



1969 TR5, missing was fresh styling to match the new engine and its more "manly" character.

Source: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/91/1969.triumph.tr5.inside.jpg>

removable fabric section over the driver and passenger's heads that preceded by five years the Porsche 911/912 'Targa', which has since become a generic name for this style of top.

The TR5 was produced in quite small numbers when compared with the later TR6 model with just 2,947 units produced. Of these, 1,161 were destined for the U.K. market and the remainder in LHD format going to France, Belgium and Germany. In a similar period, 8,484 TR250s were built in LHD format for the U.S market. **RAGTOP**

References

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- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triumph_TR5
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of 111 bhp (81 kW). The TR250 took 10.6 seconds to get to 60 mph (97 km/h) and had a top speed of 110mph (176km/h). As it turned out, the TR250 offered no performance gains over its externally identical but four-cylinder predecessor. However the power was delivered more smoothly and the occupants benefited from a more civilised interior and the extra torque from the six cylinder improved drivability at low speeds in the intermediate gears. The

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units using the twin-carburettor engine rather than fuel injection. Standard equipment in the TR5/250 models included servo-assisted front disc brakes, independent rear suspension, rack and pinion steering and a four speed gearbox. The available optional extras included overdrive, wire wheels and a hard top with detachable roof panel – known as the 'Surrey Top'. The Surrey Top came with a rigid rear section including the rear window and

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The short production run for the TR5/250 gave Triumph time to complete the new TR6 project, being designed this time by Karmann in Germany, due to the Michelotti studio being too busy to take on the challenge. The TR6 essentially received a new front and rear section with the centre section still being the old TR4/5. The TR6 was released in 1968 with the North American market



TR250 with Surrey Top removed.

marque my words

DAVE & MAGGIE'S TRANS-ATLANTIC ADVENTURES

BY MAGGIE & DAVE SIMS - TR5 & TR250 MARQUE COORDINATOR

We both grew up in the northeast of England, my family in small towns in Lincolnshire then Yorkshire and Maggie on a farm in East Yorkshire. We both enjoyed a very rural lifestyle as kids and owning a car was pretty much a necessity, particularly for a "lad" if he wanted to attract a "bird", as there was little in the way of public transport. A bicycle was the usual alternative and that was not particularly conducive to romantic interludes! My car ownership history had started with a Morris Minor (beloved transport of the District Nurse all over the UK) as soon as I was old enough to get a licence. This was replaced with a Morris 1000 convertible, which I immediately "upgraded" with a huge engine and giant wheels/tires. I drove this with the roof down almost permanently – only a really heavy downpour (surprisingly rare considering this was England) or a particularly cold night would dictate a need for a roof. It was unfortunate I had chosen to leave the roof up on a particularly windy day when a large 18-wheeler passing in the opposite direction, on a narrow road, blew my roof right off and into a nearby field!

After I drove "Morry Thou" into the ground I acquired a Wolseley 1500 from a friend which, while reliable, was remarkably staid for a young man with a love of speed. I remember it clearly – 4 July 1975 - the day that my Triumph adventures started. Maggie and I were still living in England in Goole, a small town not far from where we grew up. We had been married for about a year and had started looking for



Dave's fabulously restored 1968 TR250

something a bit more... well, faster... than the Wolseley. I had seen the ad in the 'Motoring News' – a dark blue 1968 TR5 PI for sale in Bedford. The price was right, it was a convertible (which was very important) and it sounded perfect. So we drove down after work one evening, a trip of about 80 miles – quite a journey in those days in Britain. I loved the car on sight and after a test drive and some half-hearted dicking we became the proud owners. Completing the paperwork would take several days so the seller very kindly offered to deliver the car to us once everything was finalized. We waited anxiously for UMP 474 F (CP1048E) to arrive and I am pleased to be able to report that it ran very well, making it all the way to the end of our driveway before breaking down! Not one whit deterred we pushed and shoved it up the large ramp (due to an unfinished city road – a long story for another time!) on to the drive and proceeded to admire it from every angle



Dave and Maggie's 1968 TR5

until it was too dark to see.

