



THE BRITISH DIAMOND

April 30th, 2024

PO Box 5317,
Wilmington, DE 19808

Website: www.bccdelaware.org

Officers

President

Terry Young
terryyoung224@me.com

Secretary

Sharon Kalinowski
sdka1@verizon.net

Treasurer/Membership

Calvin Jackson
Calvin_jackson@hotmail.com

Southern Chapter

President

Bill Tattersall
billtattersall@gmail.com

Treasurer

Jerry Hirst
jerryhirst@comcast.net

Secretary / Publicity

Mike Tyler
AH3000TriCarb@comcast.net

Volunteers

Newsletter

Trevor Mees
TrevorMees@outlook.com

Historian

Martha Gimbel
dediva245@verizon.net

Lewes Car Show

Mike Tyler
AH3000TriCarb@comcast.net

Northern Chapter Car Show

Sharon Kalinowski
sdka1@verizon.net

Webmaster:

Terry Young
terryyoung224@me.com

Advertising:

Don McDonald
mcd62218d@aol.com

President's Message:

We're off to a terrific "British Car Club of Delaware" season. I dare say, we're back to normal! April has been a very busy month for club events. First, we had a well-attended drive-outing around White Clay Park followed by a - standing room only - technical session at my house. We'll keep it going with another motoring excursion "Two Bridge" tour on April 21, 2024. We also fit in a "Cars & Coffee" and let's not forget our regular meetings. If that's not busy enough, the combined Lewes Chamber of Commerce & British Car Club of Delaware's 28th Annual "The British Are Coming Again" Motorcar Show is ready to go on May 3rd & 4th held at the Cape-Lewes Ferry Terminal at Lewes, DE. I'm struggling to catch my breath! I dare say, there will be more Car Club activities as we zoom into the summer months. Let's talk a bit about our social media activities such as The British Diamond newsletter, our BCCD website and Facebook.

You've heard it before. "Please submit your article about..." something suitable for publication in our bi-monthly newsletter The British Diamond, an appeal repeated by Trevor Mees, our dedicated editor, many times. He usually goes on to say. "Please submit something about your British car, a maintenance procedure, or something that would be of interest of a British car owner." You'll see the deadline listed on the northern agenda and announced during our chapter meetings - every month! As for our <http://BCCDelaware.org> website same thing goes.

The website is our "on-going" communicator for our car club. It's basically, "what we've done and what we're going to do." Additionally, our website has a much further reach than just our club. It will go to anyone who searches to WWW for British car organizations. Here's bit of history.

We've maintained a BCCD website for quite some time. Alas, the webmaster from not that long ago, Linda Parrish, did a great job until she no longer had the time. She handed off to Geoff Sundstrom who set up the basic structure as you see it today. When Geoff had to give it up, he handed off to me. Now enter our new webmaster, Bob Wall who has amiably agreed to keep 'er going. What changed is he'll keep it up to date! To that end, please send all web submissions to Bob - anything from a scheduling change, an event submission, to something you think worthy to pass on; it's easy enough. With all that said, the discussion brings me to Facebook.

Our Facebook page has become one the quickest way our club members are able to keep up on the latest BCCD news, additionally it is a pretty cool way to post a British car joke or two or comment to a previous post. Facebook has features to announce up-coming events, post forms or documents for all to access. An example is the Lewes Motorcar show arriving in a week or so. The announcement stays on the top as the first post you see. There is one feature that be a bit frustrating. Joining BCCD page and being welcomed as a new member is not necessarily membership in the British Car Club of Delaware. For membership you must fill out an application. Once our membership manager (Calvin Jackson) processes your application he will add you to the email list that reaches all BCCD members. That makes certain you won't miss an event.

Georgia and I are looking forward to the Lewes Motorcar Show, seeing the beautiful British cars and chatting with owners we've come to know through the years. It will be a memorable car show kick-off event. My fingers are crossed the wind coming off the bay will be warm at 5 knots.

See everyone soon!

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.

