

Spark & Spanner

July 2026

The Official
Publication
of the South
Alabama
British Car
Club



From the President

Ben Cummings

This past Fourth of July we celebrated our nation's 250th birthday. To honor our country, I hope you kept your British car in the garage. At this time of celebration there was no need to remind our fellow Americans about British sports car superiority. Instead, I hope you hid your grille badge and enjoyed all things American.



Maybe you have a friend in the Mustang Club or know someone with a Corvette. If you do, complement them on the beauty and power of their abominations (oops, I mean classic car).

My family always does the Fourth big. We raise the flag, say the pledge, and sing "God Bless America." Then we have a children's patriotic parade. And then we grill ribs and chicken thighs and later in the day make homemade ice cream in an old-fashioned White Mountain hand-crank ice cream churn. It's hard work and we take turns churning. When the ice cream is frozen, thick and creamy, everyone gets a scoop and it is never enough.



This year we had Scouts to raise the flag (see above) and lead us in the pledge. And some of my brothers and I dressed up as Continental Soldiers. I dressed as a proud Minute Man waving a colonial flag (see photo, left) and occasionally yelled to the king across the pond "don't tread on me!" (I mean King George III of 1776 as we do not have a king in this country.) A few Samuel Adams were consumed, and I assure you no tea was served.

And now that all the fireworks are exploded and the celebrations are over, it's fine to look for your keys and drive that little British car again.

Safety Fast,

Ben

On the cover: Don Pritchett, the club's newest charter member (see p. 6) with his award at the Pensacola show (photo by Robb Ogletree)



North American MGB Register

P.O. Box 876

Downers Grove, IL 60515-0876

Thank you for your inquiry into the North American MGB Register. We are the official register for MGB, MGB/GT, MGC, MGC/GT, MG V8, Midgets, MG 1100/1300 sedans, and all Post Abington MGs.

As a member of NAMGBR, you will receive:



The MG Driver

This bi-monthly magazine is packed with over 60 pages of useful information with the right mix of Technical and Member information.



Mutual Aid Directory (MAD)

Many members list their contact information to help fellow NAMGBR members in the event they break down in their area.



Annual Convention

In conjunction with a NAMGBR Chapter, we sponsor a convention highlighting a different part of the United States or Canada. This 4 day event features driving tours, a car show and a taste of the local food and drink. In 2026, MG2026 International will take place in Sandusky, OH.



Club Insurance

Does your club sponsor a car show, driving event or meeting? Many venues require insurance to hold the event on their property. If your club has 8 NAMGBR members and is a Chapter of NAMGBR...you're covered for free!



Member Classified

NAMGBR offers a free classified section in both the MG Driver and the website. Have an extra MG or parts you want to sell? Target your advertising to the people you know are buying MG.



Regalia

We have a number of ways you can show your NAMGBR membership to the public.



Car Insurance

NAMGBR is the first MG Register to offer members the 5% Hagerty Collector Car Insurance Discount. Being a member of NAMGBR can save you money on your insurance.



Dash Plaque

To commemorate your membership in NAMGBR, you receive a dash plaque to display in your car, home, office or where ever.



100,000/200,000 Mile Register

Has your MG gone the distance, and traveled over 100,000 or 200,000 miles? NAMGBR honors this achievement with a dash plaque your car can wear with pride.



Window Sticker

Proudly proclaim your membership in NAMGBR with this attractive two sided window sticker.



We look forward to having you as a member of NAMGBR!

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	Don Blosser
Member at Large	Tom Renick
Member at Large	Frank Stabler
Member at Large	Gil Stuart
Technical Advisors	Pierre Fontana, Scott Paradise
Webmaster	Peter Lee
Historian	Robb Ogletree
Newsletter Editor	Michael King

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

Membership in SABCC is open to anyone with an interest in classic or modern British cars, and dues are only \$20 per year [*same as 1990 — Ed.*].

British Car Festival is supported by:



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The MG Car Clubs from Ottawa and Toronto invite you to

MG103Fest.

