: two primer coats, wet sanding, sealer, color, additional sanding, three final lacquer coats with a timed flash period, two bake stages, then final sanding and polishing. The reflow oven was the last step. It turned out that even when properly applied, TPA had relatively poor long-term durability—and still had very high solvent emissions too—something else we didn't get quite right in the first article. As an aside, a neighbor has an early 60s Corvette and is always complaining about the quality of its original paint.

So I probably had the same questions you all might be having now. Jaguar and BL's introduction and use of TPA in 1979 was an adoption of a mature paint technology, not an experiment with a brand-new paint chemistry. So why *did* TPA paint fail so badly on our cars? This is how the paint looked on my Aran Beige car when I got it. Nice from 5 ft.



Nice reflection of the fluorescent lights right?



Here's a closeup of that section. Yes, really.

See the "dry lake bed/alligator skin" look? Yuck. GM had already spent roughly two decades refining primers, film thickness, sanding, flash times and reflow procedures so it seems perhaps that formulation and process control might have been the source of many of the problems, both with Jaguar and with our TR7s and TR8s. Remember that dissertation on Jaguar in the 1980s I mentioned finding? The author states that there is plenty of evidence that the "execution" of the new paint technology at Jaguar/Castle Bromwich went badly wrong in spite of best efforts to get it right. We can only guess that the same problems were occurring at BL. In fact, many later reports quote Jaguar management saying they had serious technical and production-discipline problems in the new paint shop; at one point bodies arriving at Browns Lane were reportedly being extensively reworked and even repainted.

What do the 1980s Jaguar Service Bulletins tell us about how the dealerships were dealing with TPA-paint problems? Using the AI to help find them, I downloaded three different Jaguar Service Bulletins where TPA is mentioned. I read through them and asked the AI to summarize to see what it would come up with. I'll paraphrase and past them in below.

- *TPA was a thin finish.* There was not much colored paint to begin with, so aggressive sanding or polishing can reach the underlying primer surprisingly quickly.



- *Jaguar did not treat every checked or crazed finish as a lost cause.* Their guidance was to determine how deep the damage went and preserve sound original material where possible.
- *Very fine surface checking could sometimes be corrected by extremely light (1200 grit) wet-sanding, then compounding, and polishing.* Deeper cracking required removal of the affected paint until a sound layer was reached.
- *Paint thickness mattered.* Jaguar warned that excessive film build could contribute to crazing/checking, so simply piling more paint over an old TPA finish was not a good repair strategy.

The practical takeaway for us TR7/TR8 owners? Like we said in our first article, be conservative: original TPA should be treated as a thin, solvent- and heat-sensitive finish. Use the least aggressive cleaning and polishing method that works. But, as you'll see, avoid immediately assuming ugly-looking TPA paint necessarily needs to be stripped!

OK, so how should you deal with it if you find yourself in possession of an original TPA paint car? I confess, when I got my "new" Aran Beige car I was seriously considering having to strip and repaint it. But egads, finding someone willing to do it was hard and even more off-putting were the prices I was hearing. So I started polishing with Klasse, a very very mild abrasive automotive polish and was encouraged by what I was seeing. But working the entire car by hand like I did with the Platinum TPA car I once owned just depressed me; that was a *lot* of work.

We have a local detailing shop in my small town and the detailer did some amazing work on a friend's GT-6; I chatted with her extensively, in person and over Emails, about doing my Aran Beige car. I shared all the info I'd learned about TPA paint and she agreed to have a *very gentle* go at "resurrecting" the paint. In the end, it came out very nice, not perfect but that

left me with something to do for the final touches. Now that I've got it "close enough", it's all about keeping it that way.

What about modern paint sealants and the like? How should you preserve a TPA paint car's finish? As you might guess, there are a gazillion auto-detailing forums out there and hoards of reports and information about keeping old and new cars looking great. This is the sort of thing an AI is really good at researching and summarizing since there's lots of "training" information available for it to digest. After I'd explored and researched the TPA paint topic, I asked it the following question to see what it would say: *"What would you recommend to a TR7/TR8 owner who has a car with TPA paint, based on what you've just helped me research and based on what you've read from the detailing community online?"* Here's the answer; I asked it to keep it simple and in bullet form. It's extremely good and is based on (1) David's original article and (2) my "discussion" *and* (3) what it's "read" from the detailing forums. I paraphrased and copied it in below.

