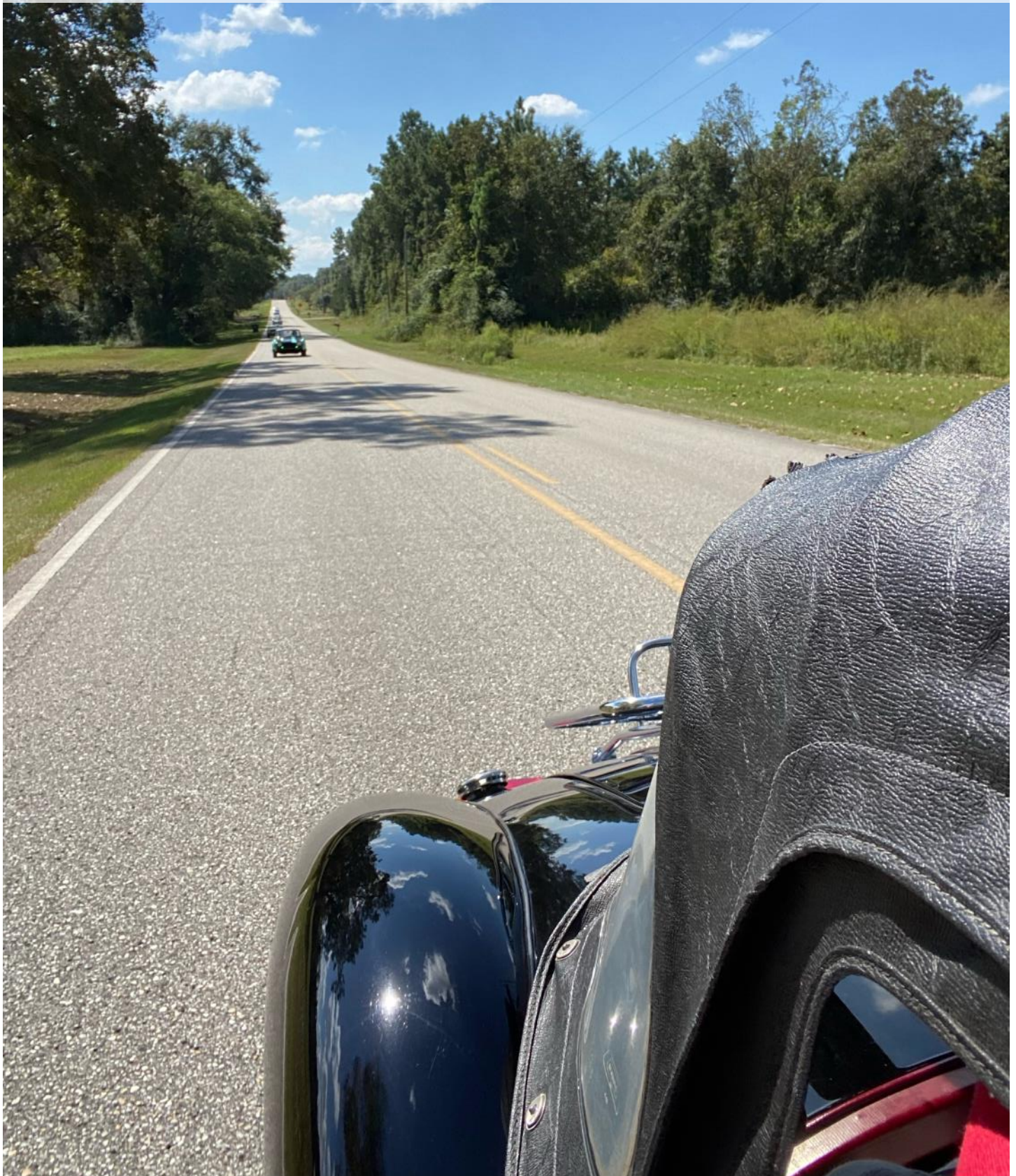


Spark & Spanner

The Official
Publication of the
South Alabama
British Car Club

September 2022



From the President

Tom Renick

A Car Named Jetson

One never knows what might happen when one alights in a 60-year-old English sports car named Jetson. It got me half-way to the start point of a past Back Roads Tour and sputtered to a stop on the side of the road. After a couple of minutes, it would start and go about 30 yards and stop again. Finally, I called **Noel** and he showed up with his favorite blue tow strip and back to the Garagemahal we went. Problem turned out to be a clogged fuel outlet at the bottom of the gas tank. Once reamed out, we were back in business. But, you can never tell when this will happen again out of an old tank.

Not to worry. This past Saturday [Sep. 24-Ed.] our intrepid VP of Activities, **Don Pritchett**, came up with a doozy of a 60-mile Back Roads Tour through the really back roads of northern Baldwin County where few have obviously gone. Not to be intimidated by a dirty gas tank, Jetson



Photo by Noel Eagleson



and I set out for the start point [*and Noel was brave enough to ride "shotgun"-Ed.*].

So far, success. Before departure, eight British cars had gathered with twelve adventurers. The morning was cool and we were finished by lunch. Jetson and everyone else made it without a hitch. Nice!

Our British Car Festival is only a month away. Sponsorships have come in very well but there are a few small things we still need volunteers for. Please call **Donna Eagleson** at 251-421-3896 for Friday

night festivities and **Brian Daly** at 251-402-

1414 for everything else. Door prizes are in a little bit of short supply so if you have something, take it to the club meeting or the Garagemahal.

As always, a little effort from a lot of folks and a big task becomes "easy-peasy," as they say.