Join us for a weekend of fun and camaraderie in scenic Gananoque. Gananoque is located in the Thousand Islands near the US border.

This weekend gathering of MGs is open to all enthusiasts.

Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Tailgate Pizza Party	Group Scenic Tour	MG Car Show
	Pub & Trivia Night	

tinyurl.com/mg103fest

AUGUST 14-16, 2026



GANANOQUE

NORTH AMERICAN COUNCIL OF MG REGISTERS

Invites ALL MG Owners

to join us August 24-27, 2026

in the Sandusky, Ohio / Lake Erie area

for the every-five-year ALL-MG Event

mginternational2026.org

SHORES & ISLANDS OHIO

CEDAR POINT SANDUSKY PUT-IN-BAY

Registration opens

year-end 2025

Around the Bend

Upcoming Club Activities



July 7, 2026

BCF Planning Meeting

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

Aug. 4, 2026

BCF Planning Meeting

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

July 19, 2026

Tri-Club Pig Roast

Tom Schmitz Home, 9609 Soldier's Creek Dr, Lillian, 36549. Arrive at noon; the "guest of honor" will be served around 1:30. Bring an appetizer, side, or dessert to share, and your own drinks.

Aug. 28, 2026

Monthly Club Meeting

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

July 28, 2026

Monthly Club Meeting

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

JULY							AUGUST						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
5	6	BCF PLNG.	8	9	10	11	2	3	BCF PLNG.	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	CLUB MTG.	29	30	31	1	23	24	CLUB MTG.	26	27	28	29
							30	31	1	2	3	4	5

Sparks

Club and Member News



Don Pritchett—Member of the Quarter

story by Ben Cummings

Long-time member **Don Pritchett** was recognized as an outstanding member at last month's regular meeting. Don says that he is not a Charter Member even though he attended the inaugural meeting of the SABCC. In 1990 an ad was placed in the local newspaper calling all those interested in forming a new British car club to meet at the Eastern Shore Import Service on Church Street in Fairhope. The first meeting was held on September 7, 1990, and the dues of \$20 were collected. Don was at the inaugural meeting, but his wallet was lacking the necessary cash. So, he technically joined the new club at the second meeting when he paid his dues.

Don has been an active member since the club was founded in 1990, thirty-six years! He is a past president serving the club from 2000 to 2001. And for many years he was Vice-President of Activities. Some of the activities he organized are a funkhana, drives through the countryside to a destination lunch, and a scavenger hunt. This past January he briefly came out of retirement to organize another scavenger hunt which was fun and well attended.

For many years he has made the special trophies for the British Car Festival. Many hours of time go into the creation of the trophies. The kids love to view them at the festival, and the recipients get a unique award that no other club provides.

His main passion in the club is youth participation. He organizes the voting for the



Don receives his award from President Ben. (photo by Robb Ogletree)

“Kid’s Choice,” gives away Hot Wheels cars to children, and has organized a Hot Wheels race. His post-festival report of the children’s participation is always encouraging. His efforts help pass the interest of our hobby onto the next generation.

He is a kind fellow who is willing to help a fellow member with car trouble and share his automotive knowledge. The club is lucky to have him as a member, even if he doesn’t consider himself a charter member. For all of this and more Don Pritchett is recognized as an outstanding member.

To remedy a 36-year-old error, a motion was made by **Michael King** that the club officially recognize Don Pritchett as a Charter Member. The motion was seconded and the membership approved the motion with great zeal. So, Don Pritchett is now officially a Charter Member. Congratulations Don!

SABCC Ice Cream Social

photos by *Ben Cummings*

Along the Gulf Coast, summer is not the best time to motor about in a non-air-conditioned British car, so to encourage members to get together, heat notwithstanding, the club organized an ice cream social on the afternoon of June 14 at Cammie's Old Dutch Ice Cream in Fairhope. That way, those brave enough to drive an MG, a Triumph, or even a Sunbeam roadster could at least cool off when they arrived at the event.



