



Bits and Spares

For The British Motoring Enthusiast

Established in 1989

January 2010

January Polar Bear Run



Winner, Best Costume
John and Valerie Peckham
Mr. and Mrs. Groucho Marx



Alaskan Tourists
Charles and Lisa Hutchison



German Visitors
Charlie Collins and Ronnie McLeod



Polar Bears

Newsletter by e-mail

We are taking a look at making the newsletter available by e-mail for those of you that would prefer that over snail mail. You will get the newsletter faster and we will save printing and postage.

If you want to receive the monthly newsletter by e-mail please send me an e-mail me stating that you want this. That will give me your e-mail address so we can make sure we are sending your newsletter to the right address.

If you elect this you will not receive the newsletter by post office mail, only by e-mail.

My e-mail is <newsletter@bmca.net> or <bross3396@sbcglobal.net>

The Coldest Polar Bear Run

Saturday Jan. 9th was a very cold morning, but that didn't stop 38 or so rather odd looking people in their little british cars. Their was Groucho Marx & his bride, Alaskan tour guides, a British mountain climber, wildlife protector, a bottle of beer, a margarita, Ice queen, and of course the princess and the frog ! We began our trek through Ferndale, Paron, Crows, stopping at a pit stop just west of Owensville. After a bit to eat we were on our way to Gulpha Gorge.

The temperature at he gorge was 21o and the water was 23o, but the water was running so It wasn't frozen. The six brave (or deranged) souls took their "polar plunge" very quickly, exiting white and shivering to the cheers of the on lookers. In the crowd was the park ranger asking if we had a permit....."what permit"?

Now it was off to the Arlington Hotel to get checked in, recoup, shop and socialize. We headed to the Brau House for dinner at 6:00 about 8 blocks away. Some were in the lederhosen their knees were blue by the time they arrived. We had good German food and beer! Then we danced the chicken dance, we were really good at it to. (so we thought) .Now it was time to walk back 8 blocks to the hotel and get in the hot tub. At least it was 16o instead of 8o like last night. Soon it was morning and breakfast at the pancake house was great. We left the hotel about 10:30 a headed for home.

Ron McLeod

Marque Responsibility Reminder Chart

Month	Event	Tech Talk
February	Triumph	AH
March	MG	Empire
April	AH	Triumph

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'Bits & Spares'

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

MG Marque

In 1949 I was reading a magazine at my grandpa's house and there was a cover picture on a magazine of an MGTC driving behind a big semi-truck. The illustration showed a happy couple on a two lane road. I remember wondering how they would see to pass with the steering wheel on the wrong side of the car. Also, the car was so little and I thought I was just the right size for the car. The little British car was just coming to America and I was ten years old.

That magazine cover picture has been embedded in my mind for all of these years, and that illustration began my love affair with MG cars.

My first MG wasn't an MG at all, but was a little Jeep toy (couldn't find a toy MG) I pretended the Jeep was an MG that I played with on my front porch on warm summer days. It was two years later when I saw a real MG for the first time. That one was a yellow MG-TD at Harder Cycle Shop, which by the way was right across the street from the General Motors Plant in my home town, Janesville, Wisconsin. Harder was the new dealer for British cars and he had the guts to open business in a General Motors town. Bud Harder preferred BSA and Triumph motorcycles to the standard Harley Davidson motorcycles, which by the way were made in good old Wisconsin. Bud continued to sell British motorcycles but stopped selling cars.

I was twelve when my dad took me to Harders to look at the car people were talking about. I remember my dad telling me that nobody would buy "one of those" when they could buy a new Chevy for the same price. My dad said people would have to be crazy. I didn't think of myself as crazy, I was just a little boy who dreamed about owning an MG, and it was the last thing I thought about before falling asleep at night.

My dad was a mechanic and he looked the MG-TD over pretty good and he asked Bud Harder a lot of questions about the car and I remember my dad telling Bud that he would someday make a lot of money repairing the little British cars. My father just could not take a liking to MG's .

In the late 50's I finally bought my first MG TD. I was a senior in High School in 1957. The car was four years old, a 1953 MG-TD . British racing green with a green leather interior . I borrowed the entire cost of the car, \$ 1,250 from my mother to buy the car of my dreams. The payback terms were \$ 20.00 per week. I was 17 years old then and I made the final payment when I was 24. My credit would have been shot at an early age if I had gone with a bank loan. Moms are a bit more forgiving, and I remember that she sort of liked the car herself.

The day I bought the car was cold and it was raining. I drove it about 12 miles and it just quit running. I called my father who was working in his shop. His first words were words I had heard so many times, " I told you so." He came out to the farm where I was stranded and pulled me in with his Chevrolet. I never stopped loving that car and I remember being pulled several times by my dad's Chevrolet.

Over the next two years that I owned the green TD, I was pulled in many times.

Gerry McCullough



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Austin—Healey Marque

My first car that actually ran for more than a few days was a 1965 Mustang. My first brand new car was a Datsun 240Z. But I most fondly remember my first Austin-Healey and the people I met and friends made as a result of owning that car.

