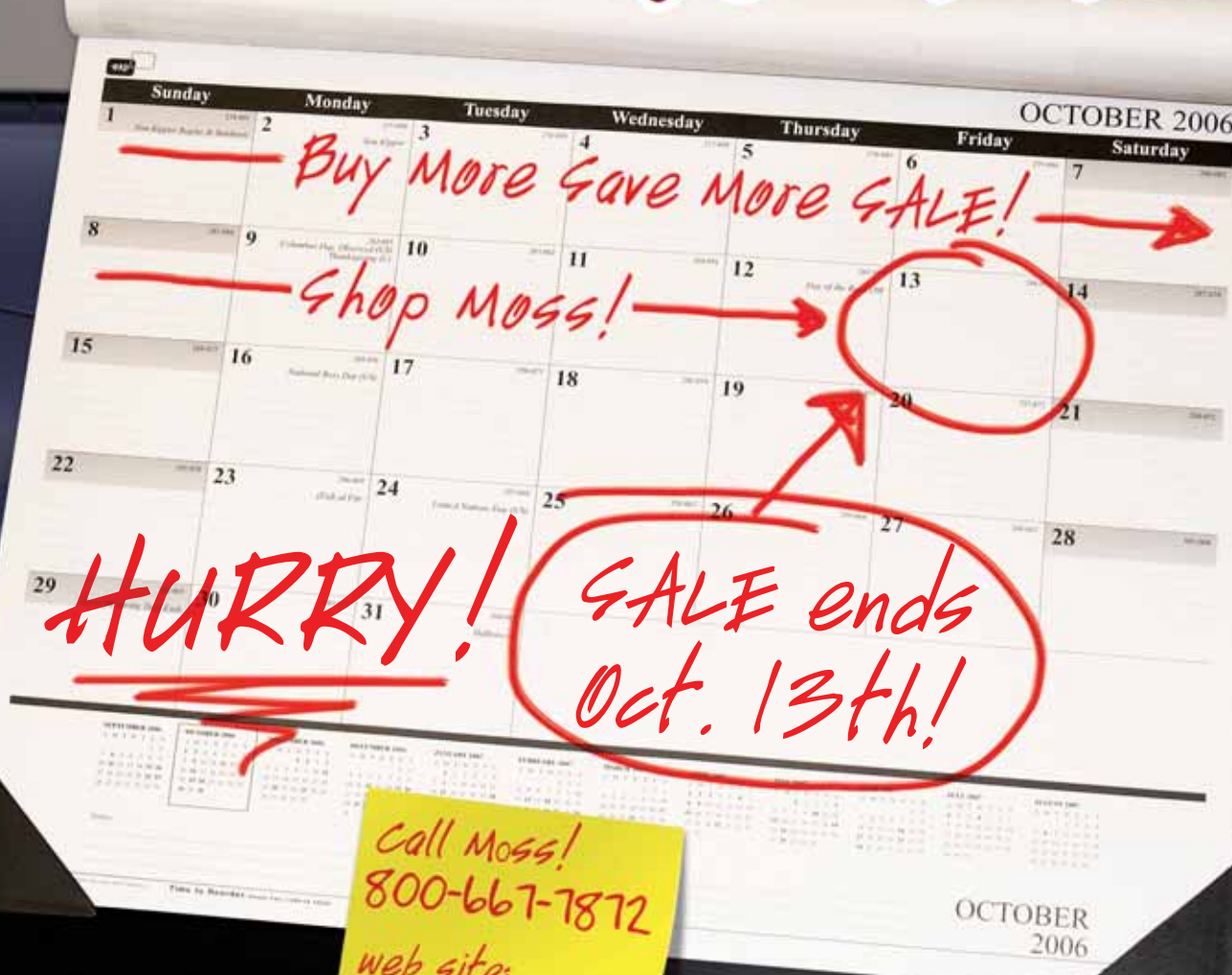




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Orders must be received in our Goleta, CA office by October 13th, 2006 (not just postmarked by) to qualify. Be sure to order early. Discounts apply to single order only. This Order Value Discount Offer applies to retail Classic British parts at regular list price and does not apply to promotional items, superchargers, E.F.I. kits, 5-speed conversions or body tubs. These items count toward the order total, but are not discounted. This offer is limited to Moss Motors Classic British parts and is not applicable to some general items or BMW Mini products. Shipping charges will be based upon your total before application of the appropriate discount.



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ON THE COVER:

Dan Kahn had to chase the setting sun to capture Gordon Gibbons' streamlined '53 TR3A at El Mirage Dry Lake for this month's cover.

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MOTORING**

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Write Seat

Forces Not Fully Understood

By Robert Goldman



To borrow part of a cartoon caption from the great Gary Larsen, “Suddenly, through forces not yet fully understood,” a field in the middle of seemingly nowhere became the locus of 1,100 MG cars. Standing there in the middle of the show, I felt as though I was up to my eyeballs in a sea of MGs.

Whereas many car shows take place in neatly organized parking lots, with neatly organized rows of cars, MG2006 was more like a bag of Halloween candy. Scrabbling around in the bag produces one treat after another. On the verge of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, it’s not easy finding a venue able to handle so many cars. Trees, creeks and general vegetation forced groups of vehicles to be scattered about. After viewing “all the MGBs” one would look off through the trees and spot another large group on the other side of a stream. It was MG heaven on earth.

Events of this magnitude don’t happen in a vacuum. The North American Council of MG Registers organized the third MG International event, which is to say a handful of dedicated enthusiasts worked their tails off for months in exchange for a complimentary hotel room they likely had little opportunity to enjoy. Having been to the original MG 1996 event in

Indianapolis, and having heard about the 2001 event in St. Paul, MN, it seems as though attendance kicked up a notch in ’06.

In fact, interest in British cars in general seems to be at an all time high. Whatever the magic of these machines, the spell is growing. Want a recent sign of the apocalypse? How about the \$97,500 a TR4 recently fetched at a Barrett Jackson auction (TR4 owners line up here to condemn me for undervaluing TR4s).

Another symptom is our catalog supply. Calculating the number of catalogs to print is a black art. The marketing department must gaze into their crystal ball and confidently say “we will use X many each of these nine different catalogs over the next six months.” They must then present the budget for approval and sign it in blood. It’s an unlovable no-win scenario. If they’re wrong, we either run out of catalogs, angering customers, or have way too many, angering the accounting department. In a perfect world, we put a couple dozen books in the recycling bin at the end of every catalog cycle.

As I write this (in July) we have been out of MGT catalogs for weeks, and won’t have additional supplies until the next printing. Catalog requests have

been booming of late, and although we incorporate historical usage data in our print run calculations, sometimes life chooses to ignore art. I would like to think that with availability of replacement parts and upgrade products like our 5-speed gearbox conversions, people are starting to realize they don’t have to keep their classics on blocks but can enjoy them on the road.

We all want the classic cars we own to appreciate in value, but there are limits. I believe skyrocketing values have pushed a lot of muscle cars off the roads. With a few notable exceptions, classic British cars land in a sweet spot where their values steadily rise, but not to an extent people feel they can no longer hop in and go for a cruise. Heck, I’ll drive my Midget to the store for groceries any time. If it were worth a quarter of a million dollars, it would never leave the garage. Imagine the crashing jaws of all those who used to own one if that happened.

I believe part of the success of MG2006 was, in addition to all us “old time” enthusiasts and club members, a lot of new people entering the hobby because they see a vehicle that is both unique and obtainable. The cars are also easy to work on and restore. Or would be, if we had any catalogs. 🇬🇧

Reader Letters



“That’s my radiator mascot!” was my astonished reaction to the photos of the Ecurie Cod Fillet trophy in the Spring 2006 British Motoring. I’ve had one of those leaping fish (stamped “Desmo,” so it’s undeniably British) on my TD for years - see the attached photo. It was on a derelict TD MkII we once bought, and since my husband and I both like to fish, putting it on my car seemed perfectly logical. We had no idea it had such exalted connections!

—Sarah Carr
Tunkhannock, PA

The world of English cars and classic motorsports is truly a small one, Sarah. When British Motoring Art Director Matt Rust splashed images of the Ecurie trophy fish all over John Sprinzel’s story we had a pretty good chuckle, but we never thought there were other phantom fish floating around. Apparently they’re all in Pennsylvania! Thanks for sharing, and please send in photos of your TD for Reader’s Cars, we’d love to see it!

I just want to tell you that the “new” British Motoring format is a keeper! Not only is it a great sales tool, but it has turned into an honest-to-goodness magazine! You are correct to say that it can easily be kept on the coffee table, and the best thing is that it is “wife approved” for display. In addition, leaving it on the coffee table gives me a great opportunity to provide gift hints for birthdays, Father’s Day, Christmas etc. I have also attached a photo of my 1953 MGTD, “Eliot” sporting a Moss full tonneau, which is covering a new Moss hood. Eliot is an original 89,000-mile car with exception of the usual replacement items. Cheers and keep up the good work.

—Gene Fodor
South Hero, VT

Thanks for the kind words, Gene. We’re very proud of BM’s new look, and we like to think that high-end photography and top-notch art direction gives these amazing Anglo classics the attention they deserve. Eliot looks like an excellent little MG, especially considering its an original un-restored car. FYI- we’ve found that sticky notes and highlighters work particularly well for getting the “I want this part for Christmas” message across to loved ones. Good luck!



