

Spark & Spanner

The Official
Publication of
the South
Alabama British
Car Club

July 2023

| MATERIAL USED | | | |
|---------------|----------|-------------|-------|
| QUAN. | PART NO. | DESCRIPTION | PRICE |
| 1 | 86 683 | filter | 2 65 |
| 1 | 54572304 | Rein | 4 85 |
| 1 | 54572411 | Lens | 2 85 |
| 1 | 54572350 | Lens | 1 90 |
| 1 | 1019 | Bulb | 40 |
| 1 | 423153 | paints | 1 60 |
| 1 | 423871 | cond. | 1 60 |
| 4 | N94 | flange | 4 40 |
| | | | 20 25 |

2042

FOREIGN CAR CENTER, Inc.
421 S. 21st Street Telephone 322-5567
BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

MG VOLVO

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------------|
| NAME | RECEIVED | DATE |
| ADDRE | P. M. | 7-21-66 |
| CITY | PHON | CUSTOMERS ORDER NO. |
| MAKE | 257 8001 | ORDER WRITTEN BY |
| TYPE OR MODEL | TERMS | Speed |
| YEAR | LICENSE NO. | SPEEDOMETER |
| WHR. NO. | | |
| MTR. No. | | |

| OPER. NO. | INSTRUCTIONS | LABOR CHARGE |
|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| (36) | Replace front lamp lens + rein | N C |
| | 9,000 mile inspection | 6 00 |
| | Lens | 7 95 |
| | Adjust | N C |
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[Handwritten signature]

Now
Passport to



| | |
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| YES <input type="checkbox"/> | NO <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 95 | |
| 20 25 | |
| 3 75 | |
| TAX | 1 22 |
| TOTAL AMOUNT | 39 17 |

From the President

Tom Renick

Rushing to Completion

The countdown has begun in all seriousness. Only three more months until our British Car Festival. Time to get that last needful part and apply the finishing touches to this year's entry. Get your entry forms [online](#) or at the meeting and start sending them in. And while you're at it, you might want to consider [sponsoring](#) your favorite class as well.

Because of a change in our door prize structure this year, we have eliminated prizes for each registrant, and will draw for a crisp fifty-dollar bill every fifteen minutes until ten are gone. Therefore, consider seeking \$200 major sponsors instead of plastic brushes for door prizes. As usual, check with **Brian Daly**, show chairman, to see if you can give a little assistance anywhere, and **Donna Eagleson** to help with our superb Friday night supper and prizes. This one can be the best yet if everyone pitches in.

Activities VP **Dave Roloson** and committee are busy keeping us busy. Recently they organized a breakfast at Serda's Coffee House on Royal Street in beautiful downtown Mobile. It's a nice place that we frequent from time to time. There's some free parking if you know where to look and are lucky enough to get it. Otherwise, parking meters require downloading an app to your



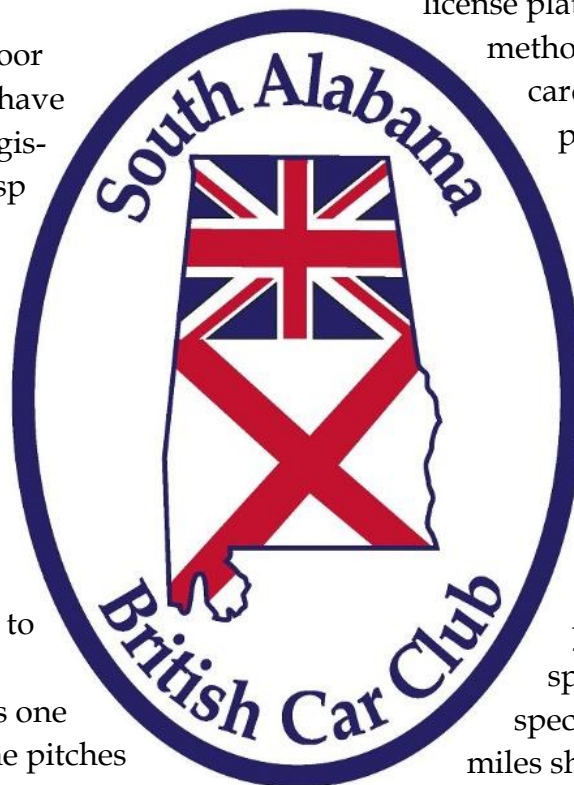
Photo by Noel Eagleson

smart phone, entering the parking zone number and some personal information, entering your license plate number, and choosing a method of payment, like a credit card. Sure beats all that trouble of putting a nickel in the slot. Nevertheless, other fun is brewing in the pot and you will all hear about it soon.

