



# Northumbria Newsletter



March 2010

Greetings to everyone in Northumbria Group

[\(http://www.groups.tr-register.co.uk/northumbria/\)](http://www.groups.tr-register.co.uk/northumbria/)

## Northumbria Update.

**Simon Rutter** was awarded the **Dave Wright Trophy** for best TR attendance in 2009 and we were lacking a picture of the occasion in the January Newsletter. That situation can now be rectified and here you see the formidable pair. TR and Trophy that is; plus Wedge pilot **Simon**. Dave would have been pleased that in its inaugural year the Trophy was won by our youngest member.



More recently, there were awards for winners and losers at the inter-group quiz with Cleveland during February. At what is now an annual event a Northumbrian team of **John Cook, Tom, Sean** and **Simon** managed to top the results table at last. Cleveland indulged in their usual pre-contest meal, which has in previous years proved a successful brain stimulant, but for once **Graham's** team didn't triumph. **John Cook** is keeping his preparation secret for the time being but deserves congratulations for his team's success this year.

**David Rawlinson** was Question Master for the evening and had spent some time researching suitable local and TR topics for the entertainment. All team scores were close at the half way point and it seemed the later `motor sport` and TR rounds were to make the difference.

Special thanks go to David, who lives in the Northern most part of Northumberland. At the time he volunteered to organise the quiz he wasn't aware that the venue would involve him in a 110mile round trip to get there; or that in the intervening period his time would be taken up in dealing with a catastrophe in his garage. His Northern location gave him an excessive share of the winter snows which have brought down his garage roof damaging his TR's stable mates in the form of an Austin Seven and a 1933 MG. He therefore had more than enough to keep him busy already, but nevertheless, took time out to make up a good night of entertainment for the teams. Thanks to David and good luck with the unfortunate new restorations.

At the other end of our region in Seaham, **Dave Blenkinship** has been giving his long hidden TR 5 a little daylight after sixteen years off the road. Contemplating a house extension, his `risk assessment` has indicated that the nature of the work and the proximity of builders, mean he has had to move it into storage for safety sake. Let's hope this small step towards freedom might mean he's inspired to start its long awaited restoration.



Similarly, just down the road from Dave, **Sean's** TR 5 restoration has started to progress again. Each burst of the welder brings him closer to November 25<sup>th</sup> 2012. Yes that's the date he set for the unveiling of the completed project when he commenced. Not long now then!

Here is an update picture from February 2010.



**Tom Smith** has also been busy over the winter renewing elements in the front of his engine bay. New radiator cowl, lamp housings and fittings; show room condition now restored for the forthcoming `concoirs` season.



## Coming Events.

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>. March**, first Wednesday meeting at **The Skiff**.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>. March**. Triumph Spares Day, Stoneleigh.

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>. March**, third Wednesday meeting at **The Lakeside**.

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>. April**, first Wednesday meeting at **Melton Constable, Seaton Sluice**.

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April**, Sunday Run with East Riding Group

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>. April**, first Wednesday meeting at **The Red Lion, (West Boldon A184)**

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April, `Drive It Day`**. TR Northumbria will have a local run but if you want to try something more adventurous Continental Car Tours have a National run ending at Gaydon, Heritage Motor Centre. For details click the following link.

[N.E.W.S. Run](#)

## Archive Item.

The styling may not be to everyone's taste, but this advertisement from the 1960s for a fibreglass after market hardtop for TRs gives an idea of the efforts to create an `all weather` sports car, making winter use more palatable. (Taken from a 1967 `Motor Sport` magazine).



**Microbond** quickly detachable  
hard-top for the Triumph TR4

**Microplas** manufacture Glass Fibre hard-tops to fit the complete range of Triumph TR sports cars, including a top for the TR2, 3, 3A, 3B and the Spitfire.

Write for details or call at:

**MICROPLAS LIMITED**  
(Dept. M.18)  
132 WESTERN ROAD, MITCHAM, SURREY  
Tel.: MITcham 5181/2  
Map reference: 1-in. O.S. Sheet: 170 — 276692½

## TR Spares

If you are grappling with `repro` spares that may be disappointing in quality;-----the pictures on the following page, sent to us by Cecil Scholar in Australia, may explain a lot!

