

# Spark & Spanner

The Official  
Publication of the  
South Alabama  
British Car Club

May 2022





# From the President

Tom Renick

## A-MAY-zing!

WOW! Did we have a great picnic or what? We were blessed with ideal weather—one important element that can obviously spell disaster for a picnic—but better than that, a record number of us showed up with over a dozen [14—Ed.] rolling up in their British conveyances. Quite a showing. There was plenty of mingling and lively palaver right up until we got to the serious business of food.

The food was plentiful, diverse and delicious. As usual, **Donna Eagleson** was overall chef coordinator and arranged food groups through her able sous chefs. They were many, and each produced a gourmet specialty, so we were treated to a feast. Thanks to everyone who assisted with food, decorations, equipment, and planning. Put our picnic on your calendar now for sometime next spring, probable May. You don't want to miss it.

Our club is not the only outfit having booming business. The Silverhill Car Show just concluded with a record registration of 209 cars and produced a really great event. Most vehicles were antiques, hot rods, muscle cars, shiny new stuff and ratty old stuff. To balance things out, **Dick Bishop** commandeered his sovereign corner at the main intersection on Highway 104 and he and his crew staked it out for classy iron—all British. The three clubs in our area turned out in droves bringing with them well over a dozen of the nicest cars the Isles ever produced [actually, nearly two dozen—Ed.]. So nice, in fact, that at least two of our members won trophies in the British categories [exactly two—Ed.]. Again, the weather was warm but with a nice



Photo by Noel Eagleson

breeze to keep things comfy, it was fine.

Plans for our own British Car Festival in October are coming along nicely. **Brian Daly** would love to hear from you if you would like to cover an aspect of the proceedings. Door prizes for the Show are always needed (one for each entrant), so if you have something new that's car related or something you would like to receive, bring it to the meeting or drop it off at the Garagemahal.

Remember, we get a lot out when everyone puts a little in.

[**Tom Renick** is the president of South Alabama British Car Club. Rumour has it he is a graduate of the Jethro Bodine School of CIPHERIN'.]



Perhaps the only person happier at the picnic than our president was **Andrea Bertagnoli**, who with husband **Michael** put in lots of extra hours on their MGB so they could drive it to the festivities.  
(photo by **Donna Eagleson**)

**On the cover:** The annual club photo at the annual club picnic (May 14, 2022).

**SABCC Club Officers**

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VP Membership	Rick Black
VP Activities	Don Pritchett
Secretary	Peter Lee
Treasurer	Donna Eagleson
Member at Large	Dick Bishop
Member at Large	Ben Cummings
Member at Large	Frank Stabler
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Membership in SABCC is open to anyone with an interest in classic or modern British cars.

# Activities Calendar

**June 4, 2022****19th Annual Eurobrit Auto & Bike Expo,**

Dublin Park, Madison, AL. 8:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. Free.

**June 18, 2022****Alabama Blueberry Festival and Car Show,**

Jennings Park, Brewton, AL. 8:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. \$25.

**June 18, 2022**

**Corn Festival Car Show**, 20733 Mifflin Rd, Foley, AL. 8:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. \$20.

**June 25, 2022**

**SABCC Brunch**, Squid Ink Eclectic Eats and Drinks, 102 Dauphin St., Mobile, AL 36602. 10:00 a.m. Feel free eat all for which you can pay. Driving tour of Mobile's Automobile Alley to follow.

**June 28, 2022**

**SABCC Month Meeting**, Don Carlos Restaurant, Daphne, eat at 6:00, meet at 7:00, your treat.

## June 2022

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	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 Brunch & Tour
26	27	28 Club Mtg.	29	30		

British Car Festival is Supported by



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# Sparks

## Club and Member News

### Record Turnout for SABCC Picnic

*photos by Ron Wolverton*

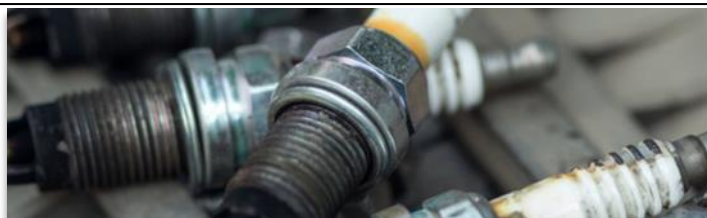
Rain the day prior did nothing to deter 50 SABCC members, an all-time high, from attending the annual feed known as the annual club picnic, held May 14 at our usual site, the Oscar Johnson Memorial Park in Silverhill, Ala.