Because our BCF features the 100 years of MG this year, **Noel Eagleson** is putting together a display of each model of MG ever produced. If you have a rare-ish MG, he might be calling upon you to include your car in this special display. It should be spectacular. Every MG within 200 miles should be in this year's show.

If this newsletter is published as planned, [*was there ever any doubt?*-Ed.] you will get it in time to be reminded of the absolutely do-not-miss all-club Pig Roast at **Tom Schmitz's** house tomorrow (Sunday, July 23). This has been going on pushing 30 years and you will want to BE THERE.

Tom Renick is president of SABCC. He's always brewing something in his pot.



SABCC Club Officers

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| President | Tom Renick |
| VP-Membership | Rick Black |
| VP-Activities | Dave Roloson |
| Secretary | Peter Lee |
| Treasurer | Donna Eagleson |
| Member at Large | Dick Bishop |
| Member at Large | Ben Cummings |
| Member at Large | Frank Stabler |
| Member at Large | Ron Wolverton |
| Technical Advisor | Pierre Fontana |
| Technical Advisor | Mike Darby |
| Webmaster | Peter Lee |
| Historian | Robb Ogletree |
| Newsletter Editor | Michael King |

Spark & Spanner is the official publication of the South Alabama British Car Club and is published monthly for the benefit of SABCC members. Permission to use this material by other British car club publications is granted provided credit is given to *Spark & Spanner*. Address comments or submissions to SparkSpanner@gmail.com.

Membership in SABCC is open to anyone with an interest in classic or modern British cars, and dues are only \$20 per year [*A bargain at twice the price-Ed.*].

British Car Festival is Supported by



On the cover: *Mike*

Activities Calendar

July 23, 2023

Tri-Club Pig Roast, Schmitz home, Lillian, AL, noon. Bring a side dish and your favorite drink.

July 25, 2023

Monthly Club Meeting, Don Carlos Restaurant, Daphne, eat at 6:00 p.m. (on you), meet at 7:00.

August 3, 2023

BCF Planning, 6:00 p.m., El Rancho, Daphne.

August 19, 2023

Cars, Coffee, and Conversation, 9:00 a.m., Derailed Diner, I-10 at Exit 53 (Wilcox Rd.)

August 22, 2023

Monthly Club Meeting, Don Carlos Restaurant, eat at 6:00 p.m. (still on you), meet at 7:00.

July / August 2023

| SUN | MO | TUE | WE | TH | FRI | SAT |
|------------------|----|---------------------|----|---------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| Pig Roast | | Club Meeting | | | | |
| 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | BCF Planning | | |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| | | | | | | Cars & Coffee |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| | | Club Meeting | | | | |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |

Sparks

Club and Member News

July Cars, Coffee, and Conversation

story by Noel Eagleson

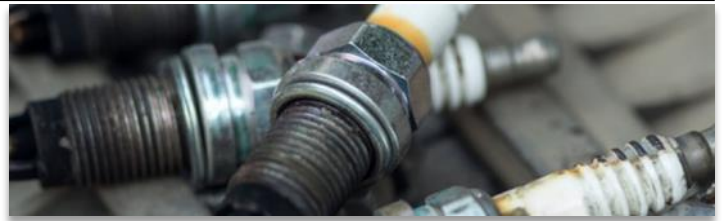
Saturday morning July 15, 2023 saw a small group of club members and one guest gathered at Serda's Coffee shop on South Royal Street in Mobile. A small family business, they are renowned for serving some of the finest coffee in town. All the beans are carefully roasted in small batches to bring out the optimal flavor and they stay busy serving mainly locals so you know the coffee is good.



The SABCC group at Serda's, from left, **Don Pritchett**, **Tom Renick**, **Mac McNamara**, **Kathy McNamara**, guest **Ted**, **Jon Gosnell**, and **Ben Cummings** (foreground). **Noel Eagleson** was taking the picture.

As we enjoyed our coffee and muffins there was plenty of interaction naturally focusing on all topics related to our particular cars, and even expressing views on the new MG Cyberster electric sports car recently previewed in London.