Tom Renick is the president of South Alabama British Car Club. He believes most things work better when you ream them out a bit.



Jetson, ready to start the tour (photo by Max Menaker)

Speaking of the British Car Festival, is your car registered? The registration form is available [here](#).

On the cover: **Robb Ogletree's** 1962 MGA, with **David Menaker** at the helm, leads the Sep. 24 backroads tour through Baldwin County, Ala. Photo by Max Menaker.

SABCC Club Officers

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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.

Activities Calendar

September 27, 2022

SABCC Monthly Meeting, Don Carlos Restaurant, Daphne, eat at 6:00, meet at 7:00. Buy yourself a nice meal.

Oct. 21 and 22, 2022

British Car Festival, details and registration form (you've not registered yet?) [here](#).

October 25, 2022

SABCC Monthly Meeting, Don Carlos Restaurant, Daphne, eat at 6:00, meet at 7:00, Dinner is your treat, again.

November 12, 2022

Tri-Club Auto Jumble, Darby Classic Restorations, 13823 Roberts Rd, Loxley, AL, 36561, 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. No charge to shop or sell.

October 2022

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
					British Car Festival	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
		Club Mtg.				
30	31					

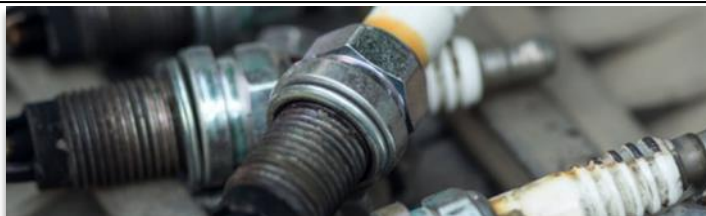
British Car Festival is Supported by



Jaguar/Land Rover of the Gulf Coast

Sparks

Club and Member News



Baldwin County Backroads Tour

photos by Max Menaker

Don Pritchett, SABCC’s vice president of activities, mapped out a backroads tour of Baldwin County about three years ago. Then, COVID happened. And the restaurant where he planned to have lunch closed due to the labor shortage. And part of the route was closed so that a bridge could be replaced. Not dissuaded. **Don** adjusted his route, found a new place for lunch, and the backroads tour was back on the calendar for September 24.

