

# Spark & Spanner

April 2025

The Official  
Publication of  
the South  
Alabama British  
Car Club





# From the President

Ben Cummings

## Would the Real Ben Please Stand Up?

Last month I played a trick on you. The March “President’s Letter,” in the spirit of embracing modern technology, was written entirely by ChatGPT. Go find last month’s newsletter and re-read the letter. Kinda scary, but before you accuse me of going fully digital and trading my spanners for a stylus, let me explain.

The very notion of blending the old with the new is what led me to write the letter using ChatGPT in the first place. You see, our club recently hosted its third tech session with none other than **John Twist** of University Motors – one of the most knowledgeable British car experts in the country and, as it turns out, quite the modern fellow himself. John has been using YouTube and podcasts to reach Anglophiles all over the world, proving that even an old hand with an SU carb can embrace new tools.

It was through this very “modern” platform that I first reached out to him – sending an instant message while watching his podcast after he casually mentioned he was wintering in our beloved Gulf Shores. A simple invitation to our monthly meeting led to a truly endearing and fruitful friendship, not just for me but for all of us. Over the past three sessions, John has gained about 150 new friends, and we, in turn, have gained a delightful old chap with a modern “Twist.”

So, if an MG Master like John Twist can embrace



*Ben (right) introduces John Twist at the February session (photo by Robb Ogletree)*

technology to bring British car enthusiasts together across the miles, surely, we can tip our herringbone caps to the idea as well.

That, dear friends, is why I felt it fitting to pen that letter with the help of Chat GPT – part tribute, part

challenge, and part reassurance that we can honor the past without being left in it.

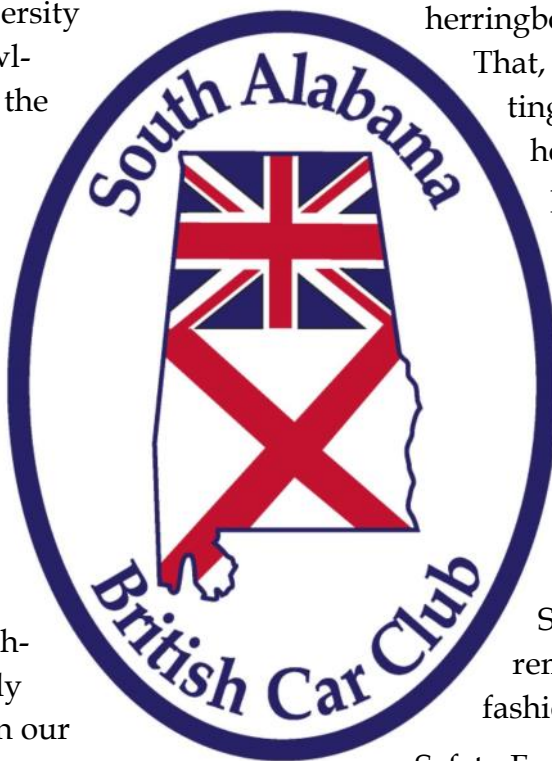
Now, if you’ll excuse me, I must go – ChatGPT is good, but it still hasn’t figured out how to properly set valve clearances on a 1968 MGB.

Some things, after all, should remain delightfully old-fashioned.

Safety Fast,

**Benjamin P. Cummings**

*Ben Cummings is the president of the South Alabama British Car Club. He promises that he can pass those “I am not a robot” tests on the Internet at least two-thirds of the time.*



## SABCC Club Officers

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Membership in SABCC is open to anyone with an interest in classic or modern British cars, and dues are only \$20 per year [*Inflation? Not here! Well, at least until 2025, perhaps-Ed.*].

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### Want a Club Shirt (or Jacket or Hat)?

