

**The**

May 2021



**RAGTOP**



# Letter from the President

**Don Couch**



**T**he TRIUMPH community is mourning the loss of R.W. "Kas" Kastner who passed away on April 11th. Kas was head of the Triumph Completion Department and literally wrote the books on racing Triumphs. His Completion Prep manuals are a starting point for anyone wanting to campaign a Triumph. He will be missed and his knowledge of all things Triumph will never be replaced. God Speed Kas.

April's Meeting found us at The Cork and Barrel in Round Rock near Dell Diamond. We had a GREAT turnout and it was kind of like a reunion of sorts. A lot of HCTC members who, like First Lady Brenda and me, have been self-quarantening from the "Covidiot" and now are vaccinated, enjoyed a few cold ones and great food all the while still socially distancing ourselves. The Cork and Barrel was recommended by past president Robert MacKenzie and from the reviews I heard it sounds like we are going to keep it in our rotation. That being said, this month's meeting "rotates" to Saturday at Live Oak Brewery at 1pm.

HCTC members Bob Kramer, Bob Blake, Greg Blake and myself went racing with CVAR at

## In This Issue:

Letter from the President	2
Secretary's Report April 2021	4
From the Archives	8
Spanish Correspondent's Report	10
Advice Not Taken — with Consequences	12
Bill's 1971 Red TR6	14
From "What Leak?" To "What a Leak!"	17
It's a 45-Year-Old Car, What Could Possibly Go Wrong?	19
Race Report: CVAR Eagles Canyon Raceway, May 2021	23
Classifieds	27
Upcoming Events	34
Next Meeting	34

Eagles Canyon Raceway in Decatur, TX this past weekend. See my race report for a rundown of the race and I shared a video on our HCTC Facebook page. Our Next CVAR race is in September after a nice break from the hot summer months. I'm hearing rumors of another BBQ party soon. I'll let you know when we

nail down a date. Don't forget 2021 VTR Nationals, Sept. 14-18 in Edmond, OK. No doubt it will be a great time.

Stay Tuned,

*Don*



*This month's cover photo is by Wiley Christal.*

# Secretary's Report April 2021

**Mike McPhail**



**A**rt Graves drove 500 miles to Austin on the second Saturday of April so as to attend the monthly HCTC meeting...too bad it was moved to the second Tuesday! No matter, an unofficial get-together was held at the Fitzhugh Brewing Company on...uh, Fitzhugh Road.

I suppose there was a meeting in Round Rock last month, but couldn't say for sure...being on tour with the Road Warriors. Art, Jim, Wiley and yours truly were 400 miles away at Los Muertos Mexican Restaurant in Marathon, Texas!

We began our 1350 mile "Way Out West Caverns and Taverns Tour" first thing Sunday morning, April 11. A rendezvous had been arranged in Llano at the Hungry Hunter café an hour and a half from our respective starting points. That got us on



Jim, Art, Mike, and Joe at Fitzhugh.

the Bluebonnet Trail through Brady, San Angelo, and Big Spring. It was hot and dusty by the time we entered New Mexico, but all was well until Jim developed tire trouble outside of Carlsbad. The terrible Hwy 176 had taken its toll...is it time the government stopped wasting money on public health and spend those trillions on highway construction?

Anyway, we made it to the Holiday Inn Express in time to walk across the street to the sandwich shop for a pleasant dinner on the patio. A little web browsing found there to be a couple of tire stores nearby, so in the morning Jim went shopping. The rest of us went searching for breakfast and soon enough we were on the way to the Caverns.

You can't believe the Monday morning crowd at Carlsbad Cavern National Park!



Flat tire.

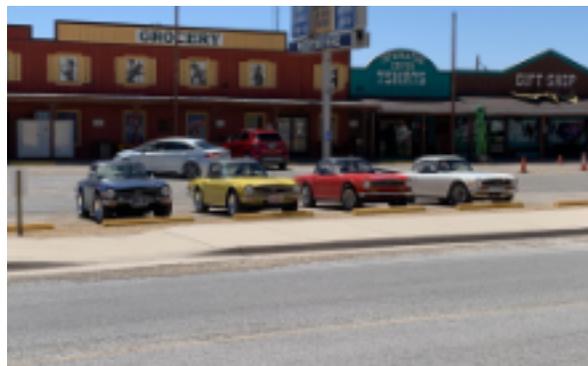


Holiday Inn Express Carlsbad.

After showing our National Park Geezer Passes, we embarked on the long tour...wished we had known about the elevator! We hiked up, down and around for several hours with the whole place to ourselves...it would seem that everyone else was in the gift shop! The whole experience was wonderful, and even better that when I visited with Nel and Roger Bolick many years ago...also in Triumphs!

Our next stop was the Guadalupe Mountains National Park, which had us back in Texas and on our way to El Paso. There isn't much there but hiking and the striking views of El Capitan and Guadalupe Peak...the highest point in Texas at 8751 feet. We were also impressed by the huge Madrones at the visitor center...

Subway sandwiches were procured on the



Whites City.



Carlsbad Cavern.

way out of town that morning and consumed with gusto at the next rest area. The drive into El Paso was breath-taking at times, and it was much more pleasant cruising than the day before. The other boys had already gotten too much sun, so it was just me with the top down!

If Art was happy to be back in his home town of El Paso, it wasn't obvious, but we did have rooms in a nice hotel and the dinner at Julio's was delicious. As a bonus, Rudy's BBQ was next door and provided a tasty Tuesday taco breakfast. We need all the nourishment we could get because our next stop was the world-class rock-climbing destination of Hueco Tanks. That's pronounced "Waco Tanks". Still doesn't make sense...

Okay, Hueco is Spanish for "basin" and in



Another damn park!



Hueco Tanks entrance.



Hueco Tanks.

Texas, a tank is that thing Yankees call a pond. Supposedly, water can be found in the rock depressions here long after a rain storm...obviously a local legend of questionable validity. A video at the visitor center got us up to date on the fascinating history of the place...cowboys, Indians, Federales, stagecoach stop, rock paintings, etc. Nowadays, the main attraction is rock-climbing on the three small granite mountains. They have natural hand-holds and the texture of the rock provides good grip. We were already somewhat worn-out from our previous day's workout when the park ranger suckered us into "doing a short hike". There is a trail to the peak, but as far as getting back down, we were on our own! So, climb we did...