About 20 members showed up for sweet treats, but *Ed.* was not provided details on how many actually braved the heat in a vintage roadster vs. driving a climate-controlled vehicle [*I was driving back from Kentucky in a Jaguar with A/C and ventilated seats, but no ice cream, and President Ben didn't take any photos in the parking lot. — Ed*]. Nonetheless, the club members that participated appear to have enjoyed each other's company, as well as some tasty ice cream.



From left, **Alicia Pereira, Dick Bishop, Michael Pereira** (behind Dick), **Tom Renick, and Michael Schiebert.**



From left, **Don Pritchett, Gavin Pepper, Toni Pepper, and Frank Stabler.**



Clockwise from left, **Ginger Black, Pat Couling, David Couling, David Pierce, Gwen Pierce, and Gil Stuart.**



From left, **Scott Funderburk, Michael Bertagnolli, and Gretchen Funderburk.**

Spare Parts

Quick- Name a British Marque Named for a Creek in Ohio

story and photos by Rodney McDonald

That's a tough one but if you hate a mystery, I'll tell you up front: Lagonda. Most British car enthusiasts know of the Lagonda marque as part of the Aston Martin concern. Lagonda, however, predates Aston Martin by a few years.



Founded in 1906 by an Ohio-born son of a preacher named Wilbur Gunn as a motorcycle builder in Staines, Middlesex, UK, Lagonda was successful almost right out of the starting gate. Gunn's Lagonda-branded motorcycle won the 1905 London-Edinburgh trial. By 1907, Gunn took the path that many other motorcycle

Lagonda automobile was a racing success, winning the 1910 Moscow-St Petersburg trial.

At Gunn's death in 1920, the firm was taken over by its senior management team and the cars were taken upmarket. Technical advances such as twin overhead cams, hemispherical combustion chambers, and superchargers were part and parcel to the Lagonda name. Other models utilized bought-in engines (a common practice at the time) from Crossley and Meadows along with license-built pre-selector gearboxes from Maybach.

Upmarket was not where the company needed to be when the Great Depression hit the world. By 1935, the firm was in the hands of a receiver and bids were solicited for its assets. Competing bids from Rolls-Royce and an investor named Alan Good were considered with Good becoming the owner of Lagonda.

Once Good took over the firm, he persuaded none other than W. O. Bentley to leave Rolls-Royce and join the company as a designer and competitions manager. Bentley worked his magic by adding higher-power engine options, torsion bar suspension, and hydraulic brakes. The lower-slung cars looked the part of high-performance



1989 Aston Martin Lagonda Photo: Jagvar

builders were following and launched an automobile in an effort to capitalize on the public's demand. As with his motorcycle, his



1964 Lagonda Rapide Photo: Herranderssvensson

story continues next page

Lagonda, continued

motoring at the time. Bentley's crowning achievement was the 4.5 liter, 180 bhp, V12 engine in the 1937 Rapide model.

Once again, financial clouds gathered after World War Two and the firm became the property of David Brown, the owner of Aston Martin. The two companies were merged under single management. Lagonda produced gentlemen's sporting transportation after the David Brown acquisition, but the marque later became known as a builder of sporting saloon cars not unlike the offerings of Jaguar.



1989 Aston Martin Lagonda Photo: Jagvar

Eventually, Lagonda became a model name for Aston Martin saloons, the last of which was William Towns' sharply wedge-shaped design.

By the way, don't look for Lagonda Creek in Ohio - it has been renamed Buck Creek and it runs through Springfield. There are a number of areas there named Lagonda after the original name of the creek which was a native word meaning buck horn or crooked horn. [The most recent auction on Bring a Trailer of an Aston Martin Lagonda, which ended June 15, yielded a selling price of \$55,000 for a 23k-mile dark maroon over tan car in lovely condition — Ed.]

ans ""Everyone Loves an Oddball: Episode 7: What's with the Color?

story and photos by Peter Lee

If you are reading this, you are probably a fan of the automobile. You think about features, specs, aerodynamics, and style to start list. My wife is typically more concerned about the color of the car than the make [*mine too-Ed.*]. My personal pet peeve is if I cannot rest my left arm comfortably while driving then I don't want to have anything to do with it. But when Ford brought out the Model T, Henry famously said you can have any color as long as it's black. So, it all started with a lack of variety.