Afterwards a couple of us walked a few blocks to see the 12th annual pole vault competition taking place in Dauphin Street. This event draws



The MG Cyberster, an electric roadster.

quite a crowd and many young athletes from local colleges and out of state. How nice it was to see talented young men and women enjoying this highly competitive sport. [*The next Cars, Coffee, and Conversation is Aug. 19 at Derailed Diner-Ed.*]



Pole vaulting on Dauphin St. (photo courtesy **Noel Eagleson**)

Mardi Gras MGs – a Vital, Vibrant Part of the British Car Scene

story by **Richard Bishop**
photos courtesy the author

Hello to our “Sister” British Car Clubs, SABCC and PBCA from the Mardi Gras MGs (MGMG). I thought that I would take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about your fellow Brit neighbor in Sweet Home Alabama.

Did you know that there is a dedicated group of British car enthusiasts right here on the Eastern Shore of Mobile Bay? Our club members own such classic marques as MG, Triumph, Jaguar, Austin Healey, Mini Cooper, Land Rover, Sunbeam, Morgan, and others.



June 24, 2023 club meeting at Fairhope Yacht Club.

MGMG is a small British car club centered in Fairhope, Alabama and got their start in 1995. The founding meeting was held at the home of **Stewart and Shirley Reisinger** on Wednesday, December 20, 1995 in Daphne, AL. Stewart acted as the initial chairman. The six founding members were in attendance: Bob Mason, Sue Mason, Stewart Reisinger, Shirley Reisinger, Joe Buck, and Celeste Buck.

Due to our small member size, one of our current members affectionately called our club a “boutique” British car club. MGMG meets the second Wednesday of the month and is currently meeting in the Fairhope Yacht Club. Our club

dues are \$30.00 per year. And, like the other Brit clubs, you do not need a British car or bike to join.



MGMG flags at the SABCC show

Both SABCC and PBCA know us best for our British flags that they borrow from MGMG for their key events. And we are happy to loan them out!

MGMG is proud to host two popular regional events (Brit cars only) that include inviting SABCC and PBCA to attend with us. These events are the Fairhope Arts and Crafts Festival (every March) and the Silverhill Veteran’s Memorial Car Show (every May). MGMG puts in a lot of hard work reserving show sites, buying insurance, preparing show sites, cleaning sites and handling entrant parking. The Fairhope Arts and Crafts event is a car “display” and is free for participants [and offers the best parking at the Festival-Ed.].



2019 Fairhope Arts and Crafts Festival

For other activities MGMG conducts pub crawls (senior version), road rallies, tech sessions, at

(story continue next page)

MGMG, continued

tends local area car shows (British and American) and participates in parades, including the Fairhope Veterans' Day and Lillian Christmas parades.



2023 Silverhill show

MGMG enjoys meeting with our sister clubs, SABCC and PBCA. A great opportunity to share our experiences and enhance our British car camaraderie!

[W. Richard "Dick" Bishop, CDR, USN (Ret.) is the chairman of MGMG and an active member of SABCC, where he serves as a Member at Large of the club's board. He owns a 1966 MGB, "Brooke," previously owned by his mother, after whom the car is named. In the June 2023 "Spark & Spanner," Ed. mistakenly attributed Dick's photo, below, to a member of PBCA. Ed. regrets this error, and implying in the accompanying article that the preparations and arrangements MGMG makes for the Silverhill show merely involved "arriving early" the day of the show. SABCC and PBCA are indebted to MGMG for hosting the Fairhope and Silverhill events!-Ed.]



Another view of the 2023 Silverhill show (this photo was not correctly attributed to **Dick Bishop** in the June 2023 issue)

New and Old, Down Under

Don Pritchett's son Ryan and his family were vacationing in Australia, and he sent his dad a couple of car photos.

The first is a modern MG SUV that Ryan and family rented. Don says, "This is the rental car assigned to them. He was quite surprised to see that big MG emblem on the grille. I am not sure he was aware that MGs are being made again but he was quite happy to be able to drive it." If **Ed.** is correct, this model is an MG ZS.



About the second photo, Don said "On their first trip out in the MG they encountered this Morris similar to one we had when he was younger. He got a kick out of the new versus old British car encounter." Ryan, **Ed.** hopes you had a great trip, and thanks for the photos!



Spannering

Repairs, Restorations, and Technology

Distributor Ground Troubles

story by Fred Veenschoten, PBCA

George Bruno and I were working on a “Bubber Rumper” B that wouldn't fire. As you know there are three wires in the distributor. The third one is a ground wire spot-welded to the points plate and the other end fixed to one of the screws that holds the whole points plate assembly into the body. In this case the spot weld end had broken loose.

The fix seemed easy enough: crimp a lug on the broken end and put it under the nut on the points stud.

The plastic piece will insulate it from the other two wires.

George pulled the coil wire from the cap and held it near the engine while I flicked the points. We would get intermittent sparks. OK, we have new points, condenser, cap and plug wires so let's do the whole job.