SABCC uses Queensboro, which offers a large variety of embroidered shirts, jackets, hats, and other items, in men's, ladies, and youth styles, all of which can be embroidered with the SABCC logo. Here's it works:

1. Visit the [Queensboro site](#), find a shirt (or other item) you like, and note the style number, size, and color name (make sure the item is available in your size and color). We can usually get items at half retail.
2. [Send Ed. \(Michael King\) an email](#) listing what you want, including quantity, style number, color name, and size for each item.
3. When Queensboro runs one of their sales, I will place a group order – **but we need at least five to get the best pricing.**
4. Once the order is placed, I will send you an email with your total, which will include the price of your items plus shipping and tax.
5. When I receive the order (usually a couple of weeks) I will let you know.
6. I'll deliver your items at the next club meeting or event, and you'll reimburse me.

Simple, right? So, start shopping, and send me your list! If you have any questions, call or text Michael at 251-689-1040.

# Around the Bend

## Upcoming Club Activities



**April 22, 2025**

### Monthly Club Meeting

Don Carlos Restaurant, 29699 AL-181, Daphne — 6:00 to eat and 7:00 to meet.

**May 17, 2025**

### Annual Club Picnic

Oscar Johnson Park, 16811 State Highway 104, Silverhill, 36576, 11:00, \$10 per person. **The picnic takes the place of the regular May meeting.**

**May 24, 2025**

### Silverhill Veteran's Memorial Car Show

Highway 104 and CR 55, Silverhill. Watch your email for details.

## April 2025

SU	MO	TUE	WE	TH	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 CLUB MEETING	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

## May 2025

SU	MO	TUE	WE	TH	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 SILVER- HILL
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



# Sparks

## Club and Member News

### Brits on the Bay 2025

Our Panhandle British Car Association friends held the 31st edition of "Brits on the Bay" last weekend in historic Seville Square, and once again, SABCC turned out in force and took home several awards.



Top, dinner setup (photo by Tim Witzigreuter); bottom, PBCA president Paul Reese calls out awards (photo by Gail Sanders).

The festivities began Friday evening with the pre-show dinner, at the Museum of Commerce, a recreation of an early-20th century street in downtown Pensacola. Guests feasted on red beans and rice, meatball subs, and a huge variety of salads, sides, and sweets prepared by club

members.

On Saturday morning, the skies were clear and the temperatures were mild, and both stayed that way the remainder of the day. One hundred one of the 109 cars registered were on the field, covering 29 classes, ranging from a 1939 MG TA to a three-month-old Land Rover.

The day featured a raffle for gift baskets, a 50/50 contest, door prizes, and valve cover racing. SABCC and PBCA member **Eddie Toenes** won the racing for the second consecutive year.

When the awards were presented, eighteen SABCC cars were recognized, as follows

- **Andrea Bertagnolli**, 1974 MGB, 1st Place
- **Michael Bertagnolli**, 1977 MGB (modified), 2nd Place
- **Richard Bishop**, 1967 MGB, 1st Place
- **Richard Black**, 1999 Jaguar XJ8 VDP, 1st Place
- **Lyman Dykes**, 1959 Austin-Healey Sprite, 2nd Place
- **Tim Garrold**, 1939 MG TA, 1st Place *and* Preservation Award
- **Keith Jarvis**, 1978 MGB, 3rd Place
- **Kristine King**, 2025 Land Rover Defender 110 S P300, First Place
- **Jim O'Brien**, 1998 Morgan Plus 8, 1st Place
- **Tom Renick**, 1965 Sunbeam Tiger, 1st Place
- **Dave Roloson**, 2001 Jaguar XJ8 VDP, 2nd Place
- **Dwyke Rushing**, 2010 Aston Martin V8 Vantage, 2nd Place
- **Tom Schmitz**, 1955 MG TF 1500, 2nd Place
- **Tom Schmitz**, 1995 Jaguar XJS, 1st Place
- **Tom Schmitz**, 2007 Jaguar XK Coupe, 1st Place
- **Gil Stuart**, 1969 MGB, 2nd Place
- **Fred Veenschoten**, 1935 Morgan Sports, First Place

## The Show Did Go Ahead at Covington 2025

*story and photos by Noel Eagleson*

A week prior to the BMCNO's car show all the local weather channels were predicting heavy thunder storms rolling in throughout the day of the show. Organizing any large outdoor event requires months of prior planning and coordination with the local authorities and any thoughts of rescheduling may not be possible. The British Motoring Club New Orleans had decided that this would be a rain or shine event and indeed the weather turned out to be perfect, just a little overcast and slight breeze made for a pleasant event.

