

# The Ragtop



August 2017

## Letter from the President

By Don Couch

**C**an it get any *HOTTER???* Poor excuse for not scheduling any drives in July but I'm using it! Haven't gotten any word from other members either about drives they may have organized. Hopefully, the heat will give way to better driving days this month. One can always hope.

I want to thank Emily Barrett for stepping up and volunteering to be our club secretary. One less job off my resume. Why didn't I get that club shirt first? Still looking for a webmaster (Kyle?) to take on that task.

In other news, it's official, The Hill Country Triumph Club will be hosting the 2019 Vintage Triumph Nationals. Dripping Springs has been chosen, for it's close proximity to Austin, beautiful hill country roads, wineries, breweries, Luckenbach and

more. I will be organizing committees in the next few weeks. If you'd like to volunteer for anything in particular, feel free to contact me. I know this club can "knock this outta the park"!

We've had *GREAT* attendance at both meetings and hope to have even more in the months to come. I'd like to welcome new member, Paul Robichaux with his red 1969 Spitfire or is it a GT6+? My notes are a bit hazy, Nel. Anyway, The club is growing. And with growth comes change. One such change comes in the form of new Ragtop classified ad rates. These rates are to go into affect in January 2018. As always, your feedback is welcome.

Look forward to seeing *ALL Y'ALL* soon! In the meantime, stay *COOL!*

Don

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## HCTC Officers

**President** — Don Couch  
[president@hillcountrytriumphclub.org](mailto:president@hillcountrytriumphclub.org)

**Vice-President** — Roger Bolick

**Reservations**  
 Elizabeth Mericas  
 512-291-6775  
[emericas@austin.rr.com](mailto:emericas@austin.rr.com)

**Webmaster** — Don Couch  
[webmaster@hillcountrytriumphclub.org](mailto:webmaster@hillcountrytriumphclub.org)

**Treasurer** — Mike Schubert  
 512-740-9937  
[trebucs43@gmail.com](mailto:trebucs43@gmail.com)

**Secretary** — Emily Barrett

**Membership** — Nel Mcphail  
 512-656-1456  
[membership@hillcountrytriumphclub.org](mailto:membership@hillcountrytriumphclub.org)

**Ragtop Editor** — Dan Julien  
 512-451-3102  
[editor@hillcountrytriumphclub.org](mailto:editor@hillcountrytriumphclub.org)

Back issues of The Ragtop are available on our website:  
<http://www.hillcountrytriumphclub.org/newsletters.php>

The Hill Country Triumph Club, the 50th Chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR), was founded in 1990 to bring together the owners of Triumph automobiles in the Central Texas area surrounding Austin. In 1991, the membership decided to include other British car fans as associates due to lack of other clubs in our area that represent some of the other marques. As owners and lovers of our unique types of cars, we have a special kinship, which draws us together. Membership is open to anyone who is a British car enthusiast, with or without a car.

Annual dues are just \$15.00 per family group or address per year. We have dinner meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month and at least one other event each month. We encourage you to join and support us, even if you don't drive your car regularly. We also offer technical assistance if needed. One goal of the club is to help its members keep their cars on the road. Please call one of the club officers listed in the newsletter for more information about club benefits and spread the word about our club to others.

The Hill Country Club is a local chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR)/Triumph Sports Owners Association, which is open to all drivers of Triumph motorcars; a chapter of the Triumph Register of America, exclusively for TR2 through TR4A sports cars; and a chapter of the 6-PACK, dedicated to the enjoyment, preservation, and restoration of the Triumph TR250 and TR6 sports cars. Membership in these national organizations is encouraged. Visit their websites at [www.vtr.org](http://www.vtr.org), [www.triumphregister.com](http://www.triumphregister.com), and [www.6-pack.org](http://www.6-pack.org).

*The Ragtop* is published monthly by the Hill Country Triumph Club. Material within may be freely reproduced providing Ragtop and the authors are credited. Any and all newsletter contributions are welcome. Deadline for submissions is the end of each month. Submissions may be emailed to [editor@hillcountrytriumphclub.org](mailto:editor@hillcountrytriumphclub.org). Car related classified ads are free to members and will run for three months unless otherwise instructed. Contact editor for other ads.