Thanks very much for having American Collectors Insurance as one of your advertisers. I purchased a ‘62 Healey 3000 in December and will be driving it for the first time in a few weeks. My search for affordable insurance has been disappointing, until I received this month’s issue of British Motoring and there it was... the answer! Apparently advertising pays off! Thanks again.

—Bart Lehman
Received via email

We’re glad to hear ACI was able to help you out of a tight spot, Bart. We have used them in the past with excellent results, which is why we’re proud to have them advertise in British Motoring. Don’t forget to check out some of our other great advertisers, including the Austin Healey Club of America and Austin Healey Club USA. See you down the road!

We welcome all letters. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and style. Please send us your feedback at *British Motoring*, 440 Rutherford St., Goleta, CA 93117, editor@mossmotors.com.

Digital-image requirements: minimum three megapixels (2048x1536 pixels or 5x7 inches @ 300 dpi), TIFF, Photoshop (PSD), JPEG, or EPS formats (no GIFs or inkjet/laser prints, please).

Reader Cars

A Family Affair

Reader Vince Warry wrote in to share some pictures of his Uncle Ernie Kallweit's impressive car collection. Kallweit recently passed away, and his family has decided to honor the Vancouver car lover's memory by holding onto the cars he lovingly restored over a lifetime.

According to Warry, Kallweit fell in love with cars while working along side his father in their auto body shop in Prince George. This fondness grew into a love of British cars after he had relocated to Vancouver, BC with his family. While helping his kids keep their Triumphs and MG's running, Ernie restored a beautiful Jaguar saloon, a 1955 Healey 100, and his pride and joy - a 1932 MG Magnette. In his later years, he restored another Jaguar sedan, this time a 1940's Jaguar drop head coupe that won best in show at the Van Dusen car show and appeared in local automotive calendars. It is always sad to hear about the passing of the hobby's elder statesmen, but we're glad to hear that younger generations are picking up the mantle and taking the British Motoring lifestyle into the next century. Thanks for sharing these memories with us Vince, and keep these great rides on the road where they belong!

Please submit photos and brief information about your British sports car (how you acquired it, what you've done to it, what you plan to do to it, and the most enjoyable thing you've ever done with the car). Either email an image (minimum 4x6 inches at 300 dpi; no GIFs or inkjet/laser prints, please) and info to editor@mossmotors.com or send non-returnable photos and a letter to "Readers' Cars," *British Motoring*, P.O. Box 847, Goleta, CA 93117 USA.



This vintage photo shows Vancouver, BC, resident Ernie Kallweit with the MG Magnette he restored in the 1970s.

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20 Years Ago In *Moss Motoring*



The Fall 1986 issue of *Moss Motoring* highlighted the expansion of the Moss Jaguar division into a new premises in downtown Santa Barbara, and also introduced the new Moss Jaguar XK catalog. Jaguar sales had grown from a low of 14,000 in 1980 to a record 37,000 in 1985 and the existing Moss premises just could not cope!

A final report on the Ocean-to-Ocean T Tourist Trophy was provided by Robert Goldman, whose father Howard drove his TC all the way from New Jersey to California. Highlights of the report were a listing of things that broke on the 6,500-mile trek, a tale about two individuals who solved their laundry problem by strapping a small cooler

to the back of their T car. Each morning they filled the cooler with hot water, detergent and clothing. At the end of the day they had freshly washed clothes in need only of a rinse and dry!

Finally, a 1958 MG ZB Magnette plus a complete parts car was advertised for \$2000 in the classifieds, while the owner of a 1967 MGB/GT Special was looking for \$3000. Other bargains included a 1954 Healey 100-4 at \$3500 and a 1968 Triumph TR250 fully sorted to stage 2, balanced and ported for \$4500! Now, where's that time machine I used to have?!

—Ken Smith

MG: Back from the dead?

According to industry newspaper *Automotive News*, Chinese automaker Nanjing Automobile Group announced plans in early July to revive the historic MG brand, but the challenges are daunting.

Nanjing assembles only a handful of its own cars in China, although it's a credible commercial-truck manufacturer. The company will have plants in the United States, England and China. It told *Automotive News* that it expects its Ardmore, Oklahoma, plant to make 12,000 to 16,000 cars a year. About 60 percent would be for North America and 40 percent would be exported to Europe. The cars would be assembled primarily by hand, with some robotics. Its U.S. entry, the compact MG TF coupe, would enter a crowded field in a niche market. It would compete



directly with the Pontiac Solstice, Saturn Sky and Mazda Miata. Nanjing will have to rework the car to meet U.S. safety and emissions standards, as the TF was originally a Europe-only model when the company purchased the car's tooling from a British receiver last year.

Mike Cook, the former public relations manager for MG parent company British Leyland from 1968 to 1991, called Nanjing's MG plans a long shot. He says the car Nanjing plans to sell in the United States, a coupe, does not fit the image most people associate with the brand. MG is best known for sporty two-seat convertible roadsters. MG had little success selling coupes and hardtops in the United States.

Morgan's New Coupe

After a full century of producing open air roadsters, Morgan has decided to begin production of the stunning AeroMax Coupe in January 2008. A limited run of just 100 individually numbered coach built coupes will be constructed at a rate of 1-2 cars per week, with the final model leaving the production line in the automaker's centenary year - 2009.

The original AeroMax was built on commission for Eric Sturdza of Banque Baring Brothers Suisse, a close friend of company head Charles Morgan. Sturdza requested a closed version of the Morgan Aero 8 roadster, one of the fastest accelerating cars in Europe. The finished product, unveiled at the Geneva motor show, was named after Morgan's son Maximus, who is Sturdza's godson. Morgan says the banker is only paying manufacturing costs, totaling nearly \$200,000, to complete the project because of his ties to the Morgan family.

The production version will be powered by a 4.4-liter V8 with a six-speed gearbox, and go from 0-60 in under five seconds with a top speed around 160 mph. Pricing is anticipated to be around \$150,000.



TVR To Stay in UK

According to local English newspaper Blackpool today, uncertainty over the future of the town's much-loved sports car factory has been quelled. Just prior to the British Motor Show, TVR revealed that it will remain in Blackpool and will reinstate 63 laid off workers after a recent surge in sales.

TVR, which was recently purchased by a Russian industrialist, will move from its Bispham site to a plant at Squires Gate over the coming months. At the same time it will establish a new headquarters for management, research and development, sales and marketing in Lancaster. There will also be a new TVR museum and an archive library at the headquarters.

"This is the first stage of transition for the company," said David Oxley, managing director of TVR. "The Squire's Gate facility will enable us to increase our volume and open up to new international markets." TVR's chairman Nikolai Smolenski said the eventual plan is a brand new factory for TVR, but the site has yet to be chosen. "We have introduced a relocation strategy that allows TVR to grow into the international company that I've always wanted it to be, and to continue to improve quality using a skilled and committed local workforce," he said.



Triumph Revival Delayed

Word from the British Motor Show is that a MINI Speedster is coming, and Triumph versions are not. Following months of fevered speculation about the return of Triumph, it looks like plans for a second-tier MINI based Triumph line from parent company BMW won't be leaving the drawing board after all - and expansion of the model range will continue under the single marque.

According to Automotive News' Richard Truett, BMW's U.S. CEO wasn't hopeful about the chances of a return when asked at this January's Detroit Motor Show, and now it looks like those doubts have come

into fruition. According to one source, "The argument against bringing Triumph back from the dead is that USA MINI dealers don't want it. They don't want two brands, although they do want the range expanded. BMW is very strict about the separation of MINI and BMW showrooms, and the upfront cost of the Triumph side would handicap existing MINI franchises for what would be a single model planned for only four years' production."

For now it sounds like a BMW-backed Triumph return has been quashed, but there is always the possibility that BMW could lease the name to another automaker.



Aston Martin Update

There is lots of news to report in the Aston Martin world. For the first time in forty years, Aston Martin has booked a profit. Chief executive Dr. Ulrich Bez attributes the company's ascent from the red to a global boom in millionaires, with about 70 percent of Aston Martins sold outside the U.K. Only five years ago, 80 percent of the marque's production was sold in England.

On the motorsports front, a factory-prepped V8 Vantage finished a credible fourth in class and 24th overall at the Nürburgring 24-hour endurance race, among a field of custom-built racecars.

Built at Aston Martin's Gaydon headquarters, the Vantage was almost entirely production standard, including the engine and transmission. The only modifications made were for safety and pit-lane efficiency, with the full mandatory safety cage, special fuel tank and fire system, racing seat, and built-in air jacks. The eyebrow-raising performance makes one think. If an almost dead-stock Vantage

can run competitively in a 24-Hour endurance race, imagine what a fully race-prepped car could do.