Once again, the quaint streets surrounding the Covington Trailhead Visitors Center echoed to the familiar sound of our much-loved British classics as they maneuvered into their allocated parking areas. Understandably the numbers were down, yet a great cross section of makes and models were on display with owners eager to discuss and show different features of their particular cars.

One reason to attend other British Club annual shows is a chance to see some less common cars. When will you see a 1964 Gordon Keeble GK1, one of only 99 produced or a 1963 Jensen CV8, perhaps a 1973 Jensen Interceptor Mk 3 (*photo below*) would be more to your fancy? Now at the



other end of the spectrum was an original Mini chopped and shortened; it looked like a "Noddy Car" but drew a lot of attention.

Quite a few had a typed note on the windscreen indicating that the car was "visitor friendly" allowing children and adults to have a photo taken sitting in the car. I thought this was a marvelous way of generating interest and making the show more family-oriented. SABCC-er Bob Zab-



zdyr (*photo above*) did a roaring trade throughout the day as attendees couldn't resist the chance to have their photo taken in his ubiquitous London Taxi.

Interestingly the organizers decided this would be a judged event and entrants who wish to be judged were to have the bonnet of their car open.

Having attended several out-of-state shows over this past couple of years I noticed that valve cover racing appears to be making a comeback, having been in the doldrums for some time. The New Orleans folks have built a very nice ramp and the run off is also longer which I feel makes for better racing and the viewing public seemed to enjoy seeing their favorite for a few seconds longer. They also gave kids an opportunity to try their skills which was wonderful.

Overall, a fine show and big thanks to our good friends in BMCNO for staging another great event. Safety Fast!



## Brits, Out and About

Clockwise from top left, **Mac McNamara** shared a photo of his Anglia at a display at Somerby on March 22, **Peter Lee** sent a photo of his Reliant Robin and a TR6 at the April 5 Silverhill Cars and Coffee, and **Pat Couling** shared a photo of an MGA at Silverhill event.





# Spannering

Tech, Repair, Restoration

## The Lazarus Projects

story by *Fred Veenschoten*

I have had the pleasure of reviving British cars that have been in long term storage or restoration that will not start. I've done about 14 of these over the past couple of years. Some were done in situ, some at my shop and most at **Bob Manske's** shop. There are some basic steps to the process:

1. Remove spark plugs and spin the engine to get oil pressure. We were unable to get oil pressure with two recent vehicles. An Austin Healey 3000 had the spin on oil filter adapter installed upside down which reversed the flow through the filter. The back flow preventer blocked the flow. The other was an MG TD. Thanks to **Noel Eagleson** being there that day as he showed me the plug to remove to prime the oil pump.



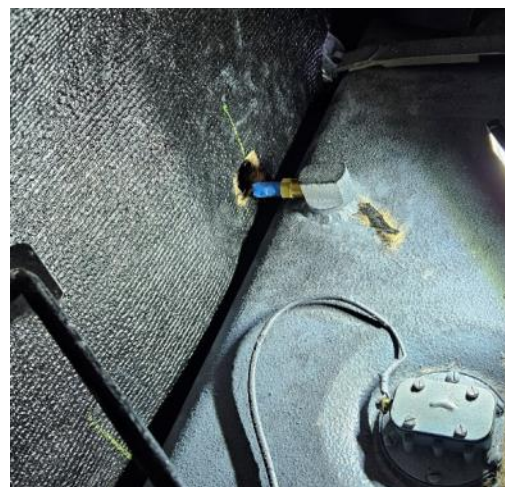
*The Austin-Healey 3000 on the lift (photo by Ed.)*

2. Now test for the points working. Take a volt meter set to 20 volts DC and put one probe on the coil wire going to the points, and ground the other probe. Turn the ignition on and crank the



engine. You should see the voltage reading flicker between zero and 12.