# How I Got Started in the British Car Hobby

By Jim Herter

**T***his is the third in a monthly series by club members on how they got hooked on British cars. The author of the current story (that would be me this time) is to nominate the next member to pen their tale for the following month. OK, the monthly part didn't happen the last ~~two~~, now **three** months, I guess someone or two or three dropped the ball. Let's see if we can keep it going this time.*

***Should the Nominee for the next installment fail to follow through, may the Lucas Prince of Darkness look after your Triumph.***

I guess my first attraction to a Little British Car was when a couple of kids not too much older than me were doing a restoration, more or less on a worn out MG TD up the street from me. I stopped by a few times to admire the car and check on the progress, but now that I think of it, I don't remember ever seeing them drive the car.

A year or two later as I walked to high school each day, a guy in a beautiful new white TR3 would drive by me. I think this went on over

two school years and I always heard the car approaching from the rear. I would turn to watch it pass and sometimes stick out my thumb for a ride, but he never stopped.

Fast forward to 1968 and I find myself in the Air Force at RAF Mildenhall, England for a two-year assignment after a couple of years at Carswell AFB, TX. There were several military car sales concessioners that would drive their demo cars to the PX area maybe once every week or two to show and sell the cars. There was a

guy selling Lotus, another selling Jags, I think there were Opels, maybe Austin Healeys and MGs and I'm sure you've guessed that someone was selling Triumphs.

I had put away a little money and wanted a new car for when I got out of the Air Force. I soon came to the conclusion I didn't have enough for a Jag, Lotus or big Healey. It came down to the most bang for the bucks in my budget would be an Opel GT or a TR6. It was an easy pick of the Classic British Roadster over the

Opel so I placed my order for the soon to be released 1970 TR6 on the 12th of November 1969 expecting delivery in about 6 weeks.

Well, the blokes at the Coventry plant decided to go on strike about the time I placed the order. I can only guess they wanted a longer lunch hour to down another pint or two. As my rotation date approached, it was looking as if I would return home Triumphless, but in the end, I finally received notice it would be delivered on the 10th of February. Unfortunately, I only had it for three days before I had to put in on the boat home.

Now, out of the Air Force and after goofing off for a few months I took a job with a military contractor that involved a lot of travel. In the first three years the ol' TR made three trips around the perimeter of the lower 48 states working at 22

or more locations each year.

By 1978 the old car had over 150,000 miles. It was smoking a bit and had some rust showing here and there. I decided to put it into semi-retirement when I bought a new car for the job that still involved quite a bit of travel. I think it was three or four years later that I decided to tear the car down for a complete frame-off restoration.

I was still constantly traveling on the job to as many as 40 locations a year, but it only lasted about ten months out of the year. I would take a month of vacation and if I wasn't needed for another job I'd take a month of LOA and return to my mother's home in West Virginia to work on the car. Well, I suppose I goofed off for the first month and then got serious about the car the second month.

This went on for several years with maybe a cou-

ple years that I couldn't get the additional month off and there was one year I took my motor home that I now traveled in to the Rocky Mountains to be a ski bum for the two months. Then, at the age of 47, I got married for the first time and that was the end of the restoration for quite some time.

I moved the car to Texas in 1997 around the time we were finally settling down and building a house in Copperas Cove. Shortly after retiring in 2007 the restoration was resumed and the car was finished just in time for the 2012 National VTR in Galveston where it won the 1st of many 1st places in Concours.

It was a long time for the ol' TR to sit, but I always knew someday we'd be back together motoring about the countryside.

**I hereby nominate Emily Barrett for the next installment.**

# New Kid in Town Progress Report

By Mike McPhail

**A**s you might recall, I took on another abandoned project recently. It would seem that some restorations “hit the wall” at some

point and the disgusted owners are more than ready to sell out. Suits me!

“The Red TR6” has me all excited since, in my opinion, all the diffi-

cult and expensive things have already been done. Only the interior, top, bumpers and a few thousand dollars’ worth of odds and ends needed sort-





ing out. Good thing I don't charge myself much for repairs, as that might make all this seem like, well...not such a good deal!