Automotive



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Tech Session at Terry Young's Home

April 6th

"Sixteen BCCD members from both North & South Chapters spent a good part of the day Saturday 4/6 at "Terry's Garage" in Dover DE. Enormous quantities of car talk, coffee, donuts, & Hoagies were consumed, along with 3 British cars received expert attention, including an MGB LED headlight conversion, progress on MGTC wiring harness installation, and Jaguar maintenance" - Bob Wall



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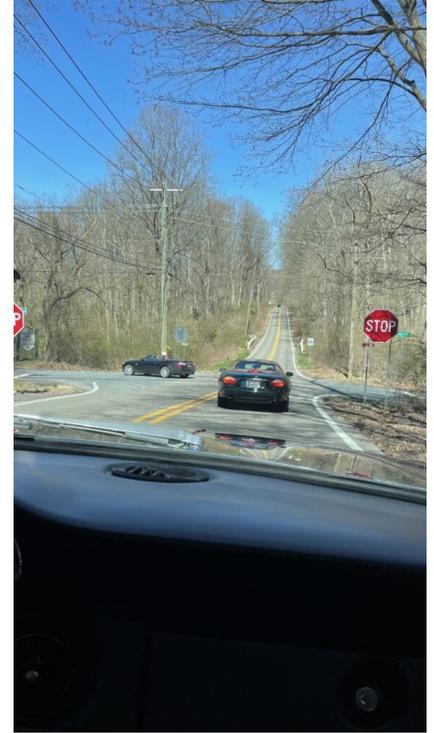


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Drive White Clay Creek

A cool, sunny day didn't stop BCCD Members from a 35 mile backroads drive through Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania ending at Smiley's Diner for a well-earned meal! Seven cars made the trek with fourteen of us enjoying lunch. Special thanks to Mike Salino on creating a great route and summoning great weather!



Shows and Show Sponsors



29th Annual
"British are Coming...Again" Car Show
THIS TIME, WE INVITED THEM!

Lewes Ferry Terminal
May 4, 2024 • 11AM – 3PM
May 5, 2024 Rain Date

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The Original British Car Day (OBCD)

46th Annual Meet Sunday, June 2, 2024

Lilypons Water Gardens ~ Adamstown, Maryland

The Chesapeake Chapter of the New England MG "T" Register is returning to Lilypons Water Gardens for the **Original British Car Day** (OBCD). This annual gathering is held for the enjoyment of all British car and motorcycle enthusiasts.

Our event will be held from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the beautiful grounds of the Lilypons Water Gardens. Come and enjoy this gathering of all British marques in one setting. You can bring your leashed pet and picnic lunch or partake of the food and drink offered by various food vendors.

We are looking forward to participation of all British marques. The **Triumph Spitfire** will be the Featured Marque this year.

Whether you are displaying your car, or just coming to enjoy the event, the drive is beautiful no matter where you are coming from. You can follow the directions on the Lilypons website www.lilypons.com. Lilypons Water Garden is located at 6800 Lily Pons Road in Adamstown, MD 21710.

The contact person for OBCD is Shaun English who can be reached at 703-229-3317 or by email at spenglish@aol.com. For information on registration and car classifications please visit our website <https://mgtchesapeake.com/>.

Adding LED Headlights to my 1980 MGB

By Richard Speck, owner of "Bertie", a 1980 MGB

At the recent tech gathering at Terry Young's home in Dover, I had asked for help installing new LED headlights. I had bought the parts but was reluctant to tackle this alone. David Glick volunteered to guide me through the process. We began after lunch. David wound up doing most of the work on this with me and others assisting where we could. First was popping off the retaining rings around the lens on each side. A blunt plastic stick didn't work and David substituted a screwdriver covered in a cloth to keep from scratching the paint.

There are three screws that hold the lens in place along with the aiming screws. Beware taking off the wrong screw! With the screws removed, the lens was attached only by its harness. Removing the plugs into the old lens and each was put into a box where the new lens had been. The new lens was flatter than the curved older lens, but I wanted functional lighting and didn't care about the aesthetics.