That day dawned clear and sunny, with almost no chance of rain, so eight British cars and 12 British car enthusiasts showed up at Daphne’s Village Park for the 65-mile trip. A brief stop in Elberta allowed everyone to stretch their legs and arrange the cars for a photo, and some car-swapping took place [*careful, this is a family publication-Ed.*]. At the end of the trip, the group enjoyed a hearty lunch at Cozumel Mexican Grill in Loxley. Among the topics of conversation was a sign on Hwy. 87 that looked like this:

**Pig Farm
Gun Range**

Is this one business, or two?



The lineup included two MGs, two Triumphs, two Jaguars, one Austin-Healey, and one Sunbeam.



Max Menaker admires the jasmine TR6 owned by new member **Al Craton**, and **Dave Roloson’s** green and black TR4.



Ben Cummings’ Sprite may have been the smallest car in the group, but it had a big heart. That’s Ben behind his car.

Dazzling Display at Dillard 2022

story and photos by Noel Eagleson

The call of the mountains is always dear to my heart, and as 10 years had passed since my last visit to the Peachtree MG Registry, this year (September 15th-18th) would be the perfect opportunity to return.

Dillard House in North Georgia is the host hotel and they provide a number of rooms for hospitality, tech sessions and the banquet dinner. The show field is within the fine grounds and provides a suitable background of mountains, covered in an eerie mist in the early morning which quickly burns off.

Wednesday morning **Donna** and I headed to out early to Montgomery and then onwards, negotiating the notorious Atlanta traffic, finally stopping at Alpharetta to visit with her sister. Thursday morning was a leisurely drive north to Dillard.

After pre-registration we joined lots of other folks enjoying hors d'oeuvres in the hospitality room, this also provided a wonderful opportunity to meet and talk with other registrants. Part of the welcome pack contains several recommended tours to local wineries and selected drives in the mountains. There was also a helpful list of local restaurants and cafes.

Later in the afternoon I attended a very enlightening tech talk by Larry Norton, focusing on the 60th anniversary of the MGB. Larry did an excellent job of outlining and illustrating many of the major changes which occurred over 18 years of production, 1962-1980. He concluded his presentation with an insight into MG post-Abingdon, including the newer MG RV8 of 1992, and this car paved the way for the 1995 MG F and later the MG TF.

Friday morning after breakfast, Donna and I decided to drive to Franklin, North Carolina and tour the Scottish Tartans Museum and heritage center. If you are from Scots/ Irish heritage, this is a must visit if in the area. Besides taking a trip back in time, the museum has a large collection of over six hundred tartan swatches along with the related history. One can get outfitted with a full clan regalia. Our return jour-

ney was via the delightful town of Highlands, known for its high-end shopping.

In the afternoon I attended another tech session, on engine head repairs, given by Barry Rosenberg. This was extremely interesting and focused on the different MGB cylinder heads and problems to look out for. He related several tales of woe regarding fitting hardened valve seats and using manganese - bronze valve guides. Barry had examples there to pass around, and I enjoyed seeing him lap in valves the old-fashioned way!



Chrome-bumper MGBs

Show morning was just picture perfect and it was nice to relax and enjoy the 160 various cars as they made their way unto the show field. Naturally, MGBs were in the majority closely followed by a great turnout of MGAs. Also great to see was six big Healeys looking splendid in the morning sun. **Donna**, of course, fell in love with the two beautiful Morris Minor Travelers (woodies).



*Wrap it, up, **Noel**, she'll take it!*

(story continues next page)

Dazzling Dillard, continued

Other cars of notable interest included a Sunbeam Imp, Triumph Herald Convertible (photo below) and



a couple of really nice Triumph 250s. There were two interesting motorcycles, a 1948 HRD Vincent Rapide and a 1938 Sunbeam Lion. Surprisingly, Big Cats (Jaguars) were very rare with only two E-Types and an XJS, perhaps the mountains are not their normal habitat? [*I hope my fellow Jaguar owners don't think they're too lofty to associate with an MG crowd-Ed.*]

Of course, dear to my heart were the several MG T-Types and an adorable 1931 MG M Type named Emma (photo below). Later in the afternoon a number of seasoned builders entered the valve cover racing which was very competitive with several unusual variations on the theme!