George Bruno practices “MG Yoga” replacing a choke cable.

Now the problems started. The new points from Moss have a plastic threaded post for the wires. So I thought I'd try leaving the ground wire off. Wrong. Flicking the points I could see some sparks from under the points plate. The points plate rotates when the vacuum advance is active so this is not a reliable ground. I ended up attaching the ground wire to the capacitor screw and Bob's your Uncle!! We have ignition.



Barn Find MGB – Part Two

story and photos by Noel Eagleson

Last month's article ended by mentioning that while cleaning out the interior of the barn find MGB, Donna recovered several pieces of paper and documents that basically tell a nice story about the early life of this particular little car.

I enjoy unraveling the history of an automobile and to quote Sherlock Holmes “there is nothing like first hand evidence.” In this case Donna's most significant find was the BMC (British Motor Corporation) Passport to Service record book listing the selling dealer and first ownership details [see cover photo-Ed.].

Since import into the USA, the car has always been registered in Alabama, with an original license date of October 27, 1964. The first owner was a Birmingham doctor based at UAB. The selling dealer was Foreign Car Center Inc., located at 421 S. 21st Street, Birmingham. Looking at a couple of old invoices show that they were a franchise for MG and Porsche autos [and Jaguar-Ed.]. Unfortunately, old paper invoices do not stand up well to being “baked” in a barn for 50 years and there are a few that were not legible.



A 1,000-mile inspection was carried out on February 3, 1965 when a gallon of antifreeze was added costing a whopping \$3. The next service at 6,000 miles, completed October 22, 1965,

(story continues next page)

Barn Find MGB – Part Two, continued

shows oil and filter, plugs, and points were changed all for a charge of \$26.64.

The invoice for the next service at 9,000 miles on July 21, 1966 [cover photo-Ed.] included the regular oil and filter change and new plugs again! There was also a tune-up and replacement of the rear light body, lens, and bulb. All this came to \$39.17 [to put this in perspective, a gallon of milk in 1966 cost 42 cents-Ed.].

This is where the trail grows a little cold. Sometime around April 1967 the car changed ownership to another doctor, also based at UAB Birmingham.

An invoice from Southern Rubber Co, Inc., at 917 Sixth Avenue, Birmingham shows that three 560x14 four-ply-rated tires were purchased at a total cost of \$61.97; this included fitting and balancing. Mileage recorded was 12,114 and one might presume the spare tire, a Dunlop cross-ply, would have been used to complete the set. On the invoice heading it's interesting to see that they sold Gillette tires and tubes!

Most of us tend to believe that back in the '60's auto-



mobile batteries lasted much longer than today. Well, the next invoice dated November 13, 1967 was issued by Alabama Electric Battery Co., 2nd Avenue South, Birmingham for the supply of two six-volt batteries. The cost was \$17 less a \$2 rebate for old batteries.

You may question why two six-volt batteries. All MGB production from 1962 to mid-1974 were positive earth and had two six-volt batteries wired in tandem. This gave a 12-volt configuration and they were fitted below the

floor of the tonneau area. These replacement batteries were made by Allstate for imported cars and the numbers on the batteries are I believe referring to size rather than date of manufacture.

The next legible invoice dated April 22, 1971 is in the name of the third owner, a Mobile attorney, and refers to the purchase of a new Sears "Best" quality vinyl convertible top. This came with a guarantee against defects in material or workmanship for five years! The modest sum paid was \$54.19, including tax.

The aforementioned attorney apparently made numerous trips to the Eastern Shore as there was a book of 40 tokens enabling the driver to make

trips through the Bankhead Tunnel. (The Bankhead Tunnel was officially opened on February 20, 1943 and a toll of 25 cents per car one way was charged until 1973.) There was also an official pass issued by the City of Mobile authorizing the car to be parked in metered zones while on official business.

The last license tag on the MG is for 1973 and I can only surmise that during that year it received the frontal passenger side damage and the owner placed it in the barn pending repair, which never happened.

To conclude this article on the little car I have to refer back to those Ruffian Racoons who were not the best of tenants during their unwelcome stay. Not only did they manage to trash the interior but they did it while enjoying all the comforts of a Motorola model 524 transistor radio and getting high on Borkum Riff aromatic whiskey-flavored tobacco. That's living on the "High Hog."

Until next time, Safety Fast!



The World According to Lucas*

story by Mac McNamara

Ignition. Every car has it (well, every gasoline-powered car). And it's amazing how tightly together all things must work for an ICE (internal combustion engine) to operate, much less, operate efficiently. Find some questions I have AND a mental journey that stemmed from the questions.

