

Spark & Spanner

The Official
Publication of
the South
Alabama British
Car Club

May 2026



From the President

Ben Cummings

Like the weather, some things are unpredictable and can change fast. Earlier in the year our V.P. of Membership, **Rick Black**, was very concerned about a drop in our number of members. At one of our Executive Committee meetings, we discussed the drop in membership. What was happening? Why were the numbers down? We talked about members that are aging out and young people not interested in joining clubs. How long will the club continue?

So, we talked about a plan to use our Members-at-Large to stay in touch with our current members. And we talked about writing an ad to invite anyone interested in British cars to join the club, similar to how Bob and Sue Mason put out a call for members back in 1991.

These are good ideas and should still be implemented, but at last week's meeting Rick announced that our membership was at 140 members. That's about the number of members that we always have.

Whoooooh. What a relief. The weather changed and the sun came out. But we should plan for the rainy day. We don't need another scare of low membership.

We need to implement those ideas we discussed at our meeting. We need to not only sustain our number of members, but we need to increase them. Let us not forget the purposes of the Club:

1. Promote camaraderie through British car oriented events and provide a local meeting place for British Car enthusiasts.
2. Provide, via a program of varying activities, a means of broadening the scope of the enthusiasm of the individual members.



*Ben was a lot of help to **Tim Witzigreuter** and me [Ed.] as we were handing out awards at the Pensacola show..*

3. Provide support for such charitable organizations or community service activities as the membership shall from time to time approve. *[In the Bylaws, 2 and 3 are combined, but I think they need to be separated. Don't hate me-Ed.]*
4. Provide a multi-faceted source of information concerning British cars, their uses, their maintenance, and their preservation.

These are noble goals for those that love British cars. And goals worth preserving. I hope, as your president, and with the help of some very fine officers, to maintain and enhance the Club so that it may be enjoyed for many years to come.

Safety Fast,

Ben

*On the cover: Club president **Ben Cummings** shows a bit of irrational exuberance for his Diamond in the Rough award, presented by SABCC member and PBCA president **Tim Witzigreuter** (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.



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.



Technical Help

NAMGBR has assembled a group of technical experts to answer your questions.



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



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.

Do you want to know more about the North American MGB Register? Check out our website at: www.namgbr.org

Do you want to be a member in the largest club in North American dedicated to the MGB, MGB/GT, MGC, MGC/GT, MG V8, Midget, 1100/1300 Sedans and Post Abington MGs?

Go to the website and either download a PDF membership form and mail with a check or instantly join via Credit Card



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

SABCC is a Chapter Club of NAMGBR, and they provide insurance coverage for SABCC events.

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 [*Inflation? Tariffs? Not here!* – Ed.].

British Car Festival is supported by



MG 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

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.

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

tinyurl.com/mg103fest
AUGUST 14-16, 2026

Around the Bend

Upcoming Club Activities



May 5, 2026

BCF Planning Meeting

Pier House, 5872 Battleship Pkwy, Spanish Fort, 36527 – 6:00 to eat and 7:00 to meet.

May 23, 2026

Silverhill Car Show

Downtown Silverhill (Hwy. 104 and CR55), \$30 registration.

May 26, 2026

Monthly Club Meeting

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

June 2, 2026

BCF Planning Meeting

Pier House, 5872 Battleship Pkwy, Spanish Fort, 36527 – 6:00 to eat and 7:00 to meet.

June 23, 2026

Monthly Club Meeting

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

PENDING RESCHEDULING

Annual Club Picnic (Shrimp Boil)

Oscar Johnson Park, Silverhill, Ala., 11:00 – 2:00, \$10 per person. Watch your email for date!

May 2026

SU	MO	TUE	WE	TH	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5 BCF PLAN.	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 SILVER-HILL
24	25	26 CLUB MEETING	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2026

SU	MO	TUE	WE	TH	FRI	SAT
	1	2 BCF PLAN.	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 CLUB MEETING	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Sparks

Club and Member News

Brits on the Bay Show, Pensacola

photos by Robb Ogletree

Our friends in the Panhandle British Car Association (PBCA) held their annual show in historic downtown Pensacola on April 18. The featured car was the Austin-Healey "Bugeye" Sprite.

