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July 2009

THE BLUEBONNET

News from the Texas Triumph Register



**Melissa and Jim Farrell's TR3B
at the 2009 Keels & Wheels Concours d'Elegance
Lakewood Yacht Club, Seabrook, Texas
(see related story, p. 9)**

TTR 2009/2010
Officers and Volunteers

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The Texas Triumph Register

The Texas Triumph Register (TTR), founded in 1981, is an organization of Triumph owners and enthusiasts dedicated to the preservation and continuing enjoyment of the Marque. Membership is open to all who appreciate automobiles bearing the Triumph name. In addition to monthly meetings, the club sponsors rallies, shows, road tours, technical seminars, and social events.

Visit our website at:

www.TexasTriumphRegister.org

National Affiliations

The Texas Triumph Register is a local chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR)/Triumph Sports Owners Association, which is open to all drivers of Triumph motorcars; an area center for the Triumph Register of America, exclusively for TR-2 through TR-4A automobiles; and a chapter of the 6-PACK, dedicated to the enjoyment, preservation, and restoration of the Triumph TR250 and TR6 automobiles.

Membership in these national organizations is encouraged. Visit their websites at:

www.vtr.org
www.triumphregister.com
www.6-pack.org

The Bluebonnet

The ***Bluebonnet*** is published monthly for TTR members. Members are encouraged to submit articles, photographs, or other items of interest. TTR neither endorses nor warrants any product or service advertised herein.

The information contained in this newsletter is for information only. TTR assumes no responsibility for the correctness or safety of the procedures; the reader assumes liability for any risk — personal or financial — in connection with the repairs or modifications outlined in the articles.

Working on cars can be hazardous if done incorrectly or without the proper safety precautions. The consequences of some mistakes can be dangerous. TTR suggests that you consult an automotive professional before attempting any repair or modification with which you are unfamiliar or inexperienced.

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Copy deadline for the ***Bluebonnet*** is the 20th of each month. [Ed.: And I really mean it!]

From the President . . .



The May meeting was held out West at the home of Brandi and Dusty Nicholson [all photos this page]. Thanks to Brandi, Dusty, and Ella for hosting the meeting. Several of the members spent part of the meeting giving Dusty and Russ Seto all of the advice they could stand as the collection of Triumph brains tried to determine why Dusty's spitfire was having idle and starting problems. When I left, Dusty and Russ were hard at work on the problem, and I hope a solution.

As always, I hope to see each and every one of you at monthly meetings, our Saturday morning breakfasts, or any of our other events. Be sure to see the Events Section of *The Bluebonnet* or check the web site for a chance to meet other club members and an excuse to get out of the house.

Remember: Get out and drive a Triumph!

Eric

I guess you can tell that summer has arrived with the record high temperatures we have been setting. During this time of year it takes a hearty TTR member to go out for an afternoon drive. One thing I've found helpful for trying to keep your LBC running cooler is to add a wetting agent to the cooling system. I've used a product called WaterWetter® from Red Line products with great results in my GT6. I have also read mixed reviews of the product on the web, so maybe it did not work and my temperature gauge just did not want to move into the red.



Don Carter has been working with the police academy for a club autocross and has firmed up arrangements. The date is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, August 9th, so mark your calendars. During the last meeting we also discussed possible locations for this year's Christmas party. Liz Reynolds has been hard at work and has found a great location centrally located on Memorial Drive.



Minutes of the June 13, 2009 Meeting of the Texas Triumph Register

At 1505 hours on Saturday, June 13th, President, **Eric Schumann** opened the meeting by thanking **Brandi** and **Dusty Nicholson** for hosting the meeting. The cold drinks were really appreciated on that hot, hot day.

Old Business:

Dusty Nicholson, Treasurer, announced we still had about \$5800 in the account, but the number of dues being received under the watchful eye of **Mike Hado** would push the number to closer to \$7000.

New Business:

Vern Burnett, Second Vice President of Events, had a signup sheet for the Falling Leaves Tour scheduled for the 23rd, 24th, and 25th of October. He will check to see if we can stay at the Holiday Inn. The second planned road trip will be to the Canyon of the Eagles on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of January. The third trip will be a 10-day trip this August to the Northeast part of the United States; he needs to know by the end of June who would like to join the caravan. Please contact **Vern** to sign up for these trips.

