



STAG NEWS

Magazine of the Triumph Stag Club USA
Summer 2021 | Issue 112



The 1971 New York International Auto Show

Triumph Stag Club USA

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Submissions should preferably be non-formatted MS Word documents. Articles of 1,500-2,000 words are preferable but larger submissions can be accommodated. The Editor reserves the right to make changes to any submission for layout purposes. Photographs or diagrams should be sent separately as high-definition JPG files (>4000KB) with appropriate cut-line/caption descriptions. The author should provide a short biography. Send by e-mail to the Editor ahead of the deadline dates of March 1, June 1, September 1 and December 1 for inclusion in a future issue.

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Our website URL is: tscusa.org

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NEW MEMBERS
Since Spring Issue #111

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Patrick Carey, Concord, MA

Kevin Duffy, Wake Forest, NC (Rejoined

from 06/2014)

Ehud Giloh, Netanya, Israel (Rejoined

from 05/2016)

Steve Jone, Sydney, Australia

Richard Kilsby, Sarasota, FL

Michael Mack, Victor, NY (Rejoined from

10/2020)

Marc McGowan, Titusville, FL

Phillip Rabottini, La Crescenta, CA

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David Roberts, Otis, MA (Rejoined from

04/2016)

Randall Schessler, San Antonio, TX

Keith Stewart, London, ON, Canada

Simon Swain, Riverview, FL

Steve Veasart, Germantown, TN

Carl Webeck, Penfield, NY

Peter Whyte, Sonoma, CA (Rejoined

from 08/2019)

Robert Yeomans, Hudson, OH (Re-

joined from 07/2020)

STAG ARTICLES WANTED!

Producing a magazine dedicated to a single classic car model issue after issue, as we do at Stag News, can be challenging. In order to keep providing interesting articles and stories, we need to hear from more of our membership. Thanks to those who have already stepped up to the plate and prepared a once off submission or have become regular contributors.

Please consider sending us an illustrated article about your Triumph Stags; the hunt for a suitable model, the restoration projects completed or underway, the modifications you have made, the difficulties faced, why you still love them, the outings and trips you take, the shows and events that you attend, the friends and associates with whom you share this passion.

We would like to hear from members in as many different States and Provinces (and internationally) as possible in order to keep the content regionally balanced.

Renew your membership ON-LINE at
www.tscusa.org/join.asp

We Need Volunteers!

*Web/Social Media | Stag News |
Membership Director/Treasurer*

Contact Michael Coffey or Terence McKillen
for further details

DEADLINE

The deadline for the next issue of

STAG NEWS is:

Sep. 1, 2021

To submit material for publication
refer to details on inside front cover

On the Cover

Michael Link's 1973
Stag at the Foxen Ranch
House, Santa Barbara,
CA

Photo: Michael Link



Like to have your photo on the front cover? Send high resolution JPG files to the Editor at Publisher@TSCUSA.org

Summer time and the livin' is easy

Ella Fitzgerald (1968)

I don't know what it has been like where you live, but here in southern Ontario we have just exited from a prolonged Stay-at-Home order in an attempt to drive down the COVID variant spread, particularly the Delta variety. During which time one couldn't use one's Triumph Stag with a clear conscience, despite the lovely spring weather. Many British car shows remain cancelled for this year, including the Bronte Stag Weekend. As the summer progresses and the vaccination numbers reach the levels required for community immunity, hopefully some of us might get to attend a show or two where we might display our Triumph Stags in this 50th anniversary year of its North American debut.

In this issue Terry Hunt of Wilmington, DE explains how to replace the studs on the Stag's trailing arms while Peter Robinson, Membership Secretary & Registrar of the Stag Owners Club in the UK continues his historical assessment of the Stag's introduction to the USA market 50 years ago with a review of the first full-format brochure produced by Triumph in America. Cupertino, CA-based Sujit Roy has pondered for the past 22 years as to when the side marker light lenses changed from the early type to the later type, while I have taken a look at the New York International Auto Show of 1971 at which the Stag had its national debut to the U.S. market. Sarasota, FL-based Henri Van Triest provides an alternative method of refurbishing control panel knobs and last but not least, Glenn Roy of Beacon, NY has been working hard during the COVID era on a prototype Surrey Top for his Stag.

Terence McKillen

Top - Glenn Roy's Tahiti blue Stag in Surrey Top mode | Center - Sapphire Blue Stag at the 1971 New York Auto Show | Lower - Terry Hunt's trailing arm stud replacement



Founder's Corner

A slow return to normal

Here we are in mid-summer and still struggling to avoid a COVID contact when and if possible. Thank's to all the doctors and medical practitioners who have brought a reasonable level of reality back in to our lives. I hope that all our club members and families are healthy and awaiting opportunities for Stag touring and gatherings. We should consider outings with appropriate caution and enjoy the summer days in our Stags. Well members, I for one did not expect this isolating coronavirus to continue with the severity that we are experiencing. I hope this newsletter finds you all in good health and enjoying life.

I wish to thank all of you who have taken the time to convey recuperation wishes from my surgery and my wife's recent hip surgery. We are both recovering well and back to almost routine form.

The membership of our club has routinely renewed and many new members have joined as you can see from the list on the inside front cover of this edition. Thank you for your kind words of appreciation for our magazine, Stag News which is produced by our very valued Editor/Publisher, Terence McKillen.

It is nice to hear that we are producing a quality and enjoyable newsletter. I have always felt that a club membership thrives when the club provides them with a feeling of belonging and apparently Terence has continually kept our Stag News in a first class quality category. Great job Terence!

