

# ***'BRITISH' May '25***



**BN2? BN7? 'M'? 'S'? 'Phase 2'? Let's sort it all out this month.**

# ‘BRITISH’

>Well worth reading some of the time<

April, 2025 Issue

The monthly publication of the British Iron Touring Club of North West Arkansas.  
Dedicated to the preservation, touring, towing, racing and discussion of British cars.

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## Monthly Meetings:

At the *All American Steak House and Sports Theater* at 3492W Sunset in Springdale. The second Thursday of every month except for December. Business at 7:00, but arrive near 6:00 for socializing and supper.

## Other Meetings:

As announced on Meeting Nights or on our BI-List email server.

**Meeting night, April 10:** A new record for consistent stop and go traffic tonight on I 49 without relief approaching Springdale. A light crowd tonight... because Bill Watkins is away on vacation? But 40 members present isn't too bad. Shirley and I sat with Barbara and Eli. Rita Carney is recovering nicely from hand surgery. Mark Cory reported they are ready to close on their new apartment and their house sold without even listing it! Way to go! We have \$6049 in the treasury. Jim and Dena Peckham joined us tonight. David Ferrell conducted the business tonight and we thrashed out activity dates. A tech session was scheduled and we set a date for a trip to Wiederkehr's on April 26th. Ron Shrum is donating a bar stool to the Brit Stop for some old guy who has trouble getting up out of low chairs. Ron is a great guy.

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About the Cover page – not too happy about the cover photo colors this month, but you know the saying ‘Beggars can’t be ...’

Note the A-H 3000 – bottom photo – is jacked up at the rear. An attempt to avoid having the muffler ripped off for the third time?

My big surprise in assembling the Austin-Healey story was to learn that BMC's Abington facility (where my 1952 MG was made) was always an assembly plant only – not the manufacturing factory I always imagined.

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**FOR SALE:** One pair **NOS** of ‘Man Cave’ or ‘Garage Art’ picture frames, imported new from England. Display your mother-in law or your favorite cat. Or whatever. Priced at a fraction of original cost. I thought they were for an Austin A40 Farina, but actually are for an A99 – too big. 15”x8” Chrome headlight rims. \$18 for both. (cheap)

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## BEHIND THE WHEEL (from the right-hand side) by Bill Watkins

I was very sad to report on April 29<sup>th</sup> that Allen McReynolds had died the previous evening in Joplin. Most of you probably didn't get to meet Allen. We, along with the Schrantz (what is plural for Schrantz??), first met Allen and Nancy at a Jaguar Club of Tulsa concours twenty-plus years ago. Allen and Nancy were showing a national quality white Jaguar MKIV drophead coupe'. Allen had a TR6 but his primary affection was for Jaguars, owning, to my knowledge, a couple of XJSs (one of which Doug now owns), the MKIV drophead, a MKV Saloon, an E-Type 2+2, and a MK II. All of his cars were high quality and beautiful.

Allen and Nancy soon became members of British Iron and would regularly join us for drives and parties. They were particularly good at bringing gag gifts to the Christmas party. Lisa still has her little purse that appears to me made out of an armadillo – head and all. Allen eventually divested of his British cars and stopped engaging in the hobby and with the club. Somewhere around the Covid years Lisa and I sort of lost touch with them but kept up via reports from Doug.

Allen was a talented character who led an interesting life. Successful in the family business in Joplin, he was also a talented musician. Once after a gathering at our house in Rogers he sat down at our piano and starting playing away without missing a note. I had no idea and was quite surprised by his talent. His health began to decline precipitously over the past year and he passed Monday night while being transported to the ER. He will be missed. Keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Changing gears, we now have a guest speaker lined up for the car show. Andy Reid was our guest the year we had to hold the event across the street – whatever year that was – and has agreed to make a return appearance. Andy still writes for Classic Motorsport magazine, is East Coast editor for ClassicCars.com, and provides consulting services. It will be good to hear his take on the state of the classic car hobby generally.