Overall, I feel this is one of the better southern British car shows, with plenty to satisfy most British car lovers and I would like to close by thanking all members of The Peachtree MG Registry who went above and beyond to ensure all entrants and spectators had an enjoyable experience. Safety Fast!

An Artist Among Us

SABCC member **Duane Wood** is an accomplished artist—here's what he says about himself and his work:

I am a native of the Upper Midwest. A graduate of Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, I have been a designer, art director, creative director and publisher in marketing communications and advertising for over 50 years. I owned a marketing communications, graphic design and specialty publishing firm for 39 years. I worked with many well-known companies including Pillsbury, Rockwell Collins, and Winnebago. I also taught art and design for many years at the University of Northern Iowa and Coe College.

My style is impressionistic realism. I maintain a painting and drawing studio in our home on Dauphin Island, Alabama. My work includes painting and drawing in oils, acrylics, pastels, watercolor, graphite and charcoal.

I attempt to capture a moment in time with the emotion that emanates through light, texture and color. Drawing is so important to me, to correctly define a subject and create the emotional atmosphere. I also have been a "car guy," a gear head, for as long as I can remember, enthralled with the shiny surfaces that reflect the day around the vehicle.

If you would like to learn more about **Duane** and his automotive art, see more of his paintings, or discuss a commissioned work, please visit his [website](#).



Triumph TR4A, by Duane Wood

Spannering

Advice on Repairs, Parts, and Services

My Car Happy Place

stories and photos by Peter Lee

What is your car happy place? For me it is the u-pull-it yard. Vast arrays of cheap parts ripe for the exploring. Locally in Mobile I frequent Barry's in Theodore and U-Pull-It in Mobile. Both have online inventories that you can check daily for new arrivals. The longer the car has been in the yard, the more picked over it will be so keep your tools close



The author with a primo find.

and be ready to pounce. Also, if it broke on your car, it probably broke on someone else's.

Most yards charge a small cover charge to get in, usually a couple of bucks, and you must sign an injury waiver. U-Pull-It has a card which gets you half-price admission. Most have rules like no one under 16 (which is why Mattie has yet to enjoy this theme park of fun). And most ban power tools, grinders, torches or jacks. They have engine hoists if you need them and will transport and load heavy parts. They will also usually have a price sheet online or printed so that you have an idea what you are going to spend. But give it a shot. You may cheaply solve an auto problem where the new part would break the bank. But to help you on your adventure I have assembled my personal rules below.

Peter's Rules of the U Pull Yard

1. **Da Barrow:** Always get a wheelbarrow on the way in because the one time you don't, you will need it.



And the moment you leave to go get the wheelbarrow, the part will disappear like a cheap TV on Black Friday. And always put the wheelbarrow back for the next scavenger.

2. **Prepare:** Research removing the parts you want ahead of time. We have all been there when you brought everything except the



one torx head driver you didn't know about. This includes bringing the less practical tool. Like a hex key instead of a hex key socket. I can put a lot more force on a hex key socket in a tight space. I also bring a list of all my part needs for a car because I will forget as soon as I walk through the front gate. Research the yard layout. Most yards have a space or row associated with the car's location online. They also have the yard map posted on their site. Look at it so you don't wander the yard and waste valuable part-pulling time.

3. **The tool rule:** Always watch your tools and try to bring cheap ones Don't bring your high-dollar set of Husky tools or your electric impact gun, in case you forget them. They won't be there when you come back. And watch your tools in your wheelbarrow. I have popped up out of a car to find someone rifling through my tools looking to "borrow" a wrench a few times. Harbor Freight is your friend.

