

Spark & Spanner

The Official
Publication of the
South Alabama
British Car Club

November 2022



From the President

Tom Renick

Fun Fall Events

You can't have much more fun than at a yard sale full of British car parts and dozens of enthusiastic treasure seekers. That's what occurred recently at **Mike Darby's** place near Silverhill with participants from our four nearby clubs. There were old rusty crusty pieces that would clean up just fine, and brand new parts at bargain prices. This was the Autojumble from the old country, as **Noel Eagleson** christened it back about five years ago when we had our first foray into the swapping parts business [*He means car parts-Ed.*]. By next year, we'll all have a new batch of "useful to somebody" devices lying around our garages and we can look forward to doing it all over again. Can't wait.

The British Car Festival committee held **Brian Daly's** "Hot Wash-up" meeting and went over what went right and what might be improved for next year's BCF. **Brian** took copious notes and is well ahead of his first



Photo by Noel Eagleson

planning meeting early next year. All who participated did a superb job and we hope many of you will get with **Brian** and, for Friday night festivities, **Donna Eagleson**, to volunteer to help again. If everyone does a little, we can have an even bigger and better show next year than our record breaker this year. Thanks to everyone!

Only three weeks away is our annual Christmas Luncheon at Rock Creek Golf Club. Be sure to get your money to **Donna Eagleson** expeditiously [*that would be no later than Nov. 24-Ed.*]. We already have a fair number signed up, and you don't want to miss out on this gala affair. We will have much-deserved awards given, and installation of new officers. Bring a new, wrapped Christmas gift and the **Coulings** will send them on to kids who need them.

The above mentioned officers will be elected at the November meeting Tuesday, the 22nd. Be there to witness all the excitement and political intrigue that always accompanies our selection of a new executive committee.

Tom Renick is the president of South Alabama British Car Club. He thrives on political intrigue.



When is a Moke not a Moke? When it's powered by batteries, and that's no joke! Here's our leader at the Cruisin' the Coast vendor fair looking askance at this replica of the Mini beach cruiser.

On the cover: The 2022 Great Gulf Coast Autojumble. That's technical advisor **Pierre Fontana** in the foreground. (Photo by **Tom Renick**).

SABCC Club Officers

President	Tom Renick
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
Member at Large	Ron Wolverton
Technical Advisor	Pierre Fontana
Technical Advisor	Mike Darby
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 [*cheap at twice the price-Ed.*]

British Car Festival is Supported by



Activities Calendar

November 22, 2022

SABCC Monthly Meeting, Don Carlos Restaurant, Daphne, eat at 6:00, meet at 7:00. Turkey is not on their menu.

December 10, 2022

Lillian Christmas Parade, meet at the Lillian Community Club, 34148 Widell Ave, Lillian, AL. 36549, parade starts at noon.

December 11, 2022

Annual Club Christmas Luncheon, Rock Creek Golf Club, Daphne, 12:30 p.m. \$15 per person. Ante up **now**, as all reservations and payments are due **November 24**. Don't forget to bring an unwrapped toy for a child who might not otherwise have much of a Christmas.

The Christmas Luncheon takes the place of the December club meeting. The next regular meeting will be January 24, 2023.

December 2022

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Lillian Parade
11 Xmas Lunch	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Sparks

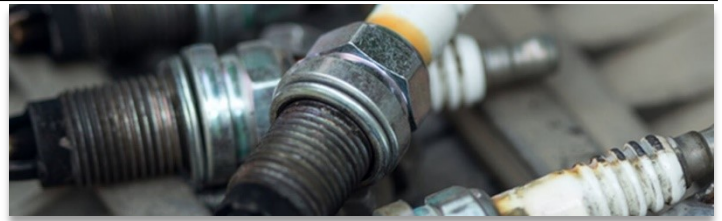
Club and Member News

A Great Autojumble

For the past several years, the three area British car clubs—SABCC, Mardi Gras MGs, and the Panhandle British Car Association—have joined forces to host perhaps the finest British car swap meet along the northern Gulf Coast, to wit, the “Great Gulf Coast Autojumble,” held this year on Nov. 12 under the tall pines at **Mike and Nancy Darby’s** place. **Mike** has begun to clean out some of his vast stores of British car parts, and more than 45 folks arrived to buy, sell, and socialize on a cool, party cloudy morning. We’ve included a few photos to capture the essence of this annual experience.



