

Spark & Spanner

The Official
Publication of
the South
Alabama British

September 2025



Payments must accompany the application
Make checks payable to: "South Alabama British Car Club"
or "SABCC" and mail to:

Donna Eagleson - Treasurer
25604 Friendship Road
Daphne, AL 36526

ENTRANT REGISTRATION FORM

Last Name	First Name	MI
Address		
City	State	Zip
Phone	Email	
Club Affiliations		

CARS TO BE ENTERED

	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	BODY STYLE	COLOR	FEE*
1						
2						
					Total Registration:	
					Fees Due:	

* \$25.00 if entry is received on or before October 1st, 2025
\$30.00 if entry is received after October 1st, 2025
** For each Additional Car, add \$15.00

Want a T Shirt? \$ 15.00

PLEASE SPECIFY SIZES & QUANTITY

Pre-order only!!!!

Orders for T-Shirts MUST be received no later that October 1st

	Small	Medium	Large	XL	2XL	3XL	4XL	Amount Due:	Total
With Pocket								x \$15.00	
Without Pocket								x \$15.00	
Long sleeve w/ no pocket								x \$15.00	

Grand Total Due (Registration and T-Shirts):

Friday Night Welcome Dinner free to all registrants at FUMC Christian Life Center at 6:30 p.m. the 17th.

Free coffee, tea, and doughnuts for early entrants. There will be a food truck available for lunch.

Waiver: In consideration of this entry, I waive any and all claims for myself and my heirs against the South Alabama British Car Club, it's officers and members, Fairhope United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church of Fairhope, their officers, and any sponsors of this event for injury and illness which may result directly or indirectly from my participation. I also give my permission for use of my name and/or picture in any broadcast, telecast, or other account of this event.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



From the President

Ben Cummings

Companions

Last month I told you about the “Sprong” that I recently purchased. I’ve been busy with the little car. **Pierre Fontana** has helped with the distributor, the head, and the carburetors. By the time this letter makes it to publication, I may have the carburetors installed and the engine running.

Last weekend was a great milestone. I installed the head and tested the compression. To my great relief I had a very consistent 160 psi in each cylinder. A previous owner had done extensive work to the car (maybe because I suspect it had been wrecked). The pistons are stamped “0.060.” So, the engine may have a little more power than when it originally left the assembly plant. And that makes me happy.



Companion 1

I spend a lot of time in the garage, and I have two companions while I work. My little yellow cat lounges around and periodically will glance at me to make sure that I’m still working. He has been a companion for many years and seems to have the same affection of British cars as me. And he has even made one of my cars his

little apartment. I’m glad to have him keep me company, but I am also glad to have him around to keep the rodents away.



Companion 2



The other, more recent companion is a green Praying Mantis. His movements are slow, and he is sneaky. When I’m not looking, he will disappear and then later reappear somewhere else. When I walk past him his little triangular head and bulbus eyes will follow me, so I know he is aware of my presence. He seems to study me with a greater intensity than the cat. Almost as if he is trying to learn about old British car repair and maintenance.

My two little companions watch over me as I get the Sprong ready for the British Car Festival. I’m comforted by their presence. They seem to keep me going as if I’m trying to impress them with my work. “See what I did today”, I ask them. And I imagine them saying, “Well done, but hurry up. The festival is only about a month away.”

Safety Fast,

Ben

Ben Cummings is the president of SABCC.

SABCC Club Officers

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VP-Membership	Rick Black
Secretary	Peter Lee
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Newsletter Editor	Michael King

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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? Tariffs? Not here! – Ed.*].

British Car Festival is Supported by



North American MGB Register

The only MEMBER-RUN organization
for MGB, MGC, Midget, 1100/1300 and
Post Abingdon Car owners.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP \$30 (\$45 overseas)
• *Dash plaque* • *Membership card* • *Window decal*
• *Six bi-monthly issues of The MG Driver,*
a 68-page informative magazine.
• *Annual national convention – a four-day MG party!*

North American MGB Register

PO BOX 876 • Downers Grove, IL 62897-0876

Toll-free phone: 800-NAMGBR-1

www.namgbr.org

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



September 23, 2025

Monthly Club Meeting

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

October 3 and 4, 2025

Renaissance Euro Fest

Renaissance at Colony Park: 1000 Highland Colony Pkwy, Ridgeland, MS 39157. No entry fee but entries must be pre-approved. For more information, go [here](#). A 1935 Swallow Sidecar SSI Coupe (Jaguar predecessor) will be featured.