During the following few days I figured out the main problem – it turned out to be the metering unit which was beyond my mechanical capabilities, so a neighbour towed it to the local Parish's BMC dealership for a new unit. Once it was running again we both got huge enjoyment from driving this speed machine. Hurtling along the motorway at around 90 mph there was a definite sense that the front end was just about to lift off the road. However there were still a few problems to sort out. In the early days, after any run of more than a few

Dave leaning on his early TR6 scrapper – haircut was optional in those days



miles, as soon as I slowed down, the engine would cut out. This would typically happen at the first traffic light we encountered and was quite embarrassing. The problem was the electronic fuel pump, housed in the trunk. It would overheat and the temporary fix was to cool it down by applying a cool, damp cloth. A few minutes of this treatment and it would start again. New pumps were expensive and it was some time before we were able to afford to replace it. Meanwhile, a damp chamois kept in a plastic bag in the trunk provided the necessary solution and Maggie became quite proficient at leaping out as soon as we heard the engine falter, to open the trunk and apply the cloth. Looking back, I realize now that the car had obviously had a very hard life and was probably not a particularly smart purchase. But I loved it anyway, it satisfied my craving for top-down motoring in a fast sports car and hey – everything could be fixed with the application of lots of my time and, hopefully, very little money! We did spend a fair amount of time replacing UJs. We ended up replacing all of them over the time I owned the car and, by the end, had developed a very successful procedure but the early experiences were a nightmare. Those things had to be slotted into those darn ball bearings in just exactly the right way. If you happened to hit it right the first time they slid in beautifully but if you missed – gawd, what an awful job it could be. A bit like threading a needle with one's eyes shut.

Another challenge we faced was the frame. Going round a roundabout one day there was an awful "crack" and the front end at one side sort of sagged a bit. The front suspension mounting had parted company with the frame and needed to be welded back together. Fortunately, my brother-in-law was handy with a welder and my father-in-law had all the necessary welding equipment so I was able to get that fixed without too much of a problem. And when the second side fell apart the same way Steve fixed that too! Then there was the time I decided the clutch needed to be replaced. A GT6-owning friend came around to help with the heavy

lifting as the gearbox had to be removed through the inside of the car in order to reach the clutch. Getting the gearbox out was not too bad and I replaced the clutch quite quickly. While we were steering the gearbox back into place, my friend found a useful spot to rest his foot to gain some leverage – it worked well for the gearbox but, unfortunately, the useful spot happened to be the overdrive solenoid which broke right off! Oops! Not to be deterred I quickly reattached it with Superglue – and the overdrive continued to work just fine! I wonder if it is still stuck on that gearbox?

Then there was the rather exciting day when the steering wheel got stuck as we were zipping along a VERY bendy, narrow local road. The wheel jammed on the steering column which made negotiating the bends quite a challenge. Fortunately there was little traffic and I was able to come to a halt, reseal the wheel and, this time, tighten all the bolts properly. Over the next few months I also fixed or replaced the indicators, hood (roof), tachometer, battery, windscreen wiper motor, washer motor, a couple of tyres (with a y) and a whole bunch of other minor things that I retrieved from a scrap early-model TR6 which I bought for the princely sum of £30, initially just for the half-shafts. That proved to be a great investment as I later sold many of the parts separately for a good profit – the engine alone recouped the cost of the entire car!

Eventually, the TR5 became a great little roadster. Remember this was the only vehicle we owned so was our daily driver and general workhorse. It was surprisingly practical. We brought home our weekly groceries in it, transported a whole variety of things from here to there – it was quite roomy with the roof down - and even managed to squeeze my younger brother-in-law (a big farmer's lad) into the "back seat" in order to take him to see JAWS when it

came to the local cinema. Sadly I had to sell it about 18 months after acquiring it as Maggie and I decided to emigrate to Canada.

Once across the Atlantic I spent a long time without a Triumph in my life. For many years

I drove a succession of Datsun/Nissan Z cars (starting with a used 240Z then various new models up to the 300ZX Turbo). Along the way I picked up a 1972 Porsche 911 which provided me with a lot of fun until it got to the point of needing extensive TLC. New Porsche models followed the Nissans and I was quite happy until BCD in September 2010. At that time we were just a month from retirement and looking forward to much more free time to devote to hobbies. Seeing all those great LBCs awakened some long-suppressed ambitions and so the following February, after some helpful advice from Tush and others at TTC, I acquired a Signal Red 1968 TR250 from Drake's British Motors in Kelowna. Len Drake had found it in West Texas so the frame had not been exposed to a damp, corroding climate. The car is original in every detail and with the rare Surrey top. It was delivered in April and I impatiently awaited some decent weather so I could try 'er out. After a couple of short jaunts just to check everything out Maggie and I set off for a pleasant half-day's journey along local byways. We got about 5 miles before the engine started to sputter and then cut out. Hmmmm, I thought. Probably nothing – the car had, after all, been sitting idle for years so a few hiccups were to be expected. After a few minutes, the engine started easily so we carried on... until the same thing recurred a few miles further on. This on-again-off-again continued for several more miles and I could see absolutely nothing wrong. Eventually we turned around and staggered towards home getting within about 5 miles of the house before it finally died permanently. Thank goodness for CAA!