You see, it was 1974 and since I wasn't able to buy the white 1967 BJ8 (Mark III) that I really wanted I decided to start looking around to see what was available. I found and purchased a 1962 BT7 (4 seater) tricarb. I didn't know it at the time but it was a very special and limited production German export model. It differed from all other 1962 Healey 3000's in that it had amber turn signals front and rear in addition to the front running lights and rear brake lights (4 lights front and rear). It had a locking mechanism for the starter just under the steering wheel on the shaft and the wire wheels had a special wrench to remove the knock-offs. It was also a center shift car, thus being made at the end of 1962 production. I still remember the serial number: HBT7L 16193. I later found out from Mr. Healey himself that only 28 German export cars were made in 1962 out of almost 5,000 cars produced.

This car was beautiful! But since originality was not coveted like it is today, the car was painted with 10 coats of Cadillac Auburn (A deep rich brown with just a hint of gold metal flake dust) using hand rubber lacquer. The paint was so deep it looked like you were going to fall right in. The interior was a beautiful creamy tan with tan carpets and it had the standard black vinyl top. I added chrome 60 spoke wheels and was ready to rock and roll!

In 1977 I was living in Roanoke , Virginia . The East Coast Austin-Healey Club meeting was being held about 100 miles away in New Market, Virginia and the guest of honor was none other than Donald Healey. There were 125 cars in attendance from all over the east coast.

I arrived at the meeting site on a Friday afternoon and standing on the balcony of the hotel was "THE MAN", Donald Mitchell Healey (DMH). I quickly made my way up to his location and after brief introductions he invited me to join him for a beer. That was the start of a cascade of events that I will never forget. Later that evening after dinner, DMH joined a number of us at one of the local pubs for "refreshments". He told us stories of his rally days before the first Austin-Healey was built. He told us of his days as a pilot during WWI and he shared many other wonderful tales of the car industry in England both pre and post war. We asked him so many questions! We wanted to learn the details of how our cars came to be, how they were made, reasons for the different model changes and here was THE MAN himself to tell us the straight poop. He always responded to our inquiries with enthusiasm and continued to drink his scotch whiskey with equal pleasure. It was quite an evening and we all learned more than we ever thought possible.

DMH was 79 years old in 1977. In addition to having a keen mind for thousands of details about all of his cars we found out that he loved to dance. When he needed a break from our numerous questions, he kept the bar maids busy dancing. Well, it was finally closing time at the pub but he wasn't ready to stop the fun. He wanted to go back to the hotel for a nightcap. Seizing the opportunity (since I was sitting next to him) I asked if he needed a ride to the hotel and as a matter of fact, he did. I fired-up the BT7 and DMH took his position in the passenger seat for the 20 minute drive back to the hotel. And what a drive it was! It seemed that the car somehow knew that its maker was on board. It seemed to perform as never before and the "music" coming from those twin exhaust pipes was never sweeter. We chatted all the way back but I cannot remember much about what was said until we pulled up to the hotel, under that lighted canopy with all of the other Healey faithful awaiting our arrival. As he was about to exit the car he took a long look over the bonnet and then slid back into the seat. He leaned over to me and said; "say Jim, this car is not one of my original colors is it?" With some trepidation I responded "no sir it isn't". "Well, he said, by God it should have been, it's beautiful!" Everyone there applauded and nothing could get the grin off of my face all weekend! I was in "Healey Heaven".

The caper on this story: the car won first place in the Mark II class and the award was presented and signed by DMH. On Sunday morning before we all departed I had a picture taken of me and DMH in my car. I still have that picture, autographed by DMH and it hangs in my office.

After 1977 I was privileged to meet DMH several more times at various Healey club events. In 1982 there was a 50th anniversary meeting in Snow Mass, Colorado. I drove out to that meeting and learned a valuable lesson in why it is important to keep your emergency brake in top working order. But that is really another story...

Jim Clark

Empire Marque—The Mini

For some of my articles this year I'm going to give brief recaps of some of the marques that are covered in the Empire. Next month is Morgan. This month it's the Mini

British Motor Cars conceived the Mini as a response to the popularity of the Volkswagen Beetle and as a reaction to the 1965 Suez Canal fuel crisis. The mini debuted in 1959 as an economical, entry-level car. It was initially marketed as the Austin Seven and Morris Mini Minor, and was quickly renamed as the Austin Mini and Morris Mini. The name was shortened to just Mini in 1969.

The original 848cc engine produced just 37 horsepower. But with curb weight at 1400 pounds, it still propelled the Mini to a top speed of 70 mph. Its compact size saved space with an 80-inch wheelbase and little overhang, yet it could hold four adults plus luggage in the trunk. The fully independent suspension used rubber cones as both shock absorbers and springs, supplying go-kart-like handling. Fuel-starved Europe appreciated the 50-mpg fuel economy. It was an instant success.

The most notable features on models made from 1959 through 1967—now commonly called the Mk I Mini— are external door hinges, sliding front side windows and 10-inch diameter wheels.