Front, left to right: **William Heritage's** 2005 Morgan and **Ed's** 2011 XK. Back, left to right: **Dave Roloson's** 1961 TR4, **Andrea Bertagnolli's** 1976 MGB, **Tom Schmitz's** 1995 XJS, and **Robb Ogletree's** 1962 MGA (obscured by **Ed's** car).

While *Ed.* never had the pleasure of meeting old Oscar, the tree-shaded park which is his namesake has plenty of space for people and cars, which is good, since when members arrived, a group that had reserved the park pavilion for an earlier event was still in place. However, members quickly regrouped, and set up an impromptu car display at the back of the park, and next to that, arranged chairs for a brief meeting. After the other group left, everyone rapidly dispatched to the pavilion so that we could begin dispatching the food, but not before gathering for the obligatory club photo.

As usual, the food did not disappoint. The club-favorite pulled pork butt was the centerpiece, but baked beans, salads, appetizers, and plenty of des-



serts meant that no one went home hungry. In fact, several took food home.

Based on the positive reaction to this event, every indication points to it being repeated next year. Mark your calendar early!



Left to right: **Robb's** unobscured MGA, **Mike Schiebert's** E-Type, **Jerry' Hall's** Elan, **Mike Darby's** 1957 MGA, **Lyman Dykes'** 1959 Bugeye Sprite, and **Don Pritchett's** 1978 MGB.



A somewhat closer view of **Mike S's** E-Type, **Jerry's** Elan, **Mike D's** MGA, **Lyman's** Bugeye, and **Don's** MGB.



Left to right: **Dick Bishop's** 1966 MGB, **Don MacDonald's** 1962 MGA, and **Fred Wilson's** 1976 Mini.



**More photos from SABCC Picnic, May 14, 2022**



*Gathering under the trees*



*Dave Roloson was ready for a cool, refreshing beverage.*



*Noel Eagleson (who appears a bit surprised) and Linda Ross.*



*Dick Bishop holds forth on a matter of great importance.*



*Good food and good company.*



*The cool kids, Rodney McDonald and Dave Couling, by the fan.*



*Frank Stabler, is that you behind those Foster Grants?*



*One in every crowd.*



## Silverhill Car Show

May 28 was the annual Silverhill Veteran's Memorial Car Show, hosted by the Baldwin County Gearjammers. While the majority of the entrants are of the American ilk (think Corvettes, Mustangs, and Camaros), the show has always welcomed British motors, and this year had three classes for the British contingent, organized around decades (pre-1970, 1970-1999, and 2000 and newer, best as we could tell).

SABCC, the Panhandle British Car Association (PBCA), and the Mardi Gras MGs (MGMG) always feature the event on their calendars, and this year had a record turnout of Her Majesty's contingent, with British cars comprising 23 of the 209 registrants. The show takes place on the four corners of Highways 55 and 104, and MGMTG always arrives early to claim the southeast corner in the name of The Queen. They also erect tents, put up flags, and bring extra chairs to ensure our bit of the Empire is well-festooned.

Silverhill is a judged show, and complying with the rules (hoods up, bonnets and boot lids raised, glass at least half up) is a bother, but at the end of the day, two SABCC members received trophies:

- **Michael King**, a/k/a **Ed.**, 2001 Jaguar XJR
- **Tom Schmitz**, 1968 Morgan 4/4

The third trophy went to PBCA member George Bruno, for his TR6 with a Buick 3.5 liter V8 (the engine adopted by Rover and Triumph).