With few and far between classic Triumph gatherings ongoing now or on the immediate horizon, we must continue to keep in contact with each other via all the routine electronic devices available to most of us. Don't hesitate to e-mail, telephone call, text any of our club officers for assistance on restoration guidance. My modest Stagparts USA company here in Pennsylvania has over 3,000 square feet of new and used Stag parts to assist with a project of your undertaking. Let me know if at any time I can be of assistance to you. Best regards and I hope to meet some of you in our Stag travels at a safe time in the near future.

Michael Coffey - Founder

The 1971 New York International Auto Show

by Terence McKillen



ingly, Columbus Circle which is located at the southwest corner of Central Park is the point from which official highway distances from New York City are measured.

What is so special about the 1971 New York International Auto Show, you might ask? Well, it saw for instance, the introduction of the

Ford Pinto, AMC Hornet, Buick Centurion, Dodge Colt, Plymouth Duster, as well as a host of domestic and international model updates.

It was also the show that British Leyland chose to introduce the latest, and final iteration of its successful Jaguar XKE (E-Type) to the North American market. The Series 3 was introduced with a new 5.3 litre V-12 engine, uprated brakes, and standard power steering. Optionally an automatic transmission, wire wheels and air conditioning were available. The V-12 came equipped with four Zenith carburetors, and produced a claimed 272 hp, more torque, and a 0-60 mph acceleration of less than seven seconds. The Series 3 was available as a convertible and 2+2 coupé. Cars for the U.S. market were fitted with large projecting rubber bumper over-riders to meet the 5 mph impact regulations. U.S. models also had side indicator repeats on the front wings.

Although the Series 3 E-Type Jaguar may have been the star of the show, BL also chose to reveal its brand new Triumph Stag Transcontinental Grand Touring model to the American press, dealers, and general public, although the official release date to the American market was supposed to be September 1971. The Triumph Stag was to go head-to-head with

The New York International Auto Show, founded in 1900 as the first automotive exhibition in North America, is an annual event usually held in late March or early April (however, in 2021 it is scheduled to be held in August). The show usually opens on or just before Easter weekend and closes on the first Sunday after Easter, and in 1971, our year of interest, it ran from April 3 to April 11. To set the scene, it was a beautiful spring Saturday morning in NYC on the day the show opened with temperatures pushing 60 degrees F. Lt.

William Calley was awaiting sentencing the following Monday morning for his part in the Mỹ Lai massacre, four years earlier while the Montreal Expos were in town for a game against the NY Mets at Shea Stadium on April 6. Richard Nixon was the 37th President of the U.S. while Edward Heath was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Pierre Trudeau was Canada's 15th Prime Minister.

The NY International Auto Show is now hosted at the Jacob Javits Convention Center but from 1956 to 1987 was held at the New York Coliseum that formerly stood at Columbus Circle in Manhattan. Interest-



the Mercedes 280SL and in a quirky, rotary disc-shaped card chart called the Carparator, BL provided potential American customers a detailed comparison of the Stag not only with the Mercedes Benz but also with the Alfa Romeo 1750 GTV, BMW 2800 CS, Jaguar XKE 2+2, Porsche 911, and Chevrolet Camaro Z-28. In the UK, the comparison also included the Reliant GTE, Toyota Crown 2600, Lancia 2000 Coupé HF, Volvo 1800 ES, Opel Commodore GS Coupé, and Ford Capri 3000 E. The Stag went on to be show cased at the Detroit, Chicago and San Francisco Auto Shows later that year.

The photo showing a general image of the BL stand at the NY show suggests at least four, possibly five Stag models were on the exhibition floor demonstrating that the Stag was to be a 'car for all seasons.' Two are displayed with hard tops affixed, another with soft top erected and one in convertible format. The Sapphire blue convertible took pride of place on the circular dais while the Carmine (?) red Stag with soft top up is in the middle of the Triumph floor area and possibly a Damson red Stag with matching hard top behind that, just under the red BL/Triumph banner. Further to the left, behind the red Stag is the metallic grey Stag with white hardtop sitting on a raised rectangular dais and another possible dark grey (or perhaps a dark green) Stag with matching hardtop sits to the far left. To the right of the latter, and in front of the red Stag, a Triumph V8 engine can be seen in a glass display case.

It is curious that BL chose to display one and possibly two of the cars in colors that were unavailable at the time. Grey wasn't a color option until near the end of the Stag's production run in 1976/77. It is also strange that a non-matching hard top (white) was mated to the grey car. Some observers believe that the grey car may

have originally been white (as its roof color suggests) and BL decided to test public reaction to the grey color for future use. In some of the images the Carmine red car looks distinctly orange, but we believe that is just the effect of the auditorium lighting in conjunction with the likely use of daylight color transparency film indoors.

The model and erstwhile actress helping to show off the Stags, and apparently changing outfits faster than a Stag at full gallop, is believed to be Ms. Suzanne Skillen. She went on to have her movie debut in a 1972 film entitled "Scarecrow in a Garden of Cucumbers," a low-budget musical comedy but seems to have evaporated into thin air thereafter as there is no further record of her on the internet. A newspaper article dated April 4, 1971, shows Ms. Skillen in safari attire with what is likely the red Stag at the NY show, this time with the soft top down.

A screen grab extracted from a contemporary British Pathé newsreel dated April 2, 1971 shows the well-known British actress Diana Rigg of "The Avengers" fame, standing inside the blue Stag at the Triumph stand. Ms. Rigg was in New York City at the time starring as Heloise in the Broadway production of "Abelard and Heloise," from March to May 1971.