October 7, 2025

BCF Planning Meeting

Pier House, 5872 Battleship Pkwy, Spanish Fort, 36527 – 6:00 to eat and 7:00 to meet.

October 17 and 18, 2025

British Car Festival

Fairhope United Methodist Church, 155 S Section St, Fairhope, AL 36532. Friday dinner starts at 6:30 in the Family Life Center; the show field opens at 9:00 Saturday morning.

October 21, 2025

Monthly Club Meeting

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

October 25, 2025

Lillian “Best of Decades” Car Show

Lillian Methodist Church, 12770 S Perdido St, Lillian, AL 36549, 8:00 a.m., \$25 by Oct. 13 or \$30 thereafter.

September 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	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025

SU	MO	TUE	WE	TH	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
						RENAISSANCE EURO FEST
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		BCF MEETING				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
						BRITISH CAR FESTIVAL
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
		CLUB MEETING				
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Sparks

Club and Member News

British Car Festival Update

The 35th iteration of the British Car Festival is just over a month away, and at the risk of hyperbole, *Ed.* will say this might be the best show ever. Why? Well, as of Sept. 10, 2024, we had 39 cars registered; as of Sept. 12, 2025, we already have 52. Second, we are on track to exceed last year's record sponsorship total, having already received 98.75 percent of 2024's income. Third, show chair **Peter Lee** says all the committee members have their teams in place and their responsibilities well in hand.



*In case you've forgotten what the British Car Festival looks like, here's a reminder (photo by **Robb Ogletree**)*

What could possibly go wrong? Obviously, we cannot control the weather, but over the years, mid-October has been a good time to have a car show in southwest Alabama. Let's pray our blessings continue. Second, we could always have a freak occurrence, such as space aliens or brain-eating zombies, but the risk of that should be quite low. Car electrical issues – well, that's another story.

However, what could impair show success is

not having enough cars to make the event interesting to our participants and the general public. Peter wants to encourage folks to register their cars, early and (if you have more than one British motor) often.



*Valve cover racing will be back, and **Peter Lee** is already boasting about sweeping the awards (photo by **Robb Ogletree**)*

If you do have more than one British motor, and are trying to decide which to bring, here are the classes that as of Sept. 12 have no entries:

- Jaguar Classic Saloons (all four-doors prior to 1995)
- Jaguar XKEs (E-Types)
- MGB and MGC GTs, 1965 – 1980
- Classic Minis (all models before 2002)
- Modern Britannia (post-2000 cars that are not Jaguars, Land Rovers, Lotuses, MINIs, Morgans, or Range Rovers)
- Triumph Spitfires and GT6s
- Motorcycles
- Vehicles Under Restoration

So, turn in your registration form, get out the Simoniz and the Hide Food, and prepare to join the fun Oct. 17 and 18. The show won't be the same without you.

SABCC's Newest Taxi Owners

story and photo by Mac McNamara

Kathy and I are the new owners of **Peter Lee's** FX4 (London Taxi). We will be working towards making the driving car stop easier than it does right now. We discovered the front brakes are not engaging when the pedal was pushed. By



the show, one of us should be able to drive the car to the show (and stop once there) while the other brings the Anglia. We may not be able to give Bob Z. a run for the money, but one day, we may be able to say it is comparable. I have taken a note from some of the *Motor Trend* car fix-it shows and wrote a bunch of stuff to do on to the windshield. (That will ensure the front window is clean at the show at least!)