In classic Aston news, a remarkably original 1939 Lagonda V12 Drophead Coupe has been unearthed from a dry hiding place in the UK where it sat for 40 years. It sports the original push-button radio, the correct period lights and wire wheels and is showing just 50,112 miles on the odometer. Finished in blue with brown leather upholstery,

the car has remained with the same family since the mid '60s. The

current owner has vivid memories of being driven to school in it by his father, shortly after which it was put into storage. The brightwork still shows traces of the grease that was applied at the time and the hood has never been opened in the 40 years that the family has owned the car! By the time you read this, the car will have been auctioned off at the H&H Auction in Buxton, Derbyshire, UK.



New Products



MG Black Polyurethane Suspension Bushings and Pads

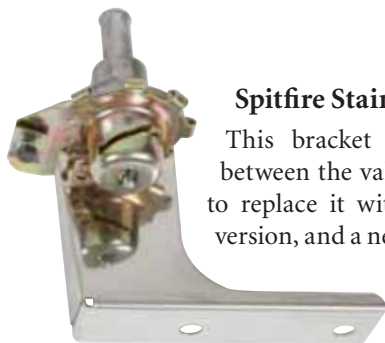
We have carried MG lower inner A-arm bushings in this material for many years, and have recently expanded the range to cover other areas. The material is slightly softer than our line of Prothane red bushings, and does not require grease lubrication. If you prefer to keep your suspension looking original but would like the corrosion resistance and longevity of Polyurethane, this material offers a perfect balance.

281-405 Bush Kit MGB Upper Outer, Sprite/Midget Lower Inner	\$6.50
281-410 MGB 1963-74.5 Crossmember Pad Kit	23.95
281-415 MGB 1974.5-80 Crossmember Pad Kit	25.95
280-485 MGB Lower Inner Bushing (8 reqd.)	2.95 ea.

TR6 Lower Front Panel

In an effort to keep repair costs down, British Motor Heritage has released this repair panel that enables the restorer to replace the lower front panel instead of having to replace the entire front apron. Fits cars with chrome over-riders only.

855-465 TR6 Lower Front Panel \$279.95



Spitfire Stainless Steel Heater Valve Bracket

This bracket is often rusted allowing leakage between the valve and bracket. Take the time now to replace it with a corrosion-proof stainless steel version, and a new valve (635-265) and seal (282-760) while you're at it.

635-235 Spitfire Stainless Steel Heater Valve Bracket \$29.99



MGB Rear Axle Puller Tool

Removing the later 1968-80 MGB rear axle to replace the seal or bearings can be a chore. This handy tool threads onto the axle threads and allows a regular slide hammer with hook to be used to pull the axle.

384-945 MGB 1968-80 Rear Axle Puller Adapter \$24.95

Weber Side Draft DCOE Carburetor Heat Shield

This heat shield is really useful where this type of carburetor is installed above the exhaust manifold as in most British sports cars. The shield bolts directly to the bottom of the carburetor and reduces problems caused by heat soak.

865-220 Weber DCOE Carburetor Heat Shield \$20.00



MGB Chromed Brass Headlamp Rim

This is the latest in our continuing program to offer our customer a choice of higher quality reproduction parts. These rims are accurately formed from brass so they fit correctly. They then plated and polished to a high standard.



164-011 MGB 1963-79 Chromed Brass Headlamp Rim \$27.95

MGB 1968-80 Upper Steering Column Bearing Kit

The early AC Delco columns are no longer available new and the later ones are expensive, so we have created a kit to repair the upper bearing which is usually badly worn allowing up and down movement of the steering wheel. This is not a simple installation, so we recommend reading the instructions on-line first and having a shop do the installation if you have any doubts as to your ability.

384-940 MGB Upper Steering Column Bearing Kit \$49.95



Clear Headlight with H4 Halogen Bulb

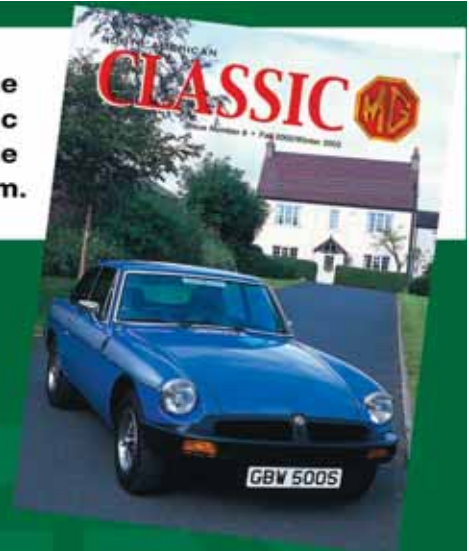
For a modern look, Moss now offers Crystal Clear headlights with Halogen H4 bulbs. These are DOT and SAE approved and deliver a strong focused light. The housing is corrosion resistant coated die cast aluminum and the lens is vented to prevent fogging. Now you can apply today's lighting technology to your classic. Replacement 60/55 watt bulbs are available.

456-875 7 Inch Crystal Clear Headlight \$29.95

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Sorting Out Distributors

Q There seems to be a lot of different options on the market for electronic ignition conversions and distributors, and it gets pretty confusing. Can you break it down to basics?

A The Lucas 25D type distributor was made obsolete by Lucas in 1974; from then on the new 45D type unit was supplied that had greater resistance to arcing due to a redesigned cap and rotor. This new distributor was supplied in points form for 1975 only in the US, and then it was replaced with a 45DM4 integral amplifier electronic ignition distributor. The 45DM4 proved to be problematic and a distributor with external amplifier unit the 45DE4 was often installed under warranty. This latest version, referred to as the Constant Energy Ignition or C.E.I., remained in use for many years and was quite dependable.

The high failure rate of the 45DM4 internal amplifier distributor prompted an American company, Pertronix to design a replacement hall-effect type pickup and module that would fit under the distributor cap of the Lucas unit. These proved extremely popular with service shops, as there was now an easy and relatively inexpensive fix for their customers. During the 1980's, service shops and parts suppliers could diagnose a defective amplifier immediately from the comment "the car died, rolled to a stop, but then started just fine after a few minutes."

Attempts to fit the Pertronix unit to the earlier 25D points type distributors proved difficult at first as the smaller diameter of the body posed problems with the size of the original amplifier package. These problems were solved with a redesign of the amplifier, and now there are Pertronix conversions for most popular early British applications.

Electronic Ignition failures and worn out 25D points distributors in US vehicles produced a demand for replacement points type distributors which was filled by importing a variety of new Lucas 45D4 units designed for the British and European markets. The most popular units were the Lucas 41427 (Moss 143-110), which was a replacement for the 1962-67 MGB, and the 41610 which was original on the European twin HIF equipped later MGB. Both of these 45D4 distributors used the DSB108 (Moss 153-915) point sets, and DCB104 (Moss 154-020) condensers as used in the 1975 Federal models so tune up parts are readily available.

Some later 45D units using the DSB191 self wiping point sets have been imported by Mini

and Land Rover parts suppliers, so it is important to identify which point set you have before ordering replacements or electronic conversion kits. Moss Motors does carry Pertronix Electronic Ignition Retrofit kits for both of these types of distributors. Part number 222-435 fits the 1975 original 45D4 distributors and other Lucas four-cylinder distributors using the DSB108 style points. Part number 222-495 fits Lucas four-cylinder distributors using the DSB191 self-wiping point sets.



The DSB108 as fitted to the Lucas 41427 and 1975 Federal applications is on the left. The DSB191 self wiping point set is on the right, the points are wiped across each other as the white lever to the bottom of the point set is moved.

Please email technical questions to tech@mossmotors.com. Include all pertinent information about your vehicle, and please keep the question as brief as possible. Questions may be edited for length and style, and we'll publish as many as possible each issue.

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When replacing points or installing a Pertronix unit it is often difficult to get the small hold down screws started without dropping them. A magnetic drywall electric screwdriver adapter makes an easy job of offering up the screws.



Lucas is no longer manufacturing new distributors, so supplies are becoming hard to find, although there is now a good quality reproduction distributor available that replaces the Lucas 41427 unit. This new distributor (Moss 143-115) adds another wrinkle: it does use the DSB108 type points set, but the cam is larger in diameter, so Pertronix and other brands of Electronic Ignition Retrofit kits will not work. The Moss Technical staff has been working with Pertronix to develop a retrofit kit for this distributor and it is now available. The new distributor can be easily identified, as it has no part numbers on either the body or vacuum advance unit.



New from Pertronix is the Flamethrower distributor. Designed to directly replace worn out points or electronic distributors with a dependable modern amplifier design built into a new distributor body with an advance curve suitable for early cars and performance use. For more information check out our website at www.mossmotors.com. PN 143-116. 



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Silver Streak

Gordon Gibbons'
1958 Triumph TR3A

By Dan Kahn



Muroc dry lake is a lonely, desolate place. Nestled in the high desert an hour north of Los Angeles, the massive expanse of smooth, hard clay has remained unchanged for millennia, the land that time forgot. This was once the birthplace of speed and glory. Young men in rocket-powered planes outran the speed of sound. Spaceships - both massive and tiny - have descended from the heavens here. Homebuilt contraptions blazed new land speed records across this very dirt. For the mechanically inclined, this is hallowed ground. Muroc is our Mecca.