Proceeds from the event are used to add names to the Silverhill Veteran's Memorial.



*Ed.'s trophy. Frankie Kucera, lead organizer of the show, makes all the trophies. The scale model is an early (1997?) Jaguar XK8.*

## Spannering

### Advice on Repairs, Parts, and Services

## Progress on the Alpine

**Tom Renick; photo by the author**

Back in ancient times BC (before COVID), some of you might remember a particularly informative tech session that was held at the Garagemahal. The purpose was to cut away a rusty rocker section on the



*Dadgum, Tom, that's starting to look good—Ed.*

green Alpine to see what was inside, and to deliberate on what to do to repair the damage. Since that auspicious beginning, nothing much has happened except that replacement panels were purchased and we [*Tom, is that the royal "we?"—Ed.*] looked at them a lot.

Until now... We have enlisted the assistance of master all 'round car fancier, **Dave Roloson**, to help, and are once again making forward progress. As the tin-type shows, we have trimmed and clamped two of the three panels, and when finished fitting the last piece, will tack them all together, remove as one section, and rust-treat what's underneath. Then we'll refit and weld, weld, weld, and prime the new stuff somewhere in the process.

Anyone having an interest in this never-ending fix is welcome to drop by and take a look. It's still where you left it.

The Best of

# Pierre's Wisdom

Pierre Fontana

## Repair or Resurrection

This old Jag, sitting near a bayou in an enclosed garage and idle too many years, will require a “restart



routine” to keep from damaging the engine. It’s covered with dirt dabbers, spider webs, etc.

The pressure washer is my favorite weapon, but I used low pressure near wiring. I then blew it dry with compressed air, making sure the plug valley is clean, removed the plugs, and poured a couple ounces of a 50 / 50 mix of gas and oil in each cylinder. Then I installed a new battery and spun the engine a few times. This sent a film of oil to all valves and pistons. I replaced the plugs to keep trash out.

The distributor looked horrible; a hose must have shrunk causing coolant to fall in it. I had to soak it a day to pry it loose. The pictures show surface corrosion on all the parts. My bead blasting cabinet will make it all look new, and a Pertronix unit



All photos courtesy **Pierre Fontana**

will replace the points and condenser.

The fuel pump was out too. I beat it up a few times, but got no response, so I cleaned the points using a Dremel tool with a soft stone, and it did the trick. I disconnected the line at the filter and ran a hose into a clear wine bottle, to let the pump exercise for a few minutes. The gas was old but clear, a very pale yellow, and my mower ran on it.

The tires, hoses, and belts all looked too dry and hard, and the clutch pedal flopped to floor. I filled the plastic reservoir, “cracked” the line coming out of clutch master cylinder, and pumped it a few times, until I felt a little pressure. I closed the line and I had a clutch. I am getting too old to get to the slave cylinder on the floor. I wanted to drive it on the lift to change it.

The old E-Type was lady-driven, so it looked clean, and was nearly still immaculate inside. The British had a good chroming process and the wheels and all look good. Seven years ago, I cleaned the carburetors and tuned it up, so I hoped my carburetor job would still hold.

The moral of the story is this: If your place is on the bayou, you must take some precautions when you store your cars. Draining and refilling the coolant would be a good idea. Once you have it running, service all fluids, including the brake fluid.

*Pierre Fontana is an SABCC technical advisor. This article first ran in September 2012.*



# Spare Parts



## Cars of the BMC

[Note from Ed.: We continue with a series of write-ups of British Motor Corporation autos discovered by member **Terry Trovato**.]



This is the fourth installment of Cars of the BMC, featuring little known models in America designed for the British home market which were rarely, if ever, exported to the US.



*BMC ADO16*



*Austin A40 Somerset*

The **Austin A40 Somerset** was an automobile which was produced by the Austin Motor Company from 1952 until 1954. It replaced the A40 Devon and was quite similar to that body-on-frame car, which used the same 1.2 litre straight-4 pushrod engine. The engine was updated to produce 42 hp giving the car a top speed of 69 mph. The Somerset resembled the larger A70 Hereford and had a bench front seat and column mounted gear change. The Somerset was initially offered only as a 4-door saloon, but a 3-passenger 2-door convertible was introduced in late 1952.