A pre-show dinner was hosted by PBCA on the evening of the 17th at the nearby Museum of Commerce. On Saturday morning, SABCC Activities VP **Michael Bertagnolli** organized a caravan from Daphne to Pensacola, and all SABCC cars, drivers, and passengers arrived unharmed (except, perhaps, for club president **Ben Cummings**, who might have suffered some hearing loss due to the loud "muffler" on his MGB).

Seville Square's spreading oaks provided shade on a very pleasant day as nearly 100 cars, covering 28 classes, gathered on the field. Top honors went to a 1953 Jaguar XK 120C (C-Type) in British Racing Green. SABCC members once again brought home a number of their awards [*with the exception of this writer, whose Jaguar was sadly overlooked-Ed.*]. A full list of the SABCC winners is on the next page. We'll let **Robb Ogletree's** excellent photos tell the rest of the story.



L to R, ready to caravan are **Michael Bertagnolli's** MGB, **Tom Renick's** Tiger, and **Robb Ogletree's** MGA. **Don Pritchett** (MGB) and daughter **Traci Pritchett** (MINI) are behind Tom's car.

Top, **Andrea Harris** with her MGB; middle, **Bob Zabzdyr** works the crowd; bottom, **Don** and **Traci** admire the C-Type.

Brits on the Bay, continued

SABCC Winners

"Bugeye" Sprites		
1st	Dwyke Rushing	1960 Austin-Healey Sprite
3rd	Lyman Dykes	1959 Austin-Healey Sprite
Jaguar Saloons, Estates, and SUVs, 1998 & Newer		
2nd	Richard Black	1999 Jaguar Vanden Plas
Jaguar XJSs		
1st	Scott Funderburk	1989 Jaguar XJ-S
3rd	Tom Schmitz	1995 Jaguar XJS
Jaguar XK8s and XKR, 1997-2006		
3rd	Scott Funderburk	1998 Jaguar XK8 Convertible
Jaguar XKs, XKR, and F-Types 2007-fwd.		
2nd	Tom Schmitz	2012 Jaguar XKR
MGA Roadsters and Coupes		
2nd	Robb Ogletree	1962 MG MGA
MGB Roadsters, 1962-67		
3rd	Richard Bishop	1967 MG MGB
MGB and MGC Roadsters, 1968-1974 1/2		
1st	Gil Stuart	1969 MG MGB
2nd	Andrea Bertagnolli	1974 MG MGB Roadster
MGB Roadsters, 1974 1/2-1980		
1st (tie)	Tim Witzigreuter	1977 MG MGB Roadster
2nd	Andrea Harris	1980 MG MGB
3rd	Don Pritchett	1978 MG MGB
Morgan – 3 Wheelers		
1st	Fred Veenschoten	1952 Morgan F Super
Morgan – 4 Wheelers		
1st	Jim O'Brien	2019 Morgan Roadster
Britannia Open Top Cars through 2009		
1st	Tom Renick	1965 Sunbeam Tiger
Britannia Large Closed Cars through 2009		
1st	Robert Zabzdyr	1983 Carbodies FX4R London Taxi
British Competition, Modified, Race Cars		
1st	Michael Bertagnolli	1977 MG MGB
Diamond in the Rough		
	Ben Cummings	1972 MG MGB



From top, **Gil Stuart** and **Dick Bishop** with Dick's MGB, "Brooke;" middle, guests admire **Tom Renick's** Tiger; bottom, **Ben Cummings' Diamond in the Rough**..

Members Out and About

Our Lady of Lourdes Lawn Party

story and photos by Mac McNamara

Great food and a good time was enjoyed at the Our Lady of Lourdes annual Lawn Party held Sunday 26 April 2026. Several children enjoyed sitting in the driver seat of the Anglia and "driving" while parents took photos. One memorable moment was the child that did not wish to sit in the Anglia, but was ecstatic when offered the opportunity to sit in the taxi!



Four Jags in Covington

story and photos by Bill Doran

I attended the BMCNO show in Covington LA in March and had the privilege of driving my brother, Andrew Doran's 1954 XK 120 Fixed Head Coupe to the show. He also showed a 1962 XKE, a 1954 XK120 Roadster (3rd place in a class with other 120s and E-types) and an

award-winning 1964 MK 2 3.8 liter 4-speed which won 1st in class [pictured in order, below-Ed.].