Just as I was finishing up this review article, Peter Robinson, Registrar of the Stag Owners Club (UK) unearthed an



Ms. Skillen in safari outfit. Source Peter Robinson



Diana Rigg at NY Show Preview. Source Peter Robinson

obscure newspaper clipping from the Oakland Tribune dated February 25, 1971 indicating that "Leyland Motors of England will host the American preview of their new Jaguar XKE V12 and Triumph Stag on March 25 at Palm Springs. The cars will go on sale April 1."

Apparently, Sir William Lyons gave an address to the press in Palm Springs so it must have been considered a prestigious, if relatively small, car show event probably worthwhile for the important California sports car market; but why just ten days before the official debut of both models in New York? And that is about as much as





Los Angeles Car Show 1971

Leyland Motors of England will host the American preview of their new Jaguar XKE-V12 and Triumph "Stag" March 25 at Palm Springs. The cars will go on sale April 1.




Oakland Tribune, Feb. 25, 1971



is known about the Stag element of the event. There is little published information, and it is generally quoted in most publications that the Stag was released into the United States in either July or September 1971, but we now know that the Stag made its main U.S. debut at the New York International Auto Show on April 4, 1971. Clearly there must have been a stock of Stags in dealerships on both the East and West Coasts by the beginning of April, a good 4-5 months ahead of the originally scheduled introduction date. This has

been confirmed, at least partially, by Glenn Merrell, a former President of TSCUSA as he was working for a Triumph dealership in Philadelphia, PA during the summer and fall of 1970 (a year ahead of the release date), that received a small delivery of LHD Stags (likely European market rather than U.S. Federal) and the cars probably didn't pass into dealership inventory (i.e., available for sale) until later in 1971 until after they were made compliant with all required Federal regulations.

Most of the images used in this article were obtained by *Stag News* in 2005, directly from the late Mike Cook, who had a decades-long career in public relations work with the American arms of Triumph and Jaguar, two marques that would eventually come together under the umbrella of British Leyland. The images were scanned from 35mm slides by former Editor, Wayne Simpson. The newspaper and newsreel images were discovered by Peter Robinson. 

Stud Replacement on Trailing Arms

by Terry Hunt

As I was installing my new CV-jointed diveshfts, I realized that a couple of the stud threads in the trailing arm were weak and I was unable to torque them up to the correct value. This is apparently a common occurrence and the 2-3 times I had taken them apart had not helped. The trailing arms can be re-threaded bigger, but they are a real accurate fit and free-handing them would be difficult, as they need to be exactly perpendicular. There is a way around this however with a Jig that makes sure the drill and tap go in correctly One example is sold in the US by Patton Machine, <http://www.pattonmachine.com> and I purchased one to do the job.

There are a few options here, a Helicoil insert, Keen-ert insert and 3/8" course studs and therefore different versions of the jig according to which solution you are planning. As the 3/8" studs use the smallest size drill, I decided on those with the view to keep as much material in the trailing arm as possible. I purchased the 3/8"

stud version. Next decision was whether to use full 3/8" course/fine studs (available from Goodparts.com) or stepped studs with 3/8" course into the arm and 5/16" fine for the hubs. The 3/8" full studs require that the hub and brake back plate are drilled out to accommodate the larger stud and I did not fancy doing that to my nice new driveshafts, so I decided on the stepped studs. Finding them, however, proved to be a challenge!

There are some specially made sets available in the UK from CCD, the people that make the CV driveshafts, <https://www.classicdrivingdevelopment.co.uk/> but they are well over \$120 plus shipping so I looked around in the U.S. for similar studs and came up short, literally - all the suitable 3/8"-UNC to 5/16"-UNF studs I found were too short. I needed them to be at least 1-3/4" preferably 2" plus they all had 3/8" shoulders which would not work as the shoulder would not allow the 5/16" back plate and hub to sit flush. Eventually,



The Triumph Motorcycle cylinder stud as bought. There is a short section of 3/8" shoulder that needs to be eliminated



The Stud had the 3/8 UNC thread extended down the shoulder and the 3/8" section was shortened down to just under 3/4" (18mm)

I found a stud that I felt may work, a 1-3/4" stud that still had a shoulder but seemed to fit the bill. Additionally, its from a Triumph motorcycle so is still in the family! The stud is a cylinder base stud Part#71-3013 and I found some on e-Bay for under \$4 each. I was able to cut the 3/8" thread further down the shoulder with a die to eliminate that problem but that left the course section of the stud too long so I had to shorten the course section to around 18mm. In the end, the fine portion was just long enough to do the job as long as I did not recess them too far into the arm.

To prepare the trailing arm the rear hubs, driveshafts and brake back plate



Cutting the 3/8" UNC thread into the shoulder. The fine end was locked with 2 good quality grade 8 nuts and held in the vice



The hub and brake backplate were removed, the backplate was placed on a box to support it



The jig mounted on the trailing arm using 3 of the studs

need to be removed. With UJ driveshafts you could probably separate the shaft at the sliding splines and withdraw the hub but with the CV ones I had to take the driveshaft out complete, so needed to loosen the hub/driveshaft nut before jacking it up and loosen the driveshaft flange nuts before removing the brake drum.

The brake back plate was supported on a box after disconnecting the hand-brake cable and there was enough flex to allow that without disconnecting the brake line. Then the surface of the trailing arm was cleaned up so it was nice and fresh.

The actual re-drilling and tapping went well, the Patton jig has two sets of holes for the studs, one 5/16" the other 3/8" so you can use it for either stud. You secure the jig with three of the studs and work on the other three. Once those are done, you swap over and work on the other three.