Liz Reynolds, Chair of the Christmas Party Organizing Committee, presented for consideration Carmella's at Memorial Drive and Dairy Ashford. Liz reported that the cost would be about \$25 per person plus bar bill. Motion was made to approve, seconded, and a unanimous vote was taken. The Christmas Party will be at Carmella's at 14795 Memorial Drive. A motion was made to subsidize the Christmas Party by \$2000, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Bill Papp, Vice President of Events, reminded members that the Classy Chassis Car Show would be held at the Reliant Center tomorrow. There will be over 100 rare and vintage automobiles on display and, for a donation of \$50, you can ride in a simulated auto cross in a race car in the parking lot. All proceeds from the event will be given to charity.

Bill also reported that the Houston British Motor Show would be held on October 17th.



Don Carter reminded the members that the VTR Nationals will be held in St. Luis Obispo, California this year and he plans to make the drive. **Liz** and **John Reynolds** plan to go as well. If you want to join the convoy, please contact **Don**.

Don also asked for volunteers to drive their vintage Triumphs in a 4th of July Parade in the Timbergrove area. The cars will line up at 0930 and the parade will start at 1000 hours and last about an hour. Please contact **Don** for more details.

Bill Papp presented the list of future events:

- July 18th meeting at the home of **Jan** and **Bob Delery**, the third Saturday, in April Sound [Lake Conroe] and will be combined with a golf outing for TTR members. Please advise Jan or Bob (936-447-3614) if you want to play and your handicap.
- The August 8th meeting will be held at **Louise** and **Don Carter's** fabulous home and garage in Houston.
- **Karen** and **Steve Kirsis** will host the September 12th meeting at their home in Bentwater [Lake Conroe].
- The October 10th meeting will be at **Melissa** and **Jim Farrell's** beach house in Galveston.
- The November 14th gathering will be held at **Lindsey** and **Rick Trenholme's** home in the Woodlands.
- The December Christmas Party will be held at Carmella's.

The meeting adjourned at 1440 hours.

Respectfully submitted:

Bob Delery



Mechanic's Mystery

The Mystery: A 1974 Triumph TR-6 had been on jack stands for weeks last summer while the differential was removed and shipped out of state for rebuilding. A new stainless-steel exhaust system was also installed while the car was “airborne.” During the time the car was out of commission, the front rotors developed a layer of surface rust while stored in the hot, humid Houston garage. Once the diff was replaced and the exhaust system completed, the owner took the car out for a brief, one mile or so drive. He noticed a hot, metallic smell and suspected it was the new exhaust system settling in. The next drive was about 3 miles to a local gas station for some fresh fuel. The car drove fine, but when getting out of the car at the gas station, white smoke was seen to be pouring out of the right front wheel well. Finding no coolant leak or any other obvious problem, the owner eased back home and contacted Russ Seto.

Russ jacked up the right front tire and noticed that it was difficult to rotate the tire by hand. The brake pads were partially compressed on the rotor, thus causing the heat, smoke, and smell noticed earlier. Russ loosened the bleed screw and the pads retracted, but he advised the owner that the next application of the brake pedal might cause the problem to recur. Despite trying to drive home using only downshifting and the emergency brake, the main brake had to be used and the problem did come back. When he heard this, Russ made the correct diagnosis.

What was it?