Let's go back to the start. The most popular pre-WW1 color for British racing cars was the famous British Racing Green. I think of this color as a 1960's item but actually, it was made famous much earlier. What's kind of funny is they used to say it was somewhere from emerald to olive as standards were a little loose. The color we know now was set much later. But BRG gained its initial popularity from the 1903 Napier that ran in the Gordon Bennett cup in Ireland that was a little more shamrocky. It was supposed to have been painted in that color to honor the host nation. After that it was adopted as the official color of British race cars.



1903 Napier

story continues next page

Oddballs, Episode 7: Color

So, the years between the wars were all about practicality, and black was still the majority color choice of all cars made. The higher-cost luxury cars tended to go with two complimentary colors to show off the style. People who wanted to stand out could say “I don’t just have money to buy an expensive luxury car; I have the money to paint it two colors.”



Above, 1930 Rolls-Royce Phantom 2; below, 1934 Triumph 8C Dolomite



Obviously the 1940’s switched to desert tan and military olive drab, but new things were on the horizon for the post-war years. The 1950’s started with solid understated colors that would appeal to the export market as the British economy was still recovering. Old English White, Oxford Blue and several others were commonly used but a brightness was starting to come to the whole country. Red suddenly became a hot color on the latest sports cars in glossy and bright versions that finished the decade with a new taste in colors. BRG was still the racing standard color, but variety was the new normal. This led into the

pastels of the late 50’s and 60’s that we all know and love.



Above, 1954 Ford Consul in Oxford White; below, 1954 Jaguar XK120 in Red



To give you an idea of the variety of older cars, you could get the above XK120 in one of 15 colors in 1954: Black, Battleship Grey, Birch Grey, Dove Grey, Lavender Grey, Pearl Grey, Old English White, British Racing Green, Suede Green, Pastel Green, Mediterranean Blue, Pacific Blue, Pastel Blue, Maroon, and Red. All were significantly distinct from each other

Some manufacturers got into a signature color that has become something more than just a paint job. The one that comes to mind for me is the classic play on green the Aston Martin made into their signature color “Moss Green.” The funny

story continues next page

Oddballs, Episode 7: Color

thing to me about the 1960's is that the bright colors in question had been floating around off and on but suddenly became the rage that continued into the 70's.



1966 Primrose Yellow XKE (*we love you, BRG, but this is the best XKE color*); below; Aston's Moss Green



But in the 80's things changed. Some companies stayed with the high-end colors and bespoke ordered choices. You want a pink Rolls, you can get one made that way from the factory. You just have to throw enough money at them. But big companies want to sell cars and assemble them efficiently. So limited colors related to sales numbers drive the choices made by the big manufacturers. They know what sells and what sits waiting on the person that wants to make a statement. My wife wanted a blue Jaguar SUV with a black interior. That combination was extremely hard to find so we had to go with a grey interior as it was the closest I could find. They came in 14 different colors, but I bet you probably only see half of the choices on the road

as they were two whites, two blacks, two reds, three greys, BRG, blue, and three weird colors that fall somewhere in the dull odd color zone. A couple of those are satin versus gloss or metallic versus not.

Metallics deepen the color and I will never be able to decide which I like better on the Jaguar XJ220, blue or green (see photos, below). Just drop one by the house and I won't complain.



Now companies have gotten into flat or matte earth colors (such as the Aston Martin below). In my humble opinion, whether that works depends on the car. But people also don't realize that these finishes need specialized care. They are more susceptible to staining and cannot be polished like a standard paint job. So beware. It may look cool and stand out but for how long will it be in that condition?



Most people don't really let the color influence the decision. The current top five British-manufactured car colors are very different from the past. In order of popularity for 2026: grey, black, blue, white and silver. To have a color outside of those five is a real rarity. Now I'm not

story continues next page

Oddballs, Episode 7: Color

saying that’s all bad. I have developed a love for the variety of metallic greys, and they are everywhere, both good and bad.