ChatGPT-6 (Sol): **Here are some TPA paint preservation guidelines from your sources:**

1. *The goal today is preservation, not restoration.* Jaguar's service bulletins were written when the paint was relatively new and sometimes recommended P1200 wet-sanding, compounding and polishing. Forty-plus years later, surviving TPA may be much thinner, so that advice should be treated very cautiously.
2. *Assume the TPA color coat is thin.* Owners who have stripped or polished original cars report reaching the underlying primer/surfacer surprisingly quickly. Edges, creases and horizontal surfaces deserve particular care.
3. *Start with the least aggressive treatment possible.* Gentle washing first; polish only when necessary. Avoid routine compounding, machine polishing or sanding.
4. *A very mild hand polish is still appropriate.* Klasse All-In-One (or similar) has worked well on original TPA and can improve gloss and remove surface oxidation without the aggressiveness of traditional rubbing compounds. The 2011 article's basic "gentle polish" philosophy still holds up.
5. *Clay should no longer be an automatic step.* Use it only where bonded contamination actually requires it. On soft, fragile single-stage paint, clay can introduce marring and unnecessary mechanical abrasion.
6. *Once the paint looks good, protect rather than continue polishing.* A pure, non-cleaning carnauba wax such as P21S is a very conservative choice because it adds a sacrificial protective layer without deliberately removing paint.
7. *A **traditional** polymer sealant also makes sense.* Products such as Wolfgang Deep Gloss Paint Sealant 2.0/3.0, Jescar Power Lock+, Poorboy's World EX-P Pure Paint Sealant, and Meguiar's M21 Synthetic Sealant 2.0 are attractive because they provide longer-lasting protection without requiring the more aggressive preparation associated with many modern ceramic coatings.
8. *If using both sealant and wax, sealant goes on first.* Let the sealant cure, then add carnauba if desired. There is probably little reason to layer both unless you want the appearance of wax plus the longer durability of the sealant.
9. *Don't aggressively strip old wax before trying a sealant.* Solvent panel wipes and similar preparation products are exactly the sort of thing to avoid on solvent-sensitive TPA. Let the wax wear naturally, wash normally, and test the sealant on a small inconspicuous area first.
10. *Ceramic/graphene coatings are not obviously better for this job.* Their added hardness, hydrophobicity and chemical resistance are useful on modern clear coats, but they do little to address the underlying problem of already-crazed TPA, and their recommended surface preparation may be unnecessarily aggressive.
11. *Avoid paint-protection film over checked original TPA.* Adhesive film bonded to an already fractured paint layer creates a significant risk that paint could come away when the film is eventually removed.
12. *Some crazing should simply be accepted.* A mild polish can restore gloss, but it cannot repair cracks that extend into the paint film. If the finish looks good from normal viewing distance, chasing the remaining "alligator" texture may sacrifice more original paint than the cosmetic improvement is worth.
13. *Storage probably matters more than the choice between good waxes and sealants.* Keeping the car indoors, minimizing prolonged UV exposure and cleaning contaminants promptly are likely to do more for long-term survival than constantly applying increasingly sophisticated products.

Jaguar told dealers how to correct TPA; forty-five years later, owners should be considerably more conservative.

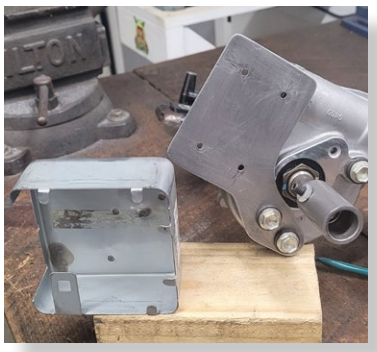
So there you have it. If you've got a TPA paint car, we'd love to see photos: editor@triumphwedgeowners.org

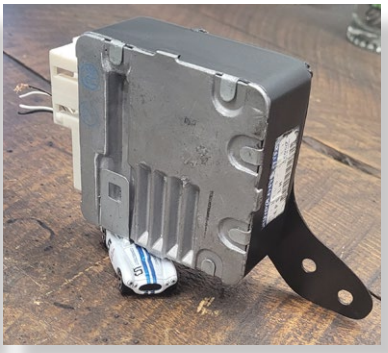


A custom-built electric power assist steering (EPAS) solution, Part 2

by Daniel Bettencourt, Jr.