Anyway, "Red" has of recent, a new windshield, black carpet and interior, Robbins reflective stripe top, all new tail light lenses, rehabbed grill, Tourist Trophy stainless polished stainless-steel exhaust, aluminum flywheel, overdrive gearbox, rear tube shocks, and lots of other goodies.

While it is marginally road-ready, I don't suppose that I ever really intended to take "Red" to the Roadster Factory Summer Party this year. "The French Blue Car" has earned

the distinction of being the Long Distance Award winner this year. Well, actually, it is going to be trailered, so we might come home empty handed...oh, well.



# TRAVEL LOG

## June-July 2017

By Nick Roccaforte

So what did you do on your summer vacation? Well, we went to Britain and Ireland. I am sure that some of you have also made the trip across the pond so I will try to give you a quick summary of the highlights. Our travels started in London to see Westminster Abby, the Tower of London, St Paul's Cathedral and many other attractions. From there we traveled to York and everywhere in between and then on to Edinburgh in Scotland. There we enjoyed a traditional Scottish night out with song and entertainment and of course the blessing and carving ritual of "The Haggis". In the Scottish countryside we saw the amazing mature border collies herding sheep, and of course all of the puppies. Then we were off to Skye, Glencoe,



Loch Lomond and Glasgow. We saw battle fields, mountains, and locales of Braveheart, Bonnie Prince Charlie and Rob Roy. Down to the western coast and ferry boat ride over to Dublin where we enjoyed an evening of fine food, a nonstop cabaret of comedy, song and dance (along with much wine and beer!). Near Limerick we visited Bunratty Castle, a 15<sup>th</sup> century castle with fine furnishings, antiques, and paintings and a magnificent display of armor and guns on the walls. Then we were off to Cork and the west to see Blarney Castle. No I did not kiss the Blarney Stone. Lying on my back with 2 people holding my legs to lean out over a sheer 98 foot drop to kiss a slobbered stone was not my idea of a good time! We were told that if you did not kiss the stone you would still receive the gifts bestowed upon you if you kissed someone who had kissed the stone. So when we got back on the bus we all kissed the driver! From there we traveled back across the sea to Wales and its capital Cardiff where we saw the most complete and refurbished castle of all. We saw all types of castle and abbey ruins along the way but this one takes the cake. The castle was refurbished in the 1800's and had



electricity, plumbing (the first of its kind toilet) and reconstructed walls. In Plymouth we did a harbor boat tour. On the next day we traveled to the magical places of Bath, Glastonbury and Stonehenge. There were so many sights, castles and adventures. It was a magnificent trip!

All along the trip I was hoping to see some old British cars. The usual suspects were all around. There were Mercedes, Audis, BMWs, and Jaguars. There were hundreds of Minis, Fiats, Opels, VWs, Hondas, Nissans, Renaults, Citroens and an occasional Saab. There were hundreds of Fords. I saw one Chevrolet, 2 Chryslers, 3 Mustangs and 3 new Alfas. Under exotics I saw 3 Ferraris and one Lamborghini. There were millions of black cabs. Behind the cab was a gas sign that





read \$1.14/gal. Oh no, wait a minute, that was 1.14 pounds/liter!

Where were the old British cars? I was getting pretty bummed after the first week. Then one misty day as our coach stopped at a country pub in Scotland my little eye spied an old green car in the parking lot. I leapt up from my seat, camera in hand and ran out to see what it was. To my amazement and delight it was a perfectly restored 1951 BGR Jaguar! The British chaps asked me about the weather ahead since their top was down and with a proud grin drove off into the mist. Now I am finally smiling from ear to ear- my first old car! Now



my curiosity was piqued. Could there be more along the way? Days went by as I scoured the highways and country roads but no joy. A few days later we stopped along the coast at the famous old St Andrew's golf course in Scotland. As the bus pulled up into the parking lot I saw a number of

vans, trucks and cars. There were also a number of people with motion picture cameras standing around, presumably on a break. As the bus turned--out of the corner of my little eye I saw through a sliver of space and time between the trucks an object that looked like—now it couldn't be. Being curious I jumped up again out of my seat and ran over to see what was behind those vans. A film crew was shooting a documentary on drives through the Scottish country side. To my amazement it was a perfectly restored 1968 Morgan or so I thought. I fortunately was able to

