

# RAGTOPS & ROADSTERS

## BRITISH AUTOMOBILES

# SHOP TALK

AUTUMN 2005 Vol 12- Issue 2

## NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR OLDE CARS

I hope that you all enjoyed the opportunity to drive your cars this summer - I've seen many of you with your cars at the shows and events around the area!

I've made many friends during my years of participation in the old car hobby. I enjoy the chance to meet new people when we get together at different events to enjoy our cars and each other's company.

One of the ways I keep in touch with the many diverse members of the British Car Community is with this newsletter. In the ten years since I produced the first newsletter, the Internet has grown to become a major form of communication in today's world.

In a move that we hope will offer more convenience for you in the future, we would like to provide the newsletter by e-mail.

The newsletter will continue to be filled with useful and entertaining information about our collector cars and the events that we participate in with them. Our annual "Calendar of Events", a compilation of the many British Car Club shows and driving



events, will still be featured every spring.

Using the enclosed instructions on pages 5 and 6, you will be able to subscribe to the new electronic version of the newsletter. We will continue to offer a printed version as

well if you so desire.

Since I started the business, we at R&R have always strived to keep pace with the needs and desires of our clients as well as the changing face of technology. Providing "SHOP TALK" by e-mail is just one of the many ways we give back to the hobby and the people who enjoy their classic cars.

Sincerely,

**WINTER IS FAST APPROACHING.  
SCHEDULE YOUR CAR FOR  
SERVICE TODAY!  
CALL 215-257-1202**

# EXTERIOR PAINT & INTERIOR RESTORATION / RECONDITIONING CONSIDERATIONS

When an enthusiast approaches us about restoring his or her favorite classic automobile, we want to understand exactly what the final objective is for them and for their car. At the start of the job we enter into considerable discussions, which continue until the car is completed. We then maintain contact as they enjoy their “new” automobile.

The exterior paint and interior finish are the most visible aspects of our effort and the part of the car that people experience directly every time they use it. It is vitally important that we understand what the owner wants in these areas and that they know what the job is going to cost.

Restoration of the mechanical features is relatively straightforward, but with the interior and the exterior there are many choices. Repainting a car can be as simple as spraying color on the existing surface, or as complex as a “bare metal refinish” with multiple layers of color, pearl or metallic paints and clear finishes buffed to a high gloss. All the exterior trim also needs to be addressed. Likewise, the interior involves more than just the upholstery and carpets.

To make communication more efficient, we have created a checklist that addresses many of the different factors that are involved in these two very subjective areas. In order to provide the client with a responsive evaluation, we ask them to review these checklists and note the items that they want us to consider as we evaluate the car for restoration. Since many of the systems in a car are related, we need to continue discussions after the checklist is reviewed. For example, much of the dashboard is linked into the electrical system as well as the heating and cooling systems.

These lists serve as a starting point in the ongoing process that results in the close collaboration between the restorer and the owner to produce a very special collector car.



**RAGTOPS & ROADSTERS**  
**PAINT EFFORT CHECKLIST**

QUALITY OF PAINT - levels of effort for "same color" exterior repaint. Exterior only (lids and doors closed), prices indicated are only a guide to help with your decision.

- Budget - \$1000-\$3000
- Nice - \$3000-\$5000
- Fine - \$5000-\$10000
- Show - \$10000+

As the final finish gets better, more effort is needed and the cost increases. These items contribute to a better finish.

- number of coats of primer, color, clear
- sanding between coats
- wet sanding and polishing
- difficulty with metallics, candys, pearls

FACTORS BELOW AFFECT (ADD TO) THE COSTS LISTED ABOVE. Check any that you may want us to consider.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Color (select)  Stock or  Custom mix
- Change from current color
- 2-tone \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Special finish \_\_\_\_\_
- Pin-stripes \_\_\_\_\_
- Remove existing paint

**Paint Application to Additional Surfaces**

- Inner fenders (wheel wells)
- Undercarriage
- Interior complete
- Interior of car only where it matches the exterior color and is visible (e.g. door edges, dash, etc.)
- Dash panel face (if painted)
- Gutter rails (around bonnet and trunk openings)
- Edges of bonnet and trunk lids
- Underside of bonnet
- Engine compartment
  - remove components
  - paint firewall
  - paint inner fenders, radiator, components, etc.
- Underside of trunk lid
- Trunk interior

**Exterior Trim Removal**

- Complete removal of all unpainted parts
- Partial - easily removed items on most cars: bumpers, lights, grille, badges (all cars are different)
- Replacement of seals and gaskets (doors, lids, lights, etc.)
- Replacement
- Rechroming
- Refinishing of trim items (bumpers, grille, letters /badges, windscreen, lights, lamps, lenses, fender beading, etc.)