In the last issue I showed you how I mechanically installed the Toyota EPAS. In this issue I will discuss electrical installation. The first step is to make a sheet metal mounting bracket for the Toyota controller; it mounts to the bottom of the EPAS motor. Then run two 8 Gauge wires directly from





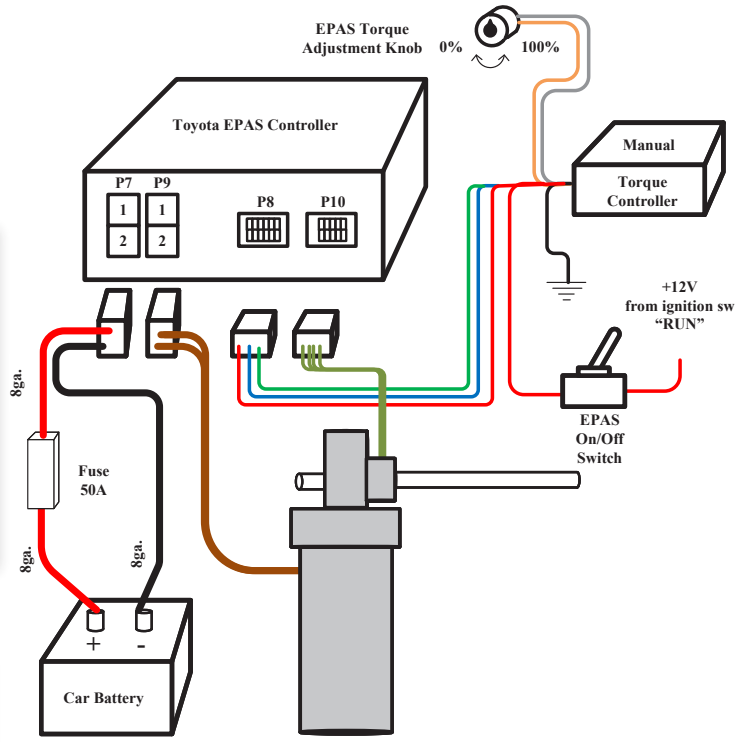
the controller to the battery and install a 50 amp fuse for the +12V cable. I mounted my fuse in the trunk near the battery.



Without a main computer the Toyota EPAS runs in a "fail safe mode" which provides a constant 30% torque assist. I wanted some adjustability, so I purchased an aftermarket torque controller (epowersteering.com). All you need to do is turn the adjustment knob to get a fixed 0-100% constant torque assist. The unit is easy to install and requires a +12 vdc supply; I installed it on a switch which controls the whole EPAS system. Reference the diagram (column 2) to see my wiring.







FYI: As of this writing there is now a aftermarket controller that provides a variable torque output based on GPS vehicle speed. I haven't tried that.

Initial road tests were ***poor***. I had a return-to-center (RTC) problem; after exiting a turn, I had to manually recenter the steering wheel. The drag from the EPAS gear box and motor could not be overcome by the vehicles front suspension caster alignment. Caster on a wedge is not adjustable and mine was low from the factory. I installed aftermarket caster adjustment blocks (thewedgeshopstore.com). They add a fixed caster of +1.5 degrees, giving me +4 degrees of caster. RTC is now much improved.

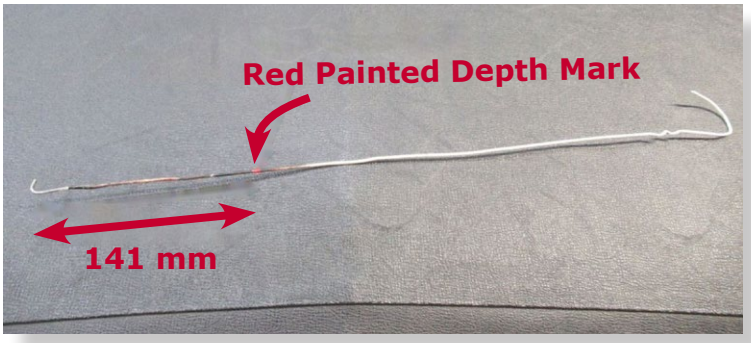


After 600 miles of road testing, I have come to some conclusions. I miss the loss of the sports car road feel (drives like a Toyota). The RTC could use more caster (cast/camber plates required now). It is a little over-assisted at highway speeds (more caster would help or I just hit the off switch). However, around-town driving and parking at the local cruise nights is FANTASTIC! Provides one-handed maneuvering with no power steering pump! For a cost of around $800 total (components= $600, machining & welding = $200), I consider this modification a good power steering option.

