

# Spark & Spanner

November 2025

The Official  
Publication of  
the South  
Alabama British  
Car Club



# From the President

Ben Cummings

Man, oh man. A month passes by quickly. It was only four weeks ago that I wrote the last letter from the president. It is sometimes hard to think of something to write about, but not this time. Some of you may recall that the club had an event October 18. The annual SABCC British Car Festival was a huge success. So many people worked together to make the show spectacular and a financial success.

The show was spectacular for so many reasons. One being the weather. A week before the show I began monitoring the weather forecasts. And there was a high chance of rain for Saturday the 18th. I was not the only one watching the weather as I received an email from another worried member suggesting that we postpone the festival. But our show chair, **Peter Lee**, knew better than to believe that someone (especially a weatherman) could predict the weather. As they say in theatre, "the show must go on." Ignoring the chance of inclement weather, we proceeded as planned. The Saturday of the show was beautiful. The day was blue skies and mild temperatures, perfect for a British car festival. Thankfully, not until late Saturday night did the rains blow through our area. But by that time all British cars were safe and dry in their garages with trophies proudly displayed on their hoods (bonnets).

The festival has evolved into something more than just a lot of parked cars. The valve cover race draws a crowd and is exciting to watch. A lot work goes into the making of a valve cover race car. Not only are they constructed to go fast down the track, but great attention is given to the design. Some are just as much art as they are race car. Last year I was assigned the stressful task of monitoring the finish line and calling out the winner. Thankfully **Bob Z** constructed an electronic device that I feel confident did a much better job knowing which car crossed the finish line first than me. The

races are fun to watch. It was especially fun to watch some of the kids race their dads' covers. Their enthusiasm made watching the races all the more fun.

And there was another race that involved kids. **Don Pritchett's** Hot Wheels race and give-away is a fun activity for the younger crowd. Each kid gets to select and take with them a Hot Wheels car. This year Don gave away over 50 cars! That means there were at least that many kids at the show. Hopefully some of them will grow up with the interest of British cars and our hobby will pass on to the next generation.

And then of course we had our vendors, the food truck, and the snow cones. 2U Tires and Vintage Euro were our two vendors this year. I heard today 2U Tires picked up some business from our show. And Vintage Euro indicated that they sold many products this year and left with cash in their pockets. The food truck, Tin Tin Rock'n'Roll, had a steady line of business and I helped the snow cone lady leave with less ice than she came with. The vendors and food help make the festival fun.

But one more spectacular thing about this year's show is that it netted over \$6,000. That is more than any of our festivals has ever made. We should all be very happy about that. We all thought the income from last year's show was great at about \$5,000. And this year exceeded that! You may recall that when I was first elected president I was worried about our income and proposed to increase dues. The thought of increasing dues was discouraged by many members, and the topic was dropped. If our festivals keep making money and covering our annual expenses, we should have no reason to increase dues. But, it takes a lot of work to make the show a success. We need to all work together and get involved to help the festival continue to be successful. I look forward to next year's show and I look forward to working with many of you to make it the success that we have become accustomed to.

Safety Fast,

**Ben**

## SABCC Club Officers

President	Ben Cummings
VP-Activities	Michael Bertagnolli
VP-Membership	Rick Black
Secretary	Peter Lee
Treasurer	Donna Eagleson
Member at Large	Stan Anderson
Member at Large	Dick Bishop
Member at Large	Don Blosser
Member at Large	Tom Renick
Member at Large	Frank Stabler
Technical Advisors	Pierre Fontana, Scott Paradise
Webmaster	Peter Lee
Historian	Robb Ogletree
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.].

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Saturday

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GANANOQUE

# Around the Bend

## Upcoming Club Activities



**November 11, 2025**

### BCF "Hot Wash" Review

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

**November 25, 2025**

### Monthly Club Meeting

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

**December 14, 2025**

### SABCC Christmas Party

Homestead Village, 924 Plantation Blvd, Fairhope, 12:30 p.m., \$25 per person.

**Reservations due to Donna Eagleson Nov. 25.**

Please bring an unwrapped toy for a child in need. **This event serves as the December meeting; no meeting will be held Dec. 23.**

## November 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	<b>CLUB MEETING</b>					

## December 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
	<b>XMAS PARTY</b>					
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

# Sparks

## Club and Member News

### British Car Festival 2025

We did it . . . again. Hopefully you have been able to catch on sleep, reunite with your family and friends, and reintroduce yourself to your dog or cat. Because the 2025 British Car Festival is behind us. But, I hope you have also taken a few minutes to congratulate yourselves, as this show should be remembered as one of the best in our 35 years of hosting a car show.



