



The CAR CLUB

BY **EVERETT BENNETT**
Assistant Inspector, Public Works/ Contract Administration



Bike Therapy

Even during the deepest darkest days of one's life, there is always something that can help remind us there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Whether it is by reading a book, phoning a friend, or walking along the beach, escapes surround us. Even though they may be temporary, they can prove to be exactly what we need to get back on track. I have always resorted to withdrawing from the world and enjoyed hiding behind my welding helmet, jumping on my snowboard, or sitting behind the steering wheel of one of my cars. Six months ago I added another escape to my list.

Here is how it all began. Car and bike shows can get a little boring after awhile. With as many as I attend, they become more of a social event than anything else. Every so often, something will catch my attention in the usual sea of cars and bikes. I first spotted this bike in the summer of 2009. An acquaintance had bought the bike in Huntington Beach and that night drove it to cruise night at Bob's Big Boy in Toluca Lake. After two minutes of checking it out, I told him if he ever decided to sell it to call me first. On a Tuesday

afternoon a year and a half later, my phone rang. Not too long after the conversation ended, I dragged my new '71 Triumph home.

The bike remains pretty much the same from the day I purchased it. The top end of the motor needed to be rebuilt, which I acknowledge terrified me because I had never tackled anything like that before on a bike. I jumped right in after drinking a Red Bull, and before I knew it the bike was running like a top. The one and only drum brake needed to be adjusted and many oil leaks were attended to. On its first voyage out of my garage, it left me stranded on PCH, and so work continued on making it reliable. A new clutch cable was made by Flanders in Pasadena, and the wide-open road was hit once again.

I can really appreciate the bike for what it is. It is simple and does not demand attention in any way. But I can assure you, it gets more attention than anything in the parking lot. I have seen first-hand people crawling over bikes worth \$40,000 to see this little English import. It reminds me of Beatlemania! Perhaps it's the simplicity and the sheer different look that lacks chrome and an in-

your-face paint job that says, "Hey, come look at me!" that draws bystanders in. It

knows it is cool... period.

The backdrop for the photos this month can be found in the west San Fernando Valley. A little exploring and research found this beautiful abandoned piece of real estate crying out for a hug or some sort of attention. Back in the 1930s, the land was owned by Charlie Chaplin.

Enough talk. Let's get to the nitty-gritty of what makes this bike special. It is a 1971 Triumph T500 with a powder-coated hard-tailed frame. The frame has a rake but I am not sure of how much. It has a Kawasaki front end with a 21-inch spoke wheel. The wheel is wrapped with a ribbed 21-inch Avon Speedmaster tire. The rear rim and tire are 18 inches. The rear rim is attached to the only brake on the bike, which happens to be a drum brake. I control this machine with 12-inch powder-coated ape hanger



handlebars. Fuel is housed in a two-gallon Wassell banana fuel tank. Mud and water is blocked from spraying up my back by a Wassell ribbed rear fender. A black leather West Eagle seat keeps me as comfortable as can be on rigid bike. I can see the road in front of me with my Bates headlight, and drivers behind me can see me stop because of 1936 Ford taillight. The Triumph doesn't have an electric starter or battery and needs to be kick-started, which can be frustrating. The bike can be found on the road four times a week splitting lanes on the 101 or cruising up PCH to the county line.

Thanks for tuning in, and don't forget those submissions! See you next month.

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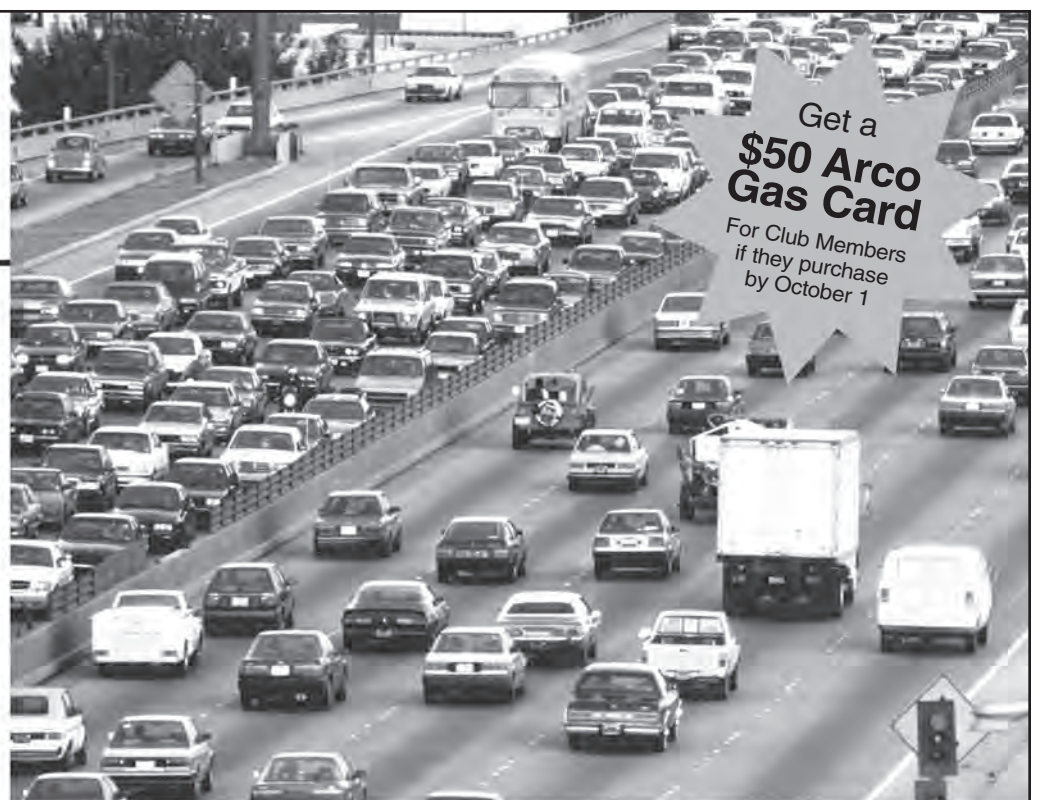
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