4. **Yard Karma:** If someone looks like they need help or asks, help out. Karma in the yard works. I helped a guy trying to remove a taillight from a car with a

(story continues next page)

My Car Happy Place, continued

claw hammer. He turned out to be a yard employee and I got out of there with a very favorable bill. And another approached me needing an adjustable wrench to get a part off. Sure, I was worried I wouldn't see the wrench again, but it actually was sitting on my car in the parking lot as promised. And the karma part that day was that I found the key I had overlooked in the MINI. The yard gods paid me back for my positive attitude.

5. **Watch the marks:** The person checking you out will mark all the parts with a distinct paint pen to identify them. Always pay attention to the marking process. I got a trim part once that the employee had marked on the outward facing side and that part was now wasted.



Land Rover Discovery and MINI Cooper

6. **Be prepared to give up:** Sometimes things just don't work out. If you have been in the yard for three hours in the sun and have borderline heat stroke, maybe you should have already left. If you can't get the passenger door open to be able to remove the door actuator, maybe that's not the part you need today. Be happy with your collection of bits and go home for a cool drink.

7. **Don't forget the little things:** Gather up the fasteners that go with the parts. If you get home and your car only has three of the four nuts and you just left four in the parts car, you're going to feel a little silly. Every garage needs a box of random fasteners,

and I can't tell you how many times that box has saved me. This counts for loose change in the cars too. I find all sorts of strange things in the cars.

8. **Adapt and Improvise:** You must work with what you have or find as you can't bring everything. An exhaust pipe makes a good cheater bar or hood prop. This doesn't mean use your screwdriver as a prybar. It's just going to break. Recently I had to use a dipstick off of a neighboring car to break into the mini I was visiting. The door closed behind me as I went to get the proper screwdriver, locking my glasses and a few tools inside. This could also be the "don't let the door close behind you, bonehead" rule.

The final thought is actually on non-pull-a-part yard. I watch the local yards that typically do not allow you to pull the parts. They will be a little more expensive, but they have a better quality of part, and you stay clean. I use www.car-part.com to find items I am struggling to get in good condition. When I find something I need, I also ask to look at the car (if they still have it) for anything else. What you value may not be what the yard will pull and list online. Some yards will not allow this, but if they let you, it is a good opportunity to find the random thing you're



needing. I went to one in Mobile and they left me alone for two hours to pull all the extra parts I wanted, though the yard dog came and checked on me once. And, he peed on my wheelbarrow. See you in the yard.

Aftermarket Gauges Might be for You

story and photos by Scott Paradise

Tired of guessing how fast you are going in your classic British car? Dashboard needs an update? Here is one way of solving your problems. While refurbishing a Mazda-powered Sprite, I realized that the gauge package was not up to the job. Unbelievably, the person(s) who originally installed the rotor motor powertrain into the Sprite actually found a speedometer cable which screwed right up to the Mazda gearbox and the Smiths speedo . . . which unfortunately is wildly inaccurate.

After looking at my options, I decided to go with a GPS driven speedometer and matching tachometer from Speedhut, a gauge manufacturer who builds them here in the USA. While purists may be put off, these gauges offer some interesting features:

- **Speedometer:** deadly accurate. Clock. Temperature. Altitude(really?). Odometer and trip odometer. And, for those so inclined, automatic 0 to 60 times as well as standing quarter mile times! Oh, and one more thing—top speed. Might want to reset that one.
- **Tachometer:** I chose the 0 to 10,000 RPM —after all, it is a rotary mo-

