



Bits and Spares

For The British Motoring Enthusiast

Established in 1989

December 2009

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The BMCA Christmas party was held December 5, 2009. As usual there was a pretty solid turnout, approximately 57 who braved the cold for a night of frolic and fun. Several of the men wore their fancy kilts and proved themselves to be quite the dapper gentlemen. The food was hot and plentiful, the door prize table overflowed and it appears that overall a good time was had by all. The newlywed men gave a good showing in an unexpected Battle of the Sexes game that had the room reeling with laughter. Old friends and new got together and good conversations were had. We said goodbye to old officers and ushered in the new crew that will take over next year.

As your outgoing Vice President, I would like to thank everyone who helped make this a great close to a great year. Thanks to all who set up, cleaned up, donated door prizes, etc. You showed once again that this club is the best thing since sliced bread. While I will be turning my duties over to Ronnie McLeod, I will be looking forward to another great year with all of you.

Barbara Beuch

New Prez Says

Thanks to all the members that put their faith in me by voting me into the office of president for 2010. I'll try my best not to disappoint, but you all have to remember that it is the membership that makes this organization what it is --- not the officers.

I hope everybody enjoys the holiday season and that each of you has a chance to sit back and enjoy family and friends in celebrating the end of 2009 and the start of 2010.

Just a reminder that January 2 is the date of the annual BMCA board meeting – all newly elected officers, marque leaders and other elected positions need to be present. All other BMCA members are welcome to attend but are not required to do so. Meeting will be at 4:00PM at Lake Corvallis Yacht Club.

Have a safe and happy holiday.
Brad Beuch

Marque Responsibility Reminder Chart

| Month | Event | Tech Talk |
|----------|---------|-----------|
| January | Empire | MG |
| February | Triumph | AH |
| March | MG | Empire |

Your Contribution could be Here

Bits and Spares is the primary communication medium for BMCA'ers. Most of us look forward to each months edition and the news and knowledge it contains. Do your part and send something in today - an article, a classified ad, ANYTHING you think other BMCA'ers would find of interest. (Contact information on Pg 2)

Prez Sez

Prez Says December 2009

It is with a heavy heart (and a few tears) that I must say good bye as your President and turn the gavel over to Brad. I am sure that Brad will lead us in the right direction and will prove to be the best Prez yet.

It has been an incredible two years for me. Starting off in 2008, just to please Doug, I was very apprehensive. Now, with 2009 coming to a close, I feel very confident that I gave my all. I enjoyed every minute, with the exception of a couple of panic attacks.

I want to thank you for your support, because without it, things just would not have happened as they did.

As I have said in the past, we have a great group of people that make up our BMCA and it has been an honor for me to fill the Presidential office for the past two years.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year and many Happy Trails in your future.

Brenda Collins,

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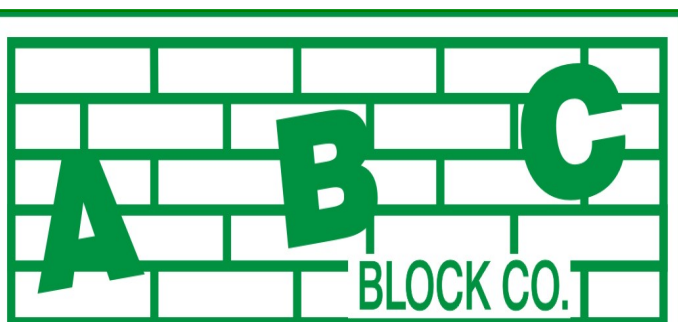
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\$30/year primary member
\$15/year spouse

WebMaster

'Bits & Spares'

is published the first Saturday after every monthly meeting. The meeting is normally the first Tuesday of each month. **Deadline** for articles and submissions is the day after the monthly meeting. (or anytime!)



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12. *Why is it better to buy a car that's not rusty?*

British sports cars are responsive, strong and light. Because they have less metal to start with, they have less metal to lose. All cars rust. Rust can be fixed at great expense. Buy the best non-rusty car you can afford.