3. With the ignition on, do you hear the fuel pump? Again, on the Healey the pump ran but was loud. We found there was no fuel line from the tank to the pump. Now, there's your problem! On the TD, the pump wouldn't run. It had voltage at the pump but no action. I replaced the diaphragm and adjusted it to get it running. These diaphragms that have been in contact with Ethanol will get stiff as a board.



*No fuel line from the tank to the pump equals no fuel to the engine (photo by Tim Garrold).*

4. You could check for compression while the plugs are out by placing your thumb over the plug hole and cranking the engine. You will feel the pressure, and your thumb will be popped off the plug hole. A full compression test isn't needed, and the results will be low since the cylinders are dry from sitting up. This is a good time to squirt some oil in the plug holes.

Now that you have a running fuel pump and the points are working and the plugs are still removed, hook a spark plug to its plug wire and ground the body of the plug to the engine and again spin the engine to be sure you have spark.

*(story continues next page)*



## Lazarus Projects, continued

Put it all back together and see if it will start up. I have had a couple of cases where the fuel pump ran but didn't fill the carb bowls. This can be from the float needle being stuck in the valve seat. Sometimes a tap on the float bowl will free it up. The engine should run now.

If it does crank up but runs really rough or still won't start, take a look at the condenser. I have found that those made in China fail right out of the box. I've seen them fail on my first test drive.



Paul Reese works on the MGTD's brakes (photo by Ed.).

A great source for new ones is British Vacuum Unit (<https://www.britishvacuumunit.com/>). This is a great company and can do wonders with a worn Lucas distributor.

That reminds me of a couple of odd things. I got called to come to a members garage where he has a late model MGB. It would start but not rev up. It stumbled and ran just like it had a bad condenser but it had electronic ignition so that wasn't it. Turned out that the hose running from

the manifold to the brake booster was a very loose fit at the manifold. I removed the hose and put my thumb over the fitting and the engine ran like new. Another was a Morgan Plus 4 with twin Weber carbs. It had almost never run right since being restored with new engine. The owner struggled with it for years with sooting-up plugs, rough running (also electronic ignition). We finally found that the brand new Pertronix coil was causing all the problems.

[PBCA and SABCC member *Fred Veenschoten* is an accomplished mechanic and machinist, to the extent that he builds miniature steam locomotives from scratch. The clubs are indebted to him for his skills and his generosity in sharing them.-Ed.]



Speaking of bringing things back from the dead . . .

## Rusty Fuel Tank?

*story by Tom Renick, SABCC*

A real bummer! Started out on a beautiful day for an SABCC backroad tour last year, got half-way to the rendezvous point, and my here-to-fore trusty steed, Jetson, a green Alpine, stopped dead on her tracks. After several brief starts and stops, I called **Noel** to tow me back to the Garagemahal. After a critical, careful, and professional examination of all systems, we found excessive rust flakes were drifting from the fuel tanks and clogging the pickup at the gas line.

What to do . . . new tanks or clean out the old. I like original if possible but our go-to tank cleaner was said to have gone out of business. I called anyway and found the rumor to be true, but found that there was a place on Brookley that allegedly did it. Nosing around, I came up with Strachan Services (pronounced Straun) on Ninth Street. I dropped by there in my vehicle that was getting gas, and met Danny Strachan, owner. It turns out that he does indeed clean out and coat gas tanks. His work appears to be more on the industrial level but will do auto tanks. He also repairs starters, alternators, and radiators.

That little bit of detective work was the easy part. Ever try to get saddle tanks with piping out of the enclosed back of a Sunbeam? Not easy, but had to be done, and was finally able to drop the tanks off at Strachan's. In a couple of week they were ready. All I had to do was install them. Ever try to install Sunbeam tanks in those itty bitty enclosed spaces? Harder than getting them out. But, it was eventually done and a year later, gas is still flowing.

After Strachan cleans out the tanks, he applies Redkote, a substance he claims to have used for twenty years without complaint. So, if you are an Originaltarian like I am, and have need of any of his services, look him up – 1878 9th St, Mobile, AL, 36615, on Brookley Field.

