



THE BRITISH DIAMOND

April 30th, 2023

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Cheers, Everyone!

Spring has arrived!! There are many clues. March 20th was the vernal equinox marking the beginning of the astronomical spring in the Northern Hemisphere (that's us). For verification, I tried to stand an egg on its end. The vernal equinox suggests equal gravity on all sides of the egg prevents it from falling over. Ha! That doesn't work unless you just happen to get the yolk to settle at the bottom. Otherwise forget it!

Moving into April we were blessed with a couple days of 70 deg weather. But since it's turned cooler. So, is it top down or top up? Come on weather, make up your mind! Spring is also the time for tornados. The watches and warnings are nothing to be ignored. Have a plan and determine a shelter you can get to quickly. When we lived in Montgomery, Georgia and I spent many hours in a small-inside room we hoped would protect us. Fortunately, it was never put to the test. So, if you hear the freight train a-coming, the tell-tail sign the tornado is on top of you, it may be too late. Enough about that! As we move from April to May, it will be a short ride into summer!

One final word. As you read this note our club, in conjunction with the Lewes Chamber of Commerce, is preparing for the opening of the annual Lewes "The British are Coming Again" Motor Car Show, held on Saturday May 6th and the Meet And Greet the night before all at the Lewes Ferry Terminal grounds. The show has been sold out for a while. I'm excited as are many others, to see the anticipated line-up of British cars (I've seen the list). I certainly hope you were able to sign up before the registration closed. This premier show kicks off the show season and it's the "must attend spring event." I hope I see you there!!

Until then, kick those tires, drop the top and check the fluids – the roads await!

See you out there and please drive safely,

Terry & Georgia

Every care was taken to insure the accuracy of the contents of this newsletter. The editor(s) accept no responsibility for any effect caused by errors or emissions.



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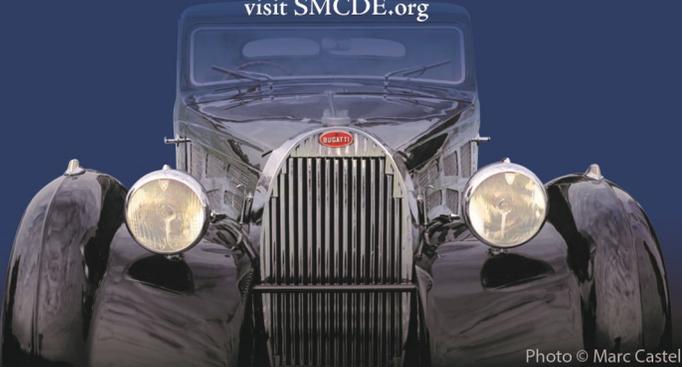


Photo © Marc Castelli



27th Annual "British are Coming...Again" Car Show

THIS TIME, WE INVITED THEM!

One if by Land, Two if by Ferry, Three if by MG

Lewes Ferry Terminal
May 6, 2023 • 11AM – 3PM

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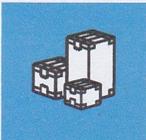
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Tri-State Spring Blossom's Tour sponsored by the British Car Club of Delaware Northern Chapter

April 22, 2023

By Dave Mitchell

We started on time with seven cars and fourteen tourers. This was a rain date reschedule that reduced our participants by two vehicles and five tourers.



C.W.; Bob Turner, Jim Martin, Brian &, Joy Read, Fiona & Alan Hill, George Alderman, Rene O'Leary, Terry Young, Dave Mitchell, Sharon Kolinski, Steve Woodman, Don McDonald. Photographer Georgia Young.

The route was designed to follow the local streams and waterways. The Fish and Game Commissions of the Tri-State region have a very aggressive stocking program this year, upwards of 13,000 trout in three varieties have been released. This made the presence of anglers noteworthy. The narrow back roads and the parking along them made for a few nervous passages.

Of the several bridges that traverse these streams two were of the covered variety dating far back in time and being preserved and nurtured by volunteer groups. These beauties do cause one to pause and visualize how far (pro or con) we have come. This area has a significant Amish population, and it is at least to me a dichotomy of worlds.

The rally tour included questions based on in the moment questions that tested one's power of observation. We have some eagle-eyes among us and there was close scoring.

Total mileage was a factor used for the scoring as well.



Tri-State Spring Blossom's Tour First Place winners, Fiona & Alan Hill answering all questions accurately and came within one tenth of a mile.

The victorious couple answered all questions accurately and came within one tenth of a mile. The next duo missed one question but nailed the total mileage! The final duo missed two questions and were off in mileage by just a little bit more.