It was quite an effort to get four cars driven to the show; luckily our brother Matt and a couple of friends helped get all four safely to the show and back from across Lake Pontchartrain.



Spannering

Tech, Repair, Restoration

In Praise Of Modified Cars

story by *Chuck Wimberly*

My LBC is a 1959 Austin Healey Bugeye Sprite. The car is rapidly approaching its 70th birthday. Sprites were built at a time when the British economy, as well as the economies of all of western Europe, were still digging out from the ravages of World War Two. A large segment of British automobiles was built on the cheap specifically for export to America.



Chuck and his car entering the 2025 SABCC British Car Festival (photo by Robb Ogletree).

Consequently, original parts for a car as old as mine are increasingly hard to find, in fact I wanted to find them. The truth is I do not care to find them. But why? But why? You may ask. Is originality not the proper course for any owner of a classic car to pursue? If my name was Jay Leno and I was headed to Pebble Beach, I would say yes. Sadly my bank account does not resemble that of Mr. Leno in any regard, nor is my Sprite or any other Sprite going to grace the lawn at Pebble Beach.

My car was restored by me with my wretched skills and with the help of a few friends. Most of the work was done by me and the car LOOKS as if it was built by me. When I set out to build the car I did so with a few goals in mind. First was the avoidance of bankruptcy, so as to keep a healthy relationship with my spouse, who has little concern for cars of any kind, least of all cars like mine which bore a strong resemblance to the [wreck of the Hesperus](#) when I drug it home.

Secondly, I did not want to spend \$20,000 to build a \$10,000 car, which is precisely what would have happened had I chosen to follow the path of strict originality in the restoration.

The numbers and kinds of advances in automotive technology which have occurred in the years since 1959 are too numerous to mention, and I have tried to include as many of them as I could in my car. The Sprite has an engine from 1971, and a 5-speed transmission from a Datsun B210. Also included are radial tires, an alternator, aftermarket gauges, silicone spark plug wires, nickel copper brake lines, electronic ignition, and a 10-circuit fused wiring harness in place of the firebomb trigger which masqueraded as the original harness. You may be able to tell that I have adopted an attitude of originality be damned with this restoration. In point of fact I could not have afforded to do otherwise. I make no apologies for my car. I built it to please me, not anyone else,

In my humble estimation, the addition of every one of these aftermarket parts represent an improvement to my car. I have no doubt that there are tens of thousands of cars on the road like mine. To the extent that these cars are alive and well, I say three cheers. To those who do not agree I say peace be with you, or something like that.. [Chuck, I'm on your side, which is why I am not fond of "Modified" classes at car shows.-Ed.]

MG Distributor Timing Procedure

story by Lawrie Alexander, PBCA

XPAG/XPEG Engines (TC/TD/TF & Y-type) (See below for MGA/B engines)