The official Autojumble mascot, who probably will still be trying to sell this tyre next year.



L to R, Don Pritchett and Tony McLaughlin chat with Pierre Fontana (behind Tony) and Keith Jarvis while Alan McDonald roots through the goods.

photo by Ed.



L to R, Bill Silhan, Tim Maynard, Fred Veenschoten, and Bob Manske.

photo by Ed.



Andrea and Michael Bertagnolli (R) flank Dave Roloson.

photo by Ed.

More BCF Photos

Due to space and time constraints, *Ed.* had to limit the number of 2022 British Car Festival photos in the October issue. Herewith are a few more, and as always, *Ed.* regrets if you or your car are not included.



Registrants line up for check-in.

photo by *Robb Ogletree*



Sprites and Midgets

photo by *Mason Blosser*



Ron Wolverton photographs Mario Gabriel, Jr. in his Tundra Green MGB, with assistance from Frank Stabler.

photo by *Robb Ogletree*



Moggies all in a row.

photo by *William Heritage*



Jeff Herndon's XK120, winner of Best of Show and Pastor's Pick.

photo by *Ron Wolverton*



BCF publicity chair *Ben Cummings* scored a major coup by getting SABCC cars used in a fashion photoshoot in *Mobile Bay Monthly's* October issue. Here, the crew readies *Tom Renick's* Sunbeam Tiger for its close-up. A letter to the editor in the magazine's November issue said "The article on British sports cars brought back a lot of memories . . ."

photo by *Robb Ogletree*



Ben Cummings brought this guy along to help him win the Kid's Choice Award—better luck next year, **Ben**.

photo by **Mason Blosser**



Peter Lee (L) prepares to release the valve cover racers in a match between **Mattie Lee** and **Fred Veenschoten**.

photo by **Robb Ogletree**



Danette Menaker with her 2022 Land Rover Defender, which took first place honors in Class RR, Land Rover Modern.

photo by **Robb Ogletree**



Triumph TR6s were featured; 20 were registered in two classes. Top honors went to **Danny Varnado** and **Dwyke Rushing**.

photo by **Robb Ogletree**



Early arrivals in Class D, Modern Jaguar Sports. This ended up being the largest class, with 13 cars registered and on the field. Plans are being made to split this class next year. [That's Ed's car in the foreground; no, it didn't win anything.]

photo by **Robb Ogletree**



As in past years, the oldest car in the show was this 1930 MG M-Type owned by **James Hester** of Russellville, Alabama (**David and Danette Menaker's** Defender, center left, was the newest). The M-Type took first place in the MG Pre-War and T-Type class.

photo by **Robb Ogletree**



Randy Fleming's 1981 Mini 1000 panel van—the only classic Mini this year—appears to be ready for a river trip.

photo by Robb Ogletree



With its full camping set-up, Mickey Slade's 1966 Defender pickup picked up lots of attention, and the Kid's Choice Award.

photo by Robb Ogletree



British motorcycles are welcome at the show; this year, five were on display, ranging from 1960 to 2012 models.

photo by Robb Ogletree



The "Diamond in the Rough" trophy, created by Don Pritchett and won by Tom Renick (see bottom left).

photo by Robb Ogletree



Fearing that his beloved Sunbeams might not have a class, forcing them to compete against more plebian marques, SABCC president Tom Renick now has three Alpines and his beautifully-restored blue Tiger. The two Alpines he brought to the show, including this green 1959, were named "Diamonds in the Rough."

photo by Robb Ogletree



Here's proof Mason Blosser made it safely home to New Hampshire after a 3,200-mile round trip in his 1979 Midget. The editor of The MG Driver (the official publication of the North American MGB Register) was so impressed with Mason's story that he plans to run it in their March/April 2023 issue.

photo by Mason Blosser

Genealogy of a Family-Owned XK8

story by **Bruce Mackey**

My current Jaguar, my third, is a 1998 XK8 convertible, which I have owned a little over a year.