Standing on the smooth, cracked surface, the place feels alien. The old dog curled at our feet is panting from the heat, attempting to understand the strange, silent landscape. Then

we both hear a noise and look up. A dot appears on the horizon, and it's coming towards us - fast. He whimpers. I grab a camera. The dot blossoms into a blob, then a blur. Suddenly it comes into focus through the telephoto lens, and it's a car. A silver, bullet-shaped British car, and it cuts through the hot desert wind like a Samurai's blade. The throaty howl of a highly modified 2100cc Triumph at full-bore pierces the silence. In a flash the silver streak is gone, vanished in the distance as it turns around for another pass.

At speed on the lakebed, you can actually see the curvature of the earth. Everything in your peripheral vision blurs away and a tunnel forms, showing you only the gauges on your dash and a narrow strip of dirt that drops off

beyond the horizon. These are the moments Gordon Gibbons lives for. After four-wheeling across Malaysia and crossing the South China Sea on a Jet Ski, there is little left that can scare the Carpinteria, California, based custom homebuilder.

Not an adrenaline junkie or a weekend warrior, Gibbons describes himself as an adventurous spirit that lives life on his own terms, hence the modified 1958 TR3A on these pages. "When most of my friends started buying Ferraris, Porsches, and classic Jags, I wanted something different," he explains. "I owned a TR3 in the early '70s and told myself that I would always get another one. Eventually I did."

Gibbons put the word out that he was



looking for a clean, unmolested Triumph that he could drive and tinker with at the same time. Five years ago he found what he was looking for, a bright red '58 TR3A that he purchased from the original owner's son. It had been parked in a garage with a blown head gasket for 27 years. After dragging the car home, his first goal was to get the car running, which he did in short order. However, after driving it in stock condition for a short while, Gibbons decided to tear the car down and give life to his vision of a sleek vintage racer that could still be converted to stock if necessary.

After tearing the Triumph down to bare bones, the body was delivered to Barry Nieson for a complete strip and paint. Modern Mercedes-Benz Brilliant Metallic Silver was

applied under a thick coat of clear. Gibbons - a metal fabricator in his spare time - crafted the aluminum tonneau cover and wheel skirts by hand, as well as the spun stainless hubcaps fitted with original Triumph badges. Upon reassembly, the front end was fortified with Koni shocks and slotted disc brakes gripped by carbon ceramic pads, while the stock rear suspension was rebuilt and the brakes were setup with R5 race shoes.

Since the stock Triumph powerplant didn't have the might Gibbons was looking for, the engine was delivered to Winning Makes in Santa Barbara, California, for a full rebuild. The block was bored and fitted with 10.5:1 JE forged pistons, hung on forged Carillo rods modified with extra oil journals. The crank was nitrited, balanced and relieved for added longevity at high rpm. A Stage 2 Triumph Rally camshaft actuates stainless valves in a ported and polished cylinder head. The result is a dyno-certified 120 horsepower and 133 lb/ft of torque, all channeled through a five-speed Toyota Supra transmission into a Quaife limited-slip rear differential. The result? A lightweight, aerodynamic classic with enough thrust to push past the 120mph barrier, leaving a rooster tail of dust in its wake.

As our photo shoot wound to a close, the sun hung low in the sky, bathing the lakebed in a tangerine glow. The silver streak had come to rest, and Muroc was silent once more. Nothing has changed on this alien landscape for centuries, save for decades old tire tracks embedded in the dirt, echoes of a high-performance past. Gibbons' Triumph is an apparition here, a reminder of the barriers that once fell before steely-eyed drivers in sleek speed machines. The Silver Streak is home.





The original gauges were set in a newly restored dash. The hand-made alloy tonneau and Brooklands wind screens isolate the driver for improved aerodynamics.



It may look stock, but the Triumph 2100 has been highly modified by Winning Makes. Changes include high-compression pistons, a ported and polished head, and a rally-spec camshaft.



Gordon Gibbons got into the spirit of the lakebed with some original pre-WWII flying gear. The goggles are necessary at high speed, as the windcreens do little to protect the driver.





While Gibbons' TR3 looks highly modified, all of the hand-made aluminum panels can be removed in a matter of minutes with basic hand tools. The hard tonneau cover makes ingress and egress tricky, but keeps the driver warm on cold Winter mornings.

The hand-made stainless steel wheel discs don't just look good, they're functional too. The centers are original-equipment Triumph badges. 🇬🇧



Digital

How to Buy
a British
Classic
Online



Deals

By Dan Kahn

Images courtesy of eBay Motors and Barrett-Jackson Auction Company

The Beginning

Fifteen years ago, if an enthusiast wanted a classic car, there were only a few options. In 1995, a small Northern California internet startup changed everything. When eBay first hit the web, most people didn't completely understand the point. Would anyone actually use it? Is there anyone crazy enough to buy a car, sight unseen? Eleven years later the results speak for

themselves. eBay, or more accurately its automotive companion site eBay Motors, is the dominant force in classic car and part sales across the globe. Need a bone-stock MGC with 100 original miles? No problem. How about a new-old-stock left taillight for a TVR Tuscan? eBay's got three. Here are a few stats to digest about the world's biggest automotive marketplace:



In the first quarter of 2006, eBay reported:

- One car sold on eBay Motors every minute
- A part or accessory sold on eBay Motors every second
- Significantly more cars are sold on eBay before 9:00 am than an average dealership sells in a year
- eBay has 193,000,000 registered users
- eBay Motors was ranked the #1 automotive web site
- 39% of all online automotive minutes are spent on eBay Motors
- As of May '06, 2-million passenger vehicles have been sold on eBay
- There are approximately 1-million parts available on eBay Motors at any given time

HOW-TO: BUYING A BRITISH CLASSIC ONLINE

Taking The Leap

Rather than giving you a general primer on the internet and how to use the thousands of different sites dedicated to buying and selling cars, we're going to focus on the biggest fish in the sea: eBay Motors. We'll give you a basic primer on how to use the site, what to look out for, how to find a deal, and the pitfalls to avoid. The illustrations in the story are screen-captures of actual eBay auctions, but we removed the seller's name and the car's Vehicle Identification Number to comply with requests from eBay's legal department.

To get started, you need a reliable computer and an internet connection. A high-speed connection such as DSL or a cable modem work best, because they minimize image download time and can actually help you swoop in and nail a last-minute auction. Open your web browser, and log on to www.motors.ebay.com. This is the car-centric part of the eBay universe.

Start off by browsing the site. You can click on the "categories" buttons on the top left corner of the screen and look at vehicles by make. To get more specific either drag down the menus in the "Car & Truck Finder" and choose the specific model you're looking for, or simply type the name of the vehicle you'd like to see into the search bar at the top center of the screen. The same method works for parts. If you want to see what MGB transmissions are available, type in "MGB Transmission" without the quotes.

As the listings come up, simply read the headline descriptions and click on the auctions that interest you. Notice that on the search results page, there are columns describing the number of bids, the current price, and how much time is left in the auction. This is important data, which we'll get to later.

Once you've found something you want to buy, if you're a new user you have to register. Simply look at the top left corner of the screen and click "register." Fill in all the information, and be sure to choose a User ID you like, since this handle will identify you from here on out in all your auctions. Once you've registered, the next time you use the site just click the "sign in" link to retrieve your information and gain bidding rights. Things get much more entertaining from here.

Learning the Language

There are several factors to consider when buying a vehicle on eBay. For a detailed look at the process, see the illustrations on the following pages. However, there are some important terms and phrases you should know when navigating the world of online automotive auctions. Here are a few definitions to clear things up:

Reserve: The buyer has placed a minimum on the auction. If the bidding doesn't meet reserve, the car will not sell.

Buy It Now: If you see a "buy it now" price, that's the buyer's final number if you want to end the auction and purchase the vehicle immediately. This is usually a good indication of the reserve price as well.

Read Feedback Comments: This link allows you to read a seller's "feedback." Former buyers can leave comments about their experience with that particular seller. High feedback ratings are imperative when buying a vehicle sight-unseen.

View Seller's Other Items: If a seller has multiple auctions going at the same time, this lets you see all of them. This comes in handy if a seller is parting out a specific car or selling multiple parts or vehicles.

Watch This Item: After you register and sign-in with eBay, clicking this link will send updates on the auction to your email, including warnings when the auction is about to close and notifications if the reserve has been met.

Vehicle Purchase Protection: Ensures that the buyer receives the vehicle, with coverage up to \$20,000 against fraud or material misrepresentation.

Condition Guarantee by Seller: Gives the buyer extra confidence that the vehicle's condition is accurately described and protects them if the actual condition is significantly different.

Vehicle history reports: Services such as Experian's Auto Check give the buyer a complete background on the vehicle.



HOW-TO: BUYING A BRITISH CLASSIC ONLINE

Tips & Tricks

To get the insider's perspective, we contacted the eBay motors PR department and asked for some pointers about using the site. The following are tips they provided:

Verify the condition of the item: The best way to ensure a smooth purchase is for the buyer to contact the seller before bidding. Sellers should be prepared to answer questions and be clear about the condition of the item. Though email is the most common means of communication, many sellers list their phone numbers with big-ticket items such as vehicles. With vehicle purchases, buyers should ask the obvious questions about the interior, exterior and mechanical conditions of the vehicle as well as the vehicle's history.