Tri-State Spring Blossom's Tour runner-up winners, Bob Turner and Jim Martin missed one questions and nailed the milage.

We ended the event by gathering at Wesley's Restaurant, a third-generation local watering hole that has a reputation for food variety and good portions.

The predicted heavy rains arrived almost at the exact time the prognosticators declared. This caused a couple of tourers to dash to protect their Drophead Coupes.

Thanks to all our members for attending the rescheduled event and more so for the comradely.

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Brit Tit Bits

Please send me pictures and captions for this page.

Many thanks, Trevor (Ed)

trevormees@outlook.com



Prince Von Sydow in his E Type

On our recent stopover in London, spotted the TR shop, unfortunately it was closed.

We also spotted a unicorn, a MG SUV EV, good looking vehicle. With gas prices at \$8.50+ per gallon an economical way to get around one of the worst traffic cities in the world. I believe they are made in China.

Tom Huelsenbeck



I need a baseball cap to keep the hair out of my eyes when I drive my 1962 Austin Healey MK 3000 Mark II Tri-Carb....Old English White with Dupont Imron Paint. The Wheels are Silver Metallic with Imron.

Don McDonald



Bill Tattersall's Lotus is ready to hit the road

Automotive

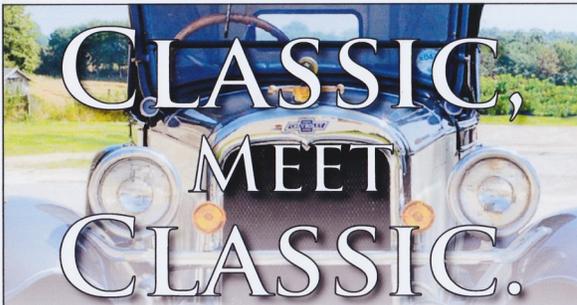
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Mystery Car

Well, Jack managed to stump the one person who responded. He managed to pinpoint the manufacturer group (Rootes) but not the make and model.

If you zoom in on to the front wing just below the windshield you can just make out the words "Super Snipe", Yes, it is a Humber Super Snipe, 1959 to be precise.

Here is a picture of one in slightly better nick.



The "Super Snipe" name appeared in 1938 on a Humber Snipe with a 4 litre 6 cylinder engine (as opposed to 3 litre). During WW2 many were used as military staff cars.

In 1945 the Humber Hawk body was used with the same engine and introduced as the Mark 1 Super Snipe. It was modernized as the Mark 11 in 1948 and continued with minor upgrades until 1958.

The car Jack photographed is from the 1958 model, known as the series 1. Powered by a 2.6 litre straight 6 through a 3 speed manual (overdrive was optional, as was an automatic). With 112 bhp It could reach about 95 mph.

And was said to resemble a smaller 1955 Chevrolet 4 door sedan (ahem, saloon)

It was succeeded by the Series 11 through V until discontinued in 1967, by which time the engine was 3 litre and produced 137.5 bhp.

And so to this edition's Mystery Car

Let's come right up to date with a British supercar. Yes, we Brits have made some pretty hairy supercars over the years.

Think mid-90's for this one.



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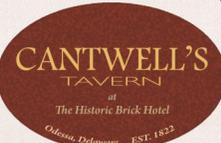
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MGB Repairs

By Mike Salino

Florida doesn't have any form of vehicle inspection so when I bought the green MGB I was able to drive it legally from day one and sort out the bugs on the fly.

As we are all aware Delaware is a bit more particular so when I went looking for a British classic last year one of the criteria was that I wouldn't have to spend weeks under the hood and loads of cash getting past the inspectors at the DMV. This is how that worked out.

After much hawing, I finally settled on a black MGB being offered on Craigslist somewhere in Maryland. I forget exactly where and its only relevance is that it was in Maryland. According to the seller who initially represented himself as a private owner but eventually turned out to be a dealer (trust Craigslist), the car was ready to drive anywhere in the USA the buyer chose to take it. The fact that the electrics died 20 yards into the test drive didn't inspire confidence but after the seller's mechanic got it going it seemed to pass muster.



This picture was taken the day the car was delivered. It still looks pretty much the same.

Because the car wasn't insured and didn't have a plate the seller requested that I restrict the test drive to a side road about a quarter mile long on a fairly steep hill. After half dozen runs up and down the hill, I decided the car was "good" and the deal was consummated. Not wishing to chance driving the 100 miles or so back to Newark in a car with no plate and dubious reliability I had it transported.

The delivery driver couldn't find our house (it is a little awkward) so I met him in a side road about a half mile away. The first thing I noticed on the way home was that the differential was really noisy. Didn't notice that on the test drive.