Personally, I think of the vehicle as an “age appropriate” Jag. You see at age 77, I find myself enjoying the plush ride, the lack of road noise, the spacious trunk and the comfortable Connolly hides. My advancing years have taken a toll. No longer are speed, handling and braking the top priorities those features once were [*although Jags do well in these areas-Ed.*].

Every Jaguar has a story and my car is no exception. I started looking for a well-cared-for XK8 coupe about two years ago. Honestly, I believe these XK8s are one of the best bargains on the used sports car market. You can buy a clean low mileage one for less than \$10K and know that your purchase is only going to go up in value in future years [*Lots of folks agree, Bruce—we had seven of this series at the BCF-Ed.*].



Bruce's current Jaguar, a 1998 XK8 convertible

photo courtesy Bruce Mackey

So, what set my car apart from the many XK8s on the market? Why did I settle for a roadster when I really wanted a coupe? Simply, it was a “one-family” owned car.

The fellow I purchased the Jag from was the grandson of the original owner. His grandmother purchased the vehicle new in 1998 from the Jaguar dealer in Naples FL. After she bought the vehicle her

niece fell in love with the red convertible! Grandma drove the car for about 25,000 miles in seven years and traded it for a new Jag. Sadly, grandmother and niece had a falling out and were not on speaking terms when the elder lady traded the car in.

However, the family grapevine leaked the news of the car's status to the niece. She went to the dealer and reached an agreement to buy the car before it ever was placed for sale. In addition, she too drove the car for 25,000 miles and about seven years.

When she elected to sell the car, her nephew purchased it! He also drove the Jaguar for about 25,000 miles during a seven-year period. He loved the car and each of the owners meticulously maintained the vehicle.

I first saw the car 13 months ago when it was 21 years old with 75,000 miles on the odometer. I bought the car sight unseen and loved it even more when I first saw it!

The owner (the grandson) purchased a much newer XK “Portfolio Edition” equipped with many options (heated/cooled seats, backup camera, navigation, etc.) lacking on the 1998 convertible. You know . . . many of those options appeal to an elderly person like myself.

In fact, he misses his old car; and we have a gentleman's agreement where he will purchase his family's red XK8 back at a future date and I will purchase his light blue Portfolio convertible!



Bruce's next Jaguar, an XK Portfolio Edition convertible

photo courtesy Bruce Mackey

[SABCC member **Bruce Mackey** is a retired journalist living in Fairhope-Ed.]

Officers Nominated for 2023

The October meeting is the time appointed by the club by-laws for the nomination of officers to serve for the ensuing year. Nominating Committee Chairman, **Noel Eagleson**, submitted this report at our October meeting:

Nominating Committee Report, October 25, 2022

Officers for 2023: In accordance with club by-laws (Article 2C) the nominating committee has great pleasure in proposing the following named to serve as officers of the club for the year commencing January 1, 2023.

- President: **Tom Renick**
- VP-Membership: **Rick Black**
- VP-Activities: (*Vacant . . . refer to below explanation*)
- Secretary: **Peter Lee**
- Treasurer: **Donna Eagleson**
- Members at Large: The club bylaws currently allow for one Member-at-Large per 30 members, and as of October 25, 2022, we have a total membership of 143. The Nominating Committee, as noted below, recommends changing the by-laws to allow one Member-at-Large per 25 members, and thus five names are put forth:
 - **Dick Bishop**
 - **Frank Stabler**
 - **Ron Wolverton**
 - **Ben Cummings**
 - **Dave Roloson** (*pending bylaws change*)

Bylaws Changes: The Nominating Committee recommends that the Executive Committee and Membership consider changing the current bylaws to increase the number of Members-at-Large and formally define their duties:

Article 2: Organization and Membership

A. 6. Member-at-Large, one per ~~30~~ 25 members

Article 3: Duties of Officers

G. Members-at-Large serve as Liaisons between the Executive Committee and the General Membership. Duties change as defined in the organization's by-laws or as needed to fulfill Executive Committee requirements and address overall organizational goals.