Clearly the engineers started having fun with the Mini as a platform for ideas, and soon they were introducing model upgrades and variations. A van joined the lineup in 1960 and a pickup following year. The Riley Elf and Wolseley Hornet models debuted in 1961 as up-market versions with more stately grilles, refined rear trunk treatment and upgraded interiors.

The first performance-tuned Mini was developed not by the factory, but by Formula 1 sensation John Cooper. The Mini Cooper was introduced in 1961 with a comprehensive set of engine, drivetrain, exhaust and suspension changes. A 997cc engine producing 55 horsepower gave it go, which evolved to a better 998cc version. To accommodate racing class considerations, the 1963 Mini Cooper S carried a 1070cc engine, and the 1964 model had 970cc and 1275cc engine options. The Mini four-wheel-drum brakes were replaced with front disc brakes— 7-inch rotors on the Cooper and 7.5-inch rotors on the Cooper S.

With the success of the Coopers, the factory put a 55-horsepower, 998cc engine into the Hornet in 1962, and on Austin and Morris Minis in 1964. The original rubber cone suspension was replaced in 1964 with a hydroelastic system that used assemblies containing pressurized hydraulic fluid.

What is now known as the Mk II version of the Mini was built from 1967 to 1969. It featured a larger rear window, bigger tail lights and a redesigned front grille. It was produced with 848cc, 998cc and 1275cc engines.

The Mk III was released in 1969 with roll up windows, larger doors with internal hinges and the original rubber cone suspension system to cut costs. In 1973, an alternator replaced the generator in an upgraded electrical system, and a rod-change transmission replaced the “magic wand” gear stick.

The Mk IV, released in 1976, used rubber mounts for the front subframe to reduce road noise. A Verto clutch became standard in 1980. A shift to 12-inch wheels and 8.4-inch front disc brakes marked the Mk V release in 1984. The 1275cc engine became standard equipment on the Mk VI, starting in 1991. Single point fuel injection replaced the single SU carburetor in 1994, and then was replaced by multi-point injection in 1996. An alarm system and catalytic converters were also added.

The last Mini rolled off the line in October 2000. During its last days, the car was sold by BMW under the Rover nameplate. BMW launched the all new Mini in 2002 with Cooper and Cooper S models, paying homage to the car's heritage and quirky styling, yet giving it the performance muscle that made enthusiasts take notice. While purists don't consider the Mini a real Mini, it deserves praise for helping to increase the value of the originals.

This is obviously plagiarized from a magazine article.

Yer creative Marque Leader,

Jim Peckham

Triumph Marque

The marquee event for February will be on February 28. We're going to have a clue rally. I'll have a lot of questions for you to answer while you try to maintain the correct speed. You'll need a navigator to help you.

We'll gather at the Kroger on Kanis at 1:00PM on Sunday Feb 28. Shortly after that we will clock each car out at 1 minute intervals. You will have specific instructions to follow for the route and the speed you should maintain. The driver that completes the course with a speed closest to the established time will receive bonus points. The second and third closest times will also receive bonus points, although not quite as many.

There will be questions about what you see, what is on various signs, and other confusing questions to see if I can get you confused. Of course you want to answer all the questions correctly. Good luck!!!

We will end up at a restaurant for the final check in. I'll be sitting there enjoying an adult beverage while you are out there trying not to get lost.

Bob Ross

*This should have been in last months newsletter. I apologize for the oversight,
And will try not to leave articles out ever again. (ed)*

The Quest for a Curvy Road.

Early Saturday morning 10 LBC's and 1 Miata set out from Ron's bound for Jasper to meet and have lunch with the British Iron club from Fayetteville along with several other clubs that they had invited. Since this is a part of the state that our club does not visit very often I thought that this run should be special so it became a quest for a curvy road the kind that our LBC's were made for. Our first stop was in Clinton where we picked up another LBC and a Pontiac Solstice. From there we found Hwy. 16 it is a nice curvy road but not quite quest worthy. Then on to Hwy. 7 again nice but not quite right but then on Hwy. 123 there was a sign No Trucks and then another one Impassible Hairpin Turns. Could this be the road we were searching for? The road did not disappoint us. As we climbed to the top of the ridge through some nice sweepers the anticipation increased. Once over the top there were the impassible hairpin turns. These were a series of tight turns where the car in front would almost meet the car behind them. This was the road of our quest. Once we were down the mountain we cruised into Jasper and had lunch at the Ozark Café. After nice lunch and a walk around the square to check out all of the other cars that had made the trip it was time to say goodbye. One group headed back to Little Rock while another traveled on to Eureka Springs but that is another story. It was a long day of driving, over 300 miles, but we had been on some of the best roads in Arkansas, did not have any mechanical problems and had spent the day with old and new friends alike what more could you ask for.

Charles Hutchison

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.

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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

Feb 28, 2010—Triumph Clue Rally. Meet at Kanis Kroger, 1:00PM

April 24, 2010 - Batesville Scottish Festival - Rooms at Holiday Inn Express 1-870-698-2700

Do you know of an upcoming event? Send the information to newsletter @bmca.net

Go find your 2009 Roster
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