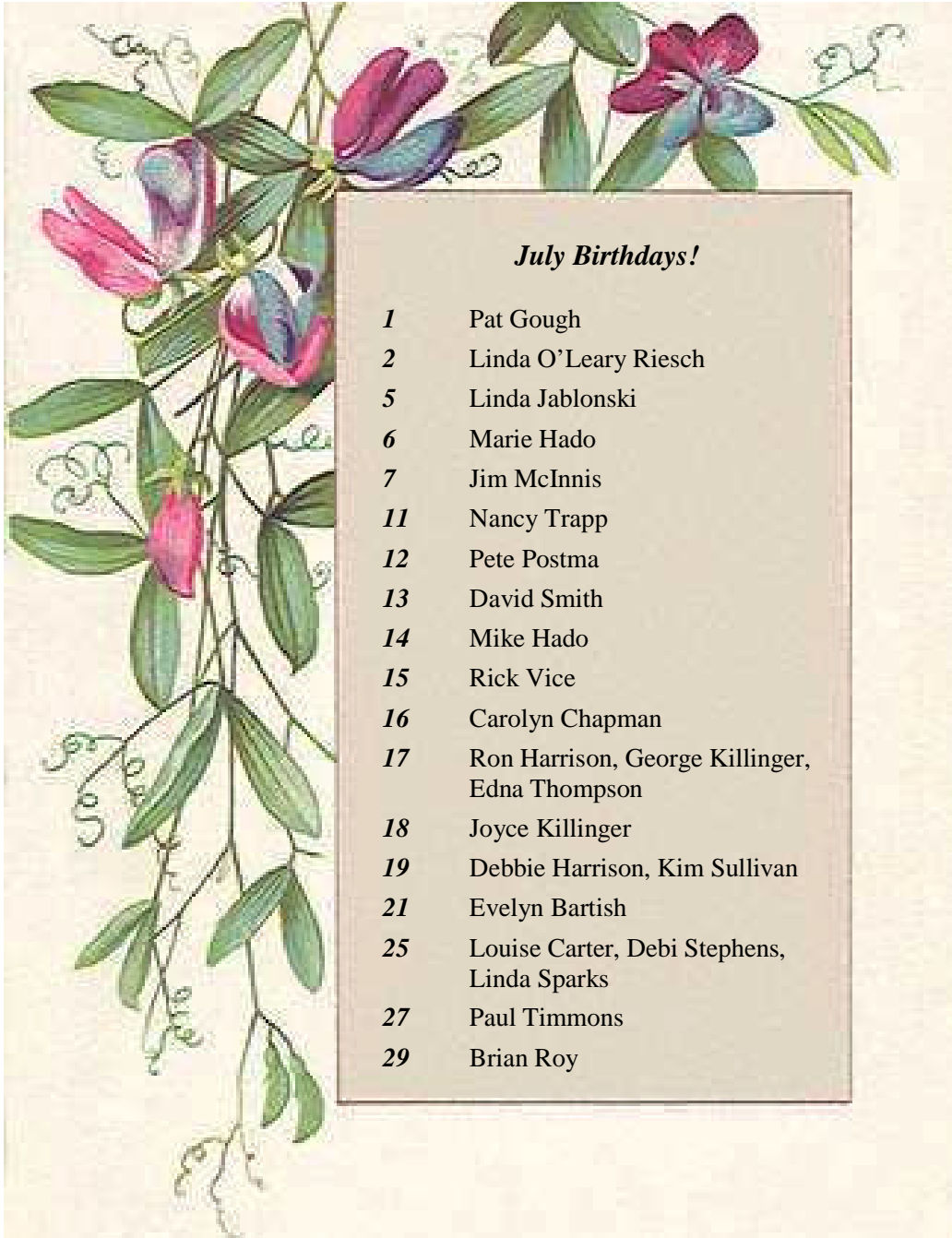
Little British Cars are known for many things, some good, some not so good. Typically, they are not blessed with substantial cargo space in the boot. Many owners use period-correct luggage racks to provide supplemental carrying capacity. However, older luggage racks are sometimes rusty and unattractive. Some period-correct luggage rack styles are no longer available. And most all luggage racks involve drilling or other damage to the car's sheet metal.



A UK-based company has developed an alternative called the Boot-Bag, which they market as “the luggage rack: evolved.” It is a waterproof PVC-coated nylon bag with carrying handle that rides on a soft, flexible pad. There is a 14-day money back guarantee.

The cost is £59.99 plus postage and shipping (about \$100 USD + shipping). You can find additional information at www.boot-bag.com.

Jeff Harris, June 2009



July Birthdays!

- 1*** Pat Gough
- 2*** Linda O'Leary Riesch
- 5*** Linda Jablonski
- 6*** Marie Hado
- 7*** Jim McInnis
- 11*** Nancy Trapp
- 12*** Pete Postma
- 13*** David Smith
- 14*** Mike Hado
- 15*** Rick Vice
- 16*** Carolyn Chapman
- 17*** Ron Harrison, George Killinger,
Edna Thompson
- 18*** Joyce Killinger
- 19*** Debbie Harrison, Kim Sullivan
- 21*** Evelyn Bartish
- 25*** Louise Carter, Debi Stephens,
Linda Sparks
- 27*** Paul Timmons
- 29*** Brian Roy

Welcome, New Members!