*Last-minute tidying (photo by Robb Ogletree)*

Let us please review the statistics, since that is always part of the show recapitulation. We registered 149 entries – not the highest ever, but very close. We had 132 motors on the field, and more importantly, we had at least one entry in each of our 31 classes. (As for the 17 cars that registered but did not make the show, some had last-minute mechanical issues, and some were folks who registered their car knowing it wouldn't be ready, but still wanted to support the club. To the former, better luck next year; to the latter, thank you and keep turning those wrenches.) We had vehicles ranging from 1930



to 2025, and our featured marque, Morgan, drew six cars with a total of 22 wheels (not counting spares).



*Morgans (photo by Donna Eagleson)*

We also had a surfeit of sponsors ("an excessive amount of something"). Three major sponsors, 21 general sponsors, and 52 class sponsorships have put us in an enviable financial position. We appreciate all these fine organizations and individuals who underwrite not only the show, but our club activities throughout the year.

As for the show itself, early forecasts of a chance of precipitation proved to be highly exaggerated, as the weather was Chamber of Commerce-perfect all day. No major glitches were noted, and we were able to begin the awards ceremony at just after 3:00. The Valve Cover races were

spirited as always, and **Bob Zabzdyr**'s new digital timing system forestalled fistfights over first-place finishes.



Valve cover racing (photo by **Robb Ogletree**)

Backing up about 20 hours to the Friday night dinner, **Donna Eagleson** and her team once again performed magnificently, ensuring that more than 100 guests got plenty to eat. And **Andrea Bertagnolli** arranged for a large number of door prizes, which were gleefully received by those fortunate enough to win one [*not me-Ed.*].



A glum-looking **Tom Renick** and a cheerful-looking **Beth Klees** welcome guests to the Friday dinner.

At the end of the day, 83 registrants received a first, second, or third-place plaque [*not me-Ed.*], we gave out five Major Awards [*not me-Ed.*], and

four more folks received one of **Don Pritchett's** Special Awards [*not me-Ed.*]. Don also handled the voting for two of the Major Awards, Next



MG Village (photo by **Robb Ogletree**)

Generation and Kid's Choice, and made the trophies for those winners [*not me-Ed.*]. And, **Tom Renick** drew names for cash door prizes, size 50, to ten lucky participants [*not me-Ed.*].

The list of folks who made BCF 2025 such a rip-roaring success is too long to include here, but show chair (and club secretary, and webmaster) **Peter Lee** certainly deserves special commendation. **Ed.** has done that job, and it's not easy.

So, as my pastor likes to say at the end of his message, now what?

Well, we celebrate all we did well, dis-



Show Chair **Peter Lee** receives one of his three third-place plaques from **Ed.** [which is three more than Ed. got] (photo by **Robb Ogletree**)

cuss opportunities for improvement, and get ready to make BCF 36 (Oct. 16 and 17, 2026) even better. Is it too early to suggest that the Silver Anniversary of **Ed.**'s 2001 Jaguar XJR would be an outstanding theme?

[A full list of winners is on pages 9 and 10-**Ed.**]

## Comments from the BCF Chair

Hey everyone. Peter Lee here, your British Car Festival Chair. I just wanted to add a quick note to the BCF Committee group for another job well done. You know who you are and your efforts have once again been rewarded with an excellent production.

We have a lot of experience in our group and are getting in some newer members that are helping with the different show aspects and doing a great job. That thanks should also be expanded to the sub-teams like the Friday set-up crew, parking team, and dinner servers. All of those groups are cogs in the big machine that is the BCF.

As to what you achieved, we had another strong showing of registrations and sponsorships. We actually had an issue this year with multiple entities wanting to be the main sponsor, so we opened it up to three this year. We earned more than any show ever which will allow our club to finance more activities for the members to help keep our membership involved and spreading the British car love.

We always get a lot of comments about how it seems to be a well-oiled machine every year but what they don't see is all the work going on in the background that I see. Every year the system gets tweaked a bit. If its good it stays and if not it goes. That's how these things slowly improve and keep fresh. We are also not afraid to honestly evaluate what went right or wrong.

Next year I'd like to kick around the idea of kids valve cover racers that are a bit lighter and an adult division for the serious competitors to help organize that chaos. The electronic timing system that **Bob Zabzdyr** designed did wonders for the race results and didn't have us all seeing whose slow-motion video cell phone was clearest like some SEC ref making the big call on replay. That was a much-needed addition by our

"Taxi Driving Technowizard" and is much appreciated.

Another idea is a designating a person to make sure that we do some aimed socializing during the show with the out of town visitors and see how they get along. I had some time to chat with the Pensacola Mini group and some of the Mississippi visitors. Both were first-timers but excited to return next year. **Donna Eagleson** squeezed in some time also to get back feedback from a variety of sources to help gauge the overall show success. I also had a few comments on an online form and pay system to ease registrations for the more computer literate among us. That should be an easy add to the website this year [*the registrar would be very happy to see this-Ed.*].