The LED bulbs were inserted into the lens and David was careful to put the bulb in so that the high beam was on top. The LED bulbs are plugged into the wiring harness directly. There is a rubber cup that covers the bulb to keep water away from the bulb. I left one home and had to remove one lens to correct my mistake.

The hard part was connecting the wiring harness to the existing wiring and making sure there were good connections for both low and high beams. David discovered that the original connectors were not good enough. He carried with him in the trunk of his Jaguar a small array of possibly needed parts and quickly replaced the connectors and all worked.

The last thing he did was ground the new harness to the metal frame. The screw was so old, it broke off and he wrestled the old part out of its hole. Replacing it with a screw from Terry's supply, that then was fixed. The last thing was connecting the power line to the bottom of the car under the starter. He put the car on a lift to allow him to see where to attach the power wire. He noticed that I had a lot of oil underneath, so I may need to investigate if I have a leak.

Once this was done, we checked that the lights turned on and off and the beams were proper for low and high function. David emerged greasy but satisfied that this little British car would have good lighting when driving at night. I am looking for an excuse to take it out and see what it looks like in the dark. Thank you to all who helped and especially David Glick, mechanic extraordinaire!

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Two-Bridges Tour

April 21, 2024

By Terry Young

The British Car Club of Delaware's Two-Bridges driving tour began at Mike Salino's house, the organizer, in Newark Delaware. We began with the necessary fuel for our – “any” - convoy - coffee and donuts – to be ready to drive around 11:30ish.

Sundays are always good for a drive; fewer cars usually in no hurry to get anywhere. Today would be no different; ideal weather, about 50 deg and overcast. Not necessarily top-down weather except for the hard-core car owners with British roots, who did the whole day “in the breeze”! Brian and Joy are you listening? Not to forget “no side curtains” Steve and Anslie, who decided to brave the rushing wind, were waiting at the pick-up point.



Lee & Mike Salino

Anticipating Mike's call to “Start Your Engines” we grabbed the last bits of donuts and refreshed our coffee; we were on our way! The eight cars executed a right turn on Ruthar Drive then maneuvered to route 273 we paused for a minute to make sure we made it, then away we were off for the 90-minute drive to Crabby Dicks in Delaware City.

Our tour was uneventful except for Alan's Lotus quick fix and an emergency restroom stop at a Wawa in Middletown, for a couple older-distinguished drivers. Remarkably our proces-

sion stayed together with only an occasional motorist butting into our perfect motorcade.

Making the final turn from Route 9 into Delaware City, we could see the distant, Crabby Dicks, at the end of Clinton St. and more importantly we could almost taste our awaiting lunch! As lunch concluded, Don impromptu speech spoke for all of us when he thanked Mike and Lee for a well thought out route and acknowledged everyone's participation. With that our leftovers boxed, and goodbyes said, we made our way to our cars to head home.



Our participants were:

Mike & Lee, Jaguar XK;

Alan & Fiona, Lotus Elan;

Brian & Joy, Triumph TR6;

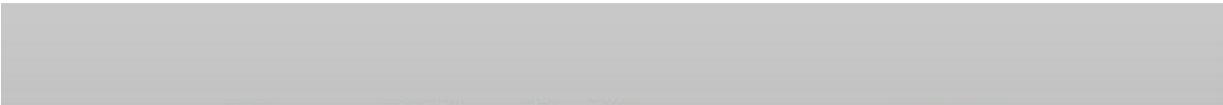
Steve & Anslie, Triumph TR3A;

Bob & Carol, Jensen Interceptor;

Calvin & Steve, MG Midget

Terry & Georgia, Jaguar XK8.

Our non-British-car drivers Sharon, Jim, Don, & Bob.



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My First LBC

Mike Salino

I wasn't always a car guy.

When I was 16, I convinced my parents that a 50 cc Hercules moped (top speed maybe 30mph) would be just as safe as my pedal bike and yes of course I would wear a helmet.