1. Remove the valve cover.
2. Rotate the engine until the timing mark on the crank pulley has stopped by the end of the pointer on the timing cover.
3. Place a dab of white paint in the notch of the pulley and at the tip of the pointer.
4. Take hold of the rocker arms for Nos. 1 and 4 cylinders; one pair will have some movement, one pair won't. If the ones that won't are No.1 cylinder, rotate the engine one more complete turn until No. 1's rocker arms are free to move.
5. Remove the distributor cap, note where the rotor is pointing. It should be pointing to roughly the 8 o'clock position. For ease of timing the engine, loosen the distributor clamping mechanism, pull the distributor out of the block and re-insert it so the rotor is in the desired position by rotating the shaft and gear.
6. Remembering that the shaft and rotor will rotate counter-clockwise when the engine is running, rotate the distributor to where the rubbing block of the points is just ahead of the tip of a lobe so that further rotation in a clockwise direction would fully open the points.
7. Now look at the wires in the cap. The one which goes to No. 1 spark plug should be located above the end of the rotor. If it isn't, reposition the wires in the cap so that it does, and then make sure the remaining wires go in a counter-clockwise direction to Nos. 3, 4, and 2 in that order.
8. Tighten the distributor clamp so it is snug but you can still rotate the distributor with a firm grip.
9. Replace the valve cover.
10. Locate your timing light. If it has a knob on it to adjust the reading, set it to 32 degrees.
11. If your timing light has no adjustment capability, go back to your crank pulley and make another white paint mark 1-1/8" further around the edge of the pulley. Looking from the front of the engine, the first mark you made will be at roughly 1:00, the second mark at about 3:15.
12. Connect the timing light to the battery and to ground.
13. Start the engine, allow it to warm up a bit then rev it up to 3,000 rpm. (A helper on the throttle and watching the tachometer is needed for this.)
14. Carefully rotate the distributor by hand until, while the engine is at 3,000 rpm, the timing light flashes at the tip of the pointer when one or other of the white marks is next to it. Use the first mark you made if your timing light is adjusted to 32 degrees, the second mark if you have no dial adjuster on your timing light.
15. Fine tune by rotating the distributor very slowly in either direction, searching for the fastest, smoothest idle. Adjust the idle speed at the carburetors to approximately 850 rpm. Road test the car; if it pings under load or on hills, retard the timing slightly (distributor counter clockwise) until the pinging stops but don't forget that pinging can be caused by too low an octane fuel.
16. Fully tighten the distributor clamp, put your tools away and go have fun with the car.

(story continues next page)

MG Distributor Timing, continued

The procedure for MGA & MGB engines is the same except for steps No. 5, 11 and 14, which will read as follows:

5. Remove the distributor cap, note where the rotor is pointing. It should be pointing to roughly the 2 o'clock position. The drive pinion in the block has an offset slot which offers only one position to engage the distributor drive, so the only way to change the rotor's position is to withdraw the pinion retaining sleeve (the 2 bolts which secure the clamp to the block and a screw under the clamp), then use a long 5/16 x 24 threaded bolt to engage the thread in the center of the pinion, pull it out, rotate it one tooth and reinsert it in such a way that the rotor will point where it ought to. This may take a couple of tries and it is important to make sure the distributor drive properly engages the offset slot and the distributor is fully secured in the clamp before the two bolts are tightened.

(Back to 6 through 10)

11. If your timing light has no adjustment capability, go back to the pointer on your timing cover. Note that there are three pointers on an early engine, five on a later one. Each one is spaced 5 degrees before t.d.c., the longest pointer. Visually calculate where 32 degrees b.t.d.c. would be and remember this spot.

(Back to 12 and 13)

5. Carefully rotate the distributor by hand until, while the engine is at 3,000 rpm, the timing light flashes at the tip of the long pointer if you have an adjustable timing light. If you don't, rotate the distributor until the light flashes at the point where you visually calculated 32 degrees would be.

(Back to 15 and 16)

This is the last MGB ad you'll ever see.

Its legend will live on. All of the fun and all of the thunder will endure in the hearts of people who love sports motoring. When the present very limited supply of 1980* model MGB convertibles is gone, it's gone forever. Which means that a classic investment opportunity will vanish too. For, over the years, early models of this great sports car marque—the MG TC and TD—have proven to increase substantially in value. But whether you see investment opportunity, or the chance to own a rare and highly entertaining convertible, hurry! It's your last chance to own an MG, the sports car America loved first. See the Yellow Pages for your nearest MG dealer.



*Only 1979 models available in California.

The ad above ran in 1980; on Oct. 23 of that year, the last MGB rolled off the line at Abingdon (photo from AROnline).



Spare Parts

Everyone Loves an Oddball:

Episode 5: Invacars

story and photos by Peter Lee

As I have ranted before, everyone makes fun of my three-wheeler. But if you ever get the gump-tion to run around the Lane Motor Museum in Nashville, you quickly realize that there have been a lot of crazy ideas in cars over the years. Propellers, wicker seats, steam power. But what about cars that are not cars but really are? What do I mean? What if you're a vet returning from WW2 and want to run down to the pub for a pint but your war injuries make that a not-so-simple feat? The British Ministry of Health was all over that with a state-provided, powered option for those who qualified.