It was sure nice to sit in the TR6s for the drive to Marathon. We had back-tracked

Hwy 62 to RR 1111, the most rural route so far, and had lots of fun running 75 with no one in sight. We stopped at Sierra Blanca's finest restaurant (the Exxon Convenience Store) for a surprisingly tasty lunch. Our Triumphs really got to stretch their legs, as we were now on IH 10 hurtling along at 80! We exited at Kent, so as to drive the entire length of 118 through the Davis Mountains...whoopie!

Now in familiar territory (Alpine was the epicenter of our November trip), it was a relaxing jaunt through Fort Davis and Alpine to our last overnight stop. Marathon Texas is home to the fabled Gage Hotel, a nearly one-hundred-year-old establishment and favorite jumping off place for visitors to Big Bend National Park.

We couldn't afford to stay there so we



HCTC rock-climbing team.



Hwy 62 salt flats.



Marathon Hotel Plaza.

checked into the tourist court down the street. The Marathon Motel turned out to be a real gem, with its tidy cabins and adobe plaza with an outdoor fireplace. We kept warm by the hearth as we visited with the other guests and admired the star-filled heavens.



Our kinda place.



Marking your territory.



Marathon view.

Dawn had us loading up for the final leg of our epic journey. A last-minute decision was made to hot-foot it to Sonora for one more cavern tour. I must have driven by the billboard a hundred times in the past and never stopped to view this natural wonder. Although rather confined compared to better known subterranean attractions, the intimate-sized tour group and the amazing formations at arm's reach (don't touch!) made for a memorable experience.

A parking lot tech session [see Wiley Christal's article in this issue – ed.] had us a little behind schedule, so our lunch-stop at Cooper's BBQ (what, no Mexican today?) in Junction was a bit late. Normally I would have been anxious to get off the interstate, but IH 10 in West Texas is actually pretty scenic. We did however want to go to London...Texas that is...and on to Mason and Llano, where we parted company with Wiley.

Jim probably should have gone on to Belton from there, but he was having too much fun to go home just yet, and returned with Art and me to Drippin'!



*Imagine my surprise, pulling into the parking lot at Sonora caverns, on our way to Big Bend on 4-14-21, and seeing HCTC members on tour. Terrific! Jim Mahaney*

# From the Archives

Art Graves



*This improbable story, written by our favorite secretary Mike McPhail, first appeared in the December 1997 Ragtop. You be the judge as to its accuracy. I do not know why Mike used all caps in his writing in those days. You'll have to ask when you see him next time.*

## DAYS OF WINE AND ROSIES

AMAZING THINGS HAPPEN WHEN TRIUMPHS GATHER. THE COLD DAMP MORNING OF NOVEMBER FIFTEENTH GAVE WAY TO BRIGHT SUNSHINE AS TR'S FILLED THE LOT AT McDonalds IN CEDAR PARK. AS IT TURNED OUT, THE MANAGER IS A TRIUMPH ENTHUSIAST AND TREATED US TO BURGERS AND SHAKES IN RETURN FOR A SPIN IN THE CERALDI'S GT6. THUS FORTIFIED, OUR ENTOURAGE HEADED DOWN LIME CREEK ROAD TO PICK UP BOB AND BARBARA. THE CONVOY SOON RESEMBLED A ROAD RACE WITH VARIOUS CLUB MEMBERS JOCKEYING FOR THE LEAD. PAT IN THE JAG XK120 WAS LEADING THE PACK WITH TOM AND DEEANN IN HOT PURSUIT. UNFORTUNATELY THE VINTAGE TIRES ON THE JAG WERE NO MATCH FOR THE TIGHT CURVES. ALL THIS LANDED THE REEDS IN THE DITCH WITH WHITE-KNUCKLED MERLE MUMBLING SOMETHING ABOUT WOMEN DRIVERS. DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF RICHARD, TOM, BRIAN, FRANK, AND DICK, THE JAGUAR WOULD NOT BUDGE. IT

TOOK A VALIANT TUG BY HERB AND CINDY TO EXTRICATE THE CAT. NOW BACK ON THE ROAD WITH MERLE AT THE WHEEL THE JAG WAS A MERE SPECK IN TOMS REARVIEW MIRROR. THE BRISK PACE SOON SAW US AT KRAMERVILLE ON LAKE TRAVIS WHERE BOB AND BARBARA WITH THE HELP OF PHIL AND YOLANDA WERE PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCH ON THE HCTC RACER. YES THE TR3 NOW HAS A JOHN DEERE TURBOCHARGED TRACTOR MOTOR UNDER THE BONNET! OUR HOSTS WERE KIND ENOUGH TO LET EVERYONE TAKE A HAND AT DRIVING THE BEAST AROUND BOB'S NEW FIGURE EIGHT TRACK. THIS IS LOCATED OUT FRONT IN THE SPACE PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED BY THE KRAMER'S NINETEEN YARD CARS. AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW, ROGER BOLICK TRADED HIS BUSINESS FOR THESE CARS AND IS NOW RESTORING THEM AT JEFF'S RESURRECTIONS WHERE HE IS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED. WITH OUR 3:30 WINERY TOUR TIME RAPIDLY APPROACHING WE HASTENED TOWARD OUR DESTINATION. THE SMILES ON THE