speak to the film director and he explained to me that Morgan was not only producing the new looking Morgans but by special order building the old models as well. It was actually a 2017 Morgan with all the modern conveniences. However it had a 4 cylinder Ford engine in it! Note the cameras in the cockpit for filming. That next day we were on the ferry to Ireland and our first stop was Dublin. We toured the old Guinness Brewery and of course had a few pints (actually a lot of beer). Feeling rather light-headed after we again boarded the coach I happened to notice out of the front windshield some red convertible. Surely it couldn't be but it



was — a 1973 Ford Mustang. The other 2 mustangs I saw were 2012-2015s. Not a LBC but unusual I thought to see in Ireland. Not too far from Killarney and the Ring of Kerry (west coast of Ireland) we stopped to shop in the small village of Kenmare. I took a break and left Julie in one of the shops and stood outside on the corner of what were the main cross roads of the village. I happened to turn around and spotted something interesting coming down the street. I happened to have my camera in hand and was in a good position to capture a really old yellow roadster.





standing on the corner waiting for more cars but there were no more to be seen! Later that day it started to rain. Being ever vigilant now I spotted something far ahead of us and it looked like 2 or 3 old cars so I got up and ran to the front of the coach and was able to get a



The couple in the car was bundled up pretty well since it had been a chilly and misty day. I have no idea what it was but maybe someone in the club will recognize it and enlighten us all. I thought to myself—could there be more so I waited on the corner with high hopes. OMG! Sure enough there was a second and a third car following the yellow roadster. The second car looked familiar but unfortunately I did not get a good shot of the grill logo. The third was some type of black salon. Hopefully someone can help us identify these three gems. I almost got left behind

picture of one of the cars through the rain spotted front windshield. There was what appeared to be an old Jaguar roadster (1950's) coming toward us. There was a 1950's-60's Jaguar 4 door Salon behind but I was unable to get that shot. It was only a blur! Wow, more old British cars on the road! What more could I ask for!

a purple/grape colored roadster. Being curious, with camera in hand I got a shot of this car. It was a new MGB! This is the modern version of the car that is now being produced in Japan. If you look hard enough you can see the MG logo on the front hood. Yea, finally an MG picture! I was especially proud since I had missed the opportunity to take the picture of a rusty brown chrome bumper (1968-70) MGB/GT a few days earlier going down a country road. I missed one other car on the trip as well. By now I know to stand on the corner outside of any store while Julie shops in hopes of seeing other old cars. Then, all of a sudden there it was-- a 1964 Triumph Vitesse Sport Six. It passed me by so fast that I fumbled to get my camera up as I chased it up the street and just as I was about to get a tail shot Julie yells to me to "look out"! I was about to be run over. Needless to say I did not get the shot—bum-

Well the next day we went from Ireland over the sea to Wales and to start our final journey back to England where we would eventually depart for Austin. We stopped in Bath where we visited the Roman baths and ruins. The engineering and design that went into that place were phenomenal. The tour guide said that if the Romans were still around we would have been to the moon a lot sooner! That would have given a whole new meaning to the song "When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie"! We next stopped in Glastonbury, to see the cathedral which is thought to be the final resting place of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere (fact or fable?). After that we were driving to Exeter, our final stop for the night. Arriving in town I happened to spot out of the corner of my eye on the other side of the bus



mer! But Julie did save my life so I shouldn't complain.

Proceeding along to Plymouth we stopped at a place called Polperro, famous for Cornish meat pies. Pulling into the parking lot I spied another old car. Yes, I rushed out to see what it was and sure enough it was another Morgan. It looked just like the other Morgan except in BRG but there wasn't anyone around to ask if it was an old 1968 or a new 2017 version but beautiful anyway.