**RAGTOPS & ROADSTERS**  
**INTERIOR EFFORT CHECKLIST**

	Recondition*	Replace/Rebuild*
Seat covers	___	___
Seat cushions	___	___
Seat frames	___	___
Panel set	___	___
Doors only (when available)	___	___
Upholstery Materials:		
___ Vinyl		
___ Leather		
___ Original (oe) style (oe - original equipment)		
___ Custom - colors, patterns		
Color _____		

	Recondition*	Replace/Rebuild*
Carpet set	___	___
Color _____		
Materials:		
___ OE		
___ Wool		
___ Nylon		

	Recondition*	Replace/Rebuild*
Trim items, interior:		
Brightwork (door handles, etc.)	___	___
Windscreen surround	___	___
Seals	___	___
Dash		
Top	___	___
Face	___	___
Replace (wood)	___	___
Steering wheel	___	___
Sun visors	___	___
Mirror	___	___
Gauges (discussion needed)	___	___
Switches	___	___
Controls	___	___
Shifter & Knob	___	___
Trim	___	___
Glovebox	___	___
Radio, speakers	___	___
Cockpit surround	___	___
Handbrake handle	___	___
Heater / AC		
Vents, grilles, louvers, ducts	___	___

\*Recondition - Clean, polish

\*Rebuild - Dismantle, replace wear items, paint, re-plate

# BIG NEWS FOR BRITISH CARS

## Winter is Service Time!

Winter is the perfect time to have the skilled, experienced and capable team at Ragtops & Roadsters service your car to eliminate those petty annoyances that have bothered you throughout the year. It's an ideal opportunity to have the front suspension rebuilt or have that creeping rust dealt with before it becomes a more serious problem.

## Fix it Now and Enjoy it in the Spring and Summer!

A good running car needs regular maintenance. In the owner's manuals you will find several pages of regular maintenance service that should be performed to keep the car running and driving its best. Having the maintenance done during the winter when your car would otherwise be sitting in the garage will allow you to enjoy your car throughout the driving season. An oil change and full chassis lubrication are only the beginning of a more enjoyable driving season.

## Improvements for Comfort and Safety!

We all love our LBCs, but there are times when just a little enhancement would make it so much more enjoyable. Minor changes to our "vintage chassis" such as better foam in the seats or the addition of seat belts can improve comfort and safety. Electrical changes such as better lights in the dash instruments, brighter turn-signal and brake lights or the addition of a high-mounted third brake light can do much to ease concerns in modern traffic.

## Performance Upgrades!

You may consider more serious efforts such as accurate steering, better handling, or more modern performance from the original engine. The installation of a supercharger or turbo-charger can add visual impact as well as performance. Enjoy those driving events and tours by adding an overdrive, a modern 5-speed gearbox, or a different rear axle ratio.

## Reward Yourself!

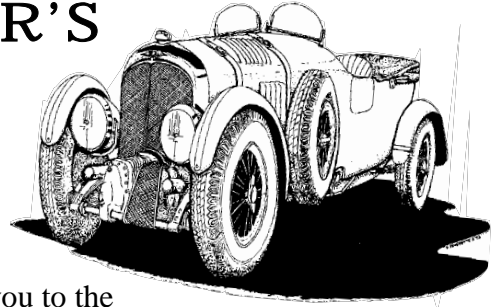
Our clients are all individuals, yet you all have something in common: you all admire and enjoy significant collector cars. Now is the time to reward yourself with your favorite special automobile. Let Ragtops & Roadsters work with you towards obtaining that goal of experiencing the joy of a fine vintage automobile.

**CALL TODAY FOR AN APPOINTMENT!**

**215-257-1202**

***BRITISH CAR WEEK IS MAY 27TH THROUGH JUNE 4, 2006***

# RECEIVE RAGTOPS & ROADSTER'S "SHOP TALK" NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL



Subscribe to Shop Talk by e-mail and you will be notified by e-mail when the each issue is available. We will e-mail you a link to direct you to the newsletter on our website.