The History of the Austin FX4

(excerpted from an article on the London Vintage Taxi Association website)

In 1958, the most famous of all London taxis, the Austin FX4, was introduced. It remained in production, with various modifications, for 39 years. This wasn't because it was such a good vehicle — it had many shortcomings — but because neither Mann and Overton, Carbodies nor Austin could find the money to replace it in the troubled economy of the 1970s and 1980s.

Carbodies made two attempts to produce a taxi of their own, the FX5 of 1978 and the CR6 of 1982, but neither went into production. In 1982, Carbodies bought the production rights to the

FX4 from Austin's owner, British Leyland. In 1985, Carbodies' owner, Manganese Bronze Holdings Plc purchased Mann and Overton and formed London Taxis International Plc (LTI) and they developed three new versions of the FX4 with Land Rover engines, being the FX4R, the FX4S, the FX4S-Plus. The final version, the Fairway of 1989, was powered by a 2.7 litre Nissan engine and was considered to be the best version of all. Production of the Fairway ended in 1997 after a total of more than 75,000 FX4s had been built.

Auction Roundup: London Taxis

1967 Austin FX4



Sold for \$14,175 on Hemmings

This taxi, powered by an Austin 2.2-liter gas engine, was extensively refurbished by the seller over a ten-year period. The only noted flaw was that the meter did not work.

2003 LTI TXII London Taxi



Sold for \$4,000 on Bring a Trailer

London Taxis International introduced the TX-series to replace the FX4; this car was built for the North American market. Powered by a Ford Diesel, it had several issues.

1949 Nuffield Oxford Taxi



Sold for \$17,500 on Bring a Trailer

This FX4 predecessor with a Morris 1.8-liter four was in top condition, as reflected by the winning bid.

Spare Parts

Captive Imports: The British Cars Sold by American Marques

story and pictures by Rodney McDonald

There has always been a market for smaller cars in the USA and a number of automakers built cars here to meet the need. Prior to World War II, the American Austin Car Company produced cars under license from the British Austin Motor Company. Going bankrupt in 1934, its assets were purchased and rebranded American Bantam Car Company. It gained some fame as the designer of the World War II Jeep.

But, we want to take a look at those “captive imports,” i.e., cars built overseas by subsidiaries of American manufacturers specifically for their home markets. Some of them came to the US to be sold alongside their American stablemates as small second cars for prosperous postwar buyers.

Ford of Britain led the way starting in 1948 by setting up a North American sales office to ex-

war debts.

Ford of Britain worked with US Ford dealers and found orders for over 12,000 UK-built Anglias, Prefects and Thames vans the first year of operation. By the mid-1950s, “English Fords” were accepted as more conventional than some of the oddities coming out of France and Germany at the time. In 1959, Ford sold over 42,000 UK-built cars in the US alone.



1959 Ford Prefect

The rakish 105E Anglia brought styling similar to that seen in late-1950s Detroit Ford products. Built to a price, Anglias were on most buyer's lists for that second car that marked a certain so-



1960 Ford Anglia (Flickr user autohistorian)



1949 Ford Prefect (H&H Auctions)

plore the US market to help carry out the UK government's “Export or Die” order to bring in desperately needed foreign currency to settle its

cial status. Later, the larger Cortina hit the US

(story continues next page)

Captive Imports, continued

market and found sales success with both the Mark I and Mark II versions, with sales peaking in 1968 at over 22,000 cars. US sales of UK-built Fords was ended in 1970 with the introduction of the US-built Ford Pinto.



Ford Cortina Mk II (Brightwells Classics)

Although a little later to the game than Ford, General Motors needed to find an offering for smaller car buyers as well. Pontiac was designated as the US seller for GM's captive import: Vauxhall's Victor Super.



Vauxhall Victor Super (Wikipedia)

US Vauxhall imports began in 1957 with the Victor saloon and estate body styles. GM arranged for 1,500 cars per month to be brought into the US with retail prices starting at just over \$1,800 (or about \$21,000 in today's money). The Vauxhall Victor's style was somewhat reminiscent of Chevrolet's "Tri-Five" series of sedans, which gave them a bit of panache in American buyer's eyes.