Having got the car home, I then went through my checklist again to make sure there were no problems before taking the car to the DMV. I swear everything was working before I bought it but now the windshield wipers wouldn't operate. With fingers crossed I set about checking the electrical system with a wiring diagram downloaded from the web hoping for a loose wire or blown fuse. The wiring on my car does still bear some resemblance to the way Joe Lucas originally made it,



Wiper motor lurking under the passenger side dashboard.



although it's obvious there have been a number of "improvements/modifications" made since it rolled out of Longbridge.

It was with some disappointment that I confirmed the wiper motor was indeed getting power and the ground connection was good. That meant the motor was shot and would have to be

changed. Wiper motors on MGBs (and most LBCs) live under the passenger side dashboard and are notoriously awkward to get at. At least replacements are easy to get and cheap. I surprised myself by replacing it in just a few hours, and went back to the checklist.



Classic MGB wiring.

For some reason the turn signals were now not working. The electrical circuit goes through the hazard warning switch on the dash. It looked like it would come out easily so I could check the circuit. It did come out easily but in about

six pieces, which I couldn't put back together. Another call to Moss Motors. I never did find exactly what the problem was, but when I put it all back together the turn signals were working again, and still are (touching wood as I write this).

I bought my car in Maryland, but it came with a Pennsylvania title and no plate. Because I have an aversion to talking to police at the side of the road, I decided to take advantage the Delaware rule that says you can get a 5 day temporary plate to take an unregistered car to the DMV to get it tested. You can also drive it to a mechanic and (I assumed) test drive to make sure it's roadworthy.

I decided to drive it round the block a few times to make sure it would make the 10 miles to the testing center. In the original test drive the overdrive engaged properly several times. The first time I tried going round the block it engaged nicely, then nothing. Oh well.

Monday morning, I drove to the DMV, basically to see what would happen. Everything went well on the brakes and the electrics. Then I had to go to the emissions test. Surprisingly it passed the Carbon Monoxide test by a good margin but then narrowly missed the Hydrocarbons test. I probably should have listened to the advice offered by several club members to disconnect the breather pipe that feeds fumes from the crankcase into the air intake. Seems obvious now. Anyway, the DMV gave me a 30 day temporary tag to fix the issues so that gave me some breathing room.

First thing I did was change all the oils in the hope that would fix multiple problems.

I drained the rear axle and refilled it with the thickest oil I could find in the hope that would quiet the racket from the differential. It didn't.

I changed the gearbox oil which is also shared with the overdrive. I also changed the overdrive filter, as the internet experts seemed to think that a dirty filter and/or old or low oil might be the reason the overdrive stopped working. It wasn't.

I changed the engine oil and filter thinking that clean oil might fix the issue with hydrocarbons test. Still not sure on that one.

I also changed the plugs 'cos why wouldn't I. The car has electronic ignition so at least I didn't have to mess with mechanical points in the distributor.

My first trip to the DMV was on a Monday morning and there was no line which turned out to be quite fortuitous. I drove the car quite a bit during the 30 day grace period and I began to notice that when stopped in traffic the temperature gauge would creep up but I never heard the electric fan turn on. So, one afternoon I let it idle in the driveway to see what would happen. Sure enough the gauge got disturbingly close to the red zone but no fan turned on.

I hotwired the fan and it turned on and ran well. I started tracing the wiring and discovered that there was nothing connected to the thermostatic switch on the radiator. A call to Moss got me a rather expensive little connector. A little creative wiring and the cooling system works as designed.



Center of the picture is the \$30 connector that makes the fan work.

It was a good job I figured that one out because on my next trip to the DMV there were long lines and it took around 30 minutes before I got to do the second emissions test. There's a good chance the car would have boiled if I hadn't fixed the fan. This time the car passed the Hydrocarbon test handily and failed the carbon monoxide test miserably.

I was feeling a little depressed when the technician leaned over and said "where's your receipts?" Turns out if you spend \$75 trying to fix an emissions failure they give you a waiver. Again, club members had already advised me about this but.... (As far as I can determine the amount you have to spend varies from County to County. In Newcastle it's \$75, Sussex I think it's \$115 and Kent something else).

I went home ordered a new ignition coil from Moss. Total cost of the coil and the set of plugs about \$80. Problem solved. I decided to weaken the fuel mixture to see if that would help. My car has a twin choke Weber like they used to fit to

pickup trucks so it's fairly simple, especially when it comes to restoring the original setting. The purists don't like them but having struggled to balance dual SUs in the past I love it.