13. *Aren't the electrical systems a problem?*

No, not if the systems are properly maintained. Lucas Industries made most of the electrical systems on British cars. The parts are well made and most problems can be repaired easily by replacing the fusebox or by removing the stuff in the trunk which is shorting the rear lights. Incorrect diagnosis and corroded connections have unfairly contributed to Lucas folklore. Watch also for poor radio installation and dirty battery connections. Proper repairs stay repaired.

14. *Is it good as an only car?*

Yes. When properly attended to, it is as reliable as any other well-built car and its fun factor means that all of your driving will be more enjoyable.

15. *What if I only want to drive it occasionally?*

These are good cars to drive occasionally -- every week or every few days. Long periods without use can affect basic systems, such as brakes or electricals. These cars run better and last longer when driven regularly.

16. *Aren't the carburetors a problem?*

The twin SU carburetors are a simple and efficient way to feed an engine and often are blamed for problems caused by air leaks, low compression and defects in the ignition system. Often, too, old original carburetors will be replaced with new and poorly matched carbs of a different design when the correct remedy is a rebuild of the original unit(s). Even when understood, both SU and Zenith-Stromberg carbs are still somewhat difficult to master. But when properly rebuilt, set up, and adjusted, they are reliable and durable.

17. *Can I paint it a non-traditional color?*

Factory paint colors were not exotic; an interesting color on a British car is sure to gain smiling approval in passing.

18. *When did they stop making inexpensive British sports cars?*

In 1980, after more than 30 years of MG's, Triumphs, Austin Healey's, and others in America, production was stopped. In the end, the British car makers lost faith. They simply forgot that their contributions to world driving were unique and exceptional. But the tradition can return.

Thanks to Motorhead Ltd. for this Q & A.

Bert Pranter, MG marque leader



A rectangular advertisement for 'McLeod's British Cars'. At the top, the text 'MCLEOD'S BRITISH CARS' is written in a large, blue, arching font. Below this, 'SINCE 1971' is written in red. The central graphic features a Union Jack flag, two red lions holding a banner that says 'McLEOD'S BRITISH CARS', and two classic cars (a dark one and a light one) on either side. Below the graphic, the address '14310 CORVALLIS RD. MAUMELLE, AR' is listed, followed by phone numbers '(501) 851-2640 • 1-800-352-5816 • FAX:(501) 851-4513' and the email 'EMAIL - McleodCo@swbell.net'. At the bottom, the slogan '"Arkansas' Classic British Car Specialist"' is written in a red, cursive font.

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PAUL HOWARD

501 Juniper
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The following Q & A comes from a 1995 MotorHead Ltd. article. Motorhead Ltd. is based in Fairfax, Virginia.

1. *Aren't British cars unreliable?*

No, not inherently. The designs are intelligent. The technology is simple and well-proven. The cars are well constructed. The parts are durable in a manner consistent with the light nature of a sports car. When renovated and properly maintained, a British car can provide 100,000 miles of fun, reliable driving at a cost of about \$100 a month.

2. *Are they safe?*

Yes, inherently. In a small responsive sports car, one is able to avoid dangerous situations. Of course, sometimes the exhilaration allows maneuvering beyond one's ability. In an accident, when shoulder belts are worn, the cockpit of a British car is rarely deformed, and injuries are minimal. While flipping a car is extremely difficult to accomplish, the convertible sports cars don't easily forgive loss of control.

3. *How much does a British car cost?*

Not much. Compared to new cars of similar ability, most British cars are inexpensive, fun, and mostly convertible. A good used one driven daily can cost from \$4500 to \$8500 to buy and about \$100 a month thereafter. Although you can own, renovate and maintain a car on a reasonable budget, there is almost no limit to the money you may spend if you choose to restore it.

4. *Won't it need a lot of work?*

At first. Most British cars need an initial renovation and then they thrive nicely on normal periodic maintenance.

5. *What normal maintenance does it need?*

Once a year it needs a major tune-up, oil and filter change, and a complete lubrication. Change the oil every 3000 miles, watch the oil and temperature gauges, listen for odd sounds, and be aware of changes in the car's behavior.