So, to the team and everyone that carried any size piece of the load, a big thank you. Without you we would have no show. This is how we keep the hobby alive by showing what we do. And remember, we will be having a hot wash up meeting the 11<sup>th</sup> at our usual haunt [*the Pier House-Ed.*] and will chat about ideas for next year. I'm already looking forward to 2026.

## British Car Festival 2026

celebrating 25 years  
of *Ed.*'s Jaguar XJR



October 17, 2026  
Fairhope, Ala.

[Did someone say 2026?-Ed.]

## Kids Add to the BCF Experience

story by **Don Pritchett**

Participation in the Kids Choice Award at this year's BCF was outstanding. Fifty-four kids turned in ballots selecting their favorite car at the festival. These kids voted on 31 different little British cars as their favorite. The Lotus class is clearly their favorite. That class accounted for 33% their votes with the top three cars being separated by one vote each.

The Kids' Choice Award went to the yellow 2006 Lotus Elise belonging to Hunter Fikes of Hamilton, AL. Congratulations to him and thanks to all the kids voted and all the parents who brought them to a car show.



*Griff Greaud accepts his "Hot Wheels Champ trophy from **Don Pritchett** while displaying his winning car, an MGB GT. Griff was the youngest of nine competitors who entered our Hot Wheels race, yet he was able to survive the round-robin elimination tournament to become the champ (photo courtesy **Don Pritchett**).*

When the kids turn in their ballots they get to pick out a Hot Wheels car to keep. The cars are of the British variety or a pink car because the girls participate in this activity too. It is always fun to watch them choose a car an immediately unwrap it and try it out on the Hot Wheels race track. Kids can be seen thru out the day showing off their cars or racing them and just having fun at the festival. [No BCF event means more-Ed.]



*From top, kids vote their favorites; Hot Wheels races; the Kids' Choice trophy which, along with several others, was made by **Don Pritchett** (middle photo by **Donna Eagleson**, others by **Robb Ogletree**)*

# British Car Festival 2025 Winners

Class	First Place	Second Place	Third Place
Austin Healey 100/3000	Peter Brauen, 1964 3000 Convertible, Kiln, MS	Terry Lopez, 1966 3000 Convertible, Lacombe, LA	Rick Huber, 1964 3000, Baton Rouge, LA
Austin Healey Sprite and MG Midget	<b>Mark Bodiford</b> , 1974 MG Midget, Mobile, AL	Benny Stiegler, 1967 Austin-Healey Sprite, Covington, LA	<b>Fletcher Thompson</b> , 1971 MG Midget, Mobile, AL
Austin Healey "Bugeye" Sprites	<b>Tom Schmitz</b> , 1959 "Bugeye" Sprite, Lillian, AL	<b>Lyman Dykes</b> , 1959 "Bugeye" Sprite, Fairhope, AL	<b>Chuck Wimberly</b> , 1959 "Bugeye" Sprite, Fairhope, AL
Jaguar Classic Sports	William Nix, 1960 XK150, New Orleans, LA	<b>Bill and Sandra Cashion</b> , 1951 XK120, Fairhope, AL	
Jaguar Classic Saloons	Lenny Dunn, 1972 XJ6, Covington, LA	Joseph Stephens, 1985 XJ6, Cantonment, FL	
Jaguar XKE (E-Type)	Jack & Cheryl Wade, 1966 E-Type FHC, Ponchatoula, LA	<b>Jack Steinmetz</b> , 1967 E-Type FHC, Fairhope, AL	<b>Roger Koby</b> , 1973 E-Type OTS, Pensacola, FL
Jaguar XJ-S/XJS	<b>David Menaker</b> , 1992 XJS, Mobile, AL	Etienne Jackson, 1996 XJS, Fairhope, AL	
Jaguar Modern Sports	Jack Wilson, 2008 XK Coupe, Fairhope, AL	Adam Holden, 2015 F-Type, Biloxi, MS	<b>Tom Schmitz</b> , 2012 XKR, Lillian, AL
Jaguar Modern Saloons and Shooting Brakes	Greg Underwood, 2005 XJ8L, Montgomery, AL	Jack Wilson, 2003 S-Type, Fairhope, AL	<b>Michael Bertagnolli</b> , 2001 XJ8 Vanden Plas, Spanish Fort, AL
Pre-War MGs and MG T-series	James Hester, 1930 M-Type, Russellville, AL	Michael Manning, 1952 MGTD Mark II, Fairhope, AL	<b>Robert Manske</b> , 1955 MGTF 1500, Milton, FL
MGA Roadster and Coupe	<b>William Doran</b> , 1959 MGA, Daphne, AL		
MGB and MGC Roadsters, 1962 – 1974	<b>Mario Gabriel, Jr.</b> , 1974 MGB Roadster, Fairhope, AL	<b>Andrea Bertagnolli</b> , 1974 MGB Roadster, Spanish Fort, AL	Keith Sanders, 1969 MGC Roadster, Milton, FL Clay Johnston, 1972 MGB Roadster, Mount Olive, MS
MGB Roadsters, 1974½ – 1980	<b>Larry Jaubert</b> , 1979 MGB Roadster, Mobile, AL	Jennifer King, 1977 MGB Roadster, Sullivan's Island, SC	Tommy Williams, 1974.5 MGB Roadster, Mobile, AL
MGB and MGC GTs, 1965 – 1980	<b>Stewart Reisinger</b> , 1966 MGBGT, Daphne, AL	<b>Michael Bertagnolli</b> , 1969 MGBGT, Spanish Fort, AL	
Mini Classics	<b>Pete Sinclair</b> , 1971 Austin Mini, Gautier, MS	<b>Fred Wilson</b> , 1999 Mini Rover, Robertsdale, AL	
Modern MINI, Generations 1 and 2	<b>Jim &amp; Jill Rosene</b> , 2006 MINI Cooper S, Daphne, AL		
Modern MINI, Generations 3 and 4	<b>Jim &amp; Jill Rosene</b> , 2023 MINI Cooper S, Daphne, AL	Emar Hargrave, 2024 MINI Hardtop, Pensacola, FL	Traci Pritchett, 2020 MINI Cooper S, Semmes, AL Jana Holmes, 2021 MINI Paddy Hopkirk, Mobile, AL
Modern Britannia	<b>Dwyke Rushing</b> , 2010 Aston Martin V8 Vantage, Cantonment, FL	Hunter Fikes, 2024 Ineos Grenadier, Hamilton, AL	
Classic Britannia Sports	<b>Jim O'Brien</b> , 1963 AC Cobra, Fairhope, AL	<b>David Menaker</b> , 1987 TVR 280i, Mobile, AL	<b>Peter Lee</b> , 1985 Sinclair C5, Spanish Fort, AL
Lotus	<b>Jerry Hall</b> , 1967 Lotus Elan, Fairhope, AL	Taber Tompkins, 2007 Caterham 7SV, Crestview, FL	Dean Duplantier, 1963 Lotus Elan, Mandeville, LA