VP-Activities: I consider this to be one of the most important positions within the club organization. **Don Pritchett** has fulfilled that role for more years than I can remember. Year after year he has come up with a wide variety of activities aimed at ensuring we have at least one monthly event to suit all members. I know he has reached a time in life when he wishes to spend more time with family and particularly grandkids who live in Tennessee. Pending someone stepping forward to undertake this important club role it may be a temporary measure that we involve the Members-at-Large to collectively come up with activities on both sides of the bay that will appeal to members.

There are three appointed positions and each current incumbent has agreed to continue in those positions including:

- Newsletter Editor: **Michael King** [*Again?-Ed.*]
- Webmaster: **Peter Lee**
- Historian: **Robb Ogletree**

There were no nominations from the floor at the October meeting, so nominations were closed. As per the club's bylaws, the nominations are to be published in the November issue of our newsletter. At the November club meeting one vote per paid membership will elect these nominees to office and pass the proposed bylaw amendments. A brief installation of officers will take place at the annual SABCC Christmas Lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

The Nominating Committee

Noel Eagleson, Chairman

Brian Daly

Robb Ogletree

Spannering

Advice on Repairs, Parts, and Services



Another Classic Back on the Road

story by **Scott Paradise**; photos by **Dennis Carroll**

Some months ago the owner (we will call him "Dennis") of a Big Healey contacted me about getting his car back to a drivable state. The car had not moved from his garage since 2004 so we didn't know exactly what we were up against, but I am always up for a challenge, and I love Big Healeys!



On the way to Scott's shop.

The Basics

After receiving the car the first thing checked was whether or not the engine was seized. I was able to turn the crankshaft but it didn't like it. Hmm. A new battery was installed and after disconnecting the fuel lines I turned the engine over with the starter. The engine was turning over very slowly which led me to check various electrical connections. No change. Tired of climbing in and out of the car to reach the key, I resorted to leaning into the car to reach the ignition switch, which now gave me a view of the engine while turning it over. Engine still spinning over slowly, I saw that the drive belt was being dragged over the water pump pulley! Aha, a seized water pump. Duh. After the belt was removed, the engine turned over just fine! Lesson learned.

Now, on to getting the car back on its feet. It needed about everything . . . obviously a new water pump, thermostat, hoses and radiator flush. The carburetors were pouring fuel,

both of them needing to be overhauled. The fuel tank was removed and cleaned and all of the flexible fuel lines replaced. The brake and clutch hydraulics were re-worked with new cylinders, calipers, linings and flexible hoses. After this work and more, it was almost time to drive the car. 2U Tire and Wheel came by and installed new tires and mentioned to me that the wire wheels were rusted and had loose spokes. I mentioned this to Dennis, who put new wheels towards the bottom of his to-do list.

The First Test Drive

With new tires, the engine running well, and a good brake pedal, it was time for the first test drive. Off the stands and engine running, I attempted to put the car in gear . . . a no-go. Damn . . . the clutch disc must be rusted to the flywheel. Several attempts at breaking the clutch loose were made by driving the car with the clutch pedal depressed and "goosing" the gas, to no avail. Backing the car out of the building for one last attempt, something broke loose and let the engine rev freely, but it wasn't the clutch. The left rear wheel hub splines had given up! New wheels and hubs were moved to the top of the "to-do" list!