The instructions say to measure the depth of the holes before drilling to establish how far to drill and mark the drill, but I found that when you hit the bottom of the hole it is pretty obvious as the threaded portion is alarmingly easy to drill. A drill-sized insert is used to keep things square and then another tap-sized insert is used to cut the thread. With liberal amounts of cutting fluid, the bottoming type of tap cuts easily. The only thing I found was to remove the tap when it stiffens up a little and blow out the swarf. This allows you to get a turn or two more and makes sure that you tap right to the bottom of the hole. As I was using stepped studs, I also countersunk the holes a little to make sure that what was left of the shoulder was not sitting proud. Once these three were done the studs were installed and then the jig was repositioned on the new studs and the other three were drilled and tapped.

I had shortened the course section of the studs but some of the lengths needed adjusting as I fitted them. I wanted the studs to go in as far as possible with the shoulders recessed but not too far so as to ensure that the fine section left protruding was enough to take the lock-nuts. Once I was happy, I used thread lock to install the studs as I feel this will not only secure them but give some buffer between the dissimilar metals. Once all studs were installed the back plate and driveshaft hub were slipped over the studs and the lock-nuts tightened. No soft ones now!



The hole was drilled out bigger using the special drill sized insert



Then it was tapped out using the tap sized insert



Swarf prevents the tap bottoming so it was blown out with air and the tap ran in again



The new threads were countersunk a little to ensure that any shoulder left does not interfere with the hub/backplate

The First Full-Format USA Stag Brochure

by Peter Robinson

Registrar Stag Owners Club (UK)

This time I will start with the full-format brochure which was produced by Triumph in America for 'serious' sales prospects. The brochure runs to 16 full-colour pages within a cream card cover and is presented with an inner tissue insert featuring a brief introduction to the car with a reference to it being 'a monarch of the road'. This title page is punctuated by a mono reproduction of Landseer's 'Monarch of The Glen'. The tissue is bound into the brochure and extends to become, in effect, the final page of the brochure.

The front cover is in slightly ribbed cardboard featuring a gold printed line drawn stag (the animal that is) with a gold band round the outside of the cover. In line with the British advertising literature, the phrase 'Stag by Triumph' is embossed into the cover.

The rear cover is in the same slightly ribbed cardboard with the British Leyland logo embossed in the bottom left-hand corner.

The brochure is lavishly presented with photographs of two Stags. The automatic saffron car with black interior is LD2 LBW i.e., the second non-prototype Stag built. Unfortunately, the identity of the manual white car with black interior is currently unknown. The car is obviously an early LHD Federal car (that's the term commonly used for cars made for the American market) and interestingly it is a manual 4-speed car without overdrive. It may well be the same car which was used for the photo of the model on the New York waterfront which I included in an earlier article.

I believe that the photographs were taken locally to the British Leyland headquarters in Leonia, New Jersey. The prose accompanying the photographs is suitably uplifting – exactly as one would expect from a company trying to market their 'best car ever' to the American public. We do not have the space to present all the pages in a fully readable format, but it is available in high quality on the Stag Owners Club (UK) website. Look under The Car and Sales Literature section.

A further interesting thing to look out



for is that the photograph of the engine bay of LD2 LBW shows the right-hand cam cover to be presented 'upside down' i.e., the 'Triumph' is readable from the left hand side of the car and not from the side nearest to an observer

The brochure clearly states that the compression ratio of the engine is 8.8:1 and that the power output is 145bhp.

Stag in The Showrooms of America

Having presented Stag to the major newspapers and to the BL dealers in Palm Springs in March and then to the public at the New York Show in early April, how did the roll out go?

It is a popular misconception that Stag was not available in the USA until the second half of 1971, but the newspaper adverts which I have seen indicate that cars were arriving in showrooms. [Former TSCUSA Chairman Glenn Merrell has previously reported Stags being delivered in late summer of 1970 to dealers in NYC and PA- Ed.]

The first advert I have found is dated 15th April and is for Thomas Lincoln-Mercury-Triumph at South Avenue, Westfield, NJ. By 6th May, the advert had been amended to show that they had 'stock for immediate delivery'. In San Antonio, CA, Alamo Sports Cars was advertising on 7th May that they had showroom stock available.

This pattern continues through May

and into June, and it continues alongside the various local newspapers reporting that 'Triumph is introducing a new sports car' – as if this news was gradually fanning out across the USA. I know that the quick acting Internet had not been invented at this point, but surely the news released in late March/early April should have been reported much sooner than two months later?

The Price

There has been some previous difficulty in ascertaining the actual price of Stag when it was released in the USA but the newspaper articles that I have seen show that as a convertible the price was quoted as \$5,525 (POE) and with the hard top \$5,773 (POE). Presumably, this means 'at Port of Entry' i.e., with local taxes to be added. It is interesting to compare this with the price of the new Series 3 E-type Jaguar, which is quoted as \$6,950 (POE) for the convertible and \$7,345 (POE) for the 2+2. That represents a markup of approximately 25% on the Stag price.

My question would be whether that is a reasonable differential within which to expect to sell that many Stags? After all, the E-type had an enormous reputation and not just a V8 engine but a 5 litre V12 which, in terms of man-appeal desirability for those with cash to burn, surely placed it in a completely different category. If the idea was for Jaguar to be offered at a price



Rose Tree Motor Club Spring Invitational Auto Rally. This was apparently a 120-mile event that drew 108 entries.

The car was campaigned for the year with Renee and either Fred Hurlburt or her husband John and it did very well. If anyone is further interested, then they will find reports of their progress in the TSOA (Triumph Sporting Owners Association) magazines which are available to view on the VTR (Vintage Triumph Register) website – but you will have to do a bit of Googling to find them. If you manage to get yourselves to the June 1971 edition, you will find the reports of 'Stag Matters'.