Jimmy & Michele Barnes, Spring — 1970 Spitfire
Mike & Mary Cole, Houston — looking for a TR6

Welcome Back!

John & Marissa Shasteen, Stafford — 1974 Carmine TR6

Events

- July 4th** **Note change:** Breakfast @ Mama's Café on Westheimer
- July 11th** Breakfast @ Eats Mesquite Grill, 13918 Old Hempstead Highway (713-460-3287)
- July 18th** Breakfast @ Otto's BBQ, 11222 Fountain Lake Drive (281-313-6889)
TTR Monthly Meeting at the Delerys' (April Sound, Lake Conroe area) (golf at 10:00 a.m., eat at 3:00 p.m., meet at 4:00 p.m.)
- July 25** Breakfast @ Clementine's Restaurant, 6448 FM 1960 West (281-440-5310)
Wine Night at the Circle S Winery — enjoy pasta and a selection of wines (e-info to follow)
- Aug. 1** Breakfast @ Humble City Cafe, 200 Main Street, Humble (281-319-0200)
- Aug. 1-12** **Convoy to the Roadster Factory's Summer Party** (Aug. 7, 8) in Armagh, Pennsylvania (contact Vern for more info)
- Aug. 8th** Breakfast @ Le Peep Restaurant, 3810 Farnham Street (713-520-5201)
TTR Monthly Meeting at the Carters'
- Sept. 12th** **TTR Monthly Meeting** at the Kirsis' (Bentwood, Lake Conroe)
- Sept. 30 - Oct. 4** **2009 VTR Convention**, San Luis Obispo, California (start planning now)
- Oct. 10th** **TTR Monthly Meeting** at the Farrels' Galveston beach house
- Nov. 14th** **TTR Monthly Meeting** at the Trenholmes' (The Woodlands)
- Dec. 12th (?)** Annual TTR Holiday Party, Carmelo's on Memorial Dr.

The breakfast group gathers at 8:00 a.m. and orders breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Because locations may change (especially for breakfast), always check our website the day before the event: www.TexasTriumphRegister.org.

Mechanic's Mystery — SOLVED

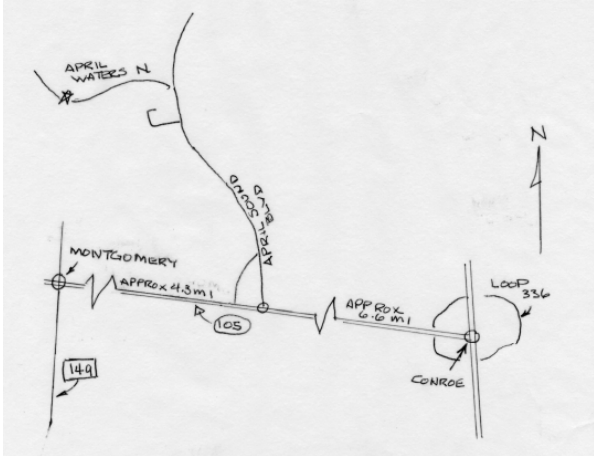
Based on previous experience, Russ suspected a clogged high-pressure brake line. The rubber hoses had been replaced about 10 years earlier. Both front hoses were replaced and the problem was solved. The defective line was "dissected" and it was clogged, although the actual clogging culprit could not be identified. The partially clogged line let some fluid by to apply the pads, but then restricted the out-flowing fluid when the brake pedal was released. This caused the pads to remain partially expanded against the rotor.

Were you able to solve the mystery?

(Jeff Harris/Russ Seto)

Our Next Meeting is Saturday, July 18th . . .

***is at the home of Jan and Bob Delery
1116 April Waters North, Montgomery, Texas
936.447.3614***



About parking:

Please park on one side of the street only;
do not block driveways or mailboxes.

**Let's eat and visit at 3:00,
then meet at 4:00.**

From I-45 north to Conroe (Exit 87 left):
Hwy. 105 west to April Sound Blvd. Enter in left
lane to stop at security gate. Give your name to the
Security Guard. Stay in left lane, turn left at
signpost to tennis courts. The first and only stop
sign on April Water Drive North is in the Delerys'
front yard!