Communicate safely through the eBay site: To avoid spam, fraud, and assure the eBay communication received is legitimate; only respond to messages received in "My Messages." My Messages is located in My eBay and contains only legitimate eBay Second Chance Offers and announcements.

Select the safest payment method: There are several methods of payment that protect both the buyer and seller. For all purchases, eBay Motors recommends PayPal, the world's safest online payment method. For large purchases – especially those over \$15,000 – a recommended method is to use an online escrow company to pay. Online escrow companies will hold your payment and send it to the seller only after you've inspected your merchandise and given your approval.

Follow rules you would with regular offline shopping: Use the same common sense you would use in the offline world - if it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

Have all your questions answered. If you still have questions after reading the listing and reviewing the photos, contact the seller using the Ask seller a question link in the "Seller information" box in the top right corner of every car listing. Also request additional photos if you want to see the car from a particular angle that isn't shown in the photos included in the listing. If you have more questions than you can address in email, ask for the seller's phone number and call him or her. Some sellers even include their phone number so you can call them directly.

Consider additional costs: Remember to consider other potential costs such as title, registration, and state taxes. Once you purchase the vehicle, be sure to complete all of the title paperwork and pay any required taxes on the vehicle. Please note that this information varies by state and vehicle type.

Get delivery details. Calculate and include delivery costs into your final price. This may simply be the cost of driving across the city or state if the car is close-by or it may mean working with a shipping company that can transport the car from anywhere in the country. To learn more about shipping costs, ask the seller or contact a reputable vehicle shipping service.

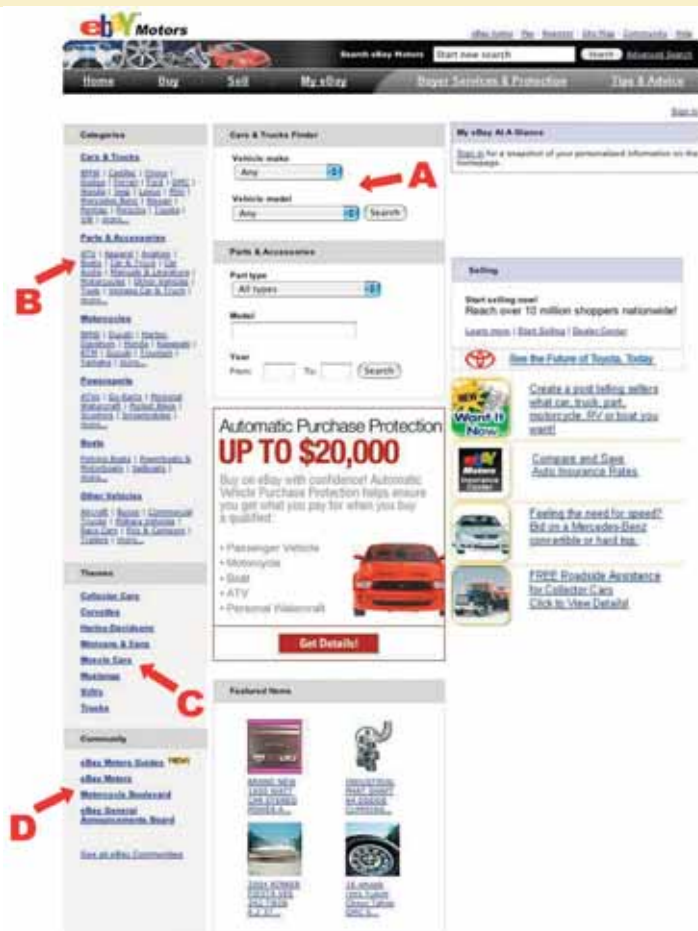
Sales history. Find out how long the seller has been a registered eBay user and look at the types of items a seller typically sells. It's okay to buy a car from a seller who hasn't sold one before — many of the car listings on eBay are from individuals selling their own car. If the seller's feedback

seems low, take the time to look at the Feedback details; sometimes a seller's Feedback looks low until you realize that they're a car dealer and their Feedback count comes entirely from car sales.

Terms and conditions. What are the terms and conditions of the sale? Are the terms agreeable to you? Sellers typically set terms and conditions, but you should make sure you agree with them. If not, find another seller/ car or contact the seller to find out if he/she is open to your suggestions.

eBay Motors Vehicle Purchase Protection up to \$20,000: Most cars purchased through eBay are automatically covered against fraud and material misrepresentation up to the cost of the car or \$20,000 (whichever is lower) with eBay Motors Vehicle Purchase Protection. To qualify for this safety program, complete your transaction on eBay with a bid, Buy It Now, or Best Offer and see additional terms of the eBay Motors Vehicle Purchase Protection.

Now follow along as we walk you through the basic steps of an online auto auction, complete with illustrated web pages. When using eBay for the first time, take baby steps. Start out with an inexpensive part or accessory, and work your way up. With a little time, practice, and strategy, it can even become a full-time business!



This is the basic eBay Motors home page. To look at vehicle listings, you can either (A) drag down the "make" and "model" menus in the Car Finder, (B) click on a category, or (C) look up a general category and browse from there. Communities (D) are also a handy navigation tool, as they allow you to gather information about general market segments like sports and muscle cars.

HOW-TO: BUYING A BRITISH CLASSIC ONLINE

Once you click on an auction listing, this is what you will see. The title of the auction (A), followed by the current bid price (B), and the current number of bids (C). Meet The Seller (D) is a vital part of the eBay process. Reading a seller's feedback comments, their feedback rating, and their other auctions gives you a feel for whether this person is honest and reputable. The Description box (E) contains pertinent information like the vehicle's VIN, mileage, engine type, etc.

1973 MG : MGB (A)

Winning bid: **US \$18,995.00** (B)

33 bids (C)

Meet the seller (D)

Description (E)

Item Specifics - Cars & Trucks

MG : MGB

1973 MGB Convertible COMPLETELY RESTORED with HARDTOP

Miles:	87108	Doors:	2 doors or more
Transmission:	Manual	Interior:	Black
Engine:	4 - Cyl.	Year:	1973
Warranty:	No	VIN Number:	
Title:	Clear	Exterior:	Yellow
Condition:	Used	Inspection:	-
Fuel Type:	Gasoline		

Options: Convertible



Vehicle Description

The 1973 MGB convertible that is up for auction has been fully restored and comes with the extra-specialist REARVIEW, new with top, automatic cover and car cover.

The MGB was the 4th and last MG that was owned by Sam Epstein, a noted AACA judge and noted racing driver. All of these MG's were restored specifically for his family.

The restoration includes almost everything new - engine, transmission, gear box, valves, suspension, running, convertible top, new upholstery, front, windshield glass, etc. etc. The car is in excellent condition. This car was owned by Sam's father and there is no doubt in my mind and I am sure the car is in excellent condition and new as good as it looks. PLEASE NOTE: The upholstery, under the MG seat cover, is brand new. The photos do not show how beautiful it is. Due to the angle of the sample shot of the upholstery in the photo.

The car has approximately 80,000 miles on the odometer. The speedometer was changed during restoration and reads 10,000, but Sam's father has the car for 40,000 original miles. Please note - I can see the rest of the odometer but I have known Sam for a long time and he has restored many cars that became AACA's, and he is a winner. He does not want with a car that is not sound and right in the first place.

The car comes with the owner's manual and a replacement manual. It has a clear Florida title in my name.

Since this was the last car Sam finished, he gave me the extra work parts from all the other restorations. This includes an air conditioning system from a 1976 MGB that Sam says was working when he took it out. All these extra parts, manuals, documents, etc. etc. go with the car.

We are selling my husband's collection of vehicles and this is the first one which we have listed. Why sell all of his cars? - because he is an amazing and a car garage into a car garage, family man and a man in his apartment in the past only.

We welcome any questions. We are located near the Kennedy Space Center, 15 minutes east of the Orlando International Airport. You are welcome to come by and inspect. Thank you very much for looking!

Powered by eBay, Turbo

The third part of an eBay auction page is the Vehicle Description. This usually contains pictures and an in-depth background on the vehicle. This particular MGB auction mentions that the car recently underwent a major restoration, comes with complete documentation and receipts, and is a show winner. This is the kind of car we would feel comfortable buying sight-unseen.

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MGA		

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MOSS

HOW-TO: BUYING A BRITISH CLASSIC ONLINE



This TR4 auction is a good example of a "But It Now" type eBay sale (A). Rather than a traditional auction, it simply has a Buy It Now price, which is basically the same as a traditional classified ad, except potential buyers can make offers (B), which the seller can accept or reject.

Check out those receipts! This is a well documented vehicle. At the bottom of the auction page you'll find a counter (A). This tells you how many people have looked at the auction... a good indicator of whether or not the bidding will go fast and furious in the last few minutes. With 2,100 views, it's a safe bet this auction will go crazy in the end. Other important details include shipping and payment instructions (B), which can be a big deal if the seller has special requests like cash-only or an immediate deposit. Always touch base via email to find out details if they aren't clear in the auction.

There are a few details in the auction that made us raise an eyebrow. First, when bidding on a high-dollar item, always check the seller's feedback rating. This particular seller has no feedback (A), an ominous sign. Also, the seller listed the mileage as zero (B); extremely unlikely for a 48 year old car. It's likely they meant zero since restoration. This could be a nice car, but it may also be a quickie shine-job the seller is trying to pass off as a fully restored car.