## Auction Roundup: Aston Martins

*In celebration of the Brits on the Bay featured marque.*

### 2006 Aston Martin V8 Vantage Coupe 6-Speed



**Sold** for \$42,257 on Bring a Trailer

*With just 38k miles, this black over black coupe had only minor issues.*

### 2005 Aston Martin DB9



**Sold** at no reserve for \$26,000 on Cars and Bids

*V12 power, 38k miles, and a handful of flaws, this is a lot of car for the price of a new Nissan Altima.*

### 1988 Aston Martin V8 Volante Series 2



**Sold** for \$161,000 on Bring a Trailer

*This is an original-owner car with just 24k miles, and offered full documentation, fitted luggage, and a toolkit. It did have deterioration of the wood dash. Well-bought.*

### 2019 Aston Martin Vanquish Zagato Shooting Brake



**Sold** for \$415,000 on Bring a Trailer

*One of only 99 produced, and only 11 in the US, this V12 shooting brake sold on BAT in June 2024 for \$468,000, proving even exclusivity is not enough to overcome depreciation – or changing market conditions.*



# Spare Parts

## 15th Annual Shirley Looney Memorial Car Show (Or, that finger Fate points with is quite fickle)

*story and photos by Mac McNamara*

Saturday morning, 29 March, was a precursor of supposed typical British weather . . . and Fate had heard comments I made during the club meeting Tuesday night exclaiming my engine more reliable than an MG.

When I started the Anglia Saturday morning (in the dark), it was missing on one cylinder. With no time to troubleshoot much, I headed out to Langan park running at 50% power on 75% of the cylinders a 4-cylinder, 37 HP engine can provide.

As I turned north on University, the miss disappeared, and power returned for a wonderful ride to Langan Park. I (mistakenly) assumed Fate's Finger had made its point (get it?) and moved on to bigger and better things (silly ol' me . . . I'm driving a British car in typical British weather . . . comfortable and heavily overcast).



*The author's Anglia, boot open, next to David and Pat Couling's 1963 Mercury Meteor S33.*

There were a few kids that enjoyed the Hot Wheels track racing Don Pritchett had so graciously loaned us and some prizes were given out. The track attracted a bit of attention from kids and adults alike and this will become a standard part of the show.

Don, the Deep South Region wants to express many thanks for the opportunity. Back to the story.

Due to the expectation of inclement weather at any time, the Marines (retired, and otherwise) began judging as soon as cars and motorcycles arrived, making the tallying go a bit faster. As expected, shortly before noon, a 15-minute knock on the door by Mother Nature rushed the show to closure.

Plaques and trophies were handed out with yours truly taking first place in the import category. Even Ron and Harry were amazed.



*Harry and Ron with the First Place plaque*

Now, to bring them home after packing up show materials. Fate stuck her finger out to me again, and the entire way home, the number 1 cylinder let me know how ecstatic it was about working on a gloomy Saturday (yes, I found the problem cylinder before heading home).

## The Legend of the Thousand Dollar E-Type

*story and photos by Rodney McDonald*

That Saturday morning in 2008 started like most weekend mornings with my much better half already up, enjoying her newspaper (remember those?) and her second cup of coffee by the time I came shuffling into the kitchen, still in a morning fog.

"There's an estate sale next Saturday in Point Clear," she said, not looking up from the small ads in the paper. "The ad says there's going to be a lot of household stuff and furniture for sale. Oh, and 1969 Jaguar XKE." Suddenly, I was no longer foggy and changed course from the coffee pot to where my wife was seated to look over her shoulder.

"Is it a roadster, a coupe or 2+2," I asked. "Uh, coupe," she said. Naturally, being the nosey type, I had to read it for myself. It just listed the date and the approximate location on Scenic 98 south of Fairhope. A week from today.

After a couple of cups of joe, I called my good friend and Jaguar enthusiast, the late Richard Cunningham to fill him in. His curiosity was piqued as well, and he said he would do some digging. "Maybe we can get a look at it ahead of the sale," he said.