On my third visit to the DMV the car failed both tests and nearly boiled over in the line because the weak fuel mixture was making it run hot. However, they gave me a waiver for 2 years and I paid for a 2 year tag so I don't have to go back to the DMV till September 2024. Plenty of time to figure out what to do next.

Next issue was the overdrive. My car has the switch on the gearlever. I was hoping that was the problem but it wasn't. After several days tracing wires and checking voltages, I came to the conclusion that problem lay with the gearbox lockout switch. There's a very suspicious loose wire hanging down from the area where the switch is.

The lockout switch is located on the top of the gearbox and designed to ensure the overdrive only works in top gear (on later cars). The only way to get at the switch is to pull the engine and gearbox out, and I'm not ready to that. So, I did exactly what the web experts say should never be done. I installed a rocker switch on the dashboard, connected power from the same circuit that runs the wiper motor and short circuited the lockout switch.



Overdrive switch should be on the gearlever knob. Now it's the upper rocker switch on the dash.

Now my overdrive works on all four forward gears and reverse. This is bad because reversing with the overdrive engaged immediately destroys it the unit. Also, the unit can't take the torque transmitted in the lower gears, which is why by the time they got to 1977 it only worked on 4th gear. So far, it's still working and I'm being very careful when reversing to the point of paranoia.

What else. The car used to wallow uncomfortably over big bumps. The bounce test indicated that the front drivers side shock wasn't absorbing. I refilled it using the same oil that goes in motorcycle front forks. Initially I thought that it hadn't worked so I acquired a replacement, but now the car feels tight on the bumps so I'm leaving it to see what happens.



I'm only slightly embarrassed by this. Checked out the cost of new seats and it ain't

Driving it cold weather it became obvious the thermostat needed replacing. I got one from Moss and then realized I didn't get a new gasket. I changed it anyway and started the engine to see what would happen. It leaked slightly for a couple of minutes and then when the block warmed up (and expanded a little) it dried up.

Now I'm going to drive it. The engine starts nicely and pulls clean and strong. I suspect it's burning some oil but the pressure holds up under normal driving. The cooling system works well in cold weather, and so does the heater. The car tracks straight and feels tight. The brakes work well, and the duct tape I put on the seats to stop them tearing further blends in nicely and is hardly noticeable. The diff is noisy as heck and I may have to find a fix. The conventional wisdom is that the best solution is to replace the whole rear axle. Not sure I'm ready for that either. Maybe once we take the top down it won't be so annoying.

Looking forward to participating in lots of events in the coming year.

Food and Drink



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A collage of four images: top-left shows the restaurant's interior with tables and a bar; top-right shows a view of the ocean from a balcony; bottom-left shows a plate of shrimp and vegetables; bottom-right shows a hand holding a drink. The Victoria's Restaurant logo is overlaid on the bottom right, featuring a woman's face and the text 'Victoria's Restaurant'. Below the logo, it says 'Oceanfront, on the Boardwalk!', 'IN THE BOARDWALK PLAZA HOTEL', 'REHOBOTH BEACH, DE', 'VICTORIASRESTAURANT.COM', and '(800)33-BEACH'.

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MY FIRST CAR

Brian REad

Like many teenagers in the U. K, my interest in motorized transport developed slowly. In the early 1950's new cars were rare because of the need to improve the balance of payment by exporting cars for the US dollar. They were also very expensive. That made "old bangers" fairly expensive too. Then there were the problems of driving license age and annual taxation. Licenses to drive a car were only available after age 17 and vehicle road tax had to be paid every year about 25 pounds sterling I think (about \$100). However licenses for motor cycles were available at age 16 and annual tax only about £4 Two of my friends had motor cycles but they were forbidden to me by my parents on the grounds that I would assuredly kill myself. (they were probably right!)

So that is the background to my acquiring a car which I doubt if anyone this side of the pond has heard of-a 1930 BSA three wheeler. Similar to the Morgan 3 wheeler in concept but with several differences, principally the engine and its location. The Morgan used a Matchless air cooled 1000cc Vee twin (I think) motor cycle engine mounted on the front of the bonnet in the open air. The BSA used a BSA (of course) air cooled 1000cc Vee twin mounted inside the bonnet. It had a number of "interesting" features

The clutch, throttle and brake pedals were conventional but the positioning was unusual. The clutch was on the left operated by the left foot, the accelerator was in the center and the brake on the right. Seemed strange at first but this was ideal for "heel and toe braking" which was very necessary before synchromesh gearboxes. It means that while braking with the sole of the right foot the heel of the right foot operated the throttle to increase the revs to match the engine speed to the new gear speed. Look at the arrangement of your right foot that normally is at a slight angle to the right. It is such a natural layout that you have to wonder why it was not adopted universally.