After several frustrating days of checking things over and replacing the fuel pump and the coil to no effect I removed the entire fuel line from the gas tank to

The TR250 on its first major outing - the Around Georgian Bay trip 2011



the fuel pump and had it blown out with a compressed air pump. Initially there was virtually no air flow through the pipe then suddenly out popped a huge lump of wadded up material. No wonder the fuel flow was restricted! This solved the immediate problem so we were able to enjoy driving our new toy through the summer of 2011. The TTC's Around Georgian Bay trip was a delight – once we figured out how to properly attach the rather complicated soft roof for the Surrey top - and we also made day trips around our local area. We took part in the 3rd annual Brits on the Lake (or was that Brits IN the Lake??) in Port Perry, in the rain as usual, and finished our summer at BCD. This first season of driving, while a pleasure, had also brought to light a number of issues which were a little more than I felt equipped to deal with so late in the year I took her in to John Keene at Cheshire Motors in Mississauga where she was fitted with a new clutch (to replace the rather challenging, either on-or-off version she came with) and to try to resolve the flaky overdrive. The overdrive proved the most frustrating issue and John pretty much rebuilt the entire thing before it started working consistently. I had thought the UJs might also need replacing (not a task I wanted to face again after all those aggravations with the TR5) as they sounded very clunky, but John

assured me they were in good shape and the smoother shifts possible with the new clutch seem to have silenced the clunks. The exceedingly mild winter we enjoyed here through 2011/2012 meant I was able to get her back on the road in March and we have enjoyed a number of local drives so far this year.

As Ancaster Flea Market day approached I was on the lookout for hood bolts. I was missing two (one at each side) and although not critical were still necessary to meet original specs. I couldn't find them there but was able to source them a few days later. One bolt slipped in easily and I started on the second side. No joy. No matter how hard I and a variety of helpful assistants tried the bolt holes would not properly line up. The next approach was to remove the first one and see if I could attach them in the opposite order. To my delight, the problematic bolt now went in smoothly and I quickly tightened it up. As I moved over to try the other side I glanced at the outside of the hood and my heart sank... the bolt must have been too long for it had dented the hood from the underside, pushing the skin outwards and cracking all the paint. Oh darn (or words to that effect!) I thought. Needless to say I was much more wary with the second bolt but that one was a good fit. So I had to get the damage fixed which meant the entire

hood had to be repainted – the damage included the distinctive hood stripe as well as the main paint.

Shortly after this we participated in Spring Fling at Fern Resort in Orillia which was a most entertaining weekend. The Canadian Invasion Classic to the Finger Lakes area of New York State was next up and we were greatly looking forward to that. It was agreed that we would all meet in Burlington to drive in convoy to the border. Just before setting off, I went to fill up with gas and on the way home the engine started stuttering and misfiring quite badly. Probably dirty gas or some stirred up sediment... but with absolutely no time left to check anything out, and a co-driver who refused to be, and I quote, "about a thousand miles from home with a broken car"... we ended up taking the Porsche instead. Still a fun weekend but not quite the same (well... except for the laps around Watkins Glen!!) as if we had been in the TR. Upon our return a new fuel filter solved the engine problem and now we are ready for whatever new adventures are in the offing.

Having been fortunate enough to own both versions of this car – the TR5 fuel injection in England and the TR250 with standard carburetors here – it is possible to make a first-hand comparison. The TR5, with fuel injection, was unquestionably faster. It developed more BHP (150 versus 104 in the 250) and had a higher top speed but as it did not meet the then-current US emissions standards it could not be sold in North America, hence the TR250 which was identical in looks. From a driving perspective there is not much difference other than the actual horsepower. I think it is interesting to note that, while the body panels on my 7-year old TR5, which had lived in the damp atmosphere of Britain, were already starting to show signs of rust and corrosion, the panels on my 44-year old TR250 have no rust whatsoever thanks to the very dry, salt-free climate of its long-time home in Texas.

So, here we are, in good running order, with many weeks of beautiful summer weather beckoning us to the open road – let the adventures continue. **RAGTOP**