With shiny new wheels and hubs now on the car, Dennis and I decided not to try breaking the clutch loose by



*Stuck Clutch **1**, Wheel Spline **0**.*

(story continues next page)

Another Classic Back on the Road, continued

driving it. Time for a clutch . . . and Dennis wanted to help. I usually work by myself but how can you turn down a guy who wants to learn more about his car and has a background in mechanical engineering?? And I was glad he was there ..Dennis is very handy and that gearbox was a bear!



Unlike MGBs, this transmission can be removed from the cockpit.

On the Road Again

The car now drivable, and a few adjustments made, Dennis drove it off to Mobile from Daphne with his wife behind him "just in case". Another one back on the road. And yes, I did call him to make sure that he made it!

I ran into Dennis at the car show and he brought me up to speed on the progress he has made on some of the minor issues with the car. I was pleased to see him enjoying his ride again and believe he still loves it after some 40 years.



Safely home.

[You can read about Ed's small part in this story in "Weak and Rusty" on p. 13.]

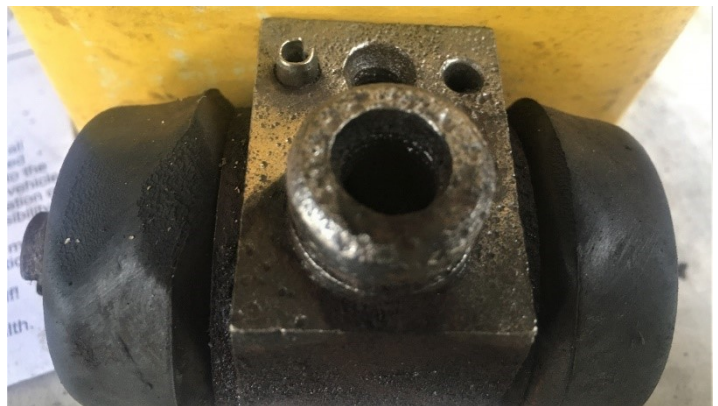
Pierre's Wisdom

Pierre Fontana

Italian Brake Parts

Many new parts are being manufactured by many factories in different countries. I am glad to be able get them, good or bad, but just want to vent my frustration today in trying to install some wheel cylinders on an old MG Midget I am getting road-worthy for a friend.

The picture below shows a "locating" split pin in the rear of the wheel cylinder. It is to mount it correctly against brake back plate, and has no other function.



Well, those reproduction cylinders have the pin about 1/16 of an inch off center. Not noticing this, I wasted a pretty good amount of time trying to make it fit.

The solution is using a drill motor and the correct drill bit to elongate the hole about toward 1 o'clock until the pin falls in.



By the way, the clips they send to fasten the rear are frustrations in and of themselves. Use a circlip; they only take a second.

Pierre Fontana is a technical advisor for SABCC.

Spare Parts

A BCF Thank You

SABCC expresses sincere appreciation to Jay Kemp, Strategic Customer Representative for Sunbelt Rentals

Scaffold Services at 4505 Halls Mill Road in Mobile.

Their motto is "Making it Happen For Our Customers," and we are grateful to Jay making sure our new photo backdrop was securely mounted at the BCF!



Spotted in the Wild

Mac McNamara sent these photos of a Thames Panel Van, a TR6, and a couple of MGBs he saw at Cruisin' the Coast, with a challenge to Mattie Lee!



Erratum [Ed. regrets these errors in the Oct. 2022 issue]

- Rodney McDonald's younger grandson is Grady Christian
- The caretakers of the 1951 Jaguar XK120 that took the 2nd Place award in Jaguar Classic Sports are **Bill and Sandra Cashion**
- David Anderson was a BCF entrant, not a class sponsor

Auction Roundup—Big Healeys

[A brief look at the Big Healey market seems appropriate considering the story earlier in this issue-Ed.]

1963 Austin-Healey 3000 Mark II BJ7



Sold for \$36,750 on Hemmings

A single-family-owned car, this black over red 3000 was in good mechanical shape, but had some cosmetic issues, and the interior was, at best, fair.