The dealership TR4 may not have a huge pile of receipts and documentation like the MGB mentioned earlier, but the auction page has a LOT of pictures. This is important if you plan to buy sight-unseen, as it lets you get a feel for the whole car. If there's something you can't see, request more pictures. Most sellers will usually oblige.



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BRMOT FALL

Tool Man's Toy



Domenic & Davana Valentino's 1959 AN5 Sprite

By Andrew Schear

As he cranked the starter, the supercharged 948cc motor roared to life with a high raspy idle and puffs of smoke from the dual Abarth exhaust. After 15-seconds the idle dropped and Domenic and Davana Valentino motored out of the parking lot of their Newbury Park, California home. "I've got the coolest place for us to shoot the car," Domenic said. We hopped into our chase vehicle and followed the '59 Austin Healey 'Bugeye' Sprite through some local twisties, only to end up in a secluded valley surrounded by horse property and windy roads, a place that any British sports car nut would call heaven.

The AN5 Sprite is considered the quintessential Austin Healey Sprite. Nearly 50,000 Bugeyes were manufactured, a

production number that far exceeds any other Healey model. Unfortunately, over the years the lions share of '58-'60 first iteration Sprites were raced, crashed, repaired, crashed and eventually sent to the boneyard. Dubbed the Bugeye in North America or Frogeye everywhere else, the AN5 had a pair of distinct headlights attached to the bonnet in what would seem like an unlikely location. Originally designed to have retractable headlights, Healey designers realized that this was cost-prohibitive option, which left two bulbous headlights in plain view. Little did they know this engineering mishap would create a cult following of epic proportion.

Domenic and Davana Valentino moved to California in the early 1990's, and it didn't

take long before they got absorbed in Southern California's crazy car culture. After attending numerous car shows and swap meets, Domenic made up his mind, his weekend beach cruiser had to be a Bugeye Sprite. Simple mechanicals, great lines, and a different look than any other car on the road all appealed to the newbie enthusiast.

About four and a half years ago the process began. After perusing a local newspaper, Domenic saw an ad that caught his attention. It read "Austin Healey Sprite; \$2,500, needs restoring." When the Valentino duo arrived to pick up the car, the words "needs restoring" was an understatement—Domenic described it as a complete basket case. But, to his surprise the car fired up and ran. Unfortunately, it had no



brakes, so a test drive was out of the question. After bringing their new project home it was time to survey the situation. What did he have, and what would he need? Let's just say he bought two more Sprites off eBay for parts.

After stripping the AN5 down to a bare carcass, it was sandblasted and primer dipped. Together with the help of buddy James Saldana, Domenic straightened the metal, patched the holes and repaired the problem areas. Knowing full well that Sprites were never offered in silver, Domenic still went with his color of choice, 2003 Corvette silver, accented with red stripes and white meatballs. After wet sanding and polishing the six coats of clear it was time for reassembly. The suspension was completely gone through and restored to

original specifications, with the exception of powder coating in lieu of paint.

While the car was equipped with a 1275cc motor when Domenic purchased it, he chose to install a period correct 948cc Judson supercharged power plant. Producing almost 90 bhp, the Sprite now faced a great number of problems, the largest being engine cooling. With the advent of modern high-octane race fuel and non-ethylene-glycol radiator fluid, Domenic was able to get the sub-liter motor to run at a steady 190 degrees.

After the driveline was completed, a Moss Motors Lucas based electric system was installed. Every wire, fuse and switch was replaced, Domenic took no chances with the Prince of Darkness. The entire interior was

custom stitched from black hide to OE specs. The carpet is Moss Motors while the gauges are original.

Why red wheels? "The supercharger, red wheels, and whitewall tires are the main reason for the theme of the car," Domenic explains. "To me, nothing screams 50's Hot Rod more than a set of whitewall tires on red wheels."

In the 50's and 60's when sports car racing was in its infancy, car clubs used local airports in Southern California to hold their races. It is in remembrance of these races that Domenic and Davana call their Sprite the Airport Racer. Not only was this restoration a chance for Domenic and Davana to explore British car culture, it has given them an opportunity to relive a part of California's racing history.





The Bakersfield Sound

The 2006 Moss Motors British Extravaganza

By Dan Kahn

Photos by Wayne McAtee, Gil Murrieta
& Dan Kahn



Garrison Bielen not only won Best in Show with his '38 Rolls Royce, he also gets the unofficial "best attitude" award from British Motoring. Dressed in full period attire, he even took his amazing Rolls out on the road course.

In the realm of country music, there's something known as "The Bakersfield Sound." Popularized in the 1950's, these gritty-sounding tunes were born in the California agricultural town's rough-and-tumble bars. A reaction to the polished music coming out of Nashville, the Bakersfield Sound was part nostalgia, part rock n' roll, and wild as hell.

On April 29 and 30, the Bakersfield Sound was a different type of music. Tappets clicking, side pipes thumping, and starters whirring harmonized in a cacophony British backbeat at Buttonwillow Raceway, home of the 2006 VARA Moss Motors British Extravaganza. Organized by the Vintage Auto Racing Association and Moss, the event is a car show, road race, social gathering and charity function all rolled into one.

An exhibition of pre-WWII racecars delighted spectators with the sights and sounds of three-wheeled Morgans and early Jags, and the Saturday afternoon slalom gave event

participants a chance to prove their mettle against some seriously scarred orange cones. The car show was well stocked with British rides of all kinds, from modern Minis to original-owner MGs, and even a few rarities like Garrison Bielen's best-in-show winning 1938 Rolls Royce. Garrison and his wife even braved the Central California heat in full period attire.

Saturday evening the racetrack played host to a massive candlelight barbeque, complete with karaoke and plenty of libations. Those who weren't in too much pain Sunday morning were treated to the sights and sounds of countless classic cars - British and otherwise - taking to the road course for some tough vintage racing action. Best of all, proceeds from the event were donated to the Boys and Girls Club of Visalia, and a Speed Channel TV crew was on hand to document the weekend.

Overall a good time was had by all, and most of the participants promised to come back in 2007 for another perfect weekend of storytelling, on-track exhilaration, good food, and great friends.

British Extravaganza Car Show

British Closed Vehicles

- 1st- Garrison Bielen, 1938 Rolls Royce
- 2nd- Bob Segui, 1978 Healey Fiesta

British Open Vehicles

- 1st- Wally Freeman, 1967 Sunbeam Alpine
- 2nd- Bill Moosiette, 1950 Morris Minor

Early MG

- 1st- Steve & Linda Simmons, 1949 MG TC
- 2nd- Steve Meline, 1957 MGA

MGB

- 1st- Carl Wade, 1965 MGB
- 2nd- Paul Erikson, 1974 MGB/GT

Early Triumph

- 1st- Lucy Geiger, 1955 Triumph TR2
- 2nd- Bob Prieve, 1960 Triumph TR3A

Sprites & Midgets

- 1st- Dominic & Davana Valentino, 1957 Bugeye
- 2nd- Bob Segui, 1959 Sprite

Jaguar

- 1st- Larry Wade, 1962 E-Type
- 2nd- Hunt Dabney, 1962 XKE

Austin-Healey

- 1st- Al Adams, 1963 BJ7
- 2nd- Steve Kingsbury, 1954 100-4

Mini

- 1st- David Haigh, 1964 Minor Traveler
- 2nd- Jim Babcock, 1967 Mini Cooper S



There were several TR4s and TR250s in the car show, but the true Triumph competition was on the racetrack, during the Group 2 road race and the MG/Triumph challenge.




There were plenty of MGs on display at the show, including these handsome MGAs.



E. Alan Moss took to the track in his Matchless-powered '34 Morgan SS. Competing in the Group 1 historic race, the tiny three-wheeler put on quite a show.



Another crowd favorite was Jason Len's beautiful Jaguar SS100 replica, which he entered in the pre-war exhibition class. 

The 2006

By Kelvin Dodd

Photos by
R. Harrington,
Scott R. Lear &
David S. Wallens



Walter Mitty Challenge

On-Track Coverage From Road Atlanta

Road Atlanta - Vintage racecars, vendors row and a host of classic car enthusiasts make for one heck of a party. This year's running of the Classic Motorsports Magazine Walter Mitty Challenge, held April 27-30, was no exception, as spectator counts and vehicle entries were up from last year. The Classic Motorsports "Big Top," which featured tech speakers during the day and genuine gearhead camaraderie in the evening, anchored the vendor's row.

The infield autocross course was popular all weekend, with Kumho Tires supplying a fleet of new Minis on Saturday and test-drives of the new Lotus Elise sponsored by Lotus and The Tire Rack on Sunday. It was difficult to see who was having the best time, the drivers or those waiting their turn, watching for mistakes.

The car club corrals started to fill up early on Saturday morning and there was a great turnout of cars. The Lotus club had been lobbied effectively and there was also a large turnout of Sunbeam Tigers and Alpines including a lovely Talbot. Moss Motors sponsored dart games on both Friday and Saturday nights, and many thanks go out to Gary Hunter for the great job he did building the back boards which gave the place a pub-like feel.