There are several easy ways for you to let us know that you would like to continue to receive the newsletter in the modern electronic version or in the original "vintage" printed version.

- \* Send an e-mail to <info@ragtops.com> Please include the information below so that we can update our database.
- \* Fill out the form below and fax it to 215-257-2688
- \* Fill out the form below, fold it, stamp it and drop it in the mail.
- \* Call Dave at 215-257-1202 and give him the information over the phone.
- \* Drive your British Car to Ragtops & Roadsters, tour the shop, see all the cars on display and the jobs in process and give us your information in person!

WE RESPECT YOUR PRIVACY. THIS INFORMATION WILL NEVER BE SHARED WITH ANYONE WITHOUT YOUR PERMISSION.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please send newsletter as  e-mail  printed version

COLLECTOR CARS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO RECEIVE OUR NEWSLETTER IN THE FUTURE, DO NOT RESPOND!  
IF WE DON'T RECEIVE AN UPDATED STREET OR E-MAIL ADDRESS WE WILL  
REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM OUR MAILING LIST.**

***The ten commandments of a peaceful life with cars***

1. Thou shalt not read thy paper on company time, lest thy employer make it impossible to continue thy car payments.
2. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's car nor his garage, nor his battery charger.
3. Thou shalt not store thy cars out-of-doors except for the wife's Toyota.
4. Thou shalt not deceive thy wife into thinking that thee is taking her for a romantic Sunday drive when indeed thou art going out to look at another car.
5. Thou shalt not love thy cars more than thy wife and children.

continued below

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PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

**RAGTOPS & ROADSTERS**  
BRITISH AUTOMOBILES

203 SOUTH FOURTH STREET  
PERKASIE, PA 18944

FOLD HERE

6. Thou shalt not despise thy neighbour's Skoda, nor his Lada, nor even his 74 Capri.
7. Thou shalt not tell thy spouse the entire cost of thy latest restoration, at least not all at the same time.
8. Thou shalt not promise thy wife a new addition for the house and then use it to store cars.
9. Thou shalt not allow thy sons nor thy daughters to get married during the car show season.
10. Thou shalt not buy thy wife a floor jack for Christmas.

# THE FIRST MOPS/DVT CHALLENGE

by Dave Hutchison

It was a picture perfect day; very few clouds in the sky, a cool breeze. You know, the kind of day that you wish all weekends were made of. Now add the sweet smell of exhaust and Castrol brake fluid and it can't get better than that! At a local church in Carversville, PA, twenty-five Morgan and Triumph Teams gathered to have a weekend of fun.



First, a little history. The local Morgan Club, Morgans of Philadelphia (MOPS) has, with much success, run a driving event since the early nineties called the Moggie Miglia. This event was named after the Mille Miglia held in Italy, but instead of being 1000 miles, here it is designed to run as a multi-stage event on a hundred mile course. Last spring, Tony Souza of MOPS approached The Delaware Valley Triumphs to see if they were interested in running a combined driving event with both the Morgans and the Triumphs. Driving events are very well attended, as any excuse to head out on the open road in a British Sports Car is always welcomed!

Now back to the event. The countryside was buzzing with the sound of LBCs as all the teams met in Carversville at 8:00AM. Some entrants came from as far away as Connecticut and stayed the night before in local B&Bs. While those who attended drank coffee in the church reception room, Mike Engard of Ragtops & Roadsters was scrutinizing the cars in a '15 Minute Concours'. All cars received a 1, 2 or 3 depending on presentation. This was the first of the five stages of competition throughout the day.

The second stage was a drive through an "adjustable gate" set as narrowly as possible without touching the car, with the driver calling out the width adjustment from the driver's seat 50 feet away.

*(Continued on page 8)*

(Continued from page 7)

With two of the five stages complete all the cars headed out of Carversville on the odometer check. The participants wound their way over to Tincum Park along the Delaware River to stage for the Regularity Run.

Now for the sprint, sometimes known as an autocross. Located in the large firehouse parking lot of the Goodwill Volunteer Fire Company, a decent size loop was marked off with cones. The drivers were not allowed to walk the course, just watch from their cars. The Morgans were steady and consistent.