But let's back up a bit first to before the WW2 era. According to Wikipedia, the first wheelchair was credited to watchmaker Stephan Farffler in 1655 in Nuremburg. Largely believed to be disabled himself, it was a need he had personally, so he designed appropriately for it. The big key with this is it was self-propelled rather than just pushed by another able-bodied person



Farffler Wheelchair

as he made it where he could use his arms as power and steering.

The English version of this that was widely used was called the Bath Chair. It was either pushed or drawn by an animal or person, but it was de-



Bath Chair

signed for a single person to easily control the direction it was going rather than just be pushed. And no, it's not a rolling bathtub, but it was designed by James Heath of Bath, England around 1750. The first purpose of it was to bring the sick to the local baths for treatment. So where am I going with all this?

Well notice, I said powered. I mean baby prams have been around forever. Same with wheelchairs that need pushing in some way. But the early 1900's brought power and fuel options that could all be added to these systems "safely."

(story continues next page)

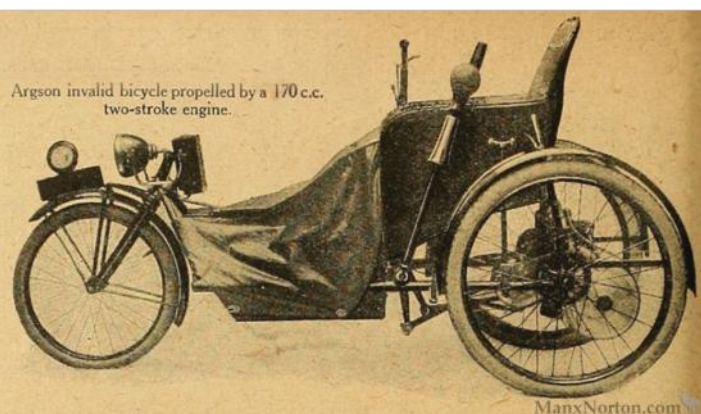
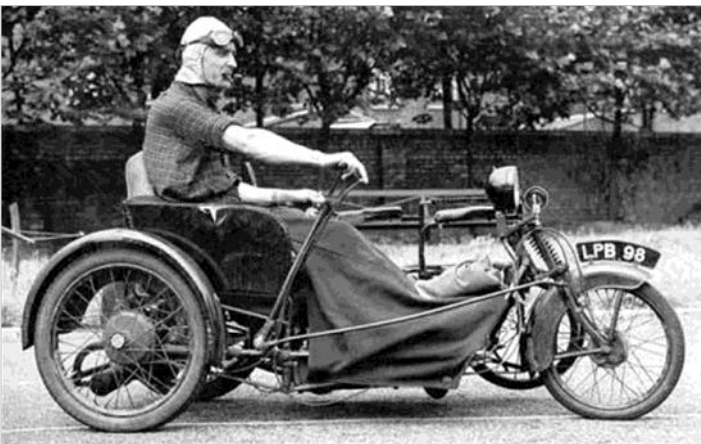
Invacars, continued



Self-propelled Tricycle

England had a long history with these carriages going back to before the Great War. And "Invalid Carriages" usually referred to single-seat, powered, hand-controlled street-legal vehicles for the disabled.

One of the first big producers was Argson Engineering of West London, which started production in 1919. Founded by two engineers, Arnold



Argson 170cc Invalid Cycle

Garnett, who was disabled and could not use his legs, and a Rolls-Royce-trained designer, Stanley Needham, they started with hand-powered tricycles but moved on quickly to powering them with a 170cc two-cylinder petrol engine. In production for over 30 years, there were a variety of trim levels and powerplants including battery power. But they stuck with a particular design that you see in the included pictures. Also, the company changed hands multiple times but stuck with the Argson branding. These units were road legal, reliable, and capa-

**COMPLETE ONE-ARM CONTROL
with the NEW "INVASTARTER"**

INVACAR is supreme among invalid carriages for its reliability, comfort, and adaptability, bringing all the joys of jolt-free town or country touring to all disabled. Our Engineers have devised special designs to meet every possible requirement of the incapacitated whether for one or two-arm control. Furthermore the new "INVASTARTER" SEMI-SELF STARTER removes the last difficulty for the elderly, or those affected with cardiac trouble, and enables them to be entirely self reliant.

PRICES £198 TWO-ARM CONTROL TO £246 ONE-ARM CONTROL.