Saturday night featured the CM-sponsored party and auction to benefit the Brain Injury



Jesse Prather's former Huffaker race MGB at rest in front of the Classic Motorsports Magazine big top.

Resource Foundation, with Burt Levy - author of the Last Open Road series of books - as auctioneer. Burt was man of the hour as he introduced his latest book "Toley's Ghost" and spent the weekend signing copies, hitching rides and telling stories.

The feature races on Sunday had a real Southern flair, as the air was filled with the sound of squealing tires and vintage stock car motors, something not seen in many venues. British racecar fans had a lot to take in, as the day kicked off with an Anglo-American GT Challenge where the 1961 E-Type Jaguar of Larry Ligas came a close second to the winning

1966 Corvette of Steve Collins.

The Moss Motors sponsored MGB of Jesse Prather finished the day on a high note after passing all but one of the Porsche 356s that have historically been a worthy foe for Vintage Production MGs. In the Vintage/Historical Production Group dominated by Porsche 914/6 and 911 six bangers, Mike Munson and his 1970 TR6 represented the British flag. Mike proved that finishing is the most important part of racing, as there were a lot of cars that did not make it to the feature heat.

All in all, the 2006 Mitty was a great weekend of racing, cars, and people.



Lotus USA and The Tire Rack trotted out the incredible lightweight Esprit sports car for test drives on the autocross course. Power may come from a Toyota mill, but this little alloy corner-carver looks all-Lotus.



Minis seemed to be the British car of choice this year, as there were several great examples in the show, on the track, and out in the parking lot.



Tim Suddard of Classic Motorsports Magazine, Robert Davis, Senior Vice President product development and quality for Mazda North America and writer B.S. Levy take the podium during the Saturday auction for the Brain Injury Resorce Foundation.



Kumho Tires rolled out this New Mini for wannabe hot shoes and pro drivers alike to strut their collective stuff.

The Moss-sponsored Friday evening dart tournament had a pub-like feel, appropriate for a show with plenty of British cars.



This is probably one of the coolest racecar support vehicles we've ever seen. 

Buffing The Boot

Restowreck Tech: Restore Your Trunk in Minutes

By Kelvin Dodd

HOW-TO: Restore Your MGB Trunk in Minutes



1) This is the before shot of a typical MGB boot area. This one is worse than most as some past owner got a bit carried away installing stereo speakers. During a full restoration there would be some tricky sheet metal work necessary to repair the of damage, but for now we'll just cover them up.



2) Out come the tools, spare tire and miscellaneous bits and we get to see a fairly good condition boot floor, but the spare tire support is in pretty bad shape. Plan on replacing the center of the floor when the time comes to do sheet metal repair.



3) In goes the molded carpet set PN 244-250 main section.



4) The hole for the spare tire clamp has been made and the carpet has the floor ribs molded into it. The fuel filler is reinstalled and the spare wheel is back in place. The rear panel carpet is simply pushed into position and is secure enough to stay without being glued.

You may ask yourself, "Why bother with the boot, when the rest of my car has cosmetic and/or mechanical problems?"

The reason is simple: if you are going to drive the car, you have to have a safe place to put valuables and perhaps a briefcase or lunchbox, especially if you plan on leaving the car parked on the street. Providing a safe place to store road gear, tools, and even spare parts will enhance both your car's value and its usability. A new carpet kit will also protect exposed wiring from being damaged by loose objects, which is a common problem.

Another quick upgrade that makes the car much more usable on a daily basis is to convert the primitive boot prop rod to modern gas strut support. As primitive as the original early strut is, it still beats the later locking design that tends to fold the boot lid if the unaware try to close it without releasing the catch. I was coaxed into upgrading my "Restowreck" MGB (see sidebar for more details) by my wife, who didn't appreciate having to set the groceries down to open the boot. Installation is very straightforward, you can see in the following pictures. This kit (Moss 900-074) fits the 1962-71 MGB. There is a similar kit available (900-071) for later cars.

Part of an afternoon and a few errant hand tools later, and the trunk looked like belonged in a brand new car, and provided significantly improved functionality to, well, boot. You get the picture.


HOW-TO: Restowreck

5) Covering up the ugly spare finishes the first project. The most important point is that since this is a molded carpet set, no glue was used, so it can be easily removed when the time comes to repaint the car.



6) The original left hand support strut is removed and a new mount is installed on the boot lip. A pivot ball is installed in the original upper mounting hole, and the new strut is popped into place.



7) The new mounts are installed on the right hand side after careful measurements are made with the help of a straight edge. The strut is installed and the job is done in about 15 minutes. 

What is a Restowreck?

This is the first in a series of articles aimed at owners of, shall we say, "less than pristine" cars that are more focused on driving and enjoying their vehicles than making them show-winners. I coined the term "Restowreck" for those of us who drive restoration projects in process. The series will focus on weekend projects that make a big difference to the way the car looks and drives. The emphasis will be on bang for the buck, keeping the cars basically stock but with enough upgrades thrown in to make the driving experience more pleasurable. Our long term goal is to keep the car on the road where it belongs while stabilizing and repairing the cosmetics enough so you get admiring glances at stoplights and on the freeway. If the car has a few dings and a rip in the driver's seat, so what?

What is a Restowreck? Well, it's a car that some might call a "Beater," others may call it a "Daily Driver". It's a British car that may be more fun to drive than to look at. It's the British car that you don't mind driving to the grocery store and parking near the doors, rather than on the far side of the lot. It's a car that has a story in every dent and upholstery tear. For those of us with an experienced eye, it's a car with potential!

Why own a "Restowreck"? For starters, you can drive it without worrying about how many hours it's going to take to get the bugs off the grille, and a rock chip doesn't dictate a complete repaint. For many of us, a ground-up restoration may be in the budget, but we still get the fun of driving a sports car. Whether you find a Restowreck in the local paper, swapmeet, bone yard, or even the back pages of this magazine, bear in mind that one man's parts car very well could be another man's treasure. Good luck, and look for more Restowreck stories coming soon!

-Kelvin Dodd



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THE "S"

Jim Babcock's 1967 MINI MK 1

By Jim McGowan
Photos By Rick Amado



The last MINI to be legally imported into the US had to beat an in-country deadline of December 31, 1967. This '67 Austin Cooper "S" MK 1 was a high school graduation present for its original and current owner, Jim Babcock. Jim first experienced MINI wonderment in 1965 while attending a race in Hanford, California. From then on he was hooked.

When you checked the option box for the "S" (or SUPER) package, you received the big 1275cc 75-horsepower engine with twin SU carburetors, high-compression head, rally cam, oil cooler, 3-row radiator for extra cooling and a 3.44 final drive. In stock form the "S" would top out at approximately 110 mph. The package also included front disc brakes with larger rear drums (useful at 110), performance suspension, twin fuel tanks, extra bright work and 4.5x10-inch tires and wheels. This MINI is basically a factory race version retuned for the street! Jim raced the "S" in several vintage races in the late '70s at Willow Springs, as well as at the Moss Motors Extravaganza at Buttonwillow Raceway.

This car was ordered by Jim's parents from Foreign Motor Sales in Fresno,

California and delivered in July of 1967. Currently it has over 100,000 miles on the clock, including two major engine overhauls and one minor refresh. Since the engine oil also lubricates the transmission, the factory advised that the oil and filter be changed every 1000 miles. Jim's wife Linda affectionately named their MINI Herman, or "Hermi" for short. They are current members of the Valley British Auto Club of Fresno, California and drive the car regularly.

Jim began a two-year restoration of the potent "S" in 2002, and after finishing the car in 2004, he entered it in a Concours show at Fresno State University where it won its class. The restoration total is six times what the vehicle originally cost. The total dealer price, including tax and license in '67, was about \$2600, so the Babcock's think of their restoration as a worthwhile investment. Moss Motors supplied many of the mechanical parts for Jim's award winning restoration.

The cosmetic resto included a complete repaint, powder coated sub-frames, and a complete new interior featuring a Moto-Lita steering wheel and walnut dash to brighten up the interior. Mechanical changes include a Longman head with

mild VP7 street cam by APT. The exhaust is 2-inch stainless steel with a Super-Trap muffler. The estimated output is between 90 and 100 HP at 7000 rpm. Jim also added 5.5-inch Minilite Magnesium rims and beefier tires. Other than the painting and plating, Jim performed almost all of the other work at home. The "S" package also features either a black or white top to contrast with the choice of body color. Over 100 hours went into the stripping and painting chores alone. Obviously a labor of love.

During the early Seventies, personalities like Steve McQueen and James Garner also drove modified MINI's around Hollywood, so Mr. Babcock is in good performance company. The Babcock's have become regular attendees at the yearly Moss Motors British Extravaganza, which is where we found this excellent example of rare breed, especially considering its original owner status. Check it out in person next year!






The engine compartment is a work of art. This is the largest engine available in the '67 MINI at 1275 cc, fed by twin SU carbs and a host of other internal engine upgrades. Power is estimated at about 95-horsepower at a screaming 7,000 rpm.



The interior was completely restored, and is quite comfortable. Fold down front seats provide access for rear seat passengers.