The **BMC ADO16** was part of a series of economical small family cars built by the British Motor Corporation and, later, British Leyland. It was launched in

1962 and for most of the next decade the ADO16 was consistently the UK's best-selling car. Models included the following:

- Austin: 1100, 1300 and 1300GT
- Austin: 11/55, America, Apache, De Luxe, Glider and Victoria
- Innocenti: Austin I4 and Austin I4S
- Innocenti: Morris IM3 and Morris IM3S
- Innocenti I5
- MG: 1100, 1275 and 1300
- MG: Princess, Sports Sedan, 1100S and MG-S 1300
- Morris: 1100, 1300 and 1300GT
- Morris: 11/55, 1100S, Marina and Marina GT
- Riley: Kestrel, Kestrel 1275, Kestrel 1300
- Vanden Plas: Princess 1100, 1275, and 1300
- Wolseley: 1100, 1275 and 1300
- Wolseley: 11/55 & Wasp

Although most of the cars were manufactured in England, they were also built in Spain by Authi, in Italy by Innocenti and at the company's own plant in Belgium.

The **Austin A40 Farina** was a compact car introduced by the British Motor Corporation in both Saloon and

*continued next page*



## Cars of the BMC, continued



Austin A40 Farina

Countryman versions. Although usually referred to as the A40 Farina, to distinguish it from previous A40 models, it was badged simply as the Austin A40. Unusual for BMC at the time, the body shape was only sold as an Austin; no other marque names were used to badge-engineer it.

The **Riley One-Point-Five**, and the very similar Wolseley 1500, were motor vehicles based on the Morris Minor floorpan, suspension and steering, but fitted with the larger 1489 cc B-Series engine and MG Magnette gearbox. Launched in 1957, the twin vehicles were differentiated by nearly 20 hp, the Riley having twin SU carburetors giving it the most power at 68 hp. The Wolseley was released in April of that year, while the Riley appeared in November, directly after the 1957 London Motor Show.



Riley One Point Five

## Auction Roundup—You're Not Enough

[This month, we look at cars that did not sell—Ed.]

### 1972 Triumph GT6 Mk III



**Not Sold** at \$27,000 on Bring A Trailer

*GT6's are hot, but \$27k seems like all the money for this car, with non-original (and garish?) colors and what appears to be sketchy panel alignment.*

### 1967 Jaguar XKE Series I 4.2 Roadster



**Not Sold** for \$175,000 on Bring a Trailer

*While this car was finished to a very high standard, it was originally primrose over black. What must the true value of an E-Type be if \$175k was too low?*

### 1995 Jaguar XJS 2=2 Convertible



**Not Sold** at \$32,000 on Bring A Trailer

*So it only had 10,000 miles, and was in very nice condition—except for the AC that doesn't blow cold. And that turquoise paint is a bit intense . . .*

### 1971 MG Midget



**Not Sold** at \$7,250 on Bring A Trailer

*It's a MIDGET. Sure, it has a 1275, and chrome bumpers, but it's school-bus yellow and has fuzzy navy and grey seats. And he turned down \$7,250?*



# Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor, *Spark & Spanner*

## Trust the Forums (but verify)

As I began to think about replacing one of the cars in my collection (see last month's column, "Still Scratching Itches"), one of the resources I turned to was the online forums. I've had good results over the years with [jaguarforums.com](http://jaguarforums.com), and I used their X150 forum (X150 being the Jaguar designation for 2007 to 2015 XKs and XKR) to increase my understanding of the various pitfalls and problem areas of this particular model. Since buying the car, I've used the same forum to help me address various issues I've discovered with my X150.