6. *What happens if it breaks down?*

You fix it well or pay to have it fixed well.

7. *Aren't parts hard to get?*

No. If you plan to renovate an MG, Triumph, Austin-Healey or Jaguar, the supply of parts to make it run, stop and light up is better now than when the cars were new. Some trim and detail items can be tough to track down. Any part that keeps the car off the road is usually available within two days.

8. *Aren't parts expensive?*

Some are; most are not. British cars are still used as unique everyday transportation and parts prices reflect the utility status.

9. *OK, well, why are shocks so expensive?*

On some British cars, the **lever** shock absorber is part of the suspension. Although this design is simple and maximizes road feel, this type of shock is a machine and costs more to manufacture than a conventional one. Surprisingly, it also lasts longer.

10. *Won't it be in the shop all the time?*

No. If the known defects are corrected and a maintenance routine is followed, your British car should have few unplanned shop visits.

11. *Will I spend my weekends fixing it?*

Only if you enjoy working on your car.

Continued on next page

RUN TO TEXARKANA

Saturday dawned bright and clear but cool. Ten British Car maniacs, Bob & Judy Ross in their Spitfire, Jean & Curtis Elwell in their TR 6, Ronnie & Vera McLeod in their TR 4, Jane & Jim Clark and Brenda & Charlie Collins - both in BMWs that really wanna be LBCs, Barbara, Gary & Keeper Bolen in their Lotus Élan, John & Valerie Peckham (our fearless leader) in their MGA, Karsten & Cindy Piefrements in their TR8, Jim & Judy Wheeler in their Spitfire, Whit Waller and his girlfriend, Charlotte, in his MGB and Dena Dixon and Roseanne Foster in Jim Peckham's old Mini, who all met at the Western Sizzler in Benton and were given Passports so that they could enter Texas to visit with Mo & Jeannine in Texarkana, Texas. Despite the intent of leaving at 9:00 sharp, it was closer to 9:15 when we pulled out of the parking lot - thinking everyone that planned to go was there in line. Not so!!! As we crossed the interstate and were turning left to get onto the freeway Whit came screaming around the corner - going the opposite way. By the time he got turned around we were nowhere to be seen....so he met up with us at Arkadelphia where we made our first pit stop. (Thank you, Valerie! I was more than ready to stop!!!)

From there it was smooth motoring on into Texas. A few of the highlights along the way were a golden Statue of Liberty, a light house, a 10' tall Ferris wheel (for plants) and a bird sitting on a post along side the road that was big enough to carry off any one of our LBCs with ease. After checking into the hotel and leaving our luggage,, we made a beeline for the Bokaie's house.

After devouring an assortment of munchies eleven of us gals climbed into Peckham's old Mini and Jeannine's mini van (trust me, it was a sight to behold) and made a mad dash to do a couple hours worth of shopping. Don't think anyone came back empty handed.

After chowing down on BBQ, polish sausage, beans, potato salad and more stuff later in the evening, we surprised Gary with a 66th birthday cake decorated in green, his favorite color. Darn it!!! We missed another opportunity for the famous BMCA cake in the face trick!!!! Oh well, maybe we'll have better luck next year.

Once again, many thanks to Mo and Jeannine for a wonderful afternoon and evening of tire-kicking, shopping, story-telling and down-home hospitality only LBC lovers can appreciate.

The next morning, with an estimated departure

time of 9:30, people began straggling in between the hours of 4:40 and 10:00 to partake of the hotel's complimentary breakfast.

Only ten cars got under way about 10:30 getting onto the freeway to go the Flying J for gas before heading home as the Piefrements have already left. All made it to the Flying J except the Peckhams, the Wheelers and Wallers, who make a few detours to the shoulder of the road to try to figure out what's wrong with the MGA...fuel delivery seemed to be the consensus after Ronnie comes back to Exit 2 on the Arkansas side and looks at the car. We limp our way to the Flying J with our cars doing almost as many miles on the shoulder as on the freeway itself. But by the time we get there, the MGA seems to be doing much better. So off we go (not on the freeway) homeward bound.