Jim added a Moto-Lita custom steering wheel and walnut dash fascia to brighten up the otherwise plain interior. Minis are simple cars, so there isn't an abundance of gauges in the dash. 



Polished Minilites give a hint of the car's hidden performance potential, but the little "S" script on the back deck is the true giveaway. For many English back road racers, that "S" stood for "Speed."

2006 Event Calendar

SEPTEMBER

9: Concours d'Elegance, Jaguar Affiliates Group of Michigan, Troy, MI, Greg Kalwasinski, (517) 223-9542

9-10: Palo Alto British Car Meet, Palo Alto, CA, Rick Feibusch, (310) 392-6605, rfeibusch1@earthlink.net

10: Battle of the Brits: Detroit Triumph Sports Car Club, Sterling Heights, MI, Terry Walters, (734) 464-8149, botbchair@detroittriumph.org

10: British Car Festival, British Car Union, Palos Hills, IL, Rey Navarro, (708) 442-7380, Rnmgracer@sbcglobal.net, www.britishcarunion.com

10: British Car Show, The North Coast Triumph Association, Aurora, OH, Terri Joles, (440) 639-0477, rjoles@ameritech.net

13-16: MG's in the Mountains, The New England MG T Register, Jeffersonville, VT, Robert O'Meara, (508) 943-1447, omearar@putnam.k12.ct.us

16: Fallfest, New Jersey Triumph Association, A-H Sports & Touring Club, Eastern New York MGA Club, Dover, NJ, Lawrence Gersten, (908)

879-3993, austhealey@aol.com

16-17: Colorado English Motoring Conclave, Arvada, CO, www.coloradoconclave.com

17: Euros at the Fair, Concord, NC, Larry McElreath, (704) 697-9531

17: Classics on the James, Central Virginia British Car Club, Richmond, VA, David, (804) 231-1964, www.britishcarclub.com

17: British Car Day, Toronto Triumph Club, Oakville, ONT, (416) 410-4882, www.britishcarday.com

22-24: All British Car Show, The Atlanta Peachtree MG Registry, Dillard, GA, www.peachtreemg.com

22-24: All British Car Meet, British Automobile Owners Association, Truth or Consequences, NM, Kevin Kittle, (505) 345-4207, www.baooa.org

23: Fox Lake British Car Show, MG Car Club of Florida, Titusville, FL, Saul Klein, (321) 269-0236, sklein@rrfl.com

23: Show of Dreams Car Show, British Cars of New Hampshire, Merrimack, NH, Mary Ann Roberts, (603) 778-8693, marphonics@yahoo.com

26-30: GoF Central, St. Louis, MO, Charlie Key, (314) 428-9335, fog@britishcarsofamerica.com, http://britishcarsofamerica.com

28-01: Fall GoF, Texas MG Register, Fredericksburg, TX, Mark, markies@comcast.net

28-01: 6PACK Trials, Vuyahoga Falls, OH, Beverly Floyd, (330) 666-2817, tr250navigator@aol.com

29-30: British Car Show, Rollin on the River, Florence, AL, Jean Mammen, (256) 767-2032, www.shoalsbritishcars.org

29-01: Autumn Mog, Morgan Group of New Jersey, Williamstown, MA, Mary Leon Hunter, (973) 543-4929, cazadors@aol.com

30: MGs on the Rocks, MGs of Baltimore, Bel Air, MD, Richard Liddick, (410) 817-6862, GRL2MGBGT@aol.com, www.mgsofbaltimore.com

30: MGs on the Green, Metroliner MG Car Club, Charlotte, NC, DeWitt Black, (704) 379-6293

OCTOBER

6-7: British Car & Motorcycle Fest, British Sports Car Club of Memphis, Bartlett, TN, Joe Reed, jreed3@midssouth.rr.com, www.memphisbritishcars.org

6-7: Dan Ligas Memorial Concours, The Sun Coast Jaguar Club of North America, Clearwater, FL, Cherry Walker, (727) 868-5333, jacqw@aol.com

6-8: British Car Festival, Shenandoah Valley British Car Club, Waynesboro, VI, www.svbcc.net

8: British Car Roundup, Valley British Auto Club, Clovis, CA, Curt Lanse, (559) 298-7144, Dcamp17913@aol.com

8: Hunt Country Classic, Washington DC MG Car Club, Middleburg VA, Dcamp 17913, caol.com

13-14: Nashville British Car Club Show, Nashville British Car Club, Franklin, TN, (615) 758-8093, mark@nashvilletn.org, www.nashvillebritishcarclub.com

16-22: Triumphfest, Triumph Register of Southern California, Buelton, CA, Bob Muzio, (818) 703-1746, tr_jag@yahoo.com

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1962 AH Sprite, 948cc H production, raced SCCA 1983 to 1986 then stored, now full upgrades for vintage racing. \$15,500, 760-822-1426, mickey@contmotors.com, CA.



1961 AH BT-7, purchased from the original owner, maintained by a Healey specialist, I have all current maintenance records, car looks and runs great. \$26,000, 210-687-1429, TX.



1964 AH 3000 Mark III, HBJ8L25971, white w/red cove insert, new paint, wiring, wheels, tires, carpet and vinyl. \$34,950, 843-869-0889, waynegaabo@bellsouth.net, SC.

MG

1948 MGYA saloon, RHD, black/red leather, restored in the 1970's by Al Moss, supercharged, chrome wires, TF brakes, looks and runs very well, owned 20 years by Skip Kelsey/Shadetree Motors. \$18,000 obo, 650-296-1108, CA.



1951 MGTD, car #6818, beautiful example, Tan top and side curtains, total mechanical restoration, rebuild 2005, new rubbers and gaskets, no rust, good wood, drives and runs nice. \$18,500, 813-621-7726, FL.



1952 MGTD: Replica by Classic Roadster Ltd., built 1984, brand new interior, carpet, seats, side curtains, top, etc., 2.3L Ford 4-cyl, C4 AT, always garaged and rarely driven, excellent condition. \$8,750, 253-858-3118, chulka@comcast.net, Gig Harbor, WA.

1952 MGTD, original, excellent, painted BRG in 1962, new tan top, side curtains, tonneau covers, MGA wire wheels and brakes, new tires, just done clutch and brakes, owned 44 years. \$20,000, 724-329-0303, PA.



1953 MGTD, beautiful, white walls, engine, chrome, dress ups, owned 22 years. \$24,000 obo, will trade for MGTC/XK/Allard/others, 206-725-2343, WA.

1955 MGTF 1500, red/tan leather interior, all original parts, garage kept, as is \$27,500, 912-598-1913, GA.



1964 MGB, original Las Vegas car, solid body, no rust ever, matching numbers, Tartan Red needs respray, wire wheels, Moss re-upholstery and carpet, original panels, rebuilt transmission, detailed engine. \$6,750, WWWGSW1970@aol.com, NV.

1970 MGB-GT, minor rebuild on engine, body, brakes and interior, new battery, windshield, tires and urethane paint job. \$7,000, 425-778-2087, WA.



1976 MGB, 68K, new top, windshield, brakes, battery, interior, paint and more. \$6,500, 425-778-2087, WA.

MG (con't)



1977 MGB, no damage, no rust, no flaws, many updates, interior and top are excellent, a drive-away car. \$8,000, 618-357-5048 or 618-357-2136, IL.

1979 MGB Roadster, Good condition inside and out. Runs good. New paint job using original paint color. Weber carb. Top needs minor stitching repair. Asking \$5,500. (256) 582-8865, AL.



1980 MGB-LE, only 15,400 miles since new, immaculate, always garaged and regularly maintained, second owner since 1984, a real gem. \$15,000, 508-359-2077, elawrence@verizon.net, MA.



TRIUMPH

1959 TR3A, very nice condition, very nice driver, red exterior, black interior, all matching numbers. \$12,500, 732-863-8068, NJ.



1959 TR3A, very restorable project car, complete but disassembled, \$1500 in new parts already purchased, including Robbins top, must sell, 760-745-0852, formerlyLDS@yahoo.com, CA.



1964 TR4, 70K original, 500 since body-off resto, new engine, Toyota 5-speed conversion, surrey top, original minilite wheels and new tires, new dash and wiring, \$18,000, 541-592-2048, cornetunes@frontienet.net, OR.



1975 Triumph TR6, British Racing Green over black, redlines, no rust ever, terrific almost new paint, numbers match, rebuilt suspension, plus much other work. \$15,995, 317-398-8997, IN.



1976 TR6, rare, one of only 14 made that year for the UK home market, right hand drive, great shape, approx. 10k miles on rebuild. \$15,000, mgopher2002@yahoo.com, 858-880-9288, CA.

1977 Spitfire, 90% Resto-mod. New Parts & Paint, Must Sell \$3500 obo. 908-928-9057.



Other



1938 25-30 Rolls sunroof, beautiful style, paint, leather, chrome. \$35,000 obo, will trade for MGTC/XK/Allard/others, 206-725-2343, WA.

1953 Sunbeam 4-door Saloon, beautiful CA car, restored and upgraded for performance, comfort, and reliability, over 15 awards for best in class/best of show, all original tools, books, etc. included. \$10,800 obo, 805-934-3496, CA



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