By 1961, the Vauxhall party was pretty much over. GM introduced their line of "compact" cars and Pontiac's Tempest offered more room, comfort and power than the British alternative. Today, US specification Vauxhalls are indeed rare.

To not leave out our Mopar fans, we have the Plymouth Cricket. Coming along much later than the initial wave of captive imports, the Cricket was a product of Chrysler-owned Rootes Group in the UK. Known there for marques such as Humber, Sunbeam, Hillman and Commer, Chrysler chose the Hillman Avenger to become Plymouth's captive import.



Plymouth Cricket (Flickr user philippos)

The 1971 rollout of the Cricket resulted in sales of 28,000 cars. Soon, customer complaints of poor workmanship, rough running and worst of all, body corrosion caused the Cricket to be struck from many buyer's shopping lists. No amount of "groovy"-themed advertising could divert attention from the car's poor reputation in the market. Fewer than 14,000 units found buyers in 1973 when Chrysler pulled the plug on the Cricket.

Soon, Chrysler would sell the Rootes Group – by then renamed Chrysler Europe – and all of its marques to Peugeot-Citroen.

[Rodney sent some vintage ads for the "captives;" they're on the next two pages-Ed.]

The Finest Examples of British Good Taste and Craftsmanship . . .

VAUXHALL Victor Super

Behold the low and lovely lines of this elegant successor to the American-made-the-overseas Vauxhall Super. It has you an eye for beauty, a taste for luxury—and a shrewd appreciation for value, then this is your car!

The Englishmen who make this Vauxhall fully understand American demands for convenience and comfort. You'll find superior equipment for fast . . . vacation-size luggage space . . . panoramic windshield and rear window . . . and American style graphics.

VICTOR SUPER offers you a choice of seven long-lasting exterior colours: Black, Silver Grey, Royal Blue and Kewanna Green. Two-tone exterior colour combinations include Royal Blue, Silver Grey and Kewanna Green with Regency Green lower body.

VAUXHALL Victor Estate Wagon

As England's most popular all-purpose conveyance, this lively new Estate Wagon widens horizons, gives new meaning to the word versatility. For in a twinkling, you can convert from handsome five passenger sedan to useful load carrier—with 13 thousand wonderful uses.

Now its big 8-door convenience . . . its smart long, low lines. You'll discover there's a dashing new look and elegant style waiting . . . new overhead baggage and four packing long assembly . . . new wrap-around bumpers that offer effective side as well as front and rear protection.

VICTOR ESTATE WAGON offers you a choice of four solid exterior colours: Black, Silver Grey, Royal Blue and Kewanna Green. Two-tone exterior colour combinations include Royal Blue, Silver Grey and Kewanna Green with Regency Green lower body.

beautifully styled inside and out!

British good taste and craftsmanship are reflected in every line of the Vauxhall. Exteriors achieve that graceful, low styling without the slightest sacrifice to space or comfort. The body work is tight, exact, solid. There are four easy-to-enter doors. Interiors reveal the best of traditional tailoring and painstaking hand work.



COMPARE VAUXHALL FOR VALUE

A Quality Product of England Since 1904—Your Best Import Buy!

AUTHERE BRITISH FUEL ECONOMY

—Here's performance plus economy and it's sure to appreciate wherever you travel. With big bore and short stroke design, Vauxhall's exciting new 4-cylinder "over-square" engine offers you efficient high-speed low-pollution action for low maintenance and fuel economy. It has rugged valves and displacement parts for easy servicing and long life expectancy.



FULL INSTRUMENTATION FOR EVERY NEED

—Vauxhall's smartly styled instrument cluster is easier to see and within easy reach. Note the American size 1 inch diameter speedometer with full range tachometer. The standard type American gearshift, offering new to home.

And, you're sure to appreciate the panoramic wind shield that affords unobstructed vision . . . its hands-free heater, motorized folded under ventrator panel (standard at no extra cost).



A CHOICE OF INTERIOR TRIM AND COLOUR

—Vauxhall Super offers choice of interior colour and upholstery—all Marokko or fabric and Marokko. Seat cushions are not spring construction with deep seating of foam rubber.