FACES OF NICK SLAUGHTER AND PERCY LEFTWYTCHE SHOWED THEIR DELIGHT AT SEEING THE GRAND ENTRY HALL OVERFLOWING WITH HCTC MEMBERS. THEY EXPLAINED THAT THE WINERY IS ACTUALLY THE OLD MISSION DE LA DEGO, DATING FROM 1769. HERE WINE IS MADE IN THE SAME OLD FASHIONED WAY USED BY EARLY SPANISH MISSIONARIES. THEY DEPEND ON THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED TOURS TO PROVIDE MANUAL LABOR NEEDED IN THE WINE MAKING PROCESS. AND PLENTY OF LABORERS THERE WERE; IN ADDITION TO OURSELVES, MARK CAMPBELL HAD BROUGHT ALONG HIS GOOD FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS, THE EMPLOYEES OF JOY'S MEN'S CLUB. WE DISCOVERED MARK AND THE GIRLS MERRILY STOMPING GRAPES IN AN ENORMOUS VAT. AFTER ADDING THE MANY BASKETS OF FRUIT WE HAD JUST GATHERED, SOME OF OUR CROWD JUST COULDN'T RESIST JOINING IN THE MASHING. SO WITH SHOES AND SOCKS FLYING EVERYWHERE, WE JUMPED INTO THE FRAY. RICHARD KNOWLES AND CHARLIE STEWART ORGANIZED AN IMPROMPTU GUESS-THE-DANCERS-WEIGHT CONTEST. ART WON FIRST PLACE, BRUCE DIETZEN SECOND, AND TORF AND FRANK TIED FOR THIRD. WOODCHUCK WAS DISQUALIFIED FOR UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOR. ONLY MINOR INJURIES WERE SUSTAINED AFTER ALL THE STOMPING SLIDING AND LIFTING. RICHARD COMPLAINED OF A SORE BACK, CHARLIE A BLACK EYE, AND BARBARA HAD TO HAVE A GRAPE SEED REMOVED FROM UNDER HER TOENAIL! OUR GIDDY CONGREGATION WAS NOW USHERED TOWARDS THE CLIMAX OF OUR VISIT ---THE TASTING ROOM. THIS WAS RATHER AN ELEGANT AFFAIR DOWN IN THE CELLAR. WE FOUND OURSELVES SURROUNDED BY

HUGE WOODEN CASKS FILLED WITH THE FRUIT OF THE VINE. JULIE WAS OFFERED THE HONOR OF TAPING THE FIRST BARREL. DUE TO THE DIM CANDLE LIGHT HER FIRST HAMMER BLOW MISSED THE PLUG AND CAUSED THE SPOUT TO SPLIT THE KEG! CALAMITY ENSUED. ALREADY COVERED HEAD TO TOE IN GRAPE JUICE, THE CROWD RUSHED, GLASSES IN HAND, TO SAVE THE WINE FROM GOING TO WASTE. THE GALLANT EFFORT PAID OFF WITH LITTLE WINE REACHING THE FLOOR. SPECIALLY BRAVE WERE NELL AND ADRIANE WHO POSITIONED THEMSELVES MOUTHS AGAPE WITH TOTAL DISREGARD TO DROWN-ING. FEARING BY NOW THAT WE MAY HAD WORN OUT OUR WELCOME IT WAS OBVIOUSLY TIME TO MOVE ON. ROSIE'S TAMALES HOUSE WAS THANKFULLY JUST A FEW MINUTES DOWN THE ROAD---IT SEEMS BY NOW THE WINE WAS HAVING AN EFFECT ON SOME OF OUR DRIVERS. RED LIGHTS AND SIRENS BROUGHT OUR CARAVAN TO A HALT IN FRONT OF THE RESTAURANT. QUICK THINKING BY THERESA WALDEN SURELY KEPT US OUT OF THE SLAMMER. SHE EXPLAINED TO THE OFFICERS THAT THE RED STAINS ALL OVER HER HUSBANDS BODY WERE CAUSED BY A RARE MEDICAL CONDITION. UNFORTUNATELY THE POLICEMEN STOOD BY UNTIL AN AMBULANCE CAME AND TOOK PHIL AWAY! IT WAS DECIDED THAT A GOOD MEAL WOULD INSPIRE AN APPROPRIATE PLAN OF ACTION. WE WERE SURPRISED TO SEE CUSTOMERS SITTING IN THE BACK ROOM AS IT HAD BEEN RESERVED FOR OUR EXCLUSIVE USE. AS IT TURNED OUT AL JOHNSON IS A CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND OF WILLIE NELSON AND HAD INVITED HIM TO DINNER. AFTER A TASTY FEAST, THAT WILLIE INSISTED ON BUYING, TIM PIPE AND

STEVE RICHARDS FORMED A SINGING TRIO WITH THE RED-HEADED STRANGER. A FEW SONGS LATER OUR ATTENTION RETURNED TO PHIL, AS THERESA HAD CALLED SAYING HE WAS INDEED A VERY SICK MAN. PETE KELLY OBSERVED THAT WE COULD PROBABLY GET IN TO SEE HIM UNDER THE GUISE OF DELIVERING ICE CREAM. WILLIE OFFERED THE USE OF HIS TOUR BUS FOR THE JOURNEY, SO WITH JUDY BYRD AT THE WHEEL WE FLEW TOWARDS TOWN. PETE WAS ABLE TO

BRIBE THE NURSE WITH COOKIES AND CREAM AND PHIL WAS ABLE TO MAKE HIS ESCAPE. WHAT A SIGHT RUNNING ACROSS THE PARK-ING LOT IN HIS HOSPITAL NIGHTGOWN! AFTER ALL THIS MISCHIEF ON THEIR MERRY WAY. ANOTHER TYPICAL HCTC OUTING TO REMEMBER! (PHOTOS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE X-MAS PARTY)

Mike McPhail

# Spanish Correspondent's Report

Ian & Elaine Phillips

**M**y TR6 has fallen victim to the deadly "sleeping policeman!" As I recall, you guys just have Cops to slow you down! The Spanish have "traffic calming bumps" slapped in the middle of the roads (like most other European countries) and they

are ruinous for suspension and wheels.

They vary in style, as there is no set method and it's left to the local bureaucrats to create the obstacle, but the ones that are bloody



dangerous are those that are factory made out of hard plastic and bolted down. They are like a 6" curb slightly rounded, and if you get distracted and miss seeing one, it can cause some serious damage... in my case a broken wire wheel! See pics...