An Appeal

Working from the UK, my research is somewhat limited and I would extend a warm welcome to anyone in the USA who can add to my current findings. I am particularly interested in hearing about real owner experiences from 1971 and 1972 or from people who worked in BL dealerships at the time. E-mail now makes global contact much easier than ten or so years ago and you can reach me through registrar@stag.org.uk.

First published in the SOC (UK) magazine, issue 460, May 2021 by kind permission of Editor, Carl Fuss.



William H. Fraser, prominent Bremerton, Washington attorney, is shown receiving the keys to his 1971 Stag from Patricia McDonald, bookkeeper for Beach Imports. Mr. Fraser is the first Stag owner in the Pacific Northwest. Shown (l. to r.) are Elmer King, owner of Beach Imports, Mr. Fraser, Miss McDonald and C. M. Lechner, Triumph Regional Sales Manager.



The 1971 Triumph Stag, driven by Dr. John O'Leary and navigated by Renee O'Leary, is shown en route through Virginia on the Virginia Reel National Rally, May 22/23. They placed in the Top Ten and won the trophy for Best British Leyland product.

Above: From the TSOA newsletter - June 1971

Below - Invitation sent to selected customers to visit a BL dealership to test drive the Stag



You are cordially invited to an exclusive preview of the all-new, eight-cylinder Triumph Stag 2+2 convertible, and convertible/hardtop.

Stag represents an entirely new look in Continental cars; four-seat luxury in a convertible, with optional hardtop, plus power steering, power windows, power brakes, chrome wire wheels, and special safety features; all in standard equipment.

We invite you to inspect and drive Triumph's most powerful car, the beautiful new Stag.



which made Ferrari look expensive, then the ploy also made Stag look expensive.

In his book 'Triumph in America', Mike Cook (Publicity Executive for Triumph and then BL in the USA) writes that the main problem with Stag was that it was just too expensive to sell that many of – and you can see why he said that. After all, the TR6, which already had an excellent reputation in the USA, was priced at only \$3,595 before taxes were applied and that is considerably less than Stag - and the TR6 offered more fun, albeit for only two people.

The Rally Scene

Unlike the Spitfire and the TR family of cars, Stag was never touted for use on the racetrack. However in 1971, a couple well known in the North American rally field acquired a Stag to replace their Rover 3500 saloon. In early May, Renee O'Leary and Fred Hurlburt notched up a win in the 17th

A Stag Surrey Top

by Glenn Roy

Twenty-three years ago, I cringed at all the welding and restoration needed on three Stags with hardtops - '71 (Ohio), '72 (NY), and '73 (TX) - that I had purchased between 1997-1998. This is a hardtop restoration story cut in half! It is a Surrey Top fabrication from a full, used Stag hardtop.

The '71 Stag (LE 1402L) was in exceptionally rusted out shape as towed from Ohio, eventually stripped for parts and scrapped for \$200. Its hardtop was sold to Wayne Simpson of the Last-Chance-Garage in New Jersey. I used the '71 engine in the '73 Stag (LE23011U) whose blown engine had a side-cracked block and warped heads.

The '72 New York Stag (LE10002L) was very rough, but personally restored over four years to be gifted to my son, Brooks, as a college graduation present at the TRF Summer Safari Party. It also became his wedding car and nearly twenty years later, Brook's family still enjoys it!

The '72 hardtop was really in unusable shape and so became the Surrey Top

candidate for this Stag story.

The '73 Texas Stag (LE23011U) had a nice hardtop which was carefully restored for myself. I welded a few areas of the hardtop, epoxy primed and eventually painted it Emerald Green (bright bits, rubber and glass not installed) for my son's '72 Stag. My son then didn't want to use the '73 hardtop and it has hung in my shed for 20 years with the rusty '72 hardtop. I felt the urge to wet sand the Emerald Green top and paint it Tahiti Blue for my '73 Stag. But, the potential to have my son change his mind stopped me in my tracks.

The '72 hardtop along the front end rail was full of holes and cut away. The front rail was totally irreparable without re-fabricating with a sheet metal brake and roller. The bottom sill was substantially trimmed of corrosion to weld onto. In the process, unfortunately, the locating holes on the sloping back and side for the stainless steel trim were lost.

I had searched extensively in the U.S. and UK for a new or used Stag hardtop

front rail assembly (part #907860) to no avail. I then considered using a Stag convertible top frame front rail (part #813768) and spare bars back to the B-post to weld in for support of the flimsy sheet metal. No luck there either.

So, when the COVID pandemic lockdown hit New York in March 2020, I commissioned my long term project of a Stag Surrey Top. The day of hardtop butchery had arrived. The safe decision was to cut 3-inches forward from the centering pin





of the B-post defroster connection. This would leave enough metal to weld closed the "triangle hole" opening left open and the bow gusset underneath could still secure the headliner. The Sawz-All cut was made. And so... acid etching, cutting, grinding, rotary wire brushing, weld thru priming and welding, grinding, went on, and on, and on. One underside support width bracket (rescued from the front end) was trimmed and welded into the front of the Surrey Top to provide an extra stiff front span of sheet metal for the bow gusset to rest upon.

Finally, the Surrey Top bodywork began. And incessant surfacing, sanding and epoxy-catalyzed priming went on. The pre-fitment of the quarter-windows required some checking to ensure no bodywork interfered. I pre-fitted blue fuzzy door seals from James Paddock Ltd. I used some saddle tan naugahyde strip to trim over the front edge. The reason was the thick door seal not the T-bar across the front wouldn't allow the top to latch!