## British Car Festival 2025 Winners (continued)

Class	First Place	Second Place	Third Place
Morgan	<b>Fred Veenschoten</b> , 1935 Morgan Sports, Pensacola, FL	<b>Jim O'Brien</b> , 1998 Morgan Plus 8, Fairhope, AL	Hunter Fikes, 1971 Morgan 4/4, Hamilton, AL
Small Britannia Saloons and Shooting Brakes	Cliff Hughes, 1957 MG Magnette, Mandeville, LA	<b>Mac McNamara</b> , 1960 Ford Anglia, Mobile, AL	<b>Peter Lee</b> , 1993 Reliant Rialto, Spanish Fort, AL
Large Britannia Saloons and Shooting Brakes	Paul Reese, 1959 Armstrong Siddeley Star Sapphire, Pensacola, FL	Mark Brown, 1974 Rolls-Royce Corniche, Prattville, AL <b>Robert Zabzdyr</b> , 1983 Carbodies FX4R Saloon, Spanish Fort, AL	<b>Mac McNamara</b> , 1971 Austin FX4, Mobile, AL
Land Rover Classics	Matt Busbee, 1995 Defender, Mobile, AL	<b>Walt Bolton</b> , 1968 Series IIA, Fairhope, AL	Chris Corley, 1993 Defender, Mobile, AL
Land Rover Modern	<b>Charles Bell</b> , 2014 LR4, Mobile, AL	Thomas Pokrefke, 2022 Defender, Lombard, IL	<b>David Menaker</b> , 2025 Defender Sedona, Mobile, AL
Sunbeam, All Models	<b>Tom Renick</b> , 1965 Tiger, Mobile, AL	Colin McCormick, 1967 Alpine V, Mandeville, LA	<b>Tom Renick</b> , 1963 Alpine, Mobile, AL
Triumph Classic Sports, pre-1969	<b>Karen Roloson</b> , 1961 TR4, Daphne, AL	<b>William Heritage</b> , 1962 TR3B, Loxley, AL	
Triumph TR6	Jan Songy, 1976 TR6, Hammond, LA	<b>Phillip Hayde</b> , 1976 TR6, Daphne, AL	Brad Mayo, 1972 TR6, Madisonville, LA
Triumph Spitfire and GT6	<b>Aaron Graeb</b> , 1963 Spitfire, Mobile, AL	Blitz Welch, 1979 Spitfire, Montgomery, AL	
Motorcycles	<b>Jack Steinmetz</b> , 1975 Norton 850 Commando, Fairhope, AL	<b>Robert Manske</b> , 2012 Triumph T-100 Bonneville, Milton, FL	
Under Restoration	<b>Michael &amp; Sherry McCord</b> , 1952 MG MGT, Foley, AL	<b>Debbie Zimmerman</b> , 2004 Jaguar XJ8, Fairhope, AL	<b>Peter Lee</b> , 2003 MINI Cooper S, Spanish Fort, AL