Once again you guys are the lucky ones, as now the UK is no longer in the EU because of Brexit and goods from there will be sent to Spanish customs where they can add an import charge (which seems to be indiscriminate), PLUS a sales tax of 21% !!!!!

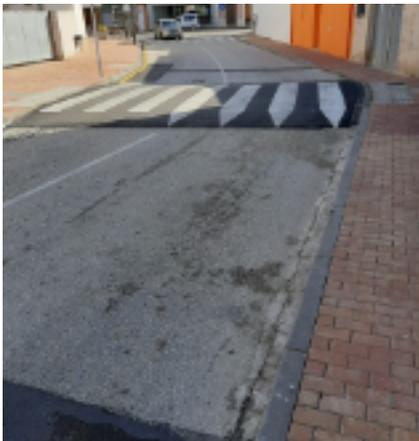
Recently I ordered some gaskets and oil filters from Moss UK. The postal

service here is diabolical, so I paid \$30 for courier, which before Brexit and Covid would be 2 days. So far it has been 4 1/2 weeks and no sign of the parts. Moss has refunded the 30 bucks, but from now on anyone in Europe who needs anything from the UK must find a supplier in Europe, because automotive wise, places such as Spain have very little to offer, never having had a car industry like the UK or the USA.

So I would just like to remind all you guys how darn fortunate you are!

Cheers

Ian and Elaine



# Advice Not Taken — with Consequences

## Art Graves

After great weather (except for the wind) on the four-day Caverns and Taverns Road Trip, a light rain fell most of the day on my drive back to Tulsa. Of course, it could be worse — ask Frederick Frankenstein. As it turns out, rain would be the least of my problems.



It could always be worse.

Since the headlights, heater motor and windscreen wipers were in use, the indicated battery voltage dropped some. This is normal – at least in my TR6. Then I noticed that, with all accessories off, battery voltage did not increase. Hmmmm. The next fuel stop gave me the answer when the 'Ignition' light on the tachometer glowed brightly. I've seen this before and hoped the fix is the same: worn alternator brushes. I decided to limit the use of headlights and heater motor and press on.

Then, as I navigated the highways in Oklahoma City, I felt the steering go a little 'wonky'. I attributed it to bad roads and proceeded north on IH35. The 'wonkiness' continued and after turning on the IH44 turnpike to Tulsa, decided that perhaps the roads weren't the reason and that maybe the car was at fault.

I exited the turnpike at the first opportunity. After checking tires and suspension as best I could in the light rain, I decided to press on to Tulsa on the old Route 66 highway at a reduced speed. What should have been a ninety-minute trip turned into the proverbial 'three-hour tour'.

The 'wonkiness' became clear the next afternoon. I was thinking a broken trailing arm bracket, but found a completely broken left trailing arm! Yikes!! And the shock absorber lever arm had come off the spindle and wedged itself between the half axle and handbrake cable. I hypothesize that the shock absorber lever arm prevented the trailing arm from swiveling up and down, causing the trailing arm to break.



An obvious cause of steering wonkiness.

Thinking back, seems I was told of a metallic 'crack' or 'pop' sound driving through Mike's neighborhood at the end of the trip. Should have taken Jim Wells'

advice and checked it out. The lever arm on that shock absorber has been loose before. A tack weld was applied to keep it on the spindle.



The shock absorber lever arm is wedged between the half axle and hand brake cable.

After sourcing a replacement trailing arm and shock absorber from John Phillips, I decided to look at the alternator brushes. I carry spare brushes with me since they are easy to replace. A 1/4" nut driver to remove four screws and just like that the brush assembly is out. The alternator itself stays in place. A phillips screw frees the brush. Easy-peasy-lemon squeezezy.



The outer brush is quite worn.



With new brush installed, the alternator charges the battery.

The new/old trailing arm needed to be cleaned - I used a wire brush on an electric drill. And the holes in the trailing arms needed to be honed to properly fit the nylatron bushings. The rest of the job was just turning wrenches.

Not sure if this experience tells more about the car or the driver. It's amazing the car drove as well as it did with a broken trailing arm. On the other hand, I'm not sure I would have driven ninety miles knowing it was broken.

# Bill's 1971 Red TR6

## Part 1

**Bill Waller**

Ok, as promised here is the beginning of my 1971 TR6 face lift and tummy tuck. Last year I did the needed mechanical work after being hit on IH 35 after a club meeting at The Tavern. I had to replace the left rear swing arm, spring, shock housing and brakes. This task required multiple parts, pounding and welding. With the exterior, I first identified rust areas and dents, including a new left front fender. While waiting for the new fender and various parts, I used a wire wheel and grinder to expose the rust areas. I then treated these raw metal areas with a rust treatment to hold until repair. Using various hammers and blocks, I pushed and pulled all the dents out. I wanted to test my

paint gun and new-found skills on the inside of the new fender and vent scuttle. I used 240 grit on the thin black shipping primer inside the fender and (painted) scuttle. I then sprayed with 2 coats of a urethane primer. I left the fender rough and sanded the scuttle with 400 grit. I thought the paint looked a bit wavy on scuttle finish. So I did some research and purchased an Iwata 400 gun. I will use my HF gun for primer. My process is to start on large areas and holes welding where I can and 3M kitty hair followed with a thin coat of Bondo where needed. When I get the whole car baby-butt smooth I will sand with 240 grit before priming the whole car, then a final sand before painting with 400



grit. I am painting the bonnet removed from the car as it is impossible to reach front area otherwise. I will write an article

next month detailing the finished project including new interior. Bill





# From “What Leak?” To “What a Leak!”

## Wiley Christal

The Caverns of Sonora is in a quaint location on a private road south of IH10 about 16 miles from Sonora, TX. If you are ever out in that direction with about two hours to spare, I can recommend that you take the tour of the caves. You know you have arrived when you hear the peacocks screeching and see them on top of the tin-roofed, red building. The Caverns of Sonora do not have a grand room like Carlsbad Caverns, but you will see many different active formations and you are

always up close to the beauty because the tour walkway goes through the middle of the caves. Art Graves, Mike McPhail, Jim Wells, and I stopped there for a cave tour on April 14 as we were heading back home from a four-day outing in our TR6s.