The week passed and on the Friday evening before the sale, Richard, his wife Donna, my wife Melissa and I met at a local pizza restaurant for supper. Richard said he had no luck getting any information about the Jaguar, but that we should probably meet early the next morning. With a plan well hatched, we departed and the next day we were at the bay front home site of the estate sale.

As we walked up the oak shaded gravel driveway to the house, we passed an open carport and there sat a very forlorn E-Type coupe on

four flat redline tires. Its Regency Red paint was overlaid in places with surface corrosion and it was obvious that there was much more corrosion within. A look in the side windows rewarded us with a view of a tan leather interior that had seen water – about three feet of it. There was a card under the windshield wiper with the asking price: \$2,000.

With our expectations well and truly tempered, we continued up to the house where the people running the sale were headquartered. We learned that the prices on everything were firm and not negotiable. That is, until 2PM when anything left on the grounds would be offered at half the asking price. We took a chance on the price and left to find enough mischief to keep us busy until 2 o'clock.

We arrived back at what must have been 1:59PM and saw a couple of gentlemen standing by the Jaguar deep in conversation about the car. Richard squeezed past them, quickly retrieved the price tag and we headed to the house. Ten minutes later, I owned my first (and only) Jaguar E-Type. Well, half of an E-Type, and not a very nice one at that. But, oh my goodness, even with the dirt and corrosion on the car, the lithe, athletic lines showed through.



*The 1969 Jaguar E-Type on arrival at the now-famous Garagemahal.*

*story continues next page*



## Thousand Dollar E-Type, continued

We departed the rarified air of Point Clear with a bill of sale, tag receipt and an envelope of paperwork to show that the transaction had taken place and headed back to Daphne to Richard and Donna's spacious garage/shop building to work out just what we were going to do next.

The following Monday, Richard had arranged for the collection of the maroon coupe and that afternoon, the E-Type was deposited at his spacious garage in all its run-down glory. It transpired that the old car had been under salt water. Twice. Hurricanes Ivan (2004) and Katrina (2005) had brought enough storm surge to flood the car up to its door handles. But the holes in the floor pans allowed the salt water to drain out...



*The Engine Bay. Note the gravel left behind by the floodwaters.*

We gave the old car a close look and quickly determined that a restoration would be a fool's errand on a car this far gone. We decided that the old Jag's highest calling would be breaking it for parts.

On the plus side, it was complete and had hard to find parts such as an air conditioning compressor mounting bracket, which Richard said was a rare item. The engine, gearbox and rear end were all present and accounted for, although the engine was seized. All of the glass

was in amazingly good nick and body pieces such as the bonnet, hatch and doors were acceptable. As Richard quipped, "We be in the parts business!"

We got down to stripping the car of its major parts, first removing the best of the body panels for storage. It was then time to start pulling the heavy bits: the driveline components. We drained the fluids out of the engine and gearbox to discover that most of the "oil" was actually seawater. And boy, did it reek. Disassembling the engine showed us that it wasn't all bad. The camshafts looked good as well as the head and other ancillaries. The dual Stromberg carburetors were too far gone to save, however.



*The interior was "fragrant."*

Stripping out the interior became an archaeology project. After removing (and disposing of) the seats we were rewarded with approximately \$1.87 in cash sprinkled about the floor. We also found evidence of its time spent in Las Vegas:

- A matchbook from the Sands Casino
- A DIY repair manual
- A 1971 California road map
- An assortment of spare interior bulbs
- Pens and pencils from various Vegas casinos
- The ugliest hammer we'd ever seen (dubbed the BFH on discovery)

*story continues next page*

## Thousand Dollar E-Type, continued

We removed the dashboard and discovered to our amazement that the water had not reached the dash top and the suite of gauges was in rather nice condition. The copper panel that housed the center gauge set was still shiny.



*The interior as seen through the open hatch.*

We quickly developed a storage system for the best bits and set aside the scrap for disposal. Now, we needed a plan to move the goods.

eBay was in its early days and we thought it would be the best way to get in touch with the people who needed Series 2 E-Type parts. The division of labor was that Richard would handle the packing and shipping and I would tend to the Ebay posts. We posted our first item, the air filter housing that sold for the princely sum of \$12.50. We were indeed in the parts business!