There's no sill trim mounted on the back of the front seat. The rear door handles have "true wheeling" safety lock buttons—on their parents especially appropriate. Also, floor covering for Super model is rubber mat floor, carpet (rubber mat, floor and rear in Estate Wagon).

VAUXHALL Sold and Serviced by Pontiac Dealers Throughout America!

. . . trim, taut and precision-built!

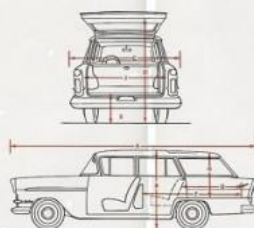


Converts Either Way In Seconds!

Looks one-way and in 10 seconds the rear seat folds forward against the back of the front seat. Then, lower back of rear seat and down all three's in 10 seconds! Back from conversion of rear compartment door and in less than 10 seconds to fold down it, you've created your extra-large family sedan (with very generous luggage space) into a two-seater with seat "right-out" load space!

EXTERIOR DIMENSIONS	
A. Overall length	107.7 in.
B. Overall width (excluding)	58.3 in.
C. Overall height	61.8 in.
*Wheelbase	79.0 in.
*Track (front and rear)	56.0 in.
Minimum ground clearance (3-point, load)—Super Sedan, Estate Wagon	6.3 in.
D. Head room, under lowest set door (height)	65.2 in.
E. Rear loading height (curb weight)	53.5 in.
*Landing rails	34 in.
INTERIOR DIMENSIONS	
Head room (cushions uncompressed)—(front seat)	54.2 in.
Leg room—(front seat)	42.0 in.
—(rear seat)	28.0 in.
*Hip room—(front seat)	52.0 in.
—(rear seat)	52.0 in.

LOAD SPACE DIMENSIONS	
F. Floor length (rear seat folded down)	63.0 in.
G. Floor height (lowest upright rear seat)	40.0 in.
H. Maximum cargo area length at floor	25.0 in.
I. Maximum cargo area width at floor with inside wheelwells	52.0 in.
J. Tail floor opening width (maximum)	17.0 in.
K. Tail floor opening height (maximum)	26.0 in.
Curb capacity of load space (without rear seat)	25.0 in.
Curb capacity of load space (with rear seat folded)	48.0 in.
(See limitations table for space weight allowed)	
Curb weight (Estate Wagon)	2500 lbs.
Curb weight (Super)	2300 lbs.
*Always use Super.	



This Vauxhall Victor brochure from 1960 emphasized the "good taste" of the British-built car, but according to the "Curbside Classic" blog, the car suffered from corrosion issues, was slow, and at \$2000 for the saloon and \$2400 for the estate, was priced close to contemporary full-sized Fords and Chevrolets. Contrast this to the Cricket (see ad, next page), which sold for \$1915 eleven years later, compared to \$1780 for the base model VW Beetle.

Cricket. (Chirp, Chirp)

All-new from Plymouth. The little car that can. \$1915*.

Happy day. Plymouth comes through with the little car that can.

Which means you can, too . . . Have more fun. Get good economy.

And have some nice things you can't have in some of the other import-sized cars.

Because we've taken some extra steps. We made our new Cricket a four-door,

and gave it the kind of tender lovin' engineering care we put into all our cars.

At a sacrifice of economy? No way. Cricket's priced down at \$1915*.

To sacrifice fun? Just the opposite. We've expanded it. Gone to four doors,

with safety locks to keep kids in. No climbing over other passengers.

No lifting packages over the front seat. Everybody's happy.

You can park Cricket like the little car it is; ride in it like the bigger car it isn't. You can get good gas mileage from its

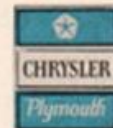
thrifty Four. Choose from an optional automatic or manual transmission.

There's standard power disc brakes up front. And 14 cubic feet of trunk space in back.

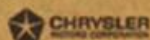
If nothing else, depend on this: Cricket is Chrysler-engineered, Chrysler-built—and that can make all the difference.

Cricket. Available at selected Plymouth Dealers*.