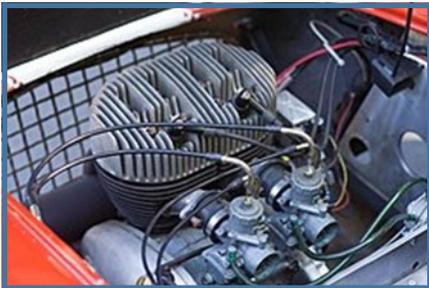
From there it was a fairly easy step to a BSA Bantam (125cc 2 stroke – 55mph) and then on to a BSA 250 C11G (11 bhp and close to 70 mph).

I guess they saw the pictures of Triumph Bonneville's, BSA Gold Stars and the like on my bedroom walls so when I came back from an extended 5 week training course they presented me with my first car. My dad (serious car guy), and I had looked at it before I went away and so he brought it home and put in our garage has a welcome home surprise. I recall I had to agree to a payment plan as well as agreeing to give up the bikes forever.

If you're not familiar the car was (maybe still is) a Berkeley SA328E. In the late 1950s in Britain when this car was conceived, petrol was (as now) really expensive so microcars mostly powered by motor cycle engines were all the rage. Unlike most of their peers, Berkeleys were seriously cool albeit also a little quirky.



Power was provided by a 328cc Excelsior Talisman motor cycle engine producing all of 18 bhp. The 4 speed transmission was modified so that 1st gear was actually a reverse leaving the remaining gears as a 3 speed sequential box. Instead of the foot operated 1 up 3 down pedal shifter, gears were selected via single throw gated lever mounted on the floor, which operated in a manner similar to a modern automatic.



The engine was provided with a Siba Dynastart which functioned as both a starter motor and dynamo. This was just as well because the engine was quite temperamental and often required a long crank before it would fire up due to a mixture either too rich or not rich enough.

The motor and gearbox were a single unit mounted in the nose of the car driving the front wheels via a very short motor cycle chain and proprietary differential unit.

The curb weight was around 600 lbs and the car was probably no more than 2 feet high so performance wasn't as bad as you might expect although 2 large passengers would easily be more than half that weight again.

Berkeley claimed it would do 70 mph but my memory is that was downhill with a following wind. Acceleration in 1st and 2nd wasn't awful but you had to change into top gear around 40. After that it was basically foot on the floor till something or someone got in the way. Corners mostly weren't a problem because it handled like a go-kart. Brakes were drums all round but it was only 600 pounds so stopping wasn't a big problem.

So, what about the quirks.

The fuel tank was about 3 gallons and mounted on the "firewall" just above the driver's legs. To fill the tank, you lifted the bonnet (hood) and tried not spill any gas on the hot exhaust which ran just under the tank, not forgetting to add oil at 25 to 1. There was no fuel gauge but the tank had a reserve switch, like a classic motorcycle that would give enough driving to reach a gas station.



Fuel was fed to the twin cylinders via 2 Amal motor cycle carbs. These did not have chokes but used ticklers to overfill the float chambers to get the rich mixture needed for starting. You press the button till gas spills out. Hopefully the exhaust is still cold. So, then you close the hood, get in the car and pray it starts. Otherwise, you have to get out and do it again. Do it too often and the oil in the gas fouls the spark plugs which you then have to remove and decontaminate.

The recommendation is for 25 to 1 petrol to oil. Because most driving is done foot to the floor the car is always followed by a blue cloud. Also, because the drive chain was intended for a lightweight motor cycle but is half the normal length and hauling 4 times the weight it continual stretches

and has to be adjusted almost every time the car is driven any distance and replaced every few weeks.

The motor cycle gearbox is a crash box (no synchro) so you have to learn to double declutch when changing down. Again, not a big deal on a bike but the extra weight of the car meant a careless down shift meant something is going to break. I did that once and a friend did it a second time. At least you didn't need to a hoist to lift the engine out and onto the bench for the repair. I think it's probably the only time I ever actually dismantled a gearbox.