# China Subcontractors Spark Plug Manufacturer



**Quality Control is a Slight Problem.**

## TR Picture Opportunity

Andrew Leask is a photography student pursuing a course at Newcastle College. He has chosen a theme of Classic Cars for a special project within his course and I was able to meet and help him last year by providing my TR for a photo shoot. He has contacted me again this year as he is searching for a TR 6 to complete a line up for an exhibition.

In return he willingly provides copies of his quality photos to those that provide subjects for him, which gives you an opportunity to get some stunning pictures of your car. (e.g. your GL's car as seen here).

If anyone can help Andrew, I have reproduced his e-mail below with all the contact details. He would be pleased to hear from you.

John Scarr, GL Northumbria



From: ANDREW LEASK, (snowdog2112@hotmail.co.uk)

To: Group Leader Northumbria

I'm coming to the end of my final year now and am putting together a portfolio of images that will be exhibited at a gallery in Newcastle in April and May. The proposed theme of the exhibition is 'Contemporary Sports Cars from the Thirties to the Noughties'. The idea is to have at least one car representing every decade from 1930 to 2009. I have arranged cars such as Lagonda Rapiers (30s), Morgan Plus 4 (50s), Austin Healeys (60s), TVR Griffith and Chimaera (90s), and BMW Z4 representing the first decade of the new millennium.

I'm looking for a car to represent the 70s, and I thought the Triumph TR6 (1968-75?) would be a good choice. This sort of car seemed to have fallen out of favour by the 70s, and the TR6, to me, represents the last of the true British sports cars.

Do you think anyone in your club would be interested in allowing me to photograph one? My timescales are fairly loose, and I don't need to have the work completed until the end of March, however I do need firm agreement in place before then to ensure I hit my deadlines. As usual, I can offer free high quality prints in exchange. As you know, a shoot would only take around an hour or so and I can fit in with whatever is convenient.

I'd be grateful if you could get back to me. My number is 07964178443.

Cheers

Andrew

## For Sale

**TR cars for sale are on our web site at,**

<http://www.groups.tr-register.co.uk/northumbria/cars-for-sale.html>

## TR Internet Entertainment

For a YouTube video of Steve Berry's review of the TR 7 click on this link

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwlIzPthJMY&feature=related>

## FBHVC News    Warning about Antifreeze

Technology moves forward and new products are constantly being launched with claims to improved formulations and performance. With the recent bitterly cold weather in January antifreeze has been in the headlines, with some alarming stories which at first seem to be about the well-known tendency of antifreeze to find the tiniest hole and cause leakages - but in these cases it has led to catastrophic engine problems. Traditional blue ethylene glycol is a toxic but highly effective antifreeze and contains silicates as an inhibitor to help prevent corrosion in an engine with mixed metals in its make-up. Bluecol and Blue Star are well known brand names and both of these are declared suitable for 'classic cars' on their company websites. Be aware that there are also low- or no-silicate ethylene glycol formulations (usually red) available which may not be suitable for all engines.

Propylene glycol is another well-known and less toxic antifreeze formula and usually contains silicates but Comma, the main manufacturer, have now discontinued it in favour of an ethylene glycol product containing 'bittering agents' to make it less palatable and minimise the risk of accidental poisoning.

Both of the above products use inorganic additive technology (IAT). Recently problems have been reported concerning the use of antifreeze mixtures using organic acid technology (OAT). OAT was introduced in the mid-1990s and the products are biodegradable, recyclable and do not contain either silicates or phosphates and are designed to be longer lasting. However these products do seem to cause problems in older engines; over and above the ability of antifreeze to find the smallest crevice and leak, OAT antifreezes have been accused of destroying seals and gaskets and causing a great deal of damage in 'old' engines. For this reason the manufacturers do not recommend their use in historic vehicles. These products are usually coloured red, pink or orange.

The final category is HOAT. These products use hybrid organic acid technology in an ethylene glycol base with some silicates in the formulation alongside the organic corrosion inhibitors. The product is usually coloured green and are not recommended for use in historic vehicles.

The Federation are still researching this problem but our advice at the moment is:

- only use blue coloured IAT antifreeze in historic vehicles;
- only use OAT products ('advanced' or 'long life' antifreeze) if the vehicle used it when new and if specifically directed by the vehicle's manufacturer;
- never mix different types of antifreeze without thoroughly flushing out the system;
- always replace the coolant within the time scale specified by the antifreeze manufacturer as the corrosion inhibitors break down over time.