*Manufacturer's suggested retail price for a Cricket. Price excludes state and local taxes, destination charges, and suggested dealer new-car preparation charges. Whitewalls shown are \$28.65 extra.



**Coming
Through.**



History of the Bugeye Sprite

*adapted from a presentation by Robert
"Bugeye Bob" Willsie*

[The Bugeye Sprite is the featured car at the PBCA 2026 Brits by the Bay show. PBCA member Bob Willsie made a presentation on the car at the August PBCA meeting. It's recapped here.-Ed.]

The Austin-Healey Sprite Mark 1, known as the "Bugeye" in the US and the Frogeye in the UK, was introduced in 1958 and sold for three (model) years, when it was replaced by the "square Sprite" and its platform mate, the MG Midget. Sprites remained in production until 1971, while the Midget soldiered on until 1979.

The Sprite resulted from a "meeting of minds" with the goal of making a cheap sports car. The conspirators were Leonard Percy Lord, President of British Motor Corporation (BMC), and Donald Healey, champion rally driver and designer, and their target was a sports car for the price of a Morris Minor (£600 in 1956, or roughly £19,000 or \$26,000 US today.)

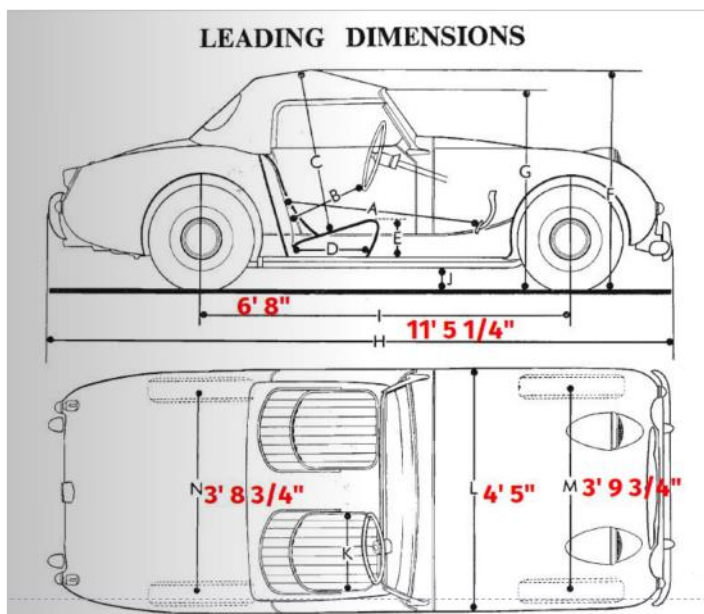
Primary design duties were turned over to Geoffrey Healey, Donald's son, with chassis work by Battle Bilbie and body by Gerry Coker, designer of the Austin-Healey 100. They were told to make it simple and inexpensive to produce, out of components already in BMC production.



The Bugeye's fac was the result of serendipitous cost-cutting.

The original design was to have rotating headlights for a streamlined hood. That lasted until the first cost accountant showed up and left us with the grinning face (and fixed headlights) we see today.

Power [a relative term-Ed.] was by the 948cc Type A Engine, a four-cylinder, overhead valve mill. Fuel was fed through twin 1 1/8" (HS2) SU carburettors. The engine produced 43 horsepower at 5,500 rpm, and 52 lb-ft of torque at 3,300 rpm. This was sent to the rear driving wheels via a 4-speed 'box, with synchromesh in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th gears only. The hydraulic clutch master cylinder was in the same body as the brake master cylinder, and actuated a Borg & Beck single dry plate clutch of 6 1/4" (16 cm) diameter. The throw-out bearing was carbon graphite or copper graphite. The rear axle, with a 9/38 ratio, was described as "3/4 floating" perhaps because it hangs off the 1/4 elliptical springs.



Key dimensions of the Bugeye

In the front, the car's independent suspension featured coil springs, solid upper coil mounts, floating wishbone (A-frame) lower coil mounts,

(story continues next page)

History of the Bugeye, continued

and lever shock absorbers. Steering was rack-and-pinion, and drum brakes were used. Out back, 10-leaf 1/4 elliptical rear springs were used, with one end socketed into the body and the other attached to the axle. Radius arms prevented axle roll. As with the front, the rear had lever shock absorbers and drum brakes. The parking brake was a manual link.