INVACAR
The Invalid Car of Quality

Full particulars and catalogue from:—
INVACAR LTD. (Dept. A.14)
57 WEST ROAD, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA, ESSEX. Telephone: Southend 44545

ble of keeping up with contemporary traffic of the time. The petrol models had a fuel tank of 2 to 3 gallons and a range of over 200 miles depending on the conditions. They were also limited to 8 mph, but still that's not your grandma's Rascal scooter in the early century, and we know what people like us do with speed limiters.

(story continues next page)

Invacars, continued

But after WW2 changes came for this style of transport. This 1948 Argson displayed the same underpinnings as the older models but showed the new interest in full fiberglass bodies post-war. Like the revolution in car design that got us tailfins and aerodynamics, styles were changing. Before, a cover or folding top was all the protection from the elements a driver received. In that same year another individual, Bert Greeves, recognized the widespread needs of veterans after



1948 Argson at the Cycle and Motor Cycle Show at Earl's Court

WW2 for more availability of these vehicles. He approached the Ministry of Health and came back with support for Invacar Ltd. and a further program of government-provided models for returning wounded veterans.

This new company came out with a classically-styled model that started with the Argson pattern and rapidly moved to full-bodied models by the 1970's, continuously improving the design and responding to ministry demands. These enclosed models typically featured sliding doors that could go forward or backwards, and weatherproofing, and started to add more power. Engines moved up in size to about 600ccs depending on availability at the time of manufacture, and this pushed the cars to reach 80 mph. Also, this is where the color (colour?) [Yep-Ed.] Ministry Blue came from with all gov-

ernment-provided units being ordered in that color. But Invacar Ltd. was not the only player competing for a piece of the government money. Multiple firms produced copies or their own designs, including Harding, Dingwall and Sons, Thundersly, AC Cars, and Coventry Climax. One of the more popular and most-produced models, the model 70, was designed by AC and built in equal numbers by AC and Invacar Ltd. This interchanging of designs and manufacturing led to all of the different models being referred to generally as Invacars, even when they were technically not the same.



AC model 70 Invacar [And two Daughters of Charity-Ed.]



Supposedly the only Invacar in the US, at the Museum of Disability in Buffalo, New York

The eventual demise of this mode of transit started in 1974 with a massively failing road crash test. I know that's a shocker as it's a fiberglass box with a person inside. This led to the ceasing of all production and state purchase by

(story continues next page)

Invacars, continued

1978. Regular cars had made them obsolete with the advances in alternate control layouts installed by specialists, larger passenger capacity, and the ability to design around more varied levels of disability. But it wasn't until 2003 that the final one was removed from the road through a safety recall and they were subsequently completely banished from road duty. This was relatively easy for the government to accomplish as they were all technically leased from the government by the owners, even listing government property on the ID plates (see photo, above right).

Over the ministry program, 50 different models of invalid carriage produced by varied manufacturers, and some sources recognize a remaining 25 active in the UK system with only two road legal. The current definition of invalid carriage for the Health Ministry is back to the 8 mph limit and is what we know now here as an electric mobility scooter. If you see one of those on the roadway, then something is really wrong and you need to go catch your grandma. I do hope there is a barn somewhere nearby with one of these

[80 mph units-Ed.] in it waiting for me to discover as I would drive the wheels off it and love the confused looks. [No more than the Reliant-Ed.]



Freedom for the disabled

INVACAR MODEL 70

The Model 70 has been developed to provide mobility for the disabled. 56 control variations are available and it is fitted with automatic transmission, which makes it possible for anyone with practically any disability to become independent, which is so vital to a happy contented life.



Control 1.
Conventional steering wheel and foot control. Manual throttle and brake are available with or without foot assistance.

Control 2.
Bicycle handle bar steering with brake operated by handle bar depression. Hand throttle. Foot controls can be fitted.

Control 3.
Tiller control for left or right hand. Brake operated by depression of tiller. Hand throttle.

Most auxiliary controls can be adjusted for left or right hand position.



ACCESS

A wide sliding door on each side of the car, coupled with a sliding seat provides a really easy access from either side and enables the driver to load and stow his folding wheel chair by his side.