Want to guess what happened? No? I'll tell you anyway. It's off onto the shoulder of the road; the A's acting up again. And then it's on again, off again, etc., etc., etc. At some point 8 of us continue on to see if we can find a fuel line in Arkadelphia. While Bolin is getting the fuel line to take back to the A, 7 of us get ready to motor on. But!!! When Wheeler tries to shift into first gear, it won't go. A fast call was made to Bolin with a request to also bring Dot 4 Fluid. Come to find out, if you turn the key off or rev the motor you can get it into first and after that it shifts okay. About this time Peckham and McLeod catch up to us. So off we go. Somewhere between Arkadelphia and the freeway south of Benton, we lose Peckham and McLeod. They tell us to go on. We do. Just before the intersection of I-430 and I-630 Peckham blows past us. Dixon pulls in behind him. The Wheelers and Bolins stay where they are. As Peckham nears the Cantrell Road exit, he moves towards the shoulder of the road with Dixon following. We continue on past due to our shifting problem. We assume they stop on the side of the road and that the Bolins stop (it's their exit) or they all continue on as we haven't heard a word from anyone to indicate that they still aren't stranded on the side of the road.

All in all, it was a fun filled, sometimes frustrating, trip Thanks Mo and Jeannine for having us. Is it too soon to ask you to invite us back for next year????

Judy Wheeler

UPDATE!!! Saw the Bolins and Peckhams at the Christmas party. John told me he and Dixon did make it to McLeods that same day and that when they started looking for the reason the A had acted up, they found the rear end of a bug (maybe a cockroach) in the fuel pump. (Yep, that would cause almost anything to quit pumping!!!)

2010 Austin - Healey Marque

I am very pleased to be your Austin-Healey marque leader for 2010. For over 40 years I have held a strong passion for Austin-Healeys and it all started back in 1967.

As a teenager I obtained part time work in a pharmacy doing every job imaginable and just learning the ropes. Since I did not have a car on those days the nice young pharmacist, Bob, who had recently been hired at the store would come by my house and give me a ride to work. He had a 1966 Healey Sprite and I thought that was a pretty cool car. Then one day he showed up at my house in a white 1967 Austin-Healey 3000 Mk III and that was about the most beautiful car I had ever seen. The rides to work became even more fun over the next few years and I just fell in love with that car.

Bob was most generous and trusting and eventually allowed me to drive the Healey, at first only with him on board, of course. As time went along we established a good friendship and Bob would let me take the Healey out on "special dates" and for the occasional Sunday drive. The deal was I had to wash the car and apply a two step Blue Coral Treatment to the paint. I didn't mind at all. I got to know every inch of that car. I remember how it drove, smelled and sounded as a new car and I wanted one for myself. Unfortunately BMC had other plans and 1967 would be the last year for the Healey 3000.

In addition to introducing me to Healeys, Bob had another profound impact on my life. He encouraged me to pursue pharmacy as a profession since I really liked the drugstore-type work. So, with his backing, I applied to the Medical College of Virginia and spent the next 5 years obtaining a degree in pharmacy. After graduation, I was ready to find a Healey of my own.

I purchased a 1962 3000 Mk II, tri carb and had a bunch of fun with that car. Since then I have owned, raced, restored and generally messed with 16 Healeys, at least one of each model from 1953 to 1967. But I always had a soft spot in my heart for that white Mk III that Bob owned and I kept pestering him to sell it to me. Nothing doing! That was his car, he bought it new and it was going to stay in his garage forever. Well,

Bob and I have remained close friends for all these years and one day about 10 years ago I got a call from him. He just wasn't driving the Healey that much anymore and he wanted to know if I was still interested in buying it. I was overjoyed! Within a week or so the white 1967 Healey was in my garage and I started a three year restoration to put it back to its original glory. That is the Healey I own today. It holds a great deal of sentimental value to me and gives me much joy each time I take it out for a drive or just admire it in the garage.

So, that's how I came to be in possession of my present Healey. Now, what about the other 15 Healeys I've owned? There are some great stories along the way. I met Donald Healey many times and even took him for a ride in one of my cars. But that story will have to wait for another time....