The Anglia has been slowly developing issues (or I've been ignoring warning signs...works either way). And now I have a series of tasks and questions. Last issue, you read of the motor mount replacement. Now, we'll work on ignition issues. I am open to all hints, tips, and told-ya-so's that lead to answers to the questions below (and hope answers help others!):

1. The Anglia runs fine while running tests in the driveway: revving and allowing to return to idle under no-load conditions. When I take it on the road, it runs fine until I am nearly at a stop and the engine dies. It will easily restart, but it dies as I slow down whether the clutch engaged, or the car is out of gear. Not right away, but certainly before I've come to a stop. I can pop the clutch to restart, but it will die again. When I start with the key, it stays running, but at that point I am at a stop. Suggestions on cause?
2. The coil is getting hot. According to several "experts" on the Anglia, no ballast resistor is required on the car and, according to the manual, the coil resistance is supposed to be 3.4 ohms. After replacing the coil with one purchased explicitly for the Anglia, it still runs hot. So how hot does the coil get if it is normally "hot," and is "hot" normal?
3. I have a DMM (digital multi-meter) that has dwell and RPM displays. I used the Dwell for the first time and found the dwell on the Anglia was at 52.9 degrees. I have opened

the points to 0.015 inches getting dwell to 56 degrees. It's supposed to be from 58-63 degrees, so I do need to open them a touch more. It should be mentioned the manual says 0.014-0.016 inches. Spot-on at 0.015 and it ain't quite enough to get the dwell to 58 degrees. I also will state that during acceleration, the dwell increases to about 60 or 61 degrees. I think that's pretty good, though the range may indicate cleaning and lubrication is in order.

4. Last one for the moment: I have also verified the timing to be about right (about 10 degrees BTDC). As I use the engine as a brake in slowing down, I will get a pop (backfire) out the carb. Is that usually an indication of too-retarded or too-advanced? The car is not running any hotter than it ever has, so any timing issues are probably minute (pronounced as "my newt," in case you're wondering what I typed, as I did when re-reading). This issue started AFTER I replaced the coil and motor mounts.

The Journey

The difference between a good shade-tree mechanic and a good mechanic is learned over and over by me just from reading Pierre's font of wisdom ... and my repeated failure check everything before replacing one thing after another. Pierre. If you're looking for a small teaching job, I would welcome a Sensei.

My family experiences unique problems when it comes to cars. As an example, we replaced the timing chain in Daniel's 1963 Mercury Meteor because, after an incident with the starter jamming into the flywheel and having to be forced free, it would not crank. Two Saturday's and one Sunday at the local Gulf Coast DIY Garage revealed we did not NEED to do that as, after all work was done, the car STILL would not crank. We found the \$15.00 solenoid was bad...and it

(story continues next page)

*Actually, Ford engineers, but everyone blames Lucas

The World According to Lucas, continued

was NEW! It was not passing power to the distributor except in the crank position.

Lesson: don't care if the solenoid in BRAND NEW, check it out. It wasn't a waste, as the timing chain was a bit slack, but it was more than 10 times the cost of the solenoid (and several hours longer!), had I just double-checked and trouble-shot correctly instead of assuming.

On the Anglia, I am currently experiencing the problems mentioned in the questions above and that has led me down a rabbit-hole figuring out how "magic ignition systems" work. Coils are just wound wires (about 100:1 for geeks like me) so electrically it does not matter which way you connect the ignition wire and distributor wire (the LOW-TENSION side). The HIGH-TENSION side relies on a collapsing magnetic field to help produce the 12kV -50kV (that's 12,000 to 50,000 volts, guys...it'll hurtcha, won't it? You know who you are if you can attest to this personally!). If you have the coil backwards for your system, the car will run, but the coil will run 15 to 25 percent less efficiently.

One of the YouTube videos I found went into detail on how ignition voltage and magnetic fields work together and explained the condenser's purpose. You can view his video [here](#) (about six minutes).

Another I found had a fellow working on a four-cylinder engine showing how to use a dwell meter to set points gap. You can view it [here](#) (about four minutes).

With those videos under your belt, we'll go back to my current issue and tests I need to perform to ensure the coil is correctly installed. Moss Motors (and others) has a very quick write-up that requires an analog meter to successfully test your coil connection. I have a digital meter and will need to get an analog meter. I suggest you

have one available as well, because there are some things an analog meter will show right away that a digital meter will hide. One example is a bad diode in the alternator. A digital meter will read the average voltage output through the alternator and not show any fluctuations. An analog meter needle will not remain steady but move back-and-forth within some range when a diode is bad.