### Major and Special Awards

**Richard B. Cunningham, Jr. Best In Show:** Paul Reese, 1959 Armstrong Siddeley Star Sapphire, Pensacola, FL

**Pastor's Pick:** Jim O'Brien, 1998 Morgan Plus 8, Fairhope, AL

**Wilson Preservation Award:** Fred Veenschoten, Pensacola, FL

**Diamond in the Rough:** Mac McNamara, 1971 Austin FX4, Mobile, AL

**Longest Distance Traveled (in British Car):** Thomas Pokrefke, 2022 Land Rover Defender, Lombard, IL

**Hard Luck Award:** Hunter Fikes, 1971 Morgan 4/4, Hamilton, AL

**When Pigs Fly Award:** Ben Cummings, 1961 Austin-Healey Sprite, Mobile, AL

**Next Generation:** Jack & Cheryl Wade, 1966 Jaguar E-Type FHC, Ponchatoula, LA

**Kids Choice:** Hunter Fikes, 2006 Lotus Elise, Hamilton, AL

### Valve Covers

**Best Engineering:** Bob Zabzdyr, Spanish Fort, AL

**Best Looking:** Bill Weeks, Pensacola, FL

**Top Gun:** Fred Veenschoten, Pensacola, FL

## BCF 2025 Major Award Winners



From top, Paul Reese's 1959 Armstrong Siddeley Star Sapphire, Jim O'Brien's 1998 Morgan Plus 8, Jack and Cheryl Wade's 1966 E-Type FHC, and Hunter Fike's 2006 Lotus Elise.

## Auction Roundup: BCF Winners

How are the models that won the BCF doing at auction?

### 1960 Armstrong Siddeley (Best of Show)



Sold for £16,000 (\$21,000) at Mathewsons (UK)

In "lovely" condition, 79k miles, running well, and with only a bit of patina, this car met pre-auction estimates.

### 1988 Morgan Plus (Pastor's Pick)



Sold for \$49,650 on Bring a Trailer

Finished in Deep Brunswick Green over tan leather, this 23k mile car was in fine condition. Well bought.

### 1966 Jaguar E-Type FHC (Next Generation)



Sold for \$110,000 on Hemmings

Offering "show-quality" paint, an updated interior, a rebuilt engine with 15k miles on the clock, a 5-speed conversion and other performance upgrades, this fine car brought top money – which it deserved.

### 2006 Lotus Sport Elise (Kids Choice)



Sold for \$49,000 on Bring a Trailer

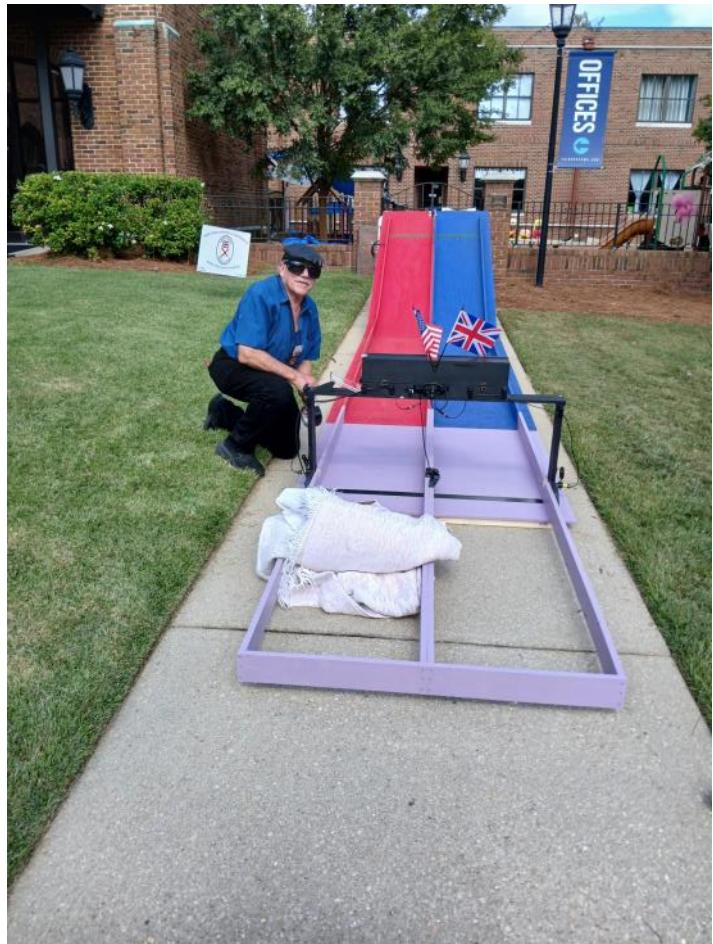
One of only 50 Sport Elises delivered to the US in 2006, this 11K mile Saffron Yellow over black and yellow car had no issues.