Other postings came thick and fast. We were shocked that we had bidders not only from the US and Canada, but also in Europe, South America and Australia. The stripped head went to Argentina. The pedal box was shipped to Italy. The bonnet wiring plug went to the UK. The gearbox tunnel cover found a home in Germany. We were an international phenomenon.

So we thought.

We spent many hours stripping parts, photographing them and getting them ready for their moment on stage. We shared laughs, skinned knuckles and almost endless conversation. If only all jobs could be this much fun.

Some of the bits stayed in our area, such as the limited slip differential that went into a highly-tuned Jaguar XK140 that SABCC'er and well-known British car restorer Mike Darby was building for a client. The hatch went to a car in Pensacola. Some of the glass was shipped to New Orleans. The passenger door was installed on Richard's 1964 E-Type since it was in better condition than the one on his restoration project.



*The interior was "fragrant."*

But the crown jewel in all of this was the iconic bonnet with its famous louvres and bulges. New reproduction bonnets were selling (at the time) for around \$9,000. We agreed that, taking this one's condition into account, we could ask a significantly lower price taking into account its condition and originality. We advertised it on Hemmings Motor News Parts for Sale web page thinking that we might reach a more enlightened audience. Besides, the ad cost us nothing since we were subscribers to the magazine.

We had a few inquiries and a couple of lowball offers, but we stuck to our guns. We were al

*story continues next page*



## Thousand Dollar E-Type, continued

ready firmly in the black for this project and we didn't want to discount what we thought was the best part of the car. After all, the body tub was fit only for scrap. No, we wanted our number.



*Richard Cunningham after harvesting an MGB overdrive gearbox from a scrapyard car*

Time passed and the sale of small bits tapered off. We still had the 4.2 litre engine block and aluminum bell housing as well as few odds and ends, but other activities took over and the eBay presence ended. We disassembled and boxed up the bonnet, thinking it would make it easier to ship in the event we had a buyer, but none was to be found. We would re-up the Hemmings ad when we thought about it, but we didn't put a lot of effort into it.

We had even planned a celebration of sorts whenever the sale might happen. We decided that we would split the cost of a bottle of 25 year old Macallan single malt Scotch and toast our success in rare style.

Sadly, it wasn't to be. We lost Richard in June of 2016.

I kept the ad live on the Hemmings site because that's what we did. We weren't going to give up. Remarkably, in late 2016, I got a phone call

from a gentleman in Arkansas. "Do you still have the Jag bonnet?"

\*HAPPY DANCE\* "Ahem, yes we do."

"I'll take it. I'm going to send a couple guys with a truck to pick it up. They'll have cash."

No haggle, no questions, no problem.

A date was set and right on time a couple of gentlemen in a U-Haul truck arrived. One of them was actually the father of the buyer. Of course, we had to give them a hard time about their Arkansas Razorback sweatshirts (after the cash was handed over, naturally) and they were just as tough on us about the Crimson Tide. After it was loaded up and goodbyes were exchanged, I watched the truck trundle down the driveway and felt a noticeable lump in my throat.



*The author with a "Jaguar grin."*

While it wasn't top shelf 25 year old whisky, I did splurge later on something a little higher up the ladder to celebrate. That evening I poured my dram, raised my glass and said, "Here's to you, buddy. We did it."

# Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor

As I wrote in this space in January, my wife is now the owner of a British motor, specifically, a 2025 Land Rover Defender 110 S P300 (that means it's a five-seat model, with the base-level trim package and a 296-hp turbo four).

I told her when we got her a British car that she would have to get more involved in the car clubs, and she took me seriously (which is not always a good idea). To that end, she's attended the last three PBCA meetings and a couple of tech days, and went with me to the Garagemahal when **John Twist** was working on my brother's MGB.