Bonnet Release Challenge: Answer

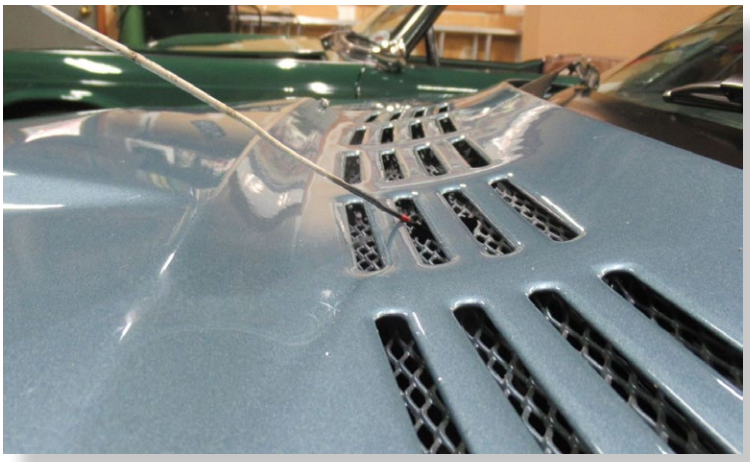
by Dave Gildner

Editor's Note: Last issue's Bonnet Release Challenge got an instant reply from Dave Gildner. Apparently the same thing had been discussed back in 2021 on the UK's TR Register Forum. Dave had posted some photos and shared them with me to share with you. It seems you can poke an ordinary coat hangar (or similar) in those holes in the grill to pop the latch! Have a look at the photos he sent me and you'll see how to do it. Also see Michael Hart's photos of the fuel injected TR7's latch arrangement. It might surprise you!

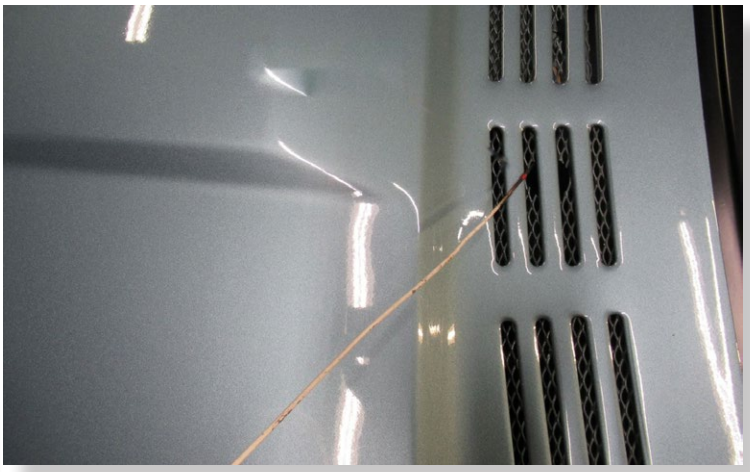


This afternoon after writing you, I went out to the garage to refresh my memory of the situation. I did some checking and practicing with the bonnet open, closed but not latched, and latched. It does take some familiarization to get the depth and angle of the wire coat hanger. I temporarily marked the coat hanger at the point where it passes through the bonnet sheet metal. With a mark, it is easier to know what depth to insert the wire. After that the only variable is the angle, in two dimensions. By the way, I don't feel like the wire is likely to scratch the paint. I've popped the bonnet several times now without inducing concern. However, it would be easy to put a little piece of masking tape on the edges of the grille slot, to be completely safe.

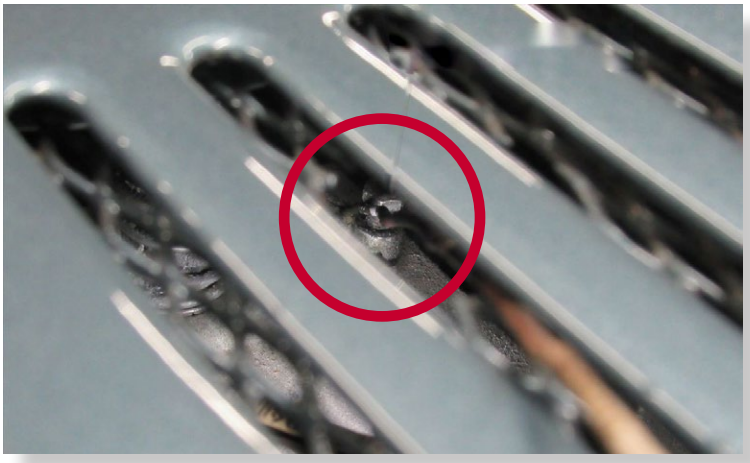
I did find one other possibility: *if the cabling is intact and not broken*, I was able to release the bonnet by simply grabbing the outer sheath of the cable under the dash where it comes through the firewall, then pull it through the firewall into the interior of the car.