The fuel tank was mounted in the engine compartment on the firewall (bulkhead) and was of oval cross section with the outlet feed pipe mounted towards the front and slightly elevated inside the tank. This arrangement meant that it could feed the engine by gravity-no unreliable fuel pump and that any dirt remained in the bottom of the tank. However in those days fuel was expensive to a teenager so generally it was purchased one gallon at a time. All very well but be careful where you are going. I well remember on one occasion taking my girlfriend out for a ride. We had a local steep hill near home – about 1 in 8 if memory serves, and we got about half way up and the engine stalled. The little fuel we had had run to the back of the tank and was below the take off pipe! Being resourceful we turned the car round by hand so the fuel was again at the front of the tank, and drove up the rest of the hill backwards.

Front suspension was by four quarter leaf springs (upper and lower each side) transversely mounted. Front wheel drive was by a chassis mounted differential, cork faced clutch and an inboard drum brake. Drive wheels were coupled via shafts, flexible coupling and Hooke joints at the front wheels. Two coupled brakes were fitted, one on the rear wheel and one mounted to the right of the differential. Who realizes that front wheel drive was fairly normal so many years ago. This arrangement also meant no oily chains driving the rear wheel.



This is not the actual car but a picture I found on the internet of a 1930 BSA (Ed.)

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Newer cars with HID headlights

David Glick

Yes today most new cars are equipped with LED headlights. But for most cars in the 2000's and 2010's HID's were all the rage and state of the art. I remember my first car with HID headlights, my new 1999 BMW E46 3 Series. The headlights dwarfed that of halogen headlights on my E36. Those days the bulk of my driving was at night, and with higher mileage, I noticed that bulbs had lost significant brightness slowly over time. My E46 was ~ 1.5 years (~60,000) old when I replaced it with another, and the new one once again had brighter whiter headlights.

Fast forward to today, my 2009 XK has just over 50,000 miles (I have owned the car since 2010) and I was noticing the lights did not seem anywhere near as bright as my F-Type HID's. When looking side by side, I was shocked to see the light intensity decreased by what seemed to be ~ 50%. Come to think of it, my wife's Jeep was suffering from a very similar phenomenon. Still had the original headlights, but the car was 8 years old with ~95,000 miles.

Well, name brand HID bulbs are not cheap, averaging ~ \$100 per bulb. On the other hand, Amazon had no shortage of Chinese or Taiwanese bulbs priced at ~\$30 per set. \$30 and two days later, I had a set of new HID bulbs in the Grand Cherokee, that worked at they did originally. Since I did a bulb-to-bulb comparison, I would say the new were easily ~50% brighter. What a difference for night driving. For those interested, what a job to change those bulbs by the way. One side was not bad, the other required removal of a few parts in the way as well as the spilling of a small amount of blood. A month later, we purchased a new Jeep (this one had LED headlights...). We did at least appreciate the brighter light for a month...

Finally got around to the Jaguar XK. Many of us with HID lights that still work in our more modern, now classic Jaguars and other new cars. Turns out the HID lights do fade over time. While the lifespan of the bulb may average ~ 3000 hours, I have seen sources that suggest ~ 15% reduced light output after 1000 hours, and only 50-70% of the original output by the time they reach 3000 hours. That seemed to be consistent with my own observations.

After my two-day wait for my \$35 set of Amazon HID replacement bulbs, my XK now lights up the road as it did when new. The fade over time was so subtle that you do not really notice how much dimmer they had become until you replace the bulbs.



Do you have a 2000's era Jaguar (XK8, XJ, XF, S-Type) or any 2000's car with HID headlights? Even though the bulbs may not be blown, you may be pleasantly surprised just how much brighter a new set of bulbs may be. As for cost, well ~\$200 for set of OSRAM/Phillips or \$35 per set for Amazon...at least 70% had 5-star ratings. Of the few ratings with less, credit a defective bulb or damage on installation. Many are not for the lighthearted to install. Passenger side was a breeze, minutes. The driver's side, had to loosen the light housing and move the power steering reservoir to accomplish the task. Still much easier to change than the Jeep Grand Cherokee. I suspect the bulb life of the more expensive name brands is not six times better than the Amazon brands. All I can say is it was well worth the

\$30 investment.

Before anyone asks, yes technically there could be an LED upgrade to HID's. However, you would have to bypass the HID ballast, and your car would likely show a bulb out error, so not easily accomplished. Just stick with an HID bulb for now. This holds true regardless of what you are driving at the moment if the car was equipped with HID headlights.

Let the club members know if your observations are similar. If you are in the area, glad to offer assistance with changing the bulbs.




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