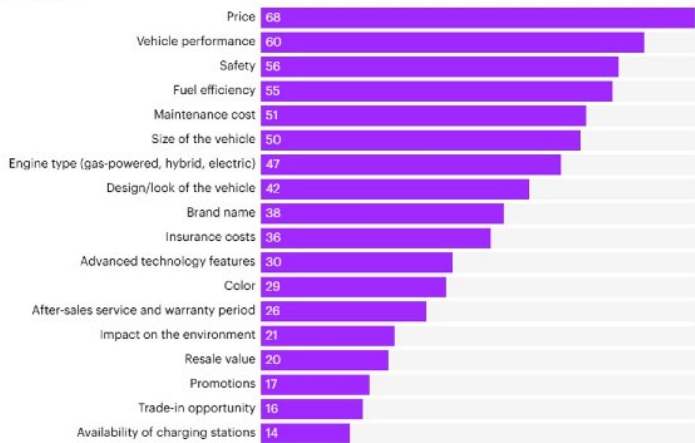


Metallic Grey Jaguar F-Type

So here is the final point. Color turns out to be a minor aspect of the car purchase for most people. It may catch the attention, but buyers are a fickle bunch. And companies understand this. They have choices but still produce the big hitters more often than the oddballs. This is evident when you look at cars for sale on a website that lets you class by color. White, black and grey will be everywhere. A site I looked up had 1,386 cars for sale nationwide—421 white cars were available but only one orange. Orange for me, please, but I think I’m the strange one [*Not at all, Peter; I definitely admired both of Rodney McDonald’s orange Minis-Ed.*].

Price is the most important factor for Americans when choosing to purchase a car

Which factors are important to you when choosing to purchase an automobile? (% of US adults who intend buying a car in the future)



Auction Roundup—Orange Cars

A few examples of Peter’s preferred color, all sold within the last four weeks.

1972 MGB Roadster



Sold for \$10,250 on Bring a Trailer
Featuring a black interior, a wood-trimmed dash and steering wheel, a basic AC system, and even an 8-track player, this car had no major issues.

2013 McLaren 12C Spider



Sold for \$138,000 on Bring a Trailer
Showing just 844 miles, this car nonetheless had new tires and a recent service. It did have some scuffs on the front splitter and bumper cover . . .

1977 Land Rover 88 Series III Santana



Sold for \$19,770 on Bring a Trailer
This is Sandglow, over black, and the truck had a frame-off refurbishment from 2022 to 2024. It was a no-sale last December with a high bid of nearly \$15,000; even at this price, the refurbisher likely lost a fair amount of money. Nice color, though.

Classifieds

1975 MG Midget—\$8,500

Up for sale is my British Racing Green MG Midget. This is the 50th anniversary edition. It's a fun little car to drive around, and is road ready! Interior leather is in amazing shape. Exterior paint is in good shape. Vinyl top is showing age and needs replacement, but I only drive in fair weather with the top down, which is why I haven't replaced it! Tires have plenty of life on them. I always get so many comments every time I take it out for a drive. I've owned it for around six years, and just don't get to use it as much as I was hoping. Car is kept under car cover and is well taken care of. This vehicle is looking for a good home, and is a wonderful date night car. Located in Fairhope; more photos and video at <https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/item/1038513159120505>.

Stephen Zuercher
steve.zerk@gmail.com



1975 Triumph Spitfire—\$6,500 obo

Driver for sale, 1975 Triumph Spitfire 1500. New top and gas tank; good rubber all around. Engine compartment recently refreshed to high standard, new ignition components, new wiper motor. 49,000 original miles. Needs some paint refinishing but no body work is needed. That is factored into the price. Includes hardtop and new wood dash (to be installed). Deal of the century in Pensacola; owned by former member of PBCA. Come give her a good home.

Dave Kuhn
david.kuhn1156@icloud.com
 850-206-8824



Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor

New—Like It or Not

You might notice that this issue of “Spark & Spanner” looks a bit different. That’s because this old dog is struggling to learn new tricks.