## TR Tips

Constantly reading of concerns about TR bonnet mechanisms getting stuck, and ideas for releasing them, it may be useful to look at this 'web item' from America, sent by **Sean Tindle**. It suggests a handy tool and access point for 'left hookers' but I believe there are similar suitable bulkhead grommet locations for the purpose on UK cars.

## Opening bonnet after release cable breaks

Many of us have seen TR6s with dinged bonnets because someone pried them up to release

the catch after the release cable broke. This is unfortunate because it takes less than 30 minutes to release the bonnet without damaging it. However, it is very difficult to figure out how to do it without looking under the bonnet --- and if the cable is broken, it's too late for looking.

I first encountered this problem about 15 years ago when a friend called to ask if I knew how to get his bonnet open after the cable broke. His car had a new paint job and he was not about to pry it up. He was in no rush since he would not have to add oil for a couple weeks. I had one of my TR6s torn down with much of the dash removed making it very easy to devise a tool. Several years later the same guy went to sleep and rolled his baby while going only a few miles per hour. I ended up buying the remains. It is a California car with no rust. I have new fenders and a replacement windshield and bonnet (he mangled it that time). Maybe I'll get in on the road in 2002.

I'm removing the interior of my '76 TR6 in preparation for painting. I remembered the hood release problem when removing the glove box and thought it was a good time to make a new tool and photograph the procedure.

The TOOL is shown in the following photo. It is made of an 18-inch length of mild steel bar. I used 5/16 inch diameter bar because it was the first one I found in the scrap pile; 1/4 inch bar will work just as well. Each of the three segments is 6 inches long.



The stay under the glove box, the glove box, and the right side ventilation and demister ducts are removed. The rubber grommet in the hole through which the temperature control and choke cables pass is pushed forward into the engine compartment. The tool is then inserted into this hole beside the cables; see next photo.



The tool is positioned properly when the middle segment is horizontal and the other two

segments are nearly vertical. The vertical segment in the engine compartment should rest against the hood release lever as shown in following photo.



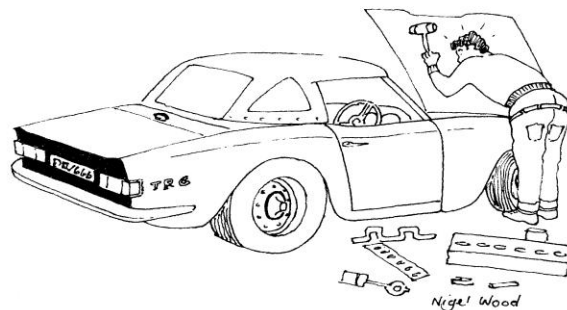
The hood is released by pushing the bottom of the tool to the left causing it to rotate around the middle segment and the top to move to the right and pressing against the hood release lever.

One caution, the positive battery terminal is near the hood release lever. If the rubber insulation is missing from the cable connector, it may be possible to get the tool on the positive terminal. A friend managed to vaporize part of a large screwdriver while attempting to open his hood through this same hole. If you're really concerned about this, you can insulate the end of the tool by wrapping it with electric tape, duct tape, or masking tape. Another option is to turn on the lights and let the battery discharge. Playing the radio while simultaneously blowing the horn accelerates this process but may upset the spouse, the neighbours and the local police.

## Tailpiece.

Thanks to **Nigel Wood**, a Northumbrian member in the Cramlington area who kindly sent this contribution for your entertainment.

**P.S.** If you have anything you can send about TRs, a TR tip, a TR picture, a one liner of where you've been in the TR, or a special tool you found useful, please send them to Paul or myself. Any information is useful for the Newsletter or Social Scene reports.



".....maybe I should have bought a Ford Mondeo, married Betty and had the six kids?!"

John Scarr

---

**Events Co-ordinator**  
**Barry Thomas 0191**

**Group Leader**  
**John Scarr 0191 5843366**  
e-mail; [j.scarr@talk21.com](mailto:j.scarr@talk21.com)

**Treasurer**  
**Tom Smith 0191 274145**

**Technical Adviser**  
**Bryan Archer**  
**01661 881705**

**Web Author**  
**Sean Tindle**  
**0191 5420108**  
[seantindletr@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:seantindletr@hotmail.co.uk)

**Reporter and Photographer**  
**Paul Anderson**  
**0191 4821016**