The [method](#) to test coil connection/polarity is as follows:

1. Disconnect the high-tension wire from the coil.
2. Set your analog V-O-M to the highest voltage setting it's capable of reading.
3. Regardless of having a POSITIVE ground car (which the Anglia is) or a NEGATIVE ground car (which almost everyone else has), connect the negative V-O-M cable to the high tension connection on the coil.
4. Connect the positive cable to the engine block.
5. Have a partner crank the engine. It won't start because you've disconnected the wire from the coil, right? It will spark, so if you're touching the exposed coil connection and near ground (like leaning on the car) you will find out very soon what high-tension voltage feels like. It ain't funny, even as I laugh when it happens to me!
6. Observe the direction of needle travel on the meter. Positive direction means correct connection. Negative direction means you got it backwards. If it's backwards, reverse the primary wires on the coil (the low-tension side) and run the test again.

I am off to Harbor Freight to get a cheap (not inexpensive...CHEAP) analog meter for this and other tests I need to do. I look forward to hearing suggestions and, more importantly, to telling of this woeful tale's successful conclusion... maybe before the car show.

The Best of

Pierre's Wisdom

Pierre Fontana

Proportioning Valve – Your Ace in the Hole

The brake proportioning valve is small and ignored unless it sticks, or leaks, or you lose rear brakes. Pay attention, as it is your life saver. It separates front and rear brake fluid, so that a failure of a wheel cylinder will let you have some front brakes. These were mandated by law in the U.S., and imported cars had to com-



All photos courtesy **Pierre Fontana**



Proportioning valve (cup-type)

ply. Importing a later-model British car without one will get you in trouble; Uncle Sam will make you convert it to the U.S. standard, as

they were late converting overseas.

It is called a proportioning valve as it meters out less pressure to the rear brakes, to prevent lock-up in some instances. The British call it a PDWA (pressure differential warning actuator) assembly. It has a plastic switch (to ground); when tripped by a failure, it turns ON a warning light on the dash. You get the light and failure at same time, and can't miss it.

Be nice to this assembly. Moss is proud of it, charging \$ 469.95 plus shipping. The part is a reproduction. Rebuild kits can be had for either \$14.00 for an "O" ring type or \$34.00 for the cup type. You have to dismantle the valve to tell which you have. The one I ordered, which you see in these pictures (left), is the cup type.

The car had sat for more than a decade, and the proportion valve started leaking after a few days of driving. All the brakes were overhauled at the start of resuscitation.

Pierre Fontana is a technical advisor for SABCC. This article originally was published in Oct. 2014. I did a few searches online; for the MGB, the PDWA is made of "unobtainium" (i.e., no longer available) but the rebuild kits can still be purchased. PDWAs for other models are still available, starting at around \$300-Ed.

Spare Parts

A Celebration, a Car, and a Brew

story by *Rodney McDonald*
photos courtesy of the author

As most of our members know, this year's British Car Festival is celebrating the 100th year of the existence of the MG Car Company. For any automobile maker to make it to its centenary is a rare feat; for a maker of mostly sports cars, it's almost unheard of.

We MG drivers are all too aware of the positive reactions our classic sports cars bring to the general public. It is rare that a fuel stop (or occasionally a traffic light) doesn't invite conversation from strangers asking about the car. And most of those conversations eventually lead to stories about an MG in their past.

In fact, MG was such a force that a British brewing company developed a beer to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the MG factory in Abingdon in 1979.



The "Owld Speckled 'Un"

"Old Speckled Hen" was created by Morland & Company of Abingdon at the request of the MG



factory and it was the factory that bestowed the name on the brew, as well as providing a label design.

The name chosen came from a factory runaround hack used in the 1930s affectionately called the "Owld Speckled 'Un" from its spotted paint finish on the fabric body.

Originally called Old Speckled Hen Anniversary Brew, the first batch was only 25 barrels that quickly sold out. So quickly, it was gone before the celebrations began and the brewer had to rush a second batch through.

Of course, it was just a matter of weeks afterwards that British Leyland announced that the Abingdon factory would be shuttered and the workers laid off.

The rest is well-known history.

Old Speckled Hen continued to be brewed for Morland-affiliated UK pubs. In 2000, Morland Brewery was acquired by Greene King who capitalized on the surging demand for traditional ales.