The Surrey Top was finally looking like an achievement. A regimen of epoxy priming, wet sanding, tack sheet wiping, PPG Tahiti Blue painting and clear coats, more endless wet sanding and buffing and the Surrey Top was finally ready to be re-assembled. Because the side and

bottom sills were extensively replaced by unrusted, recycled hardtop gauge steel, there were no guide holes remaining to drill and pre-fit the rivets for the stainless steel trim strips. So it became a lengthy process of pre-fitting trim by measuring the height of the holes in my son's hardtop and then riveting. The stainless steel trims were all polished on a high speed buffer wheel to a good luster and pre-fitted to be

installed!

The headliner was trimmed at the B-post bow gusset fabric retainer and pressed easily against the extra added roof stiffener bar. I chose Dynamat brand 'Hoodliner' because they offer 3/4-inch of insulating mat, adhesive backing and a smooth foil surface (to be against the headliner fabric). Most headliner padding I found online was always 1/4-inch padding.

The underside of the hardtop and base was rubber sealed. The two rubber bumpers over the back adjuster bolts were replaced as simple rubber caps used for small furniture legs. Fortunately, the slotted tracks for the bottom rubber seal were salvageable and removed, cleaned, galvanized and re-riveted in place.

And finally, the rear window glass was installed with a new rubber seal and stainless steel trim. All hardware and other trim was polished and installed. The rain gutter stainless steel trim was cut and ball-peened over the front.

A Stag Tonneau Alternative?

The Surrey top is not for rain/winter use yet. I will design a nice snap-on/snap-off saddle tan "Naugahyde" tonneau top in the future. Comically, I only need a Stag hardtop front rail (part #907860) and/or front clip of a Stag convertible top or frame

rail (part #813768) to attach to the A-post and back to the Surrey Top. Actually, if I had any of these, I would have restored the whole hardtop! The former disintegrated cardboard interior flat surfaces running from the B-post along the back to the other B-post will later be fashioned from leftover dashboard walnut veneer to match the Stag's dashboard.

For me, one of the main benefits of the Surrey Top is



Hard top before the Sawz-All cutting!



Extra support "beam" taken from front of hardtop so that bow gusset can hold up against it with headliner



Bow gusset to hold headliner retained

the ability to protect my younger grandchildren, riding in the back in their safety seats, from being buffeted by the wind. Available aftermarket wind deflectors for the Stag just don't provide the same level of protection. 🐾



There were no guide holes remaining to drill and pre-fit the rivets for the stainless steel trim strips

Federal Stag Side Marker Lenses

by Sujit Roy



The earlier style side marker lenses were attached with one screw

Federal Stag side marker lights/reflexors are what some folks in the UK refer to as U.S. cruise lights. When I bought my May 1971 Federal Stag back in 1999, one of the red reflex reflectors was missing from the rear side marker. At that time, eBay had not taken off for Triumph parts, so sourcing parts was by word of mouth, e-mail, and on-line forums. I had done some hunting and had found that there were two types of the Lucas manufactured reflectors used on the Stag over time. I am aware that 1971 Federal specification Stags came with one type and by 1973, a different type was used. I have not been able to figure out the cut-off date between the earlier type and later type.

A year into my search I found a Stag owner on the Stag Digest website who assured me he knew what I was taking about and had the right one available. However, what arrived was not the right one; it was the later type. However, since I had paid about \$50 for it, I decided to use it and I glued it on with an RTV sealer.

My pursuit continued for another two years until one day while ordering some parts from Walter Holliday at Eight Parts in Tucson, AZ (now closed for many years). I had mentioned the reflex reflector and he knew what I was taking about, and he had one which had slightly damaged screw holes. I decided to take it. On arrival, however, I dropped it in the garage and it broke. I glued it back together, filled the screw holes with glue and re-drilled the screw holes. I replaced the later type one with the earlier type on my Stag and it is still on the car today.

But I am still on the hunt for a good

example of an early reflector at a reasonable price. The reflector alone does not come up on eBay much, however, occasionally the complete later type of side marker does. The only problem is the price of these things on eBay have gone through the roof. Folks in the UK are paying a king's ransom for these.

Another interesting observation is that the base of the units look similar, but some holes have been blanked off. The indicator bases used on the side front wings of UK Stags look similar too and I'm sure the same casting was used to make these variations.

Stag News Determines the Answer!

Here at Stag News, we decided to conduct a little more research into this issue raised by Sujit. When I asked Peter Robinson, Registrar of the Stag Owners Club (UK), what he knew about the two types of marker light covers, he commented that he had just been looking at his Stag parts catalogue and found that particular page was not easy to understand. He revealed that James Taylor makes no mention of any change in the side marker lights in his 'Original Triumph Stag' book – he probably could not sort out the situation either. Peter indicates the known facts are:

- *The first graphics catalogue dated 1970 shows the two lenses as 518802 and 518804 with 518804 being the piece that changed over time.*
- *The second parts catalogue, dated May 1973, shows the two lenses as 518804 and 520351. 520351 being the part with the new screw position.*
- *Unfortunately, that is as far as any*

investigation can go as there is nothing in the 1973 catalogue to show that any change has been made, let alone any date for that change.

Peter has also investigated the backing plate which the screws locate into and that is shown as having a part number in the 1970 book but is noted as 'not serviced' in all the later catalogues which probably explains why they cost so much when they occasionally crop up on eBay. As Sujit notes, the backing plate/base is very similar for the two units.

Undaunted, our conversation turned to Tony Fox and between us we have now resolved the time line when the early type of lens stopped being used and the new type took over. We based this on two of Tony's Stags, both exceptionally original cars, and my car which had a build date falling in between Tony's two cars.

We know that Tony's Saffron Stag (LE 1267) built on February 26, 1971 has the early single screw type reflector covers while his Pimento Stag (LE 12660) built on Monday, June 5, 1972 has the two screw, later type. Comparing the Commission Numbers, Tony's Pimento car was built 40 cars after my Friday, June 2, 1972 built Stag (LE 12620), suggesting that 15-20 cars were being built each day at that period.