Jim Clark, AH Marque Leader

BMCA Membership and Advertising Rates

Yearly membership is \$30.00 for the primary member and \$15.00 for the associate.

Yearly renewal deadline is March meeting each year.

Advertising in the Bits and Spares is available to members and non-members alike.

(Members do get a discount of course!)

| | One Month/One Year* | Non-Member Rate |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Eighth Page | \$ 5.00 / \$ 48.00 | \$ 10.00 / \$ 60.00 |
| Quarter Page | \$ 9.00 / \$ 86.40 | \$ 18.00 / \$ 120.00 |
| Half Page | \$ 16.00 / \$ 153.60 | \$ 32.00 / \$ 220.00 |
| Full Page | \$ 30.00 / N/A | \$ 64.00 / N/A |

*Yearly rate must be same ad, 12 issues.

Classified ads (items for sale or trade) for members are free. Non-members may submit an ad for \$5.00 per month.

Classified ads published as available and space allows.

2009 Austin - Healey

As Healey Marque leader I thoroughly enjoyed myself planning the marque events this year. I hope you all had as good a time as I did. It seems that even when things go wrong, wrong turns, lost?, cars not running right etc. etc. Everyone helps one another and we go on and enjoy ourselves anyway. To me that seems to be the best thing about BMCA. Even though my healey is a Sprite and more people think Big Healey when they think of the Austin Healey Marque, the Sprite was an important part of the Healey Brand for a while. It allowed a lot of people to own a 2 seat roadster that other wise probably wouldn't have had the budget to get one, and they were and are still, a lot of fun to drive and fairly easy to maintain. I missed my event to Texarkana cause Mom was under the weather (she's fine now). So Ron is gonna recap and write an article for that for me. As near as I can tell from talking to everyone a fine time was had by all. Which is usually the case with most BMCA events.

Yers Trulee,
Jim Peckham

Polar Bear Run

The Annual BMCA Polar Bear run is coming upon us soon, less than 1 month away on Saturday Jan. 9, 2010. If you haven't made your reservations at the Arlington yet, you need to do so before the end of this year to be guaranteed our group rate and a room on the 7th floor with the rest of us!

It's been communicated that the number I published before wasn't the number for the reservations. I apologize for that - at least it was to the Arlington :-).

Please call 1.800.643.1502 to reserve your room for this most memorable event to begin the 2010 year with.

We wish everyone a Very Happy Holiday Season,
MeShell & Lon Smith

Annual Board Meeting

The annual board meeting will be on January 2, at 4:00PM at Corvallis Yacht Club. All officers and elected officials need to be present. All BMCA members are encouraged to attend

Triumph Marque

The February marquee event is going to be a timed clue rally. We will select a route, find as many clues as possible and then drive the route a number of times to determine just how long it takes to complete the route driving as close to the speed limit as possible.

Points will be awarded for each correct answer, and points will be awarded to the three drivers that are closest to the time set for the event.

Hopefully there will be enough hard clues that you won't be able to answer them all and maintain the correct speed, so you will have to decide if you want the answers or the speed.

Bob Ross

BMCA Monthly Meeting - Tuesday January 5, 2010

The monthly meeting is held at **Western Sizzlin** in Benton, off I-30 beginning at **7:30 PM**. Bring the family, there is a variety of reasonably priced food, plenty of space in the meeting room, lots of parking & good company. Come a little early and enjoy a meal, stay a little late to kick the tyres on the British cars in the parking lot & visit with fellow BMCA'ers.

Calendar of BMCA and Regional Events

Jan 2, 2010, BMCA Annual Board Meeting, 4:00PM at Lake Corvallis Yacht Club.

Jan 9, 2010 - BMCA Annual Polar Bear Adventure - More details soon

April 17, 2010 - Batesville Scottish Festival - Rooms at Holiday Inn Express 1-870-698-2700

Do you know of an upcoming event? Send the information to bmcanewsletter@gmail.com



British Motoring Club of Arkansas
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