The wheels on my car had five spokes connecting a large hub to the rim and were fabricated rather than pressed out of a single piece of metal. Somehow, I managed to break 3 of the 5 wheels the car came with. I did find a shop who welded them back together, but I felt they were never the same afterwards.

The engine was an air cooled 2 stroke therefore no heater. I lived in the North of England and while it's not as bad as Michigan it's mostly cold.

I kept the car for about a year during which it was probably available to drive about half the time. However, at that time of my life I was the only one in my 'gang' with a driver's license and we needed transport. So, the Berkeley got traded for a Morris Oxford with 6 seats and a heater. That's another story.

In the meantime, Berkeley continued to shoehorn bigger and more and more powerful motor cycle engines into the same basic chassis creating evermore fragile cars all the way up to the terrifying B105 which, yes you guessed right, they claimed could hit 105mph.



Automotive

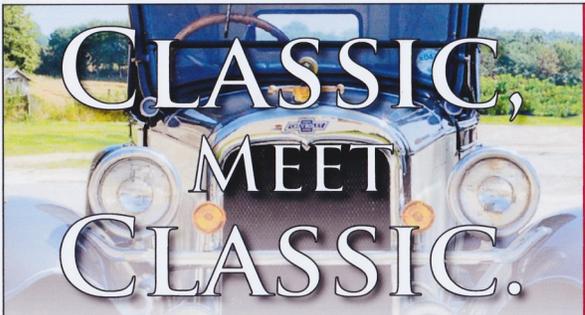
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It was replaced by the Cortina Mark 3 (I once owned a 2000E version - nice car)



How about this one? Very familiar shape and ubiquitous, particularly in London, but what is special about this one?

Drop me an email to
trevormees@outlook.com



Lon-

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London Bridge Is Falling Down

Trevor Mees

There has been a bridge across the River Thames in London, England at or near the place where the current London Bridge stands since Roman times (circa 50 AD) but the subject of this story was built in 1831. It replaced, finally, a stone bridge built around 1209, which collapsed at least twice in the 600 years it stood there. Probably the inspiration for the nursery rhyme.

The New London Bridge, as it was known, was built of granite blocks. It was opened by King William IV on August 1st, 1831 and the northern approach road was named King William Street in honour of the occasion.



a. The bridge in 1831

It stood for 137 years before, one day in 1962, a young man, just 18 years old, took the train from his home in Streatham (a southwest London suburb) to London Bridge Station and walked across the bridge to start his first ever job, as a bank clerk in Lombard Street in The City.

He crossed that bridge daily, walking at first, then riding his motorbike, then in his car, then walking again (parking meters had been introduced).

In 1968 he walked across it for the last time before it was closed and taken apart piece by piece. The pieces were carefully labeled and transported across the Atlantic, through the Panama Canal then across California to Lake Havasu City in Arizona. The bridge had been bought by a rich American who, it was rumored, thought he was buying Tower bridge (not true).

In case you hadn't guessed that young man was me.

In Arizona a canal was cut to accommodate the bridge, making an island out of the Pittsburg Point peninsula on Lake Havasu.



c. Lake Havasu 1973

Fast forward 54 years. I was visiting my brother, Gary, and we thought it would be fun to see the old bridge again. We rented a car and drove across the Sonoran Desert from Queen Creek to Lake Havasu City. Interstate 10 is long, straight and boring but once we got into the mountains AZ72 and AZ95 were much more interesting.



b. February 2024



The bridge was just as I remembered it from all those years ago (56), though the view from it, and the weather, was much better.



Food and Drink



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I SOLD MY MGB ON CRAIGSLIST (A CAUTIONARY TALE)

Mike Salino

As has been reported elsewhere I finally bought a Jaguar.

This then created a minor dilemma. We now own 3 cars, but we only actually need one as my wife prefers to avoid driving and she does not understand the concept of "car collection".

The implication is that my award winning (Diamond in the rough – 2023 BCCD Fall car show) MGB will have to go.