Out of the firehouse parking lot and right back across the Delaware River to the Riverton Hotel for lunch. Morgans and Triumphs filled the parking lot with multi-coloured cars as many people stopped to ask what was going on.



The drivers next found their way to the weighing station at the Johnsville Farm & Garden center, guessed the weight of the car and passengers, proceeded out towards the final checkpoint and then returned to meet at the Stoudsmoor Country Inn. It should be reported that no Morgan Teams were spotted working on their cars; however, three Triumph Teams were dealing with loose fan blades, bad ignition rotors, and extra parts found inside a rear brake drum! After a quick roadside rescue we all gathered for a wonderful dinner and awards ceremony.

Both Morgan Teams and Triumph Teams won their share of awards, with First Place overall in the First Morgan / Triumph 2005 Challenge was earned by Sherry and Dan Tinsman! Congratulations to both Sherry and Dan for a great job!

Sunday morning (Father's Day) the participants enjoyed each other's company at breakfast. There were only minor problems, but due to the wonders of cell phones, the stocking of TR 6 ignition rotors at Ragtops & Roadsters, and a great friend, Steve Grimsley (an MG guy), all the participants were able to make their way homeward. Several teams caravanned down to the Eastern Concours of the US at the new location on the Stabler Campus in Bethlehem. The concours had many fine automobiles on display and was a great way to cap off the weekend.

*Photos by Mike Wolf and DVT Dave*

* * * * *		* * * * *
* * * * *	Roses are red,	* * * * *
* * * * *	Brit cars are green.	* * * * *
* * * * *	Keep telling yourself,	* * * * *
* * * * *	It's just a machine!	* * * * *
* * * * *		* * * * *

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# 1935 MORRIS 10/4

In August 2004, Karen and Warren Keyser of Gettysburg, PA contacted us. They had an old Morris and wanted to know if we knew someone who would be interested in their car. We decided that we were interested in the car as a company vehicle. Dave Hutchison retrieved the car from their garage and within an hour of getting it to Ragtops & Roadsters we had the car running and driving!

William Morris founded Morris Motors, Ltd. in 1912 and in 1921 hired Cecil Kimber to be Sales Manager. In 1924 Kimber went on to found MG (Morris Garages) and make high-performance sports cars, and Morris continued to make more pedestrian cars. In August of 1932 they made the first of almost 150,000 of the Morris 10/4 (10 RAC horsepower / 4 seats). In 1935 it had a 1293 cc side-valve four-cylinder engine with a top speed of 61 miles per hour and 32 miles per gallon. It was available as a saloon, a coupe, a van and a two-seater. This one is a Series II fixed head saloon.



We had to fix several items on the car to be able to really use it. The rubber boots on the brake cylinders were literally dripping off and the fuel system was completely clogged up. We rebuilt all the brakes, cleaned out the fuel system and put new tires on the car.

The old “pear-shaped shocks” were not working at all. We had joined the Morris Register in England when we got the car, and they offered rebuilt shock absorbers. After looking at the cost along with shipping the cores to and from the UK, we choose a different solution. We made up brackets that were fitted to the original mounting holes and installed tube shocks from a Triumph: TR-3 in the front and TR-6 in the rear. This conversion has proven effective in controlling the rather primitive ride of this 70-year-old car.

To be able to use the car on the road there were a few safety modifications made. The semaphore trafficators worked, but most people have no idea what the funny thing sticking out of the side of the car means. We added blinking turn signal lamps front and rear as well as a third high-mounted brake light. We also added lap-type seat belts for the front and rear seats.

We’ve put over 500 miles on the car and it’s really a lot of fun. I’ve taken it to two car shows: the Delaware Valley Triumph’s show “Brits are Back” at Hope Lodge in Fort Washington and the Philadelphia MG Club’s “Brits at the Village” at Peddler’s Village in Lahaska. The Morris even won an award! We’ve also participated in driving events with the Antique Automobile Club of America and the Classic Car Club of America.

The only other work planned at this time is to fix the worn and broken front seats. They still have what appears to be the original blue upholstery, so repairs will be done to maintain the original appearance while making them functional. There are no plans to restore the car, but one never knows what the future will bring!

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# RAGTOPS & ROADSTERS 12TH ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE MAY 20, 2006 SATURDAY 9AM TO 4PM