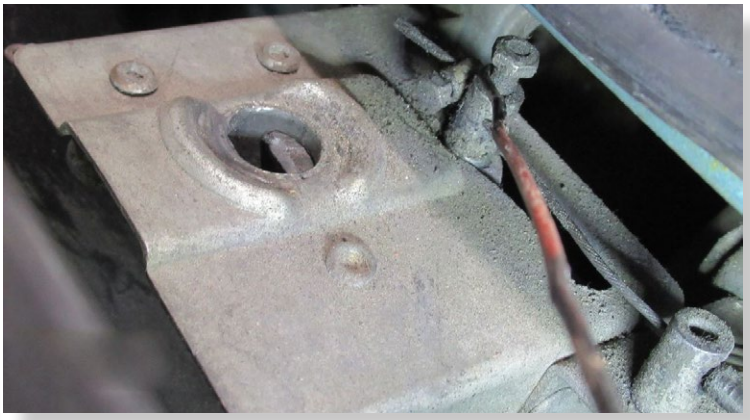
Angle of attack from the side, see the red mark?

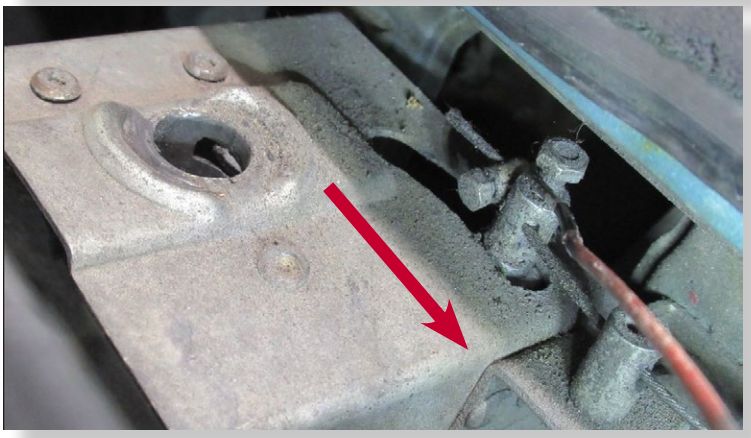


Angle of attack from the top



Wire through grill and hooked on post





Pull and Voila! Bonnet is open

Bonnet Release – One Size Fits All?

*by Michael Hart and Jim TenCate**

In the last issue of *The Bulletin*, our Editor Jim posed a challenge—how to open the bonnet of a TR7 or TR8 when the release cable breaks? Elsewhere in this issue Dave Gildner responds with a rather ingenious solution involving nothing more complicated than a bent wire coat hanger inserted through the bonnet ventilation grille. Problem solved? …

Reading Dave's article reminded me of something I had noticed some years ago but had rather forgotten. Not all wedges have the bonnet latch mechanism mounted in the same place!

There is another difference in this area too. The fresh air ducts are different on my two FI TR7s and, when fitting the duct on the Canley car, I found that some fairly substantial modification of that plenum was necessary to get everything to fit. A large hammer proved surprisingly effective (if perhaps not the factory recommended procedure)! But I digress.



When I looked at the bonnet striker pin mounting on my cars, I realised that it was different from the arrangement on Jim's TR8. Jim had taken a photo of my striker pin assembly when he visited a few weeks back and just now took a photo of the striker pin assembly on his Aran Beige TR8. Can you spot the difference below?



The striker pin assemblies are in different positions! In fact, if you look carefully at the photo of Jim's TR8, you can see an additional set of mounting holes to the right of the striker—these are the holes used on both my TR7s.

And of course the catch mechanism mounted to the body has to be in a corresponding position. The photo below shows that this is indeed the case. Remember those half-moon cutouts at the base of the windscreen that Jim originally thought might provide access to the catch? Well, with the different latch arrangement, the opening in the catch is now positioned between the cutouts rather than lining up with one of them.



So what does this mean for Dave's clever coat hanger solution? His approach was through the bonnet grille rather than those half-moon openings, but with the catch in a different position, will the same tool and angles of attack still work? I'm not sure!

And what about the UK cars? With right hand drive and potentially different arrangements for the bonnet release, are the catches mounted in yet another position? I don't know, but perhaps some of our UK members can have a look.