***Want to get in some golf before the
club (no pun intended) meeting?***

If you'd like to play the April Sound
Course, contact Jan or Bob at 936-447-3614
... be prepared to tell them your handicap. Tee
time is 10:00 a.m.





A *Interview with ...*
Jim and Melissa Farrell



BB: Please tell us about yourselves and your family.

Melissa: I was born in Port Arthur, the only girl with two older brothers. We moved to Arkansas on my 7th birthday where I grew up in the country. I was the tag-along tomboy. My first loves were drawing, baseball, and horses. Dancing became my passion as a teenager. I taught art in the Klein district from October 1985 through May 2008.

Jim was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and grew up in Brinkley, Arkansas. He was the oldest boy of three children. He learned to duck hunt with his father and became an accomplished guide when he was in high school. Jim worked for Commercial Credit in Cleveland, Tennessee, and Farrell Construction in Escatapa, Mississippi, and in Memphis, Tennessee. He got his Engineering degree from Memphis State University.

After he got his degree, we moved to Houston, where he continued to work for Farrell Construction. In 1983 he left the family company and started Shamrock Farrell. He has served on numerous corporate boards as well as non-profit associations. He is one of the founders of The Houston Area Safety Council.

We met at Arkansas State University, where Jim majored in Business and I was an Art major. We were married on August 7, 1971. I taught the first year we were married until our daughter, Elisa, was born. Stacy was born four years later. They both were brought up rallying, autocrossing, and showing cars.

Elisa loves to drive a manual shift; Stacy loves the old car shows. Stacy says she won't date a guy who doesn't know more about cars than she does. Elisa placed second in Concours at the 1990 VTR Nationals with the red Stag (later to become Bill Parker's). She received her award from Ken Richardson himself.

BB: When did you join TTR? How did you find out about the club?

Melissa We learned about the club through the Vintage Triumph Register at the 1989 Nationals. We had been members of VTR since its beginning — we are member number 274.

BB: Why did you join TTR and what stands out in your memory of your early days with the club?

Melissa: We felt TTR was not only a good source of information and parts, but also a great group of fun-loving people ... and, we met *Ken Richardson* at our first nationals in Dallas. It was a unique experience to visit with Ken. His stories were amusing history lessons. How often do you get learn history from the mouth of the historical figure himself?

BB: Do you see any significant differences in the club today as compared to the early years?

Melissa: I think the club has really added to the fun with the addition of breakfasts, driving tours, and, of course, the autocross schools.



BB: What do you enjoy most about TTR?

Melissa: I enjoy the people the most. I think the Mystery Dinner was a good example of our members ... we love to play. The second thing I enjoy most about TTR is the driving tours and autocrossing. We've found that TTR members are always eager to lend a helping hand. When my car blew a hose at Regionals this year, TTR members rushed over to help us wash off the coolant before it ruined the paint on "Sweet Melissa." What a class group of people!

BB: When/how did you become interested in British cars in general and Triumphs in particular?

Melissa: I'll never forget the first British sports car I saw. I was in high school on a date when I saw a Healey 3000 drive up at the local Dairy Queen ... and I couldn't take my eyes off it. Jim used to build models of British sports cars. At the age of ten, while staying at his Grandmother's summer cottage on Lake Michigan, a neighbor took him for a ride in an MGA. He was hooked!

We bought our first Triumph (250) when we lived in Mississippi just two miles from the beach. We were looking for an inexpensive little convertible to drive along the coast. The 250 fit the bill. We bolted a child's seat on the back shelf for Elisa and soon we were driving to Gulf Shores, Pensacola, and New Orleans for get-away weekends.

BB: What classic cars do you own now? Have you owned other classics in years gone by? How long have you owned your current Triumph?

Melissa: The TR3 and '91 BRG Miata are currently the only classics we have running. The pimento red Stag has almost recovered from the wreck ... all that is needed is to find a short in the ignition and redo the interior.

There are two Stags at the office in the process of restoration. We also have a '53 MG-TD waiting its turn. Jim rebuilt his Dad's '83 El Camino and has it stored at a local shop. There's a '55 Thunderbird calling Jim's name ... we'll see if he answers.