The personnel at the caverns strongly recommended that we not wear our jackets down into the caves because it is warm and humid down there. I believe that all of us thought that caves were cool



and damp, but we took their recommendations. Art took my jacket back to the car for me. When we exited the caves about two hours later, Art said something like, "I didn't want to tell you before the tour, but your car is leaking something." "What leak?" I thought, because nearly everything that holds fluid in my white TR6 had recently been replaced or fitted with new gaskets and seals. As the guys gathered around my car, it became obvious that the leak smelled like gasoline. A huge spot of leaked gas appeared on the gravel parking lot extending from under my car to under Art's blue TR6. What a leak!

Mike discovered that the leak was coming from the top cover of the fuel pump – the brand-new fuel pump! He removed the cover to discover that the gasket had expanded and was no longer keeping the gas inside. All of us were carrying spare

parts on this trip... thanks to Art's good example on previous trips. Luckily, I had put another identical, brand-new fuel pump in my trunk as a spare. We took the gasket from the spare fuel pump and installed it on the car. That is when I realized all the gas that was in my gas tank was now on the ground. Jim came to my aid with an empty gas can that he carries in his trunk. Mike had a procedure for getting gas from Jim's car into the gas can that did not require sucking on a hose! Soon enough that gas was in my tank.

The Caverns of Sonora charged me an extra \$20 as a hazard cleanup fee which I paid, and we were on the road again. It is good to travel in a group with knowledgeable Triumph mechanics and spare parts! The round-trip distance from my home in Round Rock for the four-day trip was 1443 miles. I cannot wait for the next outing!



# It's a 45-Year-Old Car What Could Possibly Go Wrong? The Adventures of a Cross-Country Drive

## Rip Torn

“It was the best of times; it was the worst of times” first penned by Charles Dickens in 1859 certainly felt as a good summary to describe my first solo and longest road trip to date. Last fall I was speaking to a dear friend on the effects of the lockdown and we pledged this would not keep us from enjoying an epic drive together through the Smoky Mountains and the Tail of the Dragon US 219. He was a car aficionado and owned among others, an AC Cobra. We would do this in the spring of this year. Sadly, he contracted the corona virus in January and

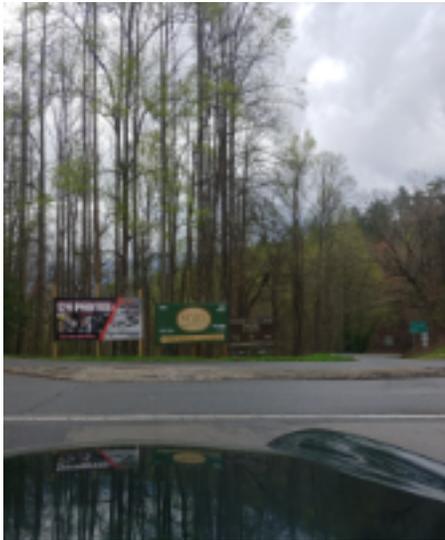
didn't make it. I was notified that he would receive a memorial service in Chattanooga, TN near where he lived April 16, 2021. Due to events last year our Air Force squadron did not have its annual reunion at Wursthfest either and many of us decided we need to attend the service and show our respects to Fons. So, I decided to make a journey through the southern US to touch base with friends, make a memorial drive and pay my respects.

If you ever want an outstanding detail and paint for your car, Jerry Mitchell is the one



to contact. He had put in many hours on the Green Machine straightening panels and sanding/ polishing the car but it took a bit longer than planned so on the evening of the 6th I started the trip and drive to Duncanville to stay with my sister overnight. Up early the next morning I make the longest leg to Crossville TN, 845 miles all along the interstate highway system. There is a definite awareness on the quality of the roads once you leave Texas, and the lack thereof. Crossing East Texas, Arkansas, and into western Tennessee the landscape is varying and not too interesting until you start into the Ozarks

and Smokies. The payoff was a short 1-hour cruise to US 219 and the start of the Tail. 312 turns in 10 miles are its claim to fame.



It is now Thursday morning, cloudy with scattered showers. I was hoping the roads would not be a hazard and once I started winding up into the mountains at the edge of the Smoky Mountain National Park, I was not disappointed. The sign



announcing the beginning of the run toward Deal Gap approached and traffic was very light. The Green Machine was purring and feeling tight. Onto 219 we turned and off we went climbing higher into the scattered fog but no other cars around. Exhilarating hairpin turns and short stretches followed by more. Having driven this once before in my more modern car, it is certainly a workout in a 4-speed manual with no power steering and 95ish HP. Past the ubiquitous photo services looking good zipping through the turns until reaching Deals Gap and taking a break. Had Fons been there in his Cobra he would either have been throttled way back for me or waiting at the end. Either way, it was fun. That afternoon was social time and stopped in Asheville to have dinner with friends and ended up driving in the dark to Blowing Rock, NC for the overnight.



Friday morning started bright and sunny and it revealed the beauty of the area. Apparently, a ski destination and had great views. A short stretch on the Blue Ridge Parkway revealed some breathtaking