Now our journey was coming to a close and I was feeling pretty good in that I had actually seen a number of old British cars. We arrived back in London with one last pub stop for fish and chips and a

Strongbow Cider. The next morning with all our bags packed we loaded up in a Mercedes van and began our journey to the airport. The traffic was light and we were chatting in the van as we saw London for the last time and all of a sudden I saw something out of the rear window of the van, a mere streak of yellow. I wrenched my neck to see and lo and behold it was a beautiful 1970-73 chrome bumper Jasmine TR6! It



was very elusive —once behind a car and the van and then another car. I fumbled to unpack my camera. It was almost as if it was following me and calling to me-- "Wait, you can't leave London without a picture of me!" "You missed that shot of my

brother the Sport Six so surely you have to have a picture of me for your story of the trip". As I fumbled to get the camera I took the first shot which was a blur. The flash of the next shot reflected off the window; rats — another bad shot. Luckily we stopped at a light and I was able to adjust the camera, turn off the flash and just as we took off it came along side and I got the shot! Just then I swear the TR6 seemed to nod in approval and— with a typical British smirk as it drifted out of sight remarked— "finally you got a picture of a Triumph. Your mission is accomplished. You can go home now!" That's my story and I am sticking to it!





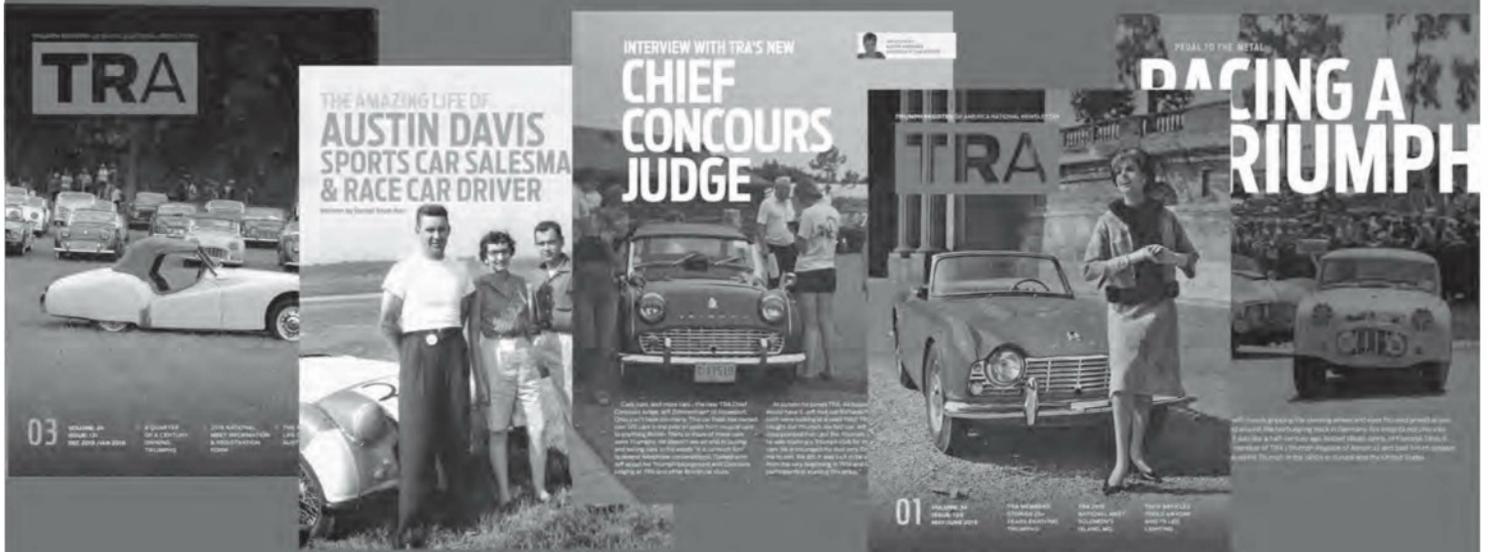
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## WITH A TRA MEMBERSHIP WE OFFER:

- 4 National newsletters per year
- Annual National Meet
- Website (member password protected area)
- Concours judging standards

- Factory build records
- Technical articles
- Contact information
- Shutterfly National Meet website



SEE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING AT:  
**www.TriumphRegister.com**

OR CONTACT:

**TONDA.MACY@MACYSGARGE.COM**

# Welcome to TRA



## TRIUMPH REGISTER OF AMERICA Membership Application Form

*Please write legibly.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Please include area code

Car \_\_\_\_\_  
Make & Model

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Commission Number \_\_\_\_\_

Car \_\_\_\_\_  
Make & Model

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Commission Number \_\_\_\_\_

Car \_\_\_\_\_  
Make & Model

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Commission Number \_\_\_\_\_

Car \_\_\_\_\_  
Make & Model

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Commission Number \_\_\_\_\_

Mail check and/or application to:

Tonda Macy  
TRA Treasurer/Membership  
4200 Lisa Drive  
Tipp City, OH 45371  
[tonda@macysgarage.com](mailto:tonda@macysgarage.com)  
937-266-1832

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Listing change as I get shipments from the UK so check back often or contact me for any special requests.