## More BCF Photos



Top left, entering via pre-registration; top right, **Charles Bell's** Land Rover in full regalia; middle left, **Tom Renick** had competition in the Sunbeam class; middle right, modern Jaguar saloons; bottom, a panoramic view of the Morgans (top left photo by **Donna Eagleson**, all others by **Robb Ogletree**)

## Still More BCF Photos



*Top left, Hunter Fikes' Morgan is pushed on the field, causing him to earn the Hard Luck Award; top right, **Bob Zabzdyr** sets up his digital valve cover race winner determination device (DVCWDD); bottom right, **Fred Veenschoten**'s 1935 (green) and 1952 Morgan (burgundy) 3-wheelers; bottom left, Fred receives the Wilson Preservation Award from **Peter Lee** (top photos by Donna Eagleson, bottom by Robb Ogletree)*

## Gulf Coast Autojumble

Forty-three members and friends of PBCA and SABCC attended the Gulf Coast Autojumble, held Nov. 2 at **Tom Schmitz**'s "Garagemahut" in Elberta, Ala. **Tim Witzigreuter** reports that "lots of parts, magazines, and other things [were] being sold for many different marques and years by six or seven folks." The event also featured a valve cover launch event, as chronicled on the next page by **Jack Cowsill**.

Herein we present a few photos for those who were unable to attend as well as those who wish to relive the day.



*Above, and top right, shopping the wares; upper middle right, **Tom Schmitz** visits with, from left, SABCC members **Dave** and **Pat Couling** and **Kathy McNamara**; lower middle right, **Donna Eagleson** and **Noel's** daughter **Leslie**; bottom right, **Fred Veenschoten's** Morgan and **Tim Witzigreuter's** MGB (lower middle photo by **Paul Reese**, bottom right photo by **Tim Witzigreuter**, others by **Donna Eagleson**)*

## World Record Valve Cover Launch

story by Jack Cowsill, PBCA

In an incredible engineering feat, the world record distance record for a British valve cover launched by a trebuchet was established at 28' 2". It occurred during the annual British Autojumble 2 Nov at **Tom Schmitz's Hut**. It was witnessed by a crowd in the tens. Gasps of "woah!," "is that going to hit my truck?," and "is there any more ranch dip?" were heard.

This accomplishment effectively ends the search



*The trebuchet in action (photo courtesy Jack Cowsill)*

for valve covers going to where no valve cover has gone before, And it eclipses all previous episodes of British valve covers racing, floating, diving, and flying.

This all came about during discussions about how to launch a valve cover into space. Sadly, it became a conflict when it was learned that there was a SpaceX launch scheduled during the 2 Nov Autojumble. Undeterred, **Eddie Toenes** and Bob Willsie conceived of an engine lift trebuchet. Subsequently, much time was invested into how to spell and say trebuchet, and wiping ourselves off after **Bob Manske's** pronunciation attempts.

An initial prototype was developed and demonstrated during a club tech event. Many potatoes were impacted into what is now known as the Manske Milton Potato Farm LLC.

An operational version was developed and the trebuchet was erected at the World Famous Hut in Elberta Ala. Tensions were high due to multiple inadvertently mashed potatoes during test events. John Stephens graciously provided a MGA starter as an additional counter weight. The first launch with a valve cover turned out to be the record breaking result.

A special thanks to all that assisted with the design and development, especially Taber Tompkins for bringing donuts. And to Bob Manske who "donated"



*Our "sponsor," without whom this glorious achievement would not have been possible.*

multiple pieces to the trebuchet. Also to Tom Schmitz for allowing the use of his newly designated Hut Launch Pad #1." And finally to our sponsor, 3M Duct Tape.

# Spannering

Tech, Repair, Restoration



## A Quick Guide to Automotive Elastomers

*story by Rodney McDonald*

The owner of a vintage car will, at some point in their ownership, have to replace rubber items on their car. Whether it's aging due to heat or light exposure or by material breakdown from normal service, nearly all rubber compounds have a finite service life.

While this guide is not a comprehensive one, it should help you understand the intended service for these materials (called "elastomers" in the trade) by their common or their trademarked names.

**BUNA** or **NITRILE** has a useful service temperature range of  $-65^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $+250^{\circ}\text{F}$ . It is useful for alcohols, petroleum oils and gasoline. It is not good for acids or ketones.