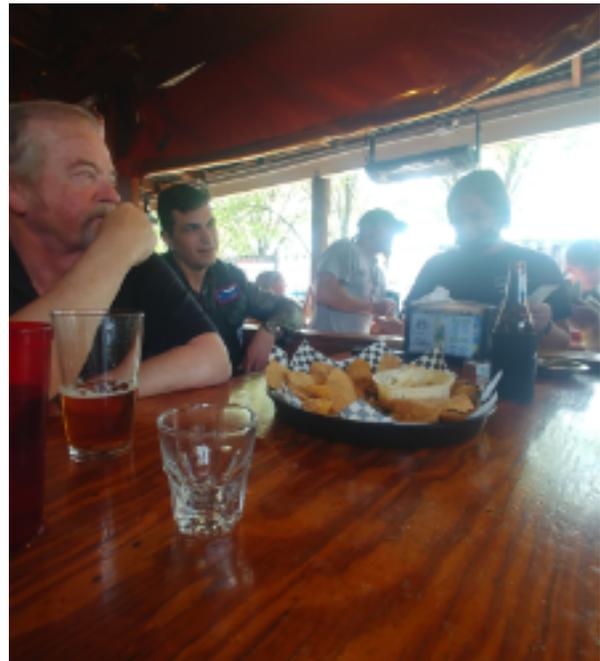


sights albeit at 35-45 mph, max. That evening was planned to be in Yorktown VA so after a couple of hours of backroads driving, I got back on the interstate. Bang, bump, bang as I continued down those stretches with their hidden potholes reaching up into the suspension as if to punish me for admiring the countryside too much. Pay attention! Bang. After a quick refueling stop and grab some window food I started back toward the interstate when suddenly from under the hood smoke came billowing out. I pulled out of traffic and opened it to see flames licking up near the carbs. Seat forward, pull out the extinguisher and fire it as trained those many years at work. It went out quickly after maybe 5 minutes of burning, total. The positive lead to the battery had worked its loose and rested on the exhaust manifold. The insulation had caught fire and almost burned the wire clean through. I dig out the tools and



remove the cable. Darn it, one of the nuts rolled away and I can't find it. There is an Advance Auto across the highway, a long shot but maybe I can replace it. All of their cables are straight through Negative leads

and don't have that connector in the middle. Pick up a couple of different sized nuts and back to roadside repairs. If nothing else my Hagerty's has a 200-mile towing and my friends house is 175. Once back at the car I work this MacGyver moment and while looking through the parts bag I stumble onto my old cable. Winner! Meanwhile a gentleman comes over and starts to regale me with his Triumph of his youth story and he spots the missing nut. Bonus! The car is repaired running in 10 more minutes and after making sure the wires are well away from contact with anything else hot, I proceed to Yorktown arriving 3 hours behind schedule but relieved to be there. Then a Whiskey front passed through the area.



Saturday morning arrived and I hadn't felt like that in a long time. Having fun is not as fun as it used to be. I go to the car and see a crack formed in the corner of the windscreen. Despite no chipping or road damage visible the crack progressed the height of the glass. Not in a critical area but will have to repair it on return. Regardless drove around the area and socialized there in a very historic part of the country.

Tuesday morning, I started to head south and noticed a clunking sound when I engaged first gear. A bit of a clanking noise from behind me. Ruh-roh. I took it easy doing interstate driving and worked



my way toward Columbia SC for the night and onward to Lake Oconee for another staying with friends. At that last stop my friend, a long-retired pilot has a 1974 Lotus Elan and hoped we could make some runs in

that area but with the new noises I decided discretion to be the better part of valor, as they say and stay parked. Thursday, I left and fought the Atlanta traffic to arrive in Chattanooga for a couple of nights.

The service Friday was memorable. At the Chattanooga National Military Cemetery, they held a very dignified service for him. In addition to a good-sized contingent from our squadron his driving buddies showed up with their Cobras. About 30 cars in all. I thought what a way to go, start with a funeral and end up with a car show. We said our good byes to Fons, threw a nickel in the grass and parted ways that evening.

Saturday looked pretty daunting with: a questionable car, 875 miles, no reservations and full tank of gas. Hit it! I will go until the car quits, I quit or run out of gas. Well, the car held up, I stopped several times and averaged 24 MPG going home. 14 hours behind the wheel is not recommended but was feeling good the entire time. I rolled into the driveway around midnight ending a 10-day road trip to remember. I accomplished everything I planned to do, had some fun drive sessions, and honored my friend who was there in spirit. Dickens was right. Now off to see Mike and start ticking off the repairs. Drive safe everyone and make sure you have a working extinguisher.



# Race Report

## CVAR Eagles Canyon Raceway

### May 2021

**Don Couch**

English weather was on tap for the drive up on Thursday to Eagles Canyon Raceway in Decatur, TX. I loaded up the car on the trailer and just as soon as I was heading out the rain started. The forecast for the weekend was rain, rain followed by rain but in typical weatherman style, the forecast kept changing all weekend. Sometimes for the better and sometimes worse. Why didn't I become a weatherman? "Over to Don for the weather. Today's weather forecast is 50% chance for rain today, either it will or it won't, back to you for Sports." I was to meet Bob Blake and caravan to the track with Greg Blake and Bob Kramer heading up later in the

afternoon. The rain somewhat stopped in time for us to offload our cars and make camp.

ECR is a wonderful facility and they have poured a lot of money into making it even better. As such, the paddocks were very well designed with runoff and drainage in mind so conditions were actually very nice. The entire track was resurfaced down to 36 inches deep and driving on it is like driving on glass, VERY sticky glass I should say. They added a lot of curbing and there was no water running across the track or puddles anywhere. It made for a great weekend and the weather got better and





better with the sun shining down for Sunday's races.

This weekend's featured race was the small bore cars, the four cylinder production based cars. There were five TRIUMPHS on track for this event. I was gridded back at 25<sup>th</sup> or so and had a great start. Moving up through the pack we're coming around for lap two and I lift my foot off the brake and my foot can't find the accelerator pedal. At the same time the car dies and I'm feverishly stomping around trying to find the gas pedal when I glance down and see it has sprung UP! Luckily, this all takes place right at Pit In so I coast off track and into the hot pits. The marshal comes over to see why I pulled off and I tell him I lost my accelerator pedal and can I get out to check under the hood. He pushes me behind a barrier and I get out and pop the hood. As most of you know that's not really a speedy task on a Spitfire. Upon inspecting I see that a nut has fallen off the throttle shaft that holds the accelerator linkage to the carb.

I asked to be towed back to the paddock and they bring around a tow truck and off

we go. When we get to where I am paddocked I ask the marshal if I can go back out if I get the car repaired. He replies "Yes, if you think you have enough time". Never far from reach, I know where I always keep my nuts so I run over to my toolbox and grab one and a wrench. With full driving gear including my helmet I go to work. Easy fix and I jump back in my car, put my belts back on and I'm "off to the races!" I get back on track with about two laps to go and finished the race.