None of this means that Dave's solution won't work on the FI TR7s, just that we shouldn't assume that the same technique will work on every wedge. It would be interesting to hear from anyone who has tried it on a fuel injected car, or indeed a RHD TR7 or TR8.

Perhaps we haven't quite finished with Jim's Bonnet Release Challenge after all!



Postscript

A couple of you wrote and asked about the TR4-6 emergency bonnet release cable kit too. Here is the link to it, Moss sells the whole thing but I can't quite figure out if it'll work with the TR7/TR8!

mossmotors.com/807-065-emergency-hood-release-kit

If anyone has tried to adapt this kit, let us know!

Rescued...

- Bought a parts car from Indiana.
- Once done stripping the car for the parts I wanted, I called a scrapper we know.
- He took it to the junk yard.
- They needed a signed title.
- I got him the title signed by the prior owner and bill of sale.
- They needed a signed *Ohio* title.
- To get a signed Ohio title, a State employee has to come and inspect the VIN, then you spend $20 and an hour in line for a new title.
- I told the scrapper to bring the body back since I have a good use for it.
- Storing a car body outside is frowned upon in our neighborhood.
- Fixed it.
- As Red Green would say "If women don't find you handsome at least they'll find you handy". No duct tape was harmed in this adventure.

Bruce Clough



cArchæology: The TEN Lives of the TR7 Distributor

by Jim Doran



I read the Anorak's recent article with interest having dealt with the failure of my original Lucas electronic ignition last January. My car is an early (VIN=202xxx) 1980 fuel injected TR7. During the diagnosis process I learned that my car used a Lucas 47DM4 (41881A) distributor, *not* the AC Delco D302. Corresponding with Mike Hart and Gerald Davies, I learned that a few of the early EFI cars used this Lucas distributor. Gerald said of the 3 EFI TR7's he has had, 2 had the Lucas distributor. It looks like the factory or Lucas reworked a 41812A, striking through the "1" and changing it to a 41881A. I installed a Pertonix LU-147A and an upgraded coil and all is well now.

Next Issue: Preview

Original tire from the spare wheel well of my Aran Beige car. UTQG ratings? Treadwear 180 Traction A Temperature A.

I let out the air to unmount it. Hmmm, wonder if that was air from the UK in 1980?! Could have been!



Triumph Wedge Owners Association
8153 Quarterfield Farms Dr
Severn, MD 21144-2746
USA



Fully Searchable Newsletters on a single TWOA flash drive

Over the past few years, we managed to get all the old TR8 Car Club of America newsletters digitized and run through an OCR program. Why? The TR8CCA newsletters that you can download as a TWOA member right now are just *images* of the pages originally scanned by Joe Worsley; you cannot search them for a phrase like "gearbox oil".

Taking a cue from the Vintage Triumph Register—they're offering back issues of *The Vintage Triumph* magazine on a USB drive—we're doing the same. Size of the stick is 16 GB. That's big enough to store about 4000 photos from a 12 Megapixel digital camera. Please be aware that the earliest newsletters were hand typed, and many of the letters to the Editor (Mike, Our Founder) were handwritten. We did *not* go in and correct typos or retype the handwritten letters! Price is $20 + $5 shipping anywhere in the US; postage to Canada and ROW slightly higher. We've already shipped about 190 of these. If you're dying to get one go to the ordering page on the website now before they're gone! Both Mac and PC compatible files are on the same drive so it doesn't matter which computer you plug them into! Some have gotten lost in the mail, more than usual, so please let me know if you don't get yours!



2027 Events Listings for Wedgeheads

As a club, TWOA supports several large events, both with sponsorship dollars and by our presence. Since we're an International club, it's impractical for us to host a big event all by ourselves. So we do the next best thing and piggyback onto major events around the US and Canada. The TWOA website has a nice listing of all local events throughout the US and we're asking for your help keeping that up to date. If your club is hosting a British Car Day or similar, one that would be of interest to TR7/8 owners, *PLEASE* go to our website and in the Events menu, click on the Submit Your Events page link! It's a simple form that you or your events organizer can complete and we can list it for Wedge owners to view and attend!



22-24 April 2027. SCVTR Regionals, Shawnee OK.
https://www.2027-scvtr-regional.org/



10-14 August 2027. VTR Nationals, Valley Forge, PA. Hotel details and registration available now!
https://dvtr.squarespace.com/vtr2027



3-6 October 2027. Triumphest, San Diego CA. Dana Resort
www.Triumphest2027.com