You see, Microsoft in its wisdom has decided it will, after October, no longer support or allow access to Microsoft Publisher, the program I (and my illustrious predecessor, the award-winning **Rodney McDonald**) have always used to create this humble tome. In the meanwhile, my old Microsoft Surface Pro computer, a hand-me-down from my spouse, was giving me fits, to the extent that I nearly was unable to produce the winners’ list at the recent Pensacola show.

That meant I had to change. I use an Apple iPhone and and iPad, and since Microsoft has now betrayed me twice, I took advantage of Amazon Prime Days to score a sweet deal on a shiny new (well, refurbished) Apple MacBook. I also researched Mac apps which might replace Publisher, and I found Swift Publisher 5, a real deal at only \$20.

So all is well, right? Well, yes, until I tried actually using the new program, and found I wasn’t so swift after all. I thought I might try an alternative, and one of the forums suggested Apple Pages—a free program that’s *usually* pre-loaded on Macs—might work.

Except, it was not pre-loaded on my Mac. Easy enough, go to the App Store and download it. Except it wouldn’t download. Back to the forums, where I found a suggestion that I try turning off “Find My” for the MacBook. So, a few keystrokes

later, I was given the option to “Erase.” Which I thought meant erasing the MacBook from my Find list.

Well, not exactly. *I erased the entire computer.* Now, my shiny new MacBook was just a paperweight.

Fortunately, I remained calm enough to restore the thing, reload the operating system, reinstall all the software I’d bought, set up my passwords and mailboxes all over again—you get the picture.

After all that, I decided to give Swift Publisher another try, and I am gradually making peace with it. This newsletter was produced on the new MacBook with the new program.

You’ve probably encountered similar issues in life. Our beloved treasurer, **Donna Eagleson**, tells me she spent several frustrating hours trying to set up an online credit card payment system for SABCC. I know she’ll prevail, and the club will be better for her efforts.

Speaking of Donna, I visited her Garagemahal a few days ago. She and several folks from the club are engaged in the daunting task of sorting through the various cars, projects, parts, and tools to restore order. Right now it seems overwhelming, but I know they will succeed.

While I was there, I took a few minutes to look over the “Silver Bullet,” the 1967 MGB project **Noel Eagleson, Tom Renick, Ben Cummings** and I rescued from a carport in Spring Hill a year ago. I was able to find most of the parts and supplies I’d stashed in the Garagemahal and I’m excited about getting back to work on it.

So, when a task seems overwhelming, and even if you make a major mistake along the way, remember the WW2-era sign: “Keep Calm and Carry on.” Even if you are an old dog like me.

British Car Festival 2025



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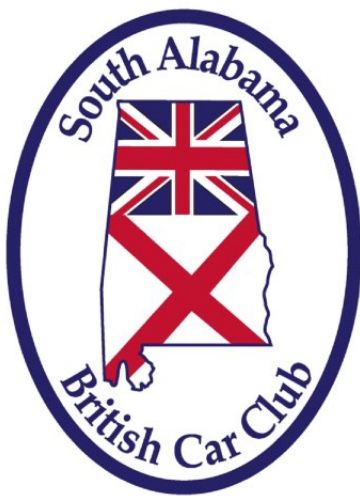
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Sarah Beth & Jake Mason
Taber Tompkins
The Palms Pet Resort & Boarding
The Royal British Legion
Tom Schmitz
Tommy & Joanne Hartwell
Tony Breeden
Tractor Supply Company
Veterinary Medical Center
W.R. Bishop
Waggy Tails

And now, for something completely different . . .



*As if you needed more proof that a small-block Chevy will fit in **anything**, here's a 1960 Mini body, mounted on a shortened frame from a 1958 Impala. Power is from a 350-ci V8 mated to a Turbo 400 automatic, and yes, those are exhaust outlets atop the rear fenders. Since the engine intrudes past the firewall, a single bench seat is located about midway between the original seat locations. Featured on Barn Finds, it's listed on Craigslist in Wisconsin for \$25,000.*



South Alabama British Car Club

www.sabcc.org

On Facebook, look for the **Friends of South Alabama British Car Club** group