My car appears to be a hybrid in that the rear markers are of the old type while



The later type (left) were held in place with two screws

the front lenses are of the new type. This suggests to me that my car either came with the old type lens on all four corners, but for some reason the front lenses were later replaced with the newer type. It is unlikely to have been the other way round. Or, perhaps more likely, when my car was being built, some of the old-type red reflectors were still available in the parts bin while the supply of old-type orange ones had already run out and had been replaced with the new type.

In either case, the full changeover to the newer style reflector lenses must have occurred late in the day on June 2, 1972, or certainly before the end of the day Monday, June 5. According to Peter, the factory did not work on weekends as a matter of course but sometimes, when overtime was in the offing, they did complete cars on Saturday and Sunday, so the changeover could also have occurred on the weekend of June 3/4. Peter has heard stories that the line staff could deliberately leave some cars incomplete during the week so that they would have to be finished in the rectification department over the weekend, at overtime pay rates. But that is only one person's story. 🐘



The base of the units look similar, but some holes have been blanked off

North American Triumph Stag Registry

Just how many Stags are there in the USA and Canada?

More	Jeb Bell	LE 1819L	1972	White - 19	Black - 43	74,000	PA	
More	Jeb Bell	LE 2217L	1972	Signal Red - 32	Black - 11	74399	PA	
More	Jeb Bell	LE24140 U	July 1973	Mallard Blue - 106	Black - 11	13048	PA	
More	Jeb Bell	LE23468UBW	May-1973	French Blue - 126	Black - 11	29000	PA	
More	John Bell	LE12939UBW	6/1/1972	Siena Brown - 23	Saddle Tan - 43	46000	CT	-
More	Robert Bell	LE403UBW	1/1/1970	Emerald Green - 65	Saddle Tan - 43	63400	NS	-
More	Jeffrey Ber	LE568L	7/1/1970	Emerald Green - 65	Black - 11	91653	LA	-

The above question is often posed by members but it is very difficult, if not impossible, to answer it accurately.

Having seen our long-standing request for someone to step forward to act as Registrar, and himself interested in finding the answer to the question, Henri Van Triest, of Sarasota, FL, kindly volunteered to take over management of the North American Triumph Stag Registry which hopefully will allow us to give a more definitive answer to the question posed.

The Club has maintained a registry of North American Stags for many, many years, but unlike our friends in the United Kingdom and Australia, our Stag database is woefully out of date through lack of any regular management. Many of our members have not been keeping their own records up to date when they buy or sell a car. We know of one member with a reported collection of 13 Stags who hasn't recorded a single one in the registry, and other multi-Stag owners who only have details of one car listed on the registry. Likewise, the database contains information for cars of owners who are no longer members of the Club.

We will expand the registry to include all known North American Stags whether owned by a Club member or not. While it is our intention not to delete any records, however, only the records of current mem-

ber's cars will be visible to members on the on-line version of the database.

Henri will be making some modest revisions to the layout of the registry format and adding a few new categories that should prove helpful to interested users. For example, a new column will allow members to provide a status report on their car, confirming if it is licensed and on the road in regular use (OR), under repair/restoration (BR), non-operational but salvageable (NO), parts car (PC), or scrapped (SC).

Henri will be in touch with all members on record (via e-mail or telephone) to invite you to update the records of your Triumph Stags when the new format registry input form is available on the website. Of course, we will only be able to contact you if your telephone and/or e-mail addresses are up to date, so please take the time to review your personal profile on the website and update it if necessary.

So, just how many Stags are there on the road in the USA and Canada? Until the database is updated we won't exactly know but it is our guess that there are likely 500-600 Stags operational in the USA and Canada, or nearly so, with perhaps 50% more in various states of retirement or just quietly turning to iron oxide. We are pretty certain that about 90 cars among 86 owners reside in Canada. 🐘

Hot to Cold

by David Gildner

I have a 25 year old Canadian Tire-branded MIG welder (model 58-8000-6, a re-branded Century 117-047) that I bought used over 20 years ago. It would have been inexpensive in its day, as MIG welders go, and it is what's known as "hot-electrode". That means that the welding wire, that comes through the gun, is always electrified - not only when the trigger is pressed, but always.

This (cheaper) design makes it harder to use, and potentially unsafe to the eyes of the user, because if you accidentally touch the wire to the work before your helmet is down, you will get a flash. Better-designed, i.e. more expensive, MIG welders are "cold-electrode", so there is voltage on the wire only when the trigger is pressed.

The idea to convert my welder to cold-electrode occurred to me soon after I got it, but I never really pursued it. I just adapted myself to the way it was. However, a recent e-mail exchange with a local Brit-car-owning friend got into a discussion of the situation. The discussion, plus a copy of the friend's own cold-electrode welder's circuit diagram that he sent me, got me wondering if I could in fact re-design my welder's circuit to be cold-electrode.

After some false starts, I did indeed figure out the circuit changes. The parts needed are 2 cheap 40A 12VDC automotive relays, a 12VDC AC adapter, a piece of an ordinary household extension cord with the female plug on the end, some wires, some spade connectors, and a rocker switch. I bought the relays from Princess Auto for less than \$10 total, and I had all of the rest of the components around the house. Here is the setup:

- The input sides of each relay are wired in parallel to the output of the 12VDC AC adapter.
- The gun switch is wired into one side of the AC adapter output, therefore controlling whether any power gets to the two relays.
- The output of one relay is inserted into a wire of the low-current (input) side of the transformer, thus controlling the low-current side of the transformer, in turn controlling the high-current side of the transformer.
- The output of the other relay

connects where the gun switch used to connect, thus controlling whether any power gets to the wire feed motor and the shielding gas solenoid.