(story continues next page)

A Celebration, a Car, and a Brew, continued

Greene King began exports of several of their brews including Old Speckled Hen, and it has been available in the US for a number of years. It is most commonly found in bottles, but cans occasionally appear. In larger cities, Old Speckled Hen can be found on draught at pub-style watering holes. Old Speckled Hen is an amber pale ale with a mild hop flavor and a cider-like finish. If you're fortunate enough to find it on tap, give it a try. It is more flavorful on tap.

Every Old Speckled Hen label pays tribute to the MG that inspired the brew, as well as proudly feature an octagon front and center. If you're so inclined, you can find Old Speckled Hen locally at World Market in Mobile and Spanish Fort. It's also part of their build a six-pack program, so if you aren't ready to commit to a full six bottles, you can buy one to try along with some of your other favorites.

Raise a 'Hen in toast of the "Sports Car America Loved First" in its centennial year. And, kids—don't drink and drive. Ever.



Speaking of speckled ones, **Ben Cummings** sent **Ed.** this photo, saying, "I'm taking an old engine apart to learn how it works. This engine came out of the rust bucket that's at the Blue Gill. The car was under water during Katrina."

Dog Days of Summer

PBCA member Paul Reese reminded **Ed.** that the dog days of summer are July 3 to August 11 of each year.

The name refers to the period when Sirius, the dog star, appears in the sky just before sunrise; the ancient Greeks



Barley, a Border Collie, with navigator Sydney, an Aussiedoodle, in Paul's MGA

blamed the star for the scorching heat this time of year.

Paul sent along a photo of his dogs in his MGA. and a [story](#) about the "Goodwoof" Festival held for the first time in May 2022 at Goodwood, the British estate that hosts the annual Goodwood Festival of Speed.

In the story, the author noted eight cars named after dogs:

- AC Greyhound, a sporting 2+2 GT coupe
- Hillman Husky, a small estate car
- Aston Martin Bulldog, a supercar concept
- Colani Whippet, an open car on a VW Beetle platform
- Ferrari Berlinetta Boxer, a mid-engine exotic
- Bedford Beagle, an estate car based on a GM Vauxhall van
- Terrier 1172 Formula, a racing car
- Rover [OK, *that might be a stretch-Ed.*]

With all the cat cars (Jaguar; Mercury Bobcat, Cougar and Lynx; Ford Puma; Panther Kallista; and Sunbeam Tiger, among others), **Ed.** guesses the dogs should have their days!

Auction Roundup: Resale Orange

[Research shows that orange cars depreciate the least-Ed.]

2015 Bentley Continental GTC V8 S



Not Sold for \$62,000 on Cars and Bids

In "Orange Flame" over black quilted hides, this well-equipped convertible with 60k miles had some minor damage, but sold after the auction ended.

2015 Jaguar F-Type R Coupe



Sold for \$53,000 on Bring a Trailer

This is "Firemist Sand" over Jet leather. with several options that pushed the original sticker to over \$104k. With just 22k miles, the car was in near-perfect condition.

2012 McLaren MP4-12C



Sold for \$106,000 on Bring A Trailer

Almost iridescent in Volcanic Orange over black leather and Alcantara, four bidders competed fiercely for this car.

1970 Triumph GT6



Not Sold for \$3,600 on Barn Finds (will take \$4,300)

A restoration project in Saffron Yellow, this GT6 has needs but seems restorable. Maybe it isn't orange enough?

Around the Bend

Here's a brief rundown of upcoming events:

- **Tri-Club Pig Roast**, July 23, noon, **Tom Schmitz** home, Lillian: Held each year at Tom's home on Soldier Creek, this event brings together members from SABCC, the Mardi Gras MGs, and the Panhandle British Car Association for all the pork, salads, sides, and desserts you could possibly want. Best of all, it's free! All you need to bring is a dish to share and whatever you care to drink. British cars get preferred parking. You'll enjoy seeing Tom's onsite garages and vast collection of model cars, relaxing by or in the pool, and watching boats go by. PBCA's Tom Matsoukas is bringing his pontoon boat for tours up and down the creek.
- **Vintage Triumph Register National Convention**, Sep. 27 – Oct. 1, Dillard, GA: Most know Dillard for its MG event, but this year it's also hosting the VTR convention. The theme is "Celebrating the Vision of Giovanni Michelotti," honoring the Italian designer of many of our favorite British cars. For more information, visit vtr2023.org.
- **British Car Festival**, Oct. 20 and 21, Fairhope UMC: It's closer than you think! This is the time to be recruiting sponsors, preparing your own car, and letting show chair **Brian Daly** know how you can help. Also, the guys from *Vintage Euro, LLC* will be back; if you need parts, [contact them](#) now!
- **Gulf Coast Autojumble**, Nov. 4, 10:00 a.m.: The annual three-club swap meet for all things British motoring will be held again this year at **Tom Schmitz's** "Garagemahut" in Elberta. Mark your calendar and start gathering your **junk** great items to sell.