I've been buying and selling cars, motorcycles and boats for xx years and I'm pretty sure I know a thing or two about how to get the best deal. Where's the cheapest place to advertise a car for sale. Why, Craigslist of course. It used to be free but now they charge only \$5 to place an ad and in any case that's where I found the car in the first place.

What could go wrong?

I take a bunch of photos on my phone, write a nice story about how great the car is. Everything works, runs well, excellent "daily driver" potential, sound investment etc, etc.

What follows next is a blow-by-blow recounting of my text conversation with one of the first responders to my ad. In my defense much of this took place during a period where we took several short vacations one after the other with very little time in between so I may have been a little distracted.

From the buyer. **Is the MGB still available?**

Me. **Yes.**

Great! I was buying a surprise gift for my father-in-law who lives in Wisconsin. Can you tell me about the condition of the vehicle.

Long boring text extolling the virtues of MGBs in general and how well my particular example has been maintained etcetc.

OK Great! I'm interested in buying it and I prefer mailing a check as a form of payment and the shippers will come for the pick up after the check clear at your bank you can send me your mailing info and the full name on the check.

Me thinking. **That's cool. He's not even arguing about the price. He must be a bit of a novice at buying cars.**

I text him the info to send the check.

Got it. Kindly take down the ads and consider it's sold to us. I'll text you immediately the check has been mail thank you.

That seemed too easy so I decide to dig a little.

What's your name and address.

I get back a name and an address in North Carolina that appears legit.

At this point I'm mildly suspicious so I run an online check on the name and address and the phone number but nothing suspicious comes up. Still a little leary I go.

Forgive me for being suspicious but how do you know you can trust me and the car isn't junk?

Well, the shippers will be test drive before picking up and if I later get any issues on it I will get it fixed and that's not a problem for me.

Seems fair enough. I guess a lot of classic cars get bought sight unseen, and I did post a lot of pictures and it's a great deal at the price.

Okay let me know when the check is in the mail.

The following text arrives the next day while we're on an Amtrak train headed to Providence RI for one of our breaks.

Hello. We'll be able to overnight the check on Wednesday (the next day) as our daughter was involved in an accident and we'd be with her in hospital although sorry for the inconvenience. I'll keep you posted with tracking number thank you.

That's a bummer. I hope this doesn't kill the deal

There follows a series of text exchanges over a period of more than a week during which in the buyers seem distracted by their daughter's condition and unsure about whether to go ahead with the purchase and are having difficulty getting "the check in the mail". In the meantime, I have a couple of other buyers who want to see the car but are probably not interested in paying full price. I'm feeling bad because I'm pushing the guy whose daughter is in hospital to send me check for a car he is buying for his father-in-law in Wisconsin.

Remember we're on vacation. After about 10 days of back and forth I finally get a text with a tracking number on it. A day later the check arrives. It's the right amount, but it's drawn on a bank in Pennsylvania I've never heard of and signed by a person who's not the name I was given when I first asked.

I get a text asking me to confirm I have the check. It's Friday afternoon. They want me to deposit the check ASAP so they can get the car shipped to Wisconsin as soon as.

Fair enough. I drive to my bank to deposit the check.

The teller is not happy. She wants to know what's going on so I tell proudly how I did this great deal selling my wonderful old car online.

Unexpectedly, I get a whole lecture about online scammers taking advantage of old codgers like me and how I need to be careful doing business with people I don't know. I'm offended and insist that she deposit the check anyway. After a further lecture about depositing bouncing checks being a bad idea that will cost me money the check finally gets deposited against her "better judgement".

On the way home from the bank the wheels start turning and the penny is finally beginning to drop that there may be a few wrinkles in this deal. When I get home, I check on the web to see if this is actually a real bank. It is and I get their phone number.

I call the bank but it's already past closing time but their phone robot offers the opportunity to check if there are funds available in the account. At least I had the foresight to make a copy of the check so I input the number and wait while the robot whirrs in the background. SURPRISE!!! There isn't enough money in the account to cover the check. OH!