That evening at the awards party, they gave me the first ever "Pit Stop Award." Steve Coleman, the group 2 rep, said "No one in the history of CVAR has started a race, gone into the paddock to fix his car and returned to finish the race!" Never count me out. As much fun as that was it paled in comparison to the race I had Saturday afternoon. For me it was the most epic race I have ever had. I got a good start passing a Sprite and a Mini going into turn 1. By now the pack has somewhat sorted itself out and my next pass comes at turn 14 as I pass the other Spitfire and then an MGB-GT at the start/finish line. On lap 3 I pass an MGB coming into turn 2 on the inside.

Coming into turn five I pass a Datsun. Coming around turn 9 I start mixing it up with another Spridget and he and I go at it until I finally get around him in turn 15 coming onto the front straight. It's at this point I see Pete Sandy in his Austin Healey Sprite coming around the Spridget I had just passed. Meanwhile, I'm trying to get around an MG Midget and finally do in Turn 7 and Pete has gotten around the Spridget and I know it's just a matter of time before he gets past the Midget too.

As I come to the end of the back straight Pete has gotten around the Midget and is closing in on me like a freight train! It's lap four and the game is on. From here on Pete and I swap positions four times. First on lap 5, Pete gets me on the inside at the end of the back straight going into turn 11, he goes deep inside and out brakes me for the pass. Coming up out of the canyon in turn 14 Pete is on three wheels as he goes hard into the sharp right hand turn and I am feeling the rear of my car just start to drift out. We are both really putting the spurs to her! Now it's my turn to late brake and I pass him back on the inside of turn 15 going onto the front straight coming up to

lap 6. There's a yellow flag as one of those pesky Porsche 914's is stopped on track in-between turns 2 and 3 so no passing till the next flag station that is clear and that is the turn three station so RACE ON! Down the back straight another car, an MGB is stopped on track so another yellow flag area but we are quickly clear of that and head down into the canyon and back up with me still ahead. As we come across the start finish for lap 7 the Start tower gives me the one more lap to go signal. Last lap we barrel down the front straight and into turns one and two. Pete makes a move to the inside going into turn three and (cough cough) he gets by me or I kinda gave up the corner so as to save both our paint jobs. But hey that's racing and I pass him back going into turn 6 but then Pete reclaims the lead at the end of the back straight. Coming up out of the canyon, Pete is again on three wheels and I'm drifting thru the turn and hit the curbing on the inside. We both know this is it. It's last lap and last turn approaching. I'd say what was going through Pete's head was the same thing that was going through my head at this point, "Don't do anything stupid!"



As we make the final turn onto the front straight, our race became a 1/4 mile drag race. Every turn, every pass has come down to a drag race and Pete got the glory by a car length! In all, I passed eight cars and swapped positions with Pete four times. It really was the best race I've ever had. I don't know as I write this where Pete and I came in overall as the timing and scoring hasn't been posted online yet. I should know by the next meeting and let you know but really this race exemplifies what vintage racing is all about. It for the thrill and fun of it all, not the eight dollar trophy.

finished every race. Gregg had brake problems and Bob Kramer has overheating issues. I'll let them tell you their stories. We have about a three month break till we race again in September at ECR. Hopefully Greg and Bob can rid their rides of these gremlins that have plagued them both for a few race weekends now. I know I have toned down my rev limiter and hope that gremlin is long gone. I look forward to being back on track soon!

Bob Blake had a good weekend and



# Classifieds

We have finished the restoration of the TR3A we have owned for about 44 years. After all those years of gathering parts and parts cars, we now have many parts and pieces left. I am wanting to give these to either an individual or a business that will be able to use them to keep some of these cars going. I don't mind if they are sold by a business or used by an individual – I just want them to be used and not stored in my garage.

I have 2 nose caps, a pair of doors, a boot lid, maybe a convertible top frame and some engine parts.

I live in Lockhart and can deliver the parts.

Bill Duran, 512-227-6067 (cell)

\*\*\*



## TR6 Air Filter Components

\$40.00 Raymond Brown 240-472-7200



**Tachometer** RPM, Original Gauge Smith, RN2414/00AS OEM. Fit all TR-6 1972-1976

\$80.00 Ray Brown 240-472-7200



**Picnic blanket** with snap on vinyl cover. Size 58 X 70 inches. New \$30.00

Ray Brown 240-472-7200

\*\*\*

**Wanted: TR 6 jack and handle.**

Joe Payne 210-326-6673  
robjoepayne@yahoo.com



**Stromberg 175 CD carburetor set.** \$80.00. Raymond Brown 240-472-7200

\*\*\*

**Visor assembly with mounts** (both sides), ignition switch cover, trunk light, misc. items.

Text Jim @ 254-563-9141



**Used seats from a '75 TR6.** Headrests are functional and stay up as desired. Asking \$240.00 (Photos right.)

Text Jim @ 254-563-9141

**Used and new TR6 parts for sale.** For full listing, contact info, and pictures, click [here](#).

\*\*\*

**SU HS2 Carbs.** For Sale a pair of SUHS2 carbs with chrome air filters. Condition excellent. New jets, needles, float needles and jets. PRICE \$175.00. Contact Olivio 316-200-3068 phone or text.

\*\*\*

**Free to a good home:**

**2 TR4 Front Overriders**

**2 TR4 Front Bumper Brackets**

**1 TR4 Rear Bumper**

All are serviceable but by no means pristine. There are scratches and scuffs and dings.

Located in Lago Vista, TX

Rod Hamilton  
(714)420-6996  
Orders@hamiltonguitars.net



**Triumph TR6 '69-72 Intake Manifold Stanpart V3108,** used, as is. Great condition. Price plus shipping or pick up in central Texas \$110



**4 Speed Transmission from 1969 TR6.** Approx 80000 miles. Price: \$500 obo. Looks clean and the gears appear in good condition. I can get it inspected by a noted local mechanic at your expense. Sold as-is. Pm me with questions, please. Shipping extra.