When Brits on the Bay rolled around, I guess I shouldn't have been too surprised that she got involved, but I did not really expect she would do as much as she did. At the March PBCA meeting, some of the ladies in the group encouraged her to participate, and next thing I know, she'd agreed to make a gift basket for the Saturday raffle, a dessert for the Friday dinner, and had signed up to serve food at the dinner. We also registered her Land Rover, which meant she'd be at the show all day.

**Kristine** loves cats, and rescues them, so her idea for a basket reflected her passion. It would be a kitty theme. She was soon ordering a soft basket, cat toys, a grooming kit, a soft blanket, treats, and more.

Her dessert was one she's made many times and always with great acclaim. They are properly called "toffee bars," but the person who gave her the recipe called them "idiot bars," because even an idiot (or a caveman?) can make them. They consist of a caramel syrup of butter, brown sugar, and vanilla poured over graham crackers, topped with chopped pecans, and lightly baked.

On Friday afternoon, I washed her Rover and hosed off its rubber floor mats, after I'd cleaned up my Jaguar XFR. With just 2700 miles, her Defender still looks brand new.

We got to the dinner Friday night and

both went to work; Karen Ianniello and I were registering cars and Kristine was dishing up meatball subs. When we finally stopped to eat, she seemed to really enjoy talking with our SABCC friends. She was also bidding on silent auction items, but did not win any.

On Saturday, the alarm went off at 5:30, and once we'd fed our many, many cats, we got ready to head to the show. I parked next to the registration area, while she put the Defender out on the field. I was absorbed with registration for the next three hours, but Kristine kept herself entertained, and was even persuaded to take advantage of the "buy the length of your car" deal for 50/50 tickets.

At the end of the day, only one of us won a class award, and it was not for my poor XFR. No, her Rover, the newest car on the field, won first place in the Britannia New Era class.

I've been involved with the British car hobby for more than 16 years, but the 2025 show was the most active Kristine has been. Since she's been so absorbed with taking care of her mom for the past several years (and her dad until his passing in 2022), I'm glad she was able to have this diversion—and I'm grateful for all those who have made her feel welcome.



*Kristine looks out over the show (photo by Gail Sanders, PBCA).*



# Classifieds

## 1965 Triumph Herald

Convertible (cloth top). Good candidate for restoration.

**Keith Jarvis**  
251-422-7979

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## Air /Acetylene Torch Kit

Has gas. \$20. See at the Garagemahal in Daphne.

**Tom Renick**  
251-661-8333

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## 1956 MGA

[Note from Ed.: This was sent to our webmaster, Mike Japp, by a member of the English Motoring Club of Mississippi. We have asked for photos and details but have not yet received them.]

One of our elderly members is selling his house on Ono Island and wants to sell his non-running 1956 MGA. It has not been driven for the past four years due to brakes and a leaky water pump. The owner says to offer it at \$5500 or best offer for a quick sale. His son lives in Pensacola and can show the car to interested folks.

**Keith Anderson**  
601-829-2573 (no texting – landline)

## 3-piece Tool Box

Noel Eagleson is selling Mike Darby's 3-piece rolling tool box. It is three tool boxes together for \$425.00. They are Craftsman brand. If new, the price for these would be around \$600.00. Accepting cash only.

The bottom rolling "Quiet Glide" tool box has 5 drawers and measures 26.5" wide, 18" deep, and 34" tall (from the floor – it has wheels).

The two tool boxes that sit on top have 3 long drawers on the bottom, 6 smaller drawers on the top one, and together they measure 42" wide, 17.5" deep, and 21.5" tall. There are keys for all three top pieces.

Please note that this is the sale of the tool boxes only and does not include tools.



**Noel Eagleson**  
(251) 404-3216  
noeleagleson@gmail.com

## 2024 British Car Festival



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And now, for something completely different . . .



*PBCA member and Lotus (and Corvette) owner Taber Tompkins is known for his snide comments about MGs, so how is it that he was actually working on one at Bob Manske's garage? This MGTD belongs to **Catherine Hajcak**, whose late father restored it. Ed. thanks **Tim Garrod** for this unprecedented photo.*

## Spark & Spanner



South Alabama British Car Club

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Mobile, AL 36618



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