The photo in this month's masthead is my 2001 XJR, for which the model designation is "X308"—the 1998 to 2003 XJ8s and XJRs. I've learned that these cars have a potential major problem, particularly with the older, 4-litre motors. The timing chain tensioners were a weak point prior to the 2002 (ugh) model years, so I listen closely on cold starts for any odd sounds.

However, my X308 had a more immediate problem when I first bought it. The bonnet (hood) would not open. The seller got an estimate of nearly \$900 to repair it, and thus gave me a \$1000 discount on the purchase price. Thanks to the forum, I found that the problem is quite common and learned how to repair it. With the help of **Noel Eagleson** and the Garage-mahal gang, we had it fixed in about an hour, and the parts outlay was only about \$200.

I wish I had consulted the X100 forum before I bought my 2006 XK8 convertible. I would have learned that the 1997 to 2006 XK8s and XKR) have a common issue with failure of the hydraulic hoses at the top of the windscreen header. Various methods exist to alleviate this, and if I had tried one of them, I might have been able to avoid replacing mine, which necessitates removing almost the entire interior of



the car. Parts and labor for that little task were over \$2,000.

But back to my X150. I bought the car in central Georgia and drove it to Kentucky for a funeral. The seller warned me that the hood (top) had just quit working and said he would cover repairs. I consulted the forums and learned more about how the system works, and managed to fix it myself at no cost.

While in Kentucky, I did, however, find a wet spot on the headliner just below the rear window. A quick check of the forum revealed that failure of the heat-



bonded seal around the glass is common. Using "Rhino Glue" and special clamps was the recommended fix. I did it on mine (see photo, above) and it's holding up well thus far.

So, I'm a forum fan, but like almost anything else online, the rule is to believe about a tenth of what you read. Before I try anything on my car, I make sure to read multiple threads, and photos or videos are worth a thousand words. As President Reagan warned, "Trust—but verify."



# 31st Annual British Car Festival Celebrating the MGA

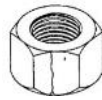


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## SABCC Grille Badges

The South Alabama British Car Club commissioned a grille badge featuring our fabulous club logo. These heavy enameled, 3-1/2 inch high badges on chrome plated metal are the perfect companion for your British car. The club has subsidized the cost so that the member price is only \$20.00.



**Noel Eagleson** is the keeper of the box of badges and brings them to club meetings, so look him up. Or, you can send an email [SparkSpanner@gmail.com](mailto:SparkSpanner@gmail.com) and we'll make arrangements to get one to you-.



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**SABCC is a Chapter of NAMGBR**

## Spark & Spanner Submissions

Go ahead: make *Ed.*'s day. It's as easy as typing an email. That's right, *Ed.* is looking for your submissions for Spark & Spanner.

Every issue will include some, most, or all of the following:

- **Activities Calendar:** SABCC events, local and national car shows, and other events worth noting
- **Sparks:** news about club members, activities, and events
- **Spannering:** stories on car repairs, restoration projects, tips and tricks, and ideas on prepping a car for a show
- **Spare Parts:** Auction Roundup, news items on the British car industry, the collector car hobby, and anything else *Ed.* finds interesting
- **Gotcha!:** stories of how members acquired their cars
- **Just Around the Bend:** Synopses of upcoming car shows and other events
- **Feature Stories:** Longer submissions of general interest
- **Classifieds:** Sell your car or car parts - or let other members know what you'd like to buy

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

### Resource Directory

Our guide to automotive resources has been released! If you have any other parts suppliers, mechanics, upholstery shops, machinists, or any other business, service, or vendor which might be helpful to SABCC members, please send these to *Ed.* at [SparkSpanner@gmail.com](mailto:SparkSpanner@gmail.com).

Thanks!



And now, for something completely different . . .



*You might recall Ed. posting a photo last month of a young couple who used his brother's MGB for their engagement photos. This picture is "Part 2." At Ed.'s suggestion, the couple posed for a shot of what MIGHT happen if one drove one's British car to get engaged. However, since this particular MGB was restored by the late **Stuart Waddington**, the photo is obviously staged.*

## Spark & Spanner

South Alabama British Car Club

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