INVACAR (LIMITED)

Armstrong Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 4PP Telephone: South Benfleet 2761 Telex: SPEYBRIG BFT 996192

The Brits Built in Italy

story and photos by Rodney McDonald

The Italian firm Innocenti was famous for producing Lambretta motor scooters in Milan. But post-war Italy had a burgeoning market for automobiles, and Innocenti determined that four-wheel vehicles with a bit of Italian panache would find eager buyers. Enter the British Motor Corporation (BMC).

Innocenti needed a car that could convey four adults and not take up a lot of space on the road. BMC's Austin A40 fit the bill. Production began in 1960 of the Innocenti A40 under license from BMC. More than 40,000 A40s were built by Innocenti. Starting with CKD kits (completely knocked down), it would later produce cars made up of Innocenti-made components.



Above, Innocenti A40 production; below, Innocenti 950 Spider (photo by Gaetano Zagra)



Innocenti also produced a very pretty roadster based on the Mk. II Austin-Healey Sprite platform. The styling differed from the Sprite on which it was based with a fixed windscreen frame, taller grille and – from the side – a body line kickup similar to a TR4. Interestingly, the styling was by American designer Tom Tjaarda who was working for Ghia. Branded the Innocenti Spider, it was powered by a 950cc A-series engine. Later, in “S” form, it would carry an 1100cc engine. About 6,000 were produced over five years.



Innocenti Mini Cooper 1300 (Innocenti photo)

Flush from the success of A40 production (Innocenti actually produced A40 axles for BMC), a license was negotiated to produce BMC's wildly successful Mini. Italian production started in 1965 and continued through 1975. The Innocenti Mini was produced in both Mini and Mini Cooper versions. Like the A40, the first Minis were built from CKD kits, but early in production, Innocenti produced its own components and built a home-grown version. There were approximately 430,000 Innocenti Minis built in its 10-year production run. The Mini platform would later underpin other Innocenti models into the 1990s.

The Innocenti cars were known for their up-graded interior trim materials, tasteful color

(story continues next page)

The Brits Built in Italy, continued

choices, and build quality. Their rarity today makes them highly collectable.

Other BMC/British Leyland Motor Company (BLMC) models were also produced in Italy included the Austin 1100/1300 and the Austin Allegro (called Regent in Italy).

In 1972, BLMC purchased Innocenti outright for £3 million. This gave BLMC a European base to ship cars on the continent, avoiding punishing tariffs on exports there from the UK.

By 1975, BLMC's financial position forced it to sell Innocenti to Alejandro DeTomaso. In 1996 the marque name was retired.

Innocenti Auction Results

Here are a couple of Innocenti sales.

1971 Innocenti Mini Matic 1000



Sold for \$17,000 on Bring a Trailer (Dec. 2025)

Rodney mentioned trim and colors as hallmarks of the Innocenti Minis, and I think this car looks great in dark taupe with gold trim over beige vinyl.

1962 Innocenti 950 Spider



Not Sold for \$17,000 on Bring a Trailer (Dec. 2021)

These cars are exceptionally rare in the U.S.; I could not find a newer auction. The high bid just wasn't enough for the seller of this very pretty little car, and commenters raising concerns about it probably kept the bids from going higher.

Auction Roundup: Sporting Jaguars

Honoring the PBCA show's top winner, an XK 120C.

1950 Jaguar XK 120 Roadster



Sold for \$62,000 on Bring a Trailer (April 2026)

Refurbished in 2011, with recent maintenance, this BRG roadster was in fine shape, with only a tear in one seat spoiling its presentation. Great buy.

1954 Jaguar XK 120SE OTS



Sold for \$94,500 on Hemmings (Feb. 2024)

Restored in the late 1980s, and mechanically refurbished in 2022, this late-production 120 is a "high-end driver."

1934 Jaguar SS1 Tourer



Sold for \$66,000 on Bring a Trailer (Feb. 2025)

In cream over green leather, this car was built three years after the launch of the model. The Jaguar name came in 1945. The seller claimed to have lost money on this sale.