1957 Austin-Healey 100-6 BN4 4-Seat Roadster



Not Sold for \$34,500 on Bring a Trailer

The subject of a full refurbishment, this Colorado Red over black car got some quibbles in the auction comments, but no major flaws were noted. Perhaps the timing (the auction closed Oct. 26) was wrong.

1967 Austin-Healey 3000 BJ8 Mk III



Sold for \$50,000 on Bring a Trailer

Repainted in blue over blue vinyl, this Big Healey was very attractive, with only wrinkled carpets and a few other cosmetic issues letting it down. Commentors considered it well-bought.



Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor, *Spark & Spanner*

We Get by with a Little Help from Our Friends

This being the season of giving thanks and all, I find myself reflecting on the big tent pitched by the British car community. I've made many great friends over the nearly 14 years I've been a member of SABCC, including some who are no longer with us, but whose memories I treasure.

In particular, I think often of the late **Richard Cunningham**, my friend and mentor. His mechanical abilities were only exceeded by his hospitable nature, and everyone was always welcome at his Garagemahal. **Richard** rebuilt the engine in the MG Midget I later sold to young **Mason Blosser**, who drove the car some 3,200 miles to have it at the BCF; the strength of that motor is testament to **Richard's** skill.

I'm also grateful for **Noel** and **Donna Eagleson**, who have continued **Richard's** tradition of hospitality at the Garagemahal, and for the gang of regulars who are always willing to help me when I'm working there on some project. **Rodney McDonald**, **Tom Renick**, **Noel**, and I have a running text exchange in which we share matters of great import and occasional wit.

Scott Paradise is doing top-shelf work keeping old British motors on the road; his story on pp. 10 and 11 is just the latest example. Dennis and Donna Carroll are longtime friends, and when they reached out to me for help with their Big Healey, I knew **Scott** would not disappoint. I am very pleased for the Carrolls, was glad to see them at the BCF, and hope they will become active club members.

Speaking of the BCF, I'm always glad to see friends from other clubs at the show—even Keith Vezina from the New Orleans club whose Damask Red MGB-plus-trailer took top honors over the Damask Red MGB my brother bought from the estate of **Stuart Waddington** (another good friend and mentor). As I



told Brian, it's hard to beat a guy who's giving away cold adult beverages.

I'm also a member of the Panhandle British Car Association (since I do, in fact, live in the Pensacola area), and through that group, I've made even more friends. And, I've seen the true spirit of the hobby embodied in a group of PBCA members who have spent many hours addressing various issues on an MGB owned by a lady whose husband died earlier this year from a tragic illness. The car runs well again!

British car enthusiasts have a longstanding reputation as the friendliest segment of the car hobby. I follow several online forums, and I have been to many shows, and I almost never encounter disdain or lack of respect. To the contrary, those who do criticize, belittle, or make snide remarks or are frequently called out and chastised.

Raucous behavior is simply not tolerated at British car shows or events. At some cruise-ins and shows, burnouts or even street racing have happened. This was the case at a weekly event at a tire store near my home, at least until sheriff's deputies intervened and the event was canceled. You will not find that with us.

So, if you are trying to decide if the British car hobby is for you, let me say again—we pitch a big tent. Neither you nor your car have to be perfect. In fact, you don't even have to have a British car—just an interest. I am thankful—and everyone is welcomed.

32nd Annual British Car Festival Celebrating the **Triumph TR6**



October 22, 2022 • Fairhope, Alabama

Thank you Sponsors!



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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)

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- *Annual national convention - a four-day MG party!*

North American MGB Register

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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.

Thanks!

And now, for something completely different . . .



*The MGBeast: If this is what it takes to get younger folks interested in MGs, maybe this "MG Beast" is worth it. Thanks (or criticisms) are due **Tony McLaughlin**, who spotted the MGBeast in Mt. Pleasant, SC, for these photos.*

By the way, the "Jagumaro," which appeared last month in this space sold for \$22,000. Ed. can't make this stuff up.

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**.*