In the past, we've owned the beloved TR250 (I still miss it) and a '71 Spitfire. We rebuilt the Spitfire engine in hopes of making it a hot autocross car. Unfortunately, we picked the wrong year for stock class. The only carburetor that year was a single Stromberg that starved on right turns, if I remember correctly. We sold it to a nice family. We also owned a Fiat 124 Spider that I auto-crossed with some success.

We bought the TR3B, "Sweet Melissa," in 1974. We rescued her from a sad existence as a planter in Biloxi, Mississippi. The 3B is definitely our favorite Triumph ... she's a beauty, but Stags are kinder to Jim's back.

BB: You have been generous in sharing your business shop space with TTR. So what's stored in your Pasadena shop these days?

Jim: Stored at the office warehouse (also known as "the museum") are numerous TR3 and some Stag parts, as well as MG-TD parts. You can also find the club's Autorama display there.

BB: Who does most of the restoration work on your Triumphs?

Melissa: Jim does a lot of the work (when possible); I'm his assistant. When we run into real problems, we call Mike Hado or Russ Seto for consultation. Mike rebuilt the steering box for us for the 3B.



Bob Vogt rebuilt the red Stag steering rack. Sometimes the work *requires* a professional. *Sweet Melissa* was painted by Independent Paint and Body and her upholstery was done by Cy-Fair Upholstery off Jones Road.

BB: How many of the Stags you previously owned are still in the club?

Melissa: Bill and Diane Parker bought the '72 red Stag from us. Bill and Patsy Papp bought the blue '71 Stag from John Thomas (Jim's CPA), who bought the Stag from us. Both cars have done well at VTR Nationals in autocross events.

BB: Melissa, when did you develop an interest in autocross and competitive driving?

Melissa: Once I started auto-crossing I found that there is nothing quite like it. It's a natural high — when you hit that sweet spot in a turn ... and you know *this* is as fast as you can take it — when the adrenaline soars. (Sometime you should get Jim to tell you about our first autocross here in Houston. That's an amusing story that he tells much better than I do.)

Autocross awards: My highest placement achieved auto-crossing was in the Women's Division at the Nationals SCCA in Dallas, Texas. I drove to a second place in 1979 in a stock '76 Toyota Celica. After that I attended the Dick Turner Autocross School near Dallas. Then, in '80 and '81, at Salina, Kansas, I returned to Nationals to place a third both years in a stock (1400 cc) '69 Fiat 124 Spider (Women's Division again). During those years I was the SCCA SW Regional Champion in E Stock Ladies. Jim was the Houston Regional E Stock Champion in 1981. Jim has always been my mechanic and my mentor.

My most treasured award was *The Ken Richardson Challenge Trophy* that I won at the VTR Nationals in 2006 with *Sweet Melissa*. (I couldn't have done it without her.) I won that award by running the autocross in the men's division.

BB: Uppermost in most TTR members' minds: how did your Galveston Island beach house (site of many TTR shrimp boils/barbeque feasts) fare in Hurricane Ike?

Melissa: The beach house has been the shrimp boil destination for the club for about ten years now. The real reason the shrimp boils have been so successful is because of our fantastic cooks, Bruce Holland and Tony Lebon.

The house was built in 1982, the first in the Karankawa subdivision. In 1983, Alicia ripped off the roof and destroyed half of the upstairs. What Alicia didn't get, the Christmas freeze of 1983 finished. We had to rebuild most of the interior. Hurricane Ike was kinder ... not a drop of water on the inside. However, we had one to two feet of sand on the lot. Downstairs, the breakaway stairs and storeroom washed away.

BB: Finally, what's this story about Ken Zindler's Triumph being given to you for restoration?

Melissa: Jim promised Ken (brother of the late Marvin Zindler, TV personality) that he would bring his Stag to life again and take him for a ride. Unfortunately, Ken passed away last July. True to his promise, Jim is rebuilding Ken's Stag and plans to take it to Ken's widow when it's finished.

Melissa Farrell and her Art ...

BB: Melissa, tell us about your artwork. (Of special interest to TTR members is Melissa's artwork depicting classic Triumphs.)

I work in several media. The club is more familiar with my drawings, but I also work with sculpture, jewelry, painting, photography, engraving, and video. I often take my drawings and paintings and scan them into the computer to make smaller prints. I always number the prints (limited editions) so that the buyer will know how many reproductions of the original were created. That makes the prints more likely to increase in value over the years. The *prisma color* drawings can take from three to seven days working off and on to finish. Paintings are usually faster.