The 943 engine

The Sprite featured monocoque or “uni-body” construction, meaning no traditional frame was under the body. Frame rails and cross members were used for the engine mounts and front suspension. The floor pans, driveshaft tunnel, sills, and cockpit and rear bulkheads are main structural components. Both footwells are punched for easy building of left-hand or right hand-drive versions. The spare tire goes in the “boot area” behind the seats, and the cars did not have a trunk (boot) lid, so good luck on finding anything other than the spare tire that gets put into the boot area.

Early cars had nine studs on top of the windscreen for attaching a hood (top); later cars had

slots on top of the windscreen. Hard tops and tonneau covers were “accessories.”



Top, a needy Bugeye; middle, the first production Sprite, ANL/501, which needs nothing; bottom, Bugeyes remain popular in vintage racing events.

According to Wikipedia, 48,987 Mark 1 Sprites were produced. The cars remain popular despite their low power output and “basic” construction, usually commanding much higher prices than later “square” Sprites and Midgets.

Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor

Resources

Last month, I asked you to send me updates to our club resource directory, a compendium of parts houses, mechanics, trim shops, and other resources you might need to restore your British car, or help you keep it on the road. I'm grateful to each of you who responded, and I sent out an updated directory last month. If you didn't get it, let me know (it's also on the website under "Technical Resources").

As you may recall, I'm working on a "carport find" 1967 MGB. "Working" might be stretching the truth, because I've only been able to get to the Garagemahal a couple of times to do some actual wrenching. I'm pleased to report that due in large part to help from **Noel Eagleson**, with assistance from **Tom Renick**, the little car's original engine spins freely!



Look at how clean that valvetrain is!

What I have been doing is assembling the resources I need to complete this project. Mostly, that means parts. So far, I have on hand a new fuel tank, a new radiator, water pump, and hoses, most of the ignition components, a new (blue) soft top, and lots of other bits, some new

and some vintage. I'm awaiting delivery of my (blue) seat covers, (blue) trim panels, (blue) carpet kit, (blue) seat belts, and (blue) fuzzy door seals.

I know I will still need a set of tires; the Michelin XZXs on the car have plenty of tread and are still holding air (or at least the inner tubes are) but they're definitely out of date. Other parts will need to be cleaned, painted, or refurbished, but I and my banker are hopeful I have most of what I need.

Along the way, I've made a decision to avoid the largest and best-known parts house, not because I think they're inherently evil, but because I wanted to spread the wealth (literally – I have the receipts) to smaller vendors, as well as individuals selling parts online. I'm a frequent visitor to the MG Experience's buy, sell, and trade forum, and I've been able to source a number of items that way. Most fun are the couple of times I've bought "grab boxes" of parts because they contained a couple of items I needed. Look for me to have a bigger presence at the November Autojumble.

But resources are more than parts. I've already mentioned my good friends Noel and Tom. They, and club president **Ben Cummings**, helped me to get the car out of that carport and to the Garagemahal, and they are always ready with advice and assistance (Tom even erected a canopy with an old dropcloth over Noel and me to shade us from the August sun while we freed up the engine). **Rodney McDonald** also inspected the car, and has been a font of expertise.

And that, friends, is what a car club is all about. Car shows, events, meetings, and the like are great, but what really makes being a part of SABCC worthwhile is the sharing of knowledge, support, and even commiseration as we try to keep these old cars on the road, and this hobby alive. Those resources – well, they are priceless, and irreplaceable.

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Want a Rolls-Royce that will fit in any garage—or playroom? You just missed out on this Tri-Ang pedal car, built in the mid-1960s in the UK. Mechanically, it was well-sorted, but it might have electrical issues—a battery is not present, so the lights and horn might not work. Nonetheless, it sold Sept. 12 on Bring a Trailer for \$7,000 (!).

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South Alabama British Car Club

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