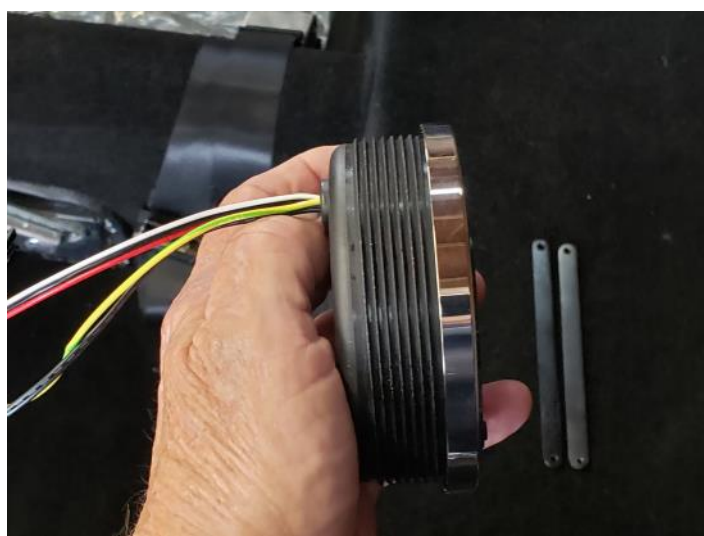


tor. The tach features a settable redline and sequential shift warning lights as redline is approached.

Speedhut offers a wide range of options including gauge diameter, face color, numeral color and font, needle color and bezel finish. For a small fee of \$20.00, you can even add a logo to the instrument. The gauges I had built look at home with the existing Smiths fuel and oil/temp gauges.



Installation is pretty straightforward and includes about everything you need, including wiring instructions which actually make sense!



Pricing is not crazy when compared to replacing / rebuilding original gauges. The two gauges cost less than \$600.00 with the optional logos.

[These look great, and would be a welcome upgrade for anyone dealing with "oscillating" gauge needles-Ed.]

The Best of

Pierre's Wisdom

Pierre Fontana

“Real Cool” MG

Many years ago, the owner of this MG wanted a “working” A/C system. A/C systems do not cool logically; instead, they remove heat, so in the absence of heat you have cool. However, you must remove heat efficiently.

Most all [older] British cars have aftermarket A/C systems. These were dealer-installed after they arrived here, or you could buy the kit made for your model car, and do it yourself. A few tricks to know—you may need a more powerful alternator and to upgrade the engine cooling system. On an old Rolls, I had to go from a generator to an alternator to keep up with amperage demand, and install an extra cooling fan.

For this particular MG, the kit had a fan shroud for the mechanical fan, which is a necessity to make the fan efficient, and two auxiliary electric radiator fans, in front of the condenser. That is the secret of this cool MG. The three fans keep the engine and driver cool.

My 1967 Jaguar E-Type rag top and my 1974 MGB-GT both had A/C and they worked well. The only problem was that on the Jag, the engineer had the bottom compressor bracket going through the middle of belt, so to change belt you had to almost remove A/C pump. On most cars, A/C makes for more difficult maintenance or impedes access to places you need to work on. This is the price to pay for comfort.

Pierre Fontana is a technical advisor for SABCC. This column first ran in June 2013. A quick Google search reveals that air conditioning systems are still available for the MGB; a kit for a “rubber” bumper MGB from one source runs \$1,425.



All photos courtesy **Pierre Fontana**



MGB with aftermarket air conditioning system.

Spare Parts

Items for Sale

British Car Literature:

1. 12 Jaguar XJ-S and XJ-6 brochures, 1970's and 80's plus 4 issues of the Jaguar Journal from '73 and '74, all for \$30
2. MG Midget Brochure - 1978 "Leaping Skaters." \$7
3. Zenith Carburetor Exploded Views and Part Numbers for 1978 MG and Triumph \$10
4. MG Shop Manual Models M to TF 1500, 1975 Revised Edition, \$20

Trailer Frame:

Rare Allstate one-wheel trailer frame with castor and arms. VW people are all about these, but a one-wheel trailer would make a fun addition to any small British car as well. \$300

Email Finboats@Gmail.Com or see me at the show. Look for the Morris Traveller.

Peter Crowl



Auction Roundup—Odd Ducks

[At the BCF, these cars would be in one of the "Britannia" classes-Ed.]

1974 TVR 2500M



Sold for \$16,700 on Hemmings

This car drapes a handsome fiberglass coupe body over a Triumph TR6 drivetrain. In good condition with only a few cosmetic blemishes, the final price was considered a bargain by commenters. The lack of air conditioning is mitigated by the vinyl sunroof.