# HCTC Classifieds



TR6 AC Unit Plus Compressor Bucket \$90.00

Joe Payne  
 (M)210.326.6673  
 robjoepayne@yahoo.com



TR-6 seats with rails and Interior from 1969 TR-6. Has all the original jute, most of the carpet and panels. \$200.00

Joe Payne  
 (M)210.326.6673  
 robjoepayne@yahoo.com

I am selling my 1980 TR8 (listed on Craigslist)

Triple carb intake for TR6 may fit other 6 cyl. engines.

Carpet kit TR7-8

Factory air cleaner GT6.

My 72 GT6 (listed on Craigslist)

Call for prices or pictures all parts are in my shop in Marble Falls. 512-909-6849.

Mark Jenks



## HILL COUNTRY TRIUMPH CLUB ADVERTISING RATES

Effective with the January Rag Top the following ad rates will prevail:

Member ads for Triumph cars or parts will continue to be free and will run for two issues. These ads may be renewed as necessary two times (For a total of six issues).

Ads or flyers for other club's events will continue to be free and will run for two issues.

### **Ads for commercial items or services will be charged the following rates:**

Business Card ad: \$5:00 per issue

Quarter page ad: \$10.00 per issue

Half page ad: \$15.00 per issue

Full-page ad: \$25.00 per issue

These ads must be prepaid and can be scheduled for as long as desired, minimum of six issues. Long term ad runs must be prepaid at the time of scheduling. All ads must include artwork.

Artwork should be submitted to Dan Julien at [dan.julien@gmail.com](mailto:dan.julien@gmail.com)

Fees should be sent to:

### **HILL COUNTRY TRIUMPH CLUB**

Attn: Mike Schubert  
18340 Masi Loop  
Pflugerville, TX 78660

# Pay Your Dues!!!!!!!

Please check the latest spreadsheet sent out by Nel. If it says Jul-17 in the dues column your dues are over-due now. Any quite delinquent member who hasn't paid will be dropped from the roster.

Cost is \$15 per year per family. If you don't wish to renew, please notify Nel.

Mail your check made out to **HCTC** to:

Nel McPhail  
1105 N Canyonwood Dr  
Dripping Springs, Tx 78620  
(512) 656-1456  
[nmcp hail@austin.rr.com](mailto:nmcp hail@austin.rr.com)

## Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Car Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Car Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_



How on earth did you hear about the Hill Country Triumph Club?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your application and \$15 check payable to HCTC to:  
Nel McPhail, 1105 North Canyonwood Dr, Dripping Springs, TX 78620

# Upcoming Events

August 8 — HCTC Tuesday evening meeting, 7 PM, The Tavern, 12<sup>th</sup> and Lamar.

August 12 — HCTC Saturday breakfast meeting, 9 AM, The Frisco.

September 9 — HCTC Saturday breakfast meeting, 9 AM, The Frisco.

September 12 — HCTC Tuesday evening meeting, 7 PM, The Tavern, 12<sup>th</sup> and Lamar.

August 16-19 — VTR Nationals, Princeton, NJ. Information at [vtr2017.org](http://vtr2017.org).

September 21-24 — Triumphest, Flagstaff, AZ. Information at [www.triumphest.com](http://www.triumphest.com).

September 22-24 — Texas All British Car Days. Information at [www.txabcd.org](http://www.txabcd.org).

## Next evening meeting:

Tuesday, August 8, 2017, 7:00 PM

The Tavern

922 West 12<sup>th</sup> St

Austin, TX 78703

At the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Lamar

[tavernaustin.com](http://tavernaustin.com) — Phone: 512-320-8377

## Next breakfast meeting:

Saturday, August 12, 2017, 9:00 AM

The Frisco

6801 Burnet Rd

Austin, TX 78757

[thefriscoaustin.com](http://thefriscoaustin.com) — Phone: 512-459-6279