1994 Proteus Jaguar C-Type Re-Creation



Sold for \$140,000 on Bring a Trailer (Aug. 2025)

\$140,000 for a replica? Well, considering a real C-Type sold in 2025 at the Pebble Beach auction for more than 25 times that, this very nice, high-quality recreation was quite a bargain. Power is from a vintage Jaguar 3.4l six.

Weak and Rusty

Michael King, Editor

Sixth in a Series

Earlier in this issue, Peter Lee offered us the fifth in his series of “oddball” cars. Knowing how competitive he is, I want to point out that my series stands at six – six Jaguars, that is.

My history with the leaping (or growling) cat marque began in 2009, when I decided I wanted an air-conditioned car to take to summer events. At the time, I’d only been in the British car hobby a few months, with an MG Midget. I found a clean 1991 XJ-S coupe on eBay, and Kristine and I drove to Atlanta to get it.

My second Jaguar was also bought off eBay, and this time I flew to Atlanta to get it. In 2011, I was replacing my daily driver, and I got a 2006 XK8 convertible. It served me well for four years, until a job change required near-daily trips from Mobile to Pensacola. I bought a more practical car, sold the XK8, and in 2017, we moved to Pensacola. The XJ-S came with me, but I was already worried about deferred maintenance, so I didn’t drive it much.

Nonetheless, I wasn’t really planning to buy another Jag – at least until a low-mileage, well-maintained 2001 XJR showed up, in Daphne. The son of the longtime owner wanted to sell it, and I couldn’t resist.

Meanwhile, now that we were settled in Pensacola, I got rid of my practical daily driver and bought a new Corvette – which was great, until the pandemic hit, and I started working from home. Meanwhile, my parents-in-law had moved in with us after Hurricane Michael damaged their home in Panama City, and suddenly my wife was driving them everywhere in her aging Chevy Avalanche. My having an expensive toy that sat in the driveway no longer made



Ed.'s XJ at the PBCA show (photo by Robb Ogletree).

sense, so I sold it, we got her a new vehicle, and I bought a Jaguar XFR – again, on eBay. This one was shipped from Chicago.

The next year, I decided to sell the rarely-used XJ-S, and get another Jag convertible, which led once again to eBay, where I found a clean 2011 XK in Macon, Ga.

Fast-forward to 2026 – the XJR and the XK were fine, but I found myself hankering for a newer daily. About this time, a friend and former co-worker had a car crisis, and indicated an interest in my XFR. Sold.

I considered several options, including a second Land Rover (my wife has a Defender), but in the end, my heart was set on another Jaguar, which led me to a 2016 XJ R-Sport in Jacksonville. Fitted with the 3.0 liter supercharged V6 (340 hp), and finished in Aurora Red over Cashew/Truffle, this sedan had just 37,000 miles and a clean history. I’m rather smitten with it.

Thus, my sixth Jag, and the third in my current ownership, along with the 2001 XJR and the 2011 XK. I’ve already owned a 1991 and a 2006. So I guess my next Jag will have to be either a 1996 or a 2021. Hmm – a 2021 F-Type sounds good . . .



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Classifieds



Needed – Parts

1. If anyone has a damaged Bugeye Sprite rear end where the right side of the rear trunk deck is good, I only need from the T molding at the top of the wing inboard about 6-8 inches. I need about the last 18 inches of rear end in that area.
2. I am also looking for the drainage channel from around the trunk lid of a damaged MG Midget, MG, or other small junked sports car. I just need the channel/gutter that the trunk lid sits on.

“Bugeye Bob” Willsie

bobw111@hotmail.com

Magnetic Parts Tray

PBCA member Matt Willken is making these personalized magnetic parts trays for \$30. Please visit his [Etsy site](#) to learn more, see his other work, and order one for yourself.

Midget/Sprite Hardtop

Original BMC hard top, Fits early model Sprite/Midgets. White, original glass.

Lyman Dykes

lymandykes@gmail.com



Since we have room, how about one more of **Robb Ogletree's** panoramic photos of Brits on the Bay?

And now, for something completely different . . .



Who needs a Beatles tribute band when you have people dressed as bananas pushing Grandma and a bunch of monkeys in a bed race? The car folks enjoyed this Family Promise fundraiser which took place adjacent to the PBCA Brits on the Bay show last month in Pensacola (photo by Robb Ogletree).



South Alabama British Car Club

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