2004 Noble M12 GTO-3R



Sold for \$61,000 on Bring a Trailer

With a composite body finished in blue over a gray and black interior, and a Ford Duratec 3.0L V6 mated to a six-speed manual transaxle, this mid-engine GT was set up for the track, and was not even registered for street use until this year. Thus, it only showed 2900 miles. It has A/C, but note the roll-up windows.

1986 Panther Kallista



Sold for \$16,275 on Hemmings

Keeping with the long tradition of British coachbuilding, the Panther Kallista offered a Ford "Lima" 2.3L SOHC four with a four-speed transmission. The red and silver body is aluminum, other than the MG Midget steel doors; the windscreen is also from an MG Midget. This car was owned from new by a physician in St. Petersburg, FL.

Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor, *Spark & Spanner*

Her Majesty, the Gearhead

Like most folks, I was not ready for the death of Queen Elizabeth II. She had been the monarch of the United Kingdom for my entire life. I admired her total commitment to her duties, her deep and abiding faith, and her ability to be a guiding, and yet impartial, leader for her country and the world.

However, after I became involved with the British car hobby, I learned of Elizabeth's great passion for all things automotive. Perhaps that traces to her war-time service in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), the women's branch of the British Army, which she joined upon turning 18 in 1944. In March 1945, she began training in vehicle operation and maintenance. The photo above right shows her during her training days.

For the remainder of her life, the Queen loved to drive. She was photographed at age 95 driving a Jaguar X-Type estate around Windsor Castle. Elizabeth II was the only person in the UK allowed to drive with-



Her Majesty was also known for driving aggressively, and alarmed the then-Crown Prince (now King) Abdullah of Saudi Arabia by personally driving him around Balmoral in a Land Rover Defender at a brisk rate of speed.

During her reign, Elizabeth issued royal warrants to many of Britain's automakers, but by most accounts her favorite marques were Land Rover and Jaguar. She was partial to estate cars (station wagons), and for many years drove a 1961 Vauxhall Cresta estate, but her 2002 Land Rover Defender with a turbo-diesel engine is cited by many as the vehicle she most enjoyed.

Knowing that Queen Elizabeth loved, and collected, cars helps her seem much more relatable. While the British auto industry waxed and waned during her 70 years on the throne, I would like to believe that she inspired several generations of car builders, car collectors, and technicians.

Today, nearly all the traditional British marques are owned by conglomerates based outside the U.K. However, Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Jaguar, Land Rover, MINI, Morgan, McLaren, Aston Martin, Vauxhall, MG, and Lotus are still building innovative and desirable products.

As a person of Scots/Irish ancestry, and a British car enthusiast, I will miss Queen Elizabeth. I pray King Charles III, Prince William, and the rest of the royal family will honor her lifelong commitment to British motoring.



Queen Elizabeth II, age 95, driving her Jaguar at Windsor.

out a license, or a number plate on her car. She also enjoyed driving at her Scottish estate, Balmoral, and taught her children to drive there.

31st Annual British Car Festival Celebrating the MGA



October 23, 2021 • Fairhope, Alabama

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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 and we'll make arrangements to get one to you-.



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*
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North American MGB Register

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Toll-free phone: 800-NAMGBR-1

www.namgbr.org

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.

Thanks!

And now, for something completely different . . .



When Prince Philip died, Ed. ran a photo of the custom Land Rover the prince helped to design to carry his casket, so including a picture of the Jaguar XJ Queen Elizabeth helped design to carry her casket seems only fair. In this case, the platform was a Jaguar XJ saloon, with extra-high windows and a glass roof specifically requested by Her Majesty. The car was finished in Royal Claret and bears Queen Elizabeth's Royal Cypher.

Spark & Spanner

South Alabama British Car Club

PO Box 18036

Mobile, AL 36618



*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**.*