**NEOPRENE** is not normally found in services where oils and gasolines would be used. It can be used for weather seals and similar trim. It has a useful service temperature range of  $0^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $+175^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

**BUTYL** has similar characteristics as Neoprene, but it does well in services where it is exposed to ultraviolet light and ozone. Its service temperature range is  $-30^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $+300^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

**VITON** can be thought of as an elastomer version of Teflon. It is a "fluorinated elastomer" and works well in gasoline, oils, other hydrocarbons and solvents. Viton is expensive, but is usually a "once and done" product. Its operating temperature range is  $-40^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $+450^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

**HYPALON** is a member of the polyethylene

family and it is good with sunlight exposure and resist weathering. It can be used with petroleum products. It has a useful temperature range of  $-30^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $+250^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

**SILICONES** are useful in hot oil service and can be found in many engine gaskets. It can be used in temperatures as high as  $+600^{\circ}\text{F}$  intermittently, but its normal useful range is  $-100^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $+450^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

So, what if you find some unknown black rubber material in your hoard of miscellaneous garage goodies that you really can't identify but can't bring yourself to throw away? There is a way to determine what family of elastomers it may belong to by using a copper wire and a butane torch.

Copper pyrolysis is a simple test to see what you might have on hand. Heat your copper wire with your torch until it glows. Take the glowing wire and touch the rubber in question. Allow it to melt a bit of it on the copper wire. Avoid inhaling any vapors that might be created. Take the goo-coated wire and heat it with your torch until it burns on its own. The resulting flame color will help determine what the rubber in question could be:

- Green flame: Likely Neoprene or Hypalon
- Orange flame: Likely EPDM (ethylene propylene diene monomer, a type of synthetic rubber that is commonly used across many industries)
- No flame: Likely Viton or silicone

# Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor

## We've Always Done It This Way

Do you know who invented the digital camera? Or who built the first prototype quartz watch? If you didn't guess "Kodak" and "the Swiss watch industry," you'd be incorrect.

That's right—an engineer at Kodak, named Steven Sasson, invented the digital camera in 1975. And the Swiss, the world leaders in watchmaking, had an early lead in quartz watch technology. However, Kodak was doing very well with film and the Swiss built the world's finest mechanical watches, so others would take these innovations and run with them.

When I joined SABCC in 2009, its British Car Festival (BCF) was held at the Fairhope beach, north of the pier. The show did well to attract 80 or 90 cars, and net income was modest. Now, the BCF registers about 150 cars each year, and its proceeds allow the club to host the annual **John Twist** seminar and other activities throughout the year.

Some of the changes were forced on the club. The City of Fairhope changed its policies, which required a move from the beach. After a few years at its next home on the state college campus, construction of an amphitheater meant moving to Fairhope Methodist. However, this proved serendipitous, as the church, with its large, shaded parking areas, dining hall, restrooms, and other amenities, is an outstanding



*Steven Sasson with his invention (Kodak.com)*

show site.

Other changes have been intentional, and have served to make the BCF better each year. Developing three sponsorship levels has increased income. Pushing pre-registration has eliminated lines on Saturday morning, and allowed the club to better lay out the field. Valve cover racing was reintroduced to great acclaim, and this year's new digital timing system (thanks, **Bob Zabzdyr**) means no more disputes. **Don Pritchett's** Kids' Choice award is so popular that children now come looking for him to vote for their favorite cars, just as they did the year(s) before, and Peter Lee involves youth with the Next Generation voting.

As registrar for the BCF, and PBCA's Brits on the Bay, I am pleased that both clubs have allowed me to introduce new ideas along the way. I use an Excel spreadsheet to capture entrants' information, and that allows me to produce a printed windscreens card for each vehicle; laminating these protects them from the elements. I have also automated the results report with that spreadsheet, meaning that I can produce a full list of first, second, and third place winners in all the classes within about 30 minutes of the votes being counted. This year, we had the both the SABCC and PBCA results ready before 3:00.

But other members have introduced new and innovative ideas. I mentioned the Twist seminar; that resulted from SABCC President **Ben Cummings** reaching out to John to see about setting up an opportunity while he makes his annual winter pilgrimage to the Gulf beaches. **Noel Eagleson** introduced the "Autojumble" idea about eight or nine years ago; it's now one of SABCC and PBCA's most popular events.

So, the next time someone suggests something new, be careful about saying "we've always done it this way." Kodak declared bankruptcy in 2012, brought down by a technology it invented.