I often work on something for two to three hours and take a break. When I return to my work, I can see what wasn't quite right and make corrections — or maybe make complete adjustments to the original idea.

Jewelry takes a lot of time and a lot of patience. It's got to be perfect. The clay sculptures also take a lot of time. But sculpture is what I always come back to. I guess that's my favorite genre. I've just started doing engraving again. I hope to have some prints in the near future. Photography has become a quick media to work with since the age of digital photography. (Just because it's fast doesn't make it any less of an art.) And video — it's a great medium. I really enjoy telling a story. It probably takes more time than anything else.

After I retired from teaching, I set up three studios in the house. The studio downstairs (enclosed breezeway) is for clay, jewelry, and painting. I have the press set up in the laundry area for engraving. The upstairs studio is for drawing, studio photography, and computer work.

Inspiration comes from anywhere, anytime. Sometimes I do lots of research; sometimes it comes in a flash in the middle of doing something else. I get these pictures in my head...sounds a little crazy doesn't it? All I know is that's how it works for me.

The Gallery. I have joined a co-op gallery called *Da Vinci's Artists Gallery* located at 315 West Main Street in Tomball. I invite everyone to come up and check out the gallery. There is something for everybody at *Da Vinci's* as the media, styles, and prices are quite diverse. The hours are Thursday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The first Friday of each month the Gallery has an "opening" party from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. featuring two or three of the gallery artists. Adult (and other) beverages and snacks are provided along with soft music. Plan to join us at one of our **First Friday** events for a relaxing evening of art, refreshments, and music.



Melissa with her namesake.

CLASSIFIEDS

Noncommercial classified ads are free to members and inexpensive for everyone else! Just \$30 per ad for six issues and six months on the web site. Photos run as space available. (Ads will run for the full term unless cancelled in writing.) Service ads run until cancelled, as space available.

For Sale:

1974 TR6 (CF13666U). 4-speed, in-line 6 cylinder. New: paint, carpet, seats, top, tires, shocks, battery, ignition coil, am/fm radio w/CD player w/rear-mounted speakers. Undercoated, rust free, clear title. \$15,500 firm. Contact Gary Myers (cell: 979-877-9420, home: 979-865-5863). TTR member.

Wanted:

Rebuildable TR6 engine. Contact Mark Riesch (mark.riesch@yahoo.com)

And finally ...

Yes, I am still retired and more disorganized than ever. Twice I've lost track of what day it is ... and am even better at putting things off now than I was before. I want to blame it on this unrelenting heat, but am afraid that my worst fear has been realized: The task at hand takes as much time to accomplish as you have allotted for it. (It's deadline day for the BB and I am just getting started on it ...)

Would like to share these few thoughts with you:

- Bill and I missed the June meeting at the Nicholsons'. I have never felt so "unplugged." Had I been there, I would have known what was going on in the club. Try putting together a newsletter without knowing what's happening. Had a heck of a time figuring out why Vern was inviting folks along on a "10-day trip this August to the Northeast part of the United States" (from Bob's meeting minutes).

Which brings me to my point: If you haven't been to a club meeting in a while, it might be a good idea to do so ...

- I am boiling eggs to devil for a going-away party in honor of the second of our great-nephews to head off to war. He leaves for Afghanistan in a few weeks.

My hope as we near this July 4th is that God will protect all those who are about to be — or already are — in harm's way.



Diane Parker



Texas Triumph Register All-Purpose Membership Form

The TTR meets the 2nd Saturday of each month. For more information, contact Mike Hado (281.807.4780). We look forward to meeting you!

Check one: New Membership Renewal Update

Member's Name: _____
 Birthday (month/day) _____

Spouse's Name: _____
 Birthday (month/day) _____

Street (or Mailing) Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work phone _____ Cell _____

e-mail Address _____

Triumph ownership is not a prerequisite for membership; however, if you do own any Triumphs, please tell us about them:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Model/Color/Condition*</u>	<u>Commission (serial) No.</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

O = original, R = restored, B = being restored (or will be), P = parts car.

Dues: **\$30 per year per family**. Make check payable to the Texas Triumph Register (P.O. Box 40847, Houston, TX 77240-0847). Your cancelled check is your receipt.