- The extension cord is cut off maybe 12 inches from the female end, and wired in parallel into the power cord entering the welder case.
- The AC adapter is plugged into the extension cord.
- The rocker switch is incorporated into the extension cord, to control power to the relays.

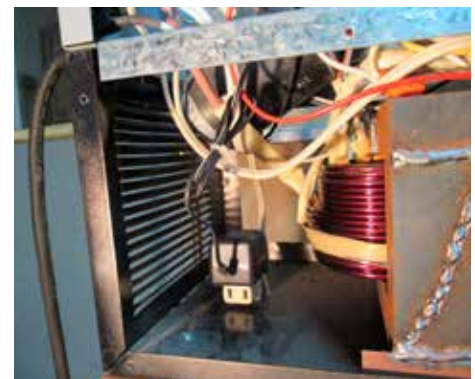
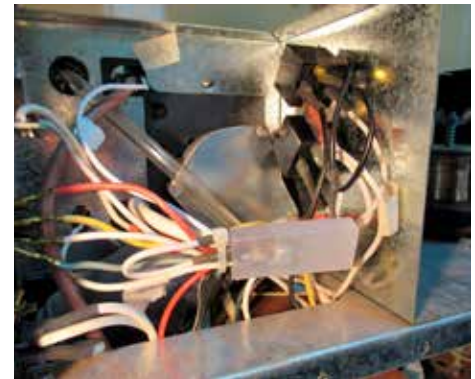
Everything has been assembled into the welder case, and it actually works, believe it or not.

I only had to unplug one spade lug, unplug one ring connector, and unwire one Marr connector, to do it. These unplugged wires got redirected to the relays and AC adapter wires. I did have to make up a number of new wires with spade connectors on the ends (soldered, not crimped!), to complete the circuits. I can easily return the welder to original hot-electrode configuration by simply unplugging the spade, the ring, and the Marr from where they now are, and putting them back to their original places.

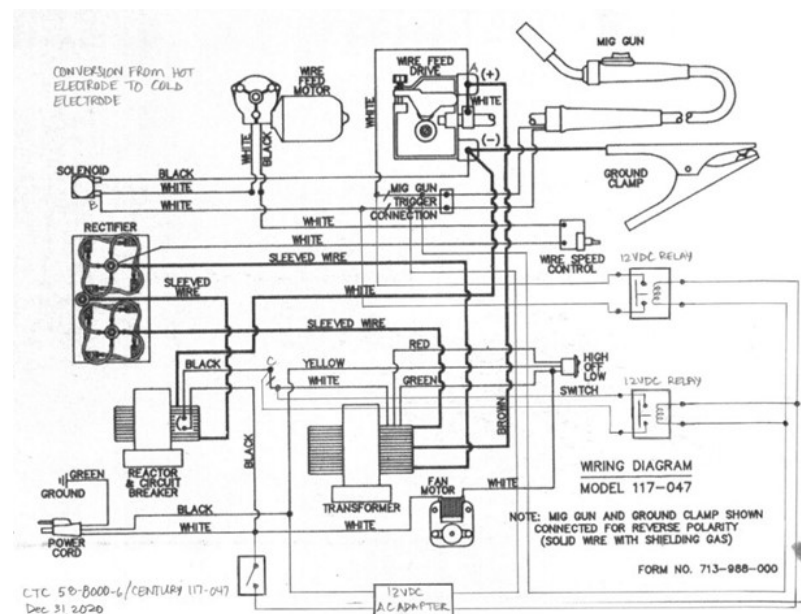
Quite likely the same general concepts could be used to convert any brand of hot-electrode welder to cold-electrode.

This is what the revised circuit diagram looks like. The little slash marks over a line show where a connection is no longer there.

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Top to bottom - front panel with new switch | two new relays mounted on vertical panel | new extension cord and AC adapter



Alternative Refurbishment of Control Knobs

by Henri Van Triest

In the winter 2021 issue of our magazine, Michael Link describes how to put the lettering back on the control knobs.

The method described works very well where there is a cut, or groove, or engraving where the markings are; some sort of relief between the general surface of the knob and its markings.

I used Michael's method successfully for the markings on the main light switch but unfortunately, on my car, the engravings on the dash panel knobs are not sufficiently deep for the paint to hold. So I looked for an alternative.

And the solution is simple. I created the knob markings in a Word document (see Fig.1) and purchased a pack of printable vinyl sticker paper from Amazon (Fig. 2).

I am making the Word document available to anyone who wants it, by e-mail. An ordinary inkjet printer will work. If you do not like the font used, you can easily change this. I have been trying to find the original font used by Triumph, but could only find a close match.

Clean the top of the knob before proceeding. The old white lettering is easily removed with some methylated spirits. After printing the labels, the only difficulty is to cut the decals out precisely. Use small and sharp scissors, peel the backing of the decal and precisely position it on the knob.

If you just position it lightly and miss, you can reposition and press the decal down firmly only when the decal is correctly positioned.

I put the knobs lightly in a vise to hold them immovable and vertically solid. Be sure to position them correctly relative to the hole in the knob that fixes them to the shaft spot!

The finishing touch is to blacken the edge of the decal using a black sharpie and spray some clear acrylic over it to seal the ink and round the edges of the decal to merge in the edges of the knob.

Figs. 3 and 4 show a before and after of the blower knob. Happy Printing. 🖨️



Finished product



Fig. 1 The decals



Fig. 2 Printable Vinyl Adhesive Paper



Fig. 3 Old switch



Fig. 4 After new vinyl lettering

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