Classifieds

MGB Projects or Parts Cars

Red car \$300; green car \$500. Both are rough, but the engine in the green car turns freely. For more information, contact Ben Cummings, who can put you in touch with the seller.



Ben Cummings

ben@cummings-architecture.com

PBCA's Stan Oman reported to *Ed.* that he was able to find the MG wheel center he needed from Michael Ruckman. He is trying to liquidate a bunch of NOS parts. Visit Michael's website [here](#).



1977 MGB Engine

Serial #18V883AEL. Rebuilt Feb. 2016 and was never used; primed and still wrapped up. I have a complete list of new parts. Taking up space in my garage, will take any reasonable offer.

David Kennedy

251-802-1700

1971 (or '72) Jaguar XJ6

Series I XJ6 for parts or restoration. Original engine and transmission available at a separate location. Asking \$500. More photos [here](#).



David Miller

david@davidmiller.net

Wanted – Sunbeam Autos

South Alabama area.

Tom Renick, 251-661-8333

32nd Annual British Car Festival Celebrating the **Triumph TR6**



October 22, 2022 • Fairhope, Alabama

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North American MGB Register

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North American MGB Register

PO BOX 876 • Downers Grove, IL 62897-0876

Toll-free phone: 800-NAMGBR-1

www.namgbr.org

SABCC is a chapter of NAMGBR, and they provide insurance for our events. Your membership matters!

Spark & Spanner Submissions

Ed. needs for your submissions for *Spark & Spanner*. Categories include

- **Activities Calendar:** SABCC events, car shows, and other events worth noting
- **Sparks:** news about club members, activities, and events
- **Spannering:** car repairs, restoration projects, tips and tricks, and prepping a car for a show
- **Spare Parts:** Auction Roundup, British car news, and whatever *Ed.* finds interesting
- **Gotcha!:** how members acquired their cars
- **Around the Bend:** Synopses of upcoming car shows and other events
- **Feature Stories:** Longer general interest items
- **Classifieds:** Sell your car or parts, or list what you need to buy

Submissions should be sent to SparkSpanner@gmail.com. Almost any text format is acceptable. Please include relevant photos.

Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor, *Spark & Spanner*

“Do More” Needs to Do More

In ancient times (pre-Covid), *Ed.*, before he even became *Ed.*, championed SABCC taking a greater emphasis on community outreach and community service. This way, we can ensure that the British car hobby does not die with those of us who came of age when MGs and Triumphs could be bought new. This met with support from a number of club members who helped form a “Do More” committee to, well, do more.

While the pandemic curtailed committee meetings, and these have not resumed, some of the ideas discussed by that committee are still percolating [*wait, can we use that metaphor, or does Tom own it? -Ed.*]. **Don Pritchett**, in particular, has been tireless in seeking ways to involve children and youth in the car show. **Peter Lee** is still making plans to teach a car care class to his daughter’s Boy Scout troop. And, I know many others share an interest in “doing more” to share our hobby with others and support its continuance.

I want to let you know that I have become involved with a group in Escambia County (Fla.) called the “Next Steps Vehicle Team,” which is part of the Homeless Reduction Task Force of Northwest Florida. This team seeks to reduce homelessness by ensuring people have access to transportation. I’ll share more as the work progresses. I’ve also been invited to teach basic car care classes at my church, First United Methodist of Pensacola. Again, look for more to come on this. Finally, I have the opportunity to help people with car needs at my job at AutoZone.

We have a great hobby, and knowledge and skills people need. I plan to reconvene the committee soon. Do you want to “Do More?”

And now, for something completely different . . .



Terry Trovato sent Ed. this picture, which he spotted in the July 2023 edition of Sports Car Market. As Terry notes, "The Bugeye Sprites did not have a trunk/boot per se; you had to push both seats all the way forward to get to a small cubby hole storage/luggage area located under the rear panel of the car."

While this picture presents at least one possible alternative to this hard-to-access luggage compartment, Ed. has to wonder about the speed rating of the tires on that rolling bag...

Spark & Spanner

South Alabama British Car Club

PO Box 18036

Mobile, AL 36618



*Find us on Facebook! Look for our Facebook page, **South Alabama British Car Club**, and our Facebook group, **Friends of South Alabama British Car Club**.*