## British Car Festival 2025



## The Morgan Motor Company

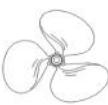
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Sami Saleeb  
Sarah Beth & Jake Mason  
Taber Tompkins  
The Palms Pet Resort & Boarding  
The Royal British Legion  
Tom Schmitz  
Tommy & Joanne Hartwell  
Tony Breeden  
Tractor Supply Company  
Veterinary Medical Center  
W.R. Bishop  
Waggy Tails

# Classifieds

## 1974 Jensen Healey



Two cars that I turned into one with spare parts. Structural metal work, including new floor pans, completed by BMC Restorations in Kiln, MS. Includes hard top, Dellorto manifold, new aftermarket seats, and installed, complete AC system. Needs light bodywork and paint; ran when restoration began but not operated in over ten years. \$5,000 invested, asking best offer.

**Cortland Musgrave**

**504-559-4960**

**heytony9999@hotmail.com**

## 1961 Triumph TR4



This TR4 underwent a comprehensive restoration and modernization by the late **David Roloson**, a dedicated club member. The frame-off restoration was completed over four years, from 2011 to 2015. Below are the details:

- Rebuilt 2,138cc inline-four (from 1965 TR4A)
- 4 Speed (from 1965 TR4A)
- Front disk brakes (Toyota 4-piston calipers on TR6 Brackets)
- 10 1/2 Inch drilled and slotted brake rotors
- Stainless steel brake lines
- All suspension pieces are new
- All glass is new
- Lights are LED or Halogen
- Battery relocated to trunk with cutoff switch
- Custom paint is 1993 Porsche mint green and Boulevard Black base/clear coat—3 coats color & 3 coats clear
- Custom interior by River Rags Coden, AL



## 1962 Bentley S2 Rolls-Royce Engine

[The 1962 Bentley used a V8 engine with a displacement of 6231cc (380ci), developing 185 hp and 339 lb.-ft. of torque-Ed.]

**Bill Everett**

**251-510-8999**

The TR4 is now available for purchase at \$16,000. It can be seen at the 2025 British Car Festival.

**Miller Roloson**

**(615)-332-1787**

## 1951 Jaguar XK 120 FHC

The time has come for me to try to sell my 1951 Jaguar XK 150 FHC. It was fully restored 1988–2005 and was in storage from 1990–2005. I purchased it in 2009 (see full story in July 2024 *Spark & Spanner*). It has been repowered with a 5-liter (302 ci) Ford V8 engine and has a 5-speed manual transmission. I have added air conditioning (heat and cool), disc brakes on front, 60-spoke chrome knockoff wire wheel with hubs, bushings, seals and bearings. It has black leather seats. The car is in great shape and ready for a new home. Asking \$100,000; highly negotiable!

**Bill Cashion**

704-500-4843



## Car Hauler Trailer

16 foot Dual Axle Steel Trailer with Electric Winch. Measures 74 inches wide (inside measurement). Includes 4 tire hold down straps. Electric Mile Marker 8000 lb. winch and battery are included. Also includes one spare tire. \$2600 or best offer.

**Monica Bachmann**

**(850) 217-1765 (call or text)**



## Original Dealer Manuals

I have some old original 1965 dealer manuals from Lucas and Girling, I can track part numbers compatible with your car's age and model, some with U.S.-made part numbers conversion. If you need a specific part number, I have wiring diagrams from 1977 and SU carburetor books from the early 60's. Pull my chain if you are in need of info.

## *Pierre Fontana*

251-232-8331

*pierrefontana@bellsouth.net*

## VEHICLE EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

## Wanted: MGB Bonnet

I am looking for a good hood (bonnet) for a late model MGB.

## *Keith Wasdin*

850 417-5279

*mkwasdin@bellsouth.net*

## Holiday Cards

The former editors of *The British Marque*, Bruce Vild and Faith Lamprey, have a wide selection of holiday cards featuring your favorite British cars. A box of 20 cards (with envelopes) is just \$10 plus shipping.

For more information, and to place an order, click [here](#).

<b>INCHES</b>	<b>MM</b>
1/8 "	3
3/16 "	4
1/4 "	6
5/16 "	9
3/8 "	10
7/16 "	12
1/2 "	13
9/16 "	15
5/8 "	16
11/16 "	18
3/4 "	19
13/16"	20
7/8 "	22
15/16"	24
1 "	25

Have you ever encountered a fastener that doesn't fit your socket? Maybe it's metric! **Jon Gosnell** sent Ed. this handy cross-reference, so you'll know what size to grab.

## And now, for something completely different . . .



*Just another (albeit very nice) Bugeye up for auction, right? Not exactly. This car, [listed on Bring a Trailer](#), is a \$100k Bugeye. That's right, "a refurbishment commissioned in the late 2000s cost more than \$100k and was conducted by The Motorway of Fort Collins, Colorado." Among its many upgrades, the car has a supercharged 1275 and a five-speed. The acronym "GLWTA" (good luck with the auction) is particularly apt.*



South Alabama British Car Club

PO Box 18036

Mobile, AL 36618



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