I get back on the phone to text the "Buyer" to inquire what's the deal. There's another lengthy exchange where I'm trying to tell them their bank doesn't have the funds and they are trying to reassure me that all is well. I decide to wait and see how it's going to play out 'cos now I'm pretty sure I'm not selling the car but curious as to what the next move will be. Sure enough the following morning (Saturday) the game resumes.

Hello. I'm Heartbroken texting you this, as we lost my daughter yesterday evening. We won't be interested in the vehicle for now. Thank you.

I'm sorry to hear that.

Thank you. We're sorry for the inconvenience about the vehicle. You can have a \$300 for the stress and have us refund. Thanks.

We're not available to receive the refund right now but you can refund it to my partner. He used Zelle and Venmo. Do let me know which works as to get you his payment info.

And there it is. I respond.

That's OK. We'll just wait for your check to bounce and then you can send the \$35 my bank will charge for a bad check. Cash would be nice.

Next Day Hello! We called our bank and nothing is reversed yet. What is the update.

A Day later. Hello you got my text?

One more day and a rather plaintive. Hello

Post script.

I sold the MGB to another buyer from Craigslist very quickly for a nice profit.

I got serious dose of "I told you so" next time I went into the bank.

The bank waived the bad check fee because they took pity on a poor innocent old guy who nearly got scammed online.

I got a silly story for the newsletter.

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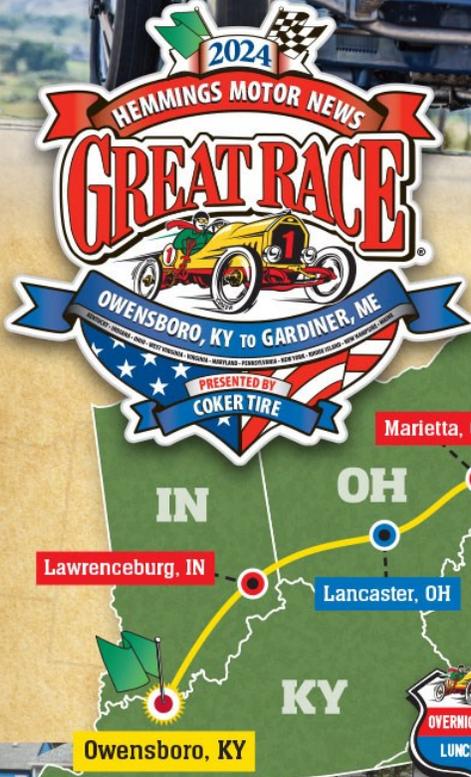
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Owensboro, KY to Gardiner, ME

Saturday, June 22-Sunday, June 30, 2024

SATURDAY, JUNE 22
START: Veterans Blvd., Owensboro, KY - 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Walnut Street, Lawrenceburg, IN - 5:15 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23
LUNCH: South Broad Street, Downtown Lancaster, OH - 12:30 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Front Street, Historic Downtown Marietta, OH - 4:15 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 24
LUNCH: High Street, Downtown Morgantown, WV - 12:15 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Gunter Hotel, Frostburg, MD - 4:45 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 25
LUNCH: Ken Walsh Farm, Purcellville, VA - 12:15 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Gateway Gettysburg, Gettysburg, PA - 4:45 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26
LUNCH: Hufnagle Park, Downtown Lewisburg, PA - 12:05 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Washington Street, Downtown Binghamton, NY - 4:45 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27
LUNCH: Clinton Street, Downtown Montgomery, NY - 11:20 a.m.
OVERNIGHT: State Capitol, Downtown Providence, RI - 5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28
LUNCH: New England Racing Museum, Loudon, NH - 11:30 a.m.
OVERNIGHT: Main Street, Historic Downtown Freeport, ME - 4 p.m.

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SATURDAY, JUNE 29
LUNCH: Seal Cove Auto Museum, Seal Cove, ME - 11:35 a.m.
OVERNIGHT: Owls Head Transportation Museum, Owls Head, ME - 4 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 30
FINISH: Water Street, Historic Downtown Gardiner, ME - 1 p.m.



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