**TR6 Stanpart Coventry Radiator.** Price: \$150 obo. Came out of a 1969 TR6. Replaced when the parts were upgraded. No leaking and holds pressure. Price plus shipping approx \$60

Many more parts for sale and prices negotiable. See the [catalog PDF](#) or look at <https://www.triumphexp.com/forum/buy-sell-and-trade-forum.5/>

Contact Rip at 512 845 2944 or rtor09@gmail.com

## Auto Lift Car-Park-8 Basic 5 Parking Lift



Specifications	Auto Park-8
Capacity	8,000 lbs.
Lifting Height	74.0"
Ground Length w/Ramp	49.0"
Ground Length w/o Ramp	47.0"
Ground Width	48.0"
Runway Track/Node	28.0"
Runway Length	48.0"
Runway Height	4.0"
Column Height	80"
Clearance Between Columns	66.0"
Clearance - Inboard	27.0"
Clearance - Outboard	19.0"
Clearance - Runway to Outside	19.0"
Clearance - Under Runways	10"
Clear - Over Runways	80"
Jacking Mechanism	18"
Base Plate Size	100" x 100"
Power	110VAC 1500W / 20A
Weight/Height	1,400 lbs.

**Hydraulic car lift.** My wife and I are downsizing and moving to Florida. I have a hydraulic car lift that I have used for about 8 years to double-stack cars in my garage and also to facilitate car maintenance. I have moved one track side in to accommodate the narrow wheel spacing of British cars. It's installed in a garage with about 9' 4" high ceiling but would also work in a 9' 0" ceiling. The lift is fully functional and comes with two ramps for loading cars onto the tracks. Capacity is 8,000 pounds. It's in excellent shape. I would advise and assist in the disassembly but it would be the buyers responsibility to handle the move.

It will require four people to disassemble, load onto a truck and reassemble. I've installed anchor bolts into my garage floor to provide structure stability. This was done using a star drill and edge-type anchor bolts.

As new cost is \$2,250. I'm asking \$800.

Jim Haller  
 jnhaller@sbcglobal.net  
 (512) 909-2226



Stock photo of car undergoing off frame restoration. Actual car is same color and wheels but left hand (USA) drive and black interior.

## 1973 Triumph GT6

Body fully stripped and mounted on dolly. frame stripped and painted. New suspension installed. \$10k in new parts (invoices available). Partial list of new parts; interior, Smith gauges, 14" mini-lite mags, stainless headers, new racing suspension and brakes, wiring harness, all chrome parts, starter, alternator, 3 carbs, plus much more.

Engine rebuilt by Performance Race Industries to Stage 1 specs.  
Rebuilt transmission and differential.  
Stored in locker for 20+ years.

John Carson  
512-716-9654  
jfcarson2005@yahoo.com

**\$13K OBO**



## Hill Country Triumph Club Advertising Rates

Member ads for Triumph cars or parts are 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 are 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



**Enjoy your TR more!**

**ENJOY A TRA MEMBERSHIP:**

- 4 National newsletters per year
- Annual National Meet
- Website (password protected areas for members)
- Concours judging standards
- Factory build records
- Technical support
- Contact information
- Shutterfly National Meet website



**Join TRA Today!**  
[www.TriumphRegister.com](http://www.TriumphRegister.com)

# Pay Your Dues!!!!!!!

Please check the latest spreadsheet sent out by Nel. If it says Jan-21 in the dues column your dues are overdue now. Any 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 (payable to **Hill Country Triumph Club** or **HCTC**) to:

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

## HCTC Officers

**President** — Don Couch  
president@hillcountrytriumphclub.org

**Vice-President** — John Akins

**Webmaster** — Kyle Fagan  
webmaster@hillcountrytriumphclub.org

**Treasurer** — Mike Schubert  
trebucs43@gmail.com

**Secretary** — Mike McPhail

**Membership** — Nel Mcphail  
512-656-1456  
membership@hillcountrytriumphclub.org

**Ragtop Editor** — Dan Julien  
512-451-3102  
editor@hillcountrytriumphclub.org

**Social Media** — Robert McKenzie

Back issues of The Ragtop are available on our website:

<http://www.hillcountrytriumphclub.org>

### **Become a VTR Member**

The Vintage Triumph Register has its benefits. A national club of Triumph enthusiasts spanning the globe needs you as a member. Affiliate club membership is not an automatic membership to VTR. Some of the benefits:

- The Vintage Triumph Magazine – Our award-winning bi-monthly color publication
- 2020 VTR National Convention in Galena, Illinois
- Access to a large number of local clubs
- Website with reference material and members-only sections
- Record Trace Certificates TR2/TR3/TR3A/TR3B. Factory trace documents on other Triumph models no longer available
- Clothing, regalia, exclusive items
- Specific vehicle consultants and experts

**Sign up at <https://vintage-triumph-register.org>**



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 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month, breakfast meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 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), [triumphregister.com](http://triumphregister.com), and [6-pack.org](http://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.

# Upcoming Events

Next date TBD — **Cars & Coffee**. Circuit of the Americas. Info [here](#).

May 8, 2021 — **HCTC Meeting**. Live Oak Brewery.

June 8, 2021 — **HCTC Meeting**. Cork & Barrel, Round Rock, TX.

Sept 14-18, 2021 — **VTR 2021 Nationals**, Edmond OK. COVTR has agreed to host the VTR 2021 Nationals in September 2021. [www.triumphsokc.org/vtr2021](http://www.triumphsokc.org/vtr2021)

Oct 29, 2021 — **South Texas ABCD**, Boerne, TX, hosted by Alamo MG Association. Registration forms available from [kkinard@att.net](mailto:kkinard@att.net).

## Next Meeting

### Next meeting:

Saturday, May 8, 2020, 1:00 PM

### Live Oak Brewery

across US 71 from Austin Bergstrom International Airport,

behind the Fast Park

1615 Crozier Ln

Del Valle, TX 78617

[liveoakbrewing.com](http://liveoakbrewing.com)—Phone: 512-580-4265

Please note some changes at the brewery:

Taproom Seating Closed

Masks Worn When:

Ordering Beer/Food

Entering Building to Use Restroom