I appreciate Andy's willingness to step into the breach this year. My target had been Tim Suddard, publisher of Classic Motorsport, and Tim suggested that I reach out to Andy again after we determined that our event could not fit into Tim's schedule. But, Tim has already agreed to come in 2026 (of course, we don't yet know what our schedule next year will be so I'll cut him some slack if necessary).

My cars are still providing pleasure. The Alvis had gotten to be hard to start recently and I finally realized that the automatic choke was not coming on. Those of you with Jaguars will recognize the set up, it is the same electric choke system. After some work with a test light (thanks for the training, Wil) I figured out that the choke system was not getting power. Everything looked in order and properly connected. However, the second time I reached to remove the power lead from the choke the wire just pulled right out of the connector. Aha! After extending that wire a little to take the tension off of it and the addition of a new connector, some solder, and some heat shrink, power was restored to the choke and the car now starts right up (well, as soon as the mechanical fuel pump gets fuel to it).

Lisa and I missed the last meeting as we were *en route* to a Viking river cruise on the Rhine from Basel to Amsterdam. Great trip, highly recommended. I had some hopes of seeing some classic cars on the roads during our shore excursions but was somewhat disappointed to only see an XK140 drop head, a Rover P5 and a '60's Roller. If you have not been to Amsterdam, it is a very interesting and scenic city but watch out for the cyclists!! To call then aggressive would be an understatement. There are separate bike lanes on every street and they are jammed with cyclists who do not care about pedestrian right of way laws. One cyclist cussed our guide for daring to block the bike lane at a crosswalk while the six of us in our group crossed the street. The guide reminded him that pedestrians have the right of way, at which point the cussing commenced. Geez.

Thanks to David for running the last meeting. I'll see you all on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Club Staff

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1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – **Doug Schrantz**

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – **David Ferrell**

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## Coming Events

### Next monthly Meeting Night – May 8th

**May 17:** Ride to Jasper for lunch

**JUN 28:** GOBMC Show at Springfield

**JUL 12:** Ride to Tahlequah - Sam & Ella for pizza

**AUG:** Too hot?

**SEP 14:** Work party at the Storey's

**SEP 18,19,20:** Our 'Brits in the Ozarks' show, party and drives.

**OCT 25:** Halloween Party at the Storey's

**NOV ?:** Greg's annual overnight retreat

**DEC 6:** Christmas Party at the Storey's

**JAN 1:** Annual gathering at the Steakhouse

Funny to me: Mentally insert your favorite British car in the blank spot.

“Of all the ----- cars made, 95% are still on the road. The other 5% made it home.”

A follow up on the February cover (Indian motorcycle): Pierce motorcycles of 1910 had a four-cylinder engine and FN of Belgium had a four a few years earlier. Where will it ever end, I mean start?

As I've mentioned before, my older brother, Gordon, raced the super streamlined D-B Le Mans Roadster in 1957 before I bought it. When trailering it to races, and when stopped at traffic lights young guys would often look at it and then inevitably ask "How fast will it go?" Gordon would say, "200." The next question would be "What kind of engine?" He would reply, "A two-cylinder." Then, there would be laughs or rude noises. When Gordon asked how fast their Ford V-8 would go (Chevy guys never were interested, for some reason) we would hear something silly like 125 mph. Gordon would say, "Well, Indy cars go 180 mph right? And they have four cylinder Offy engines. That should give you an idea." We would get puzzled expressions – they knew something wasn't right – but we never heard a sensible response before the light changed. (The D-B was clocked at 117 mph on the Mulsanne Straight in 1955)

That Austin-Healey story was condensed from "The Cars of BMC" by Graham Robson. Motor Racing Publications, LTD. 1999. Our thanks to Dave Paul and Rita Carney's contribution this month.

With the sad passing of member and Jaguar enthusiast Allen McReynolds, we offer our sympathy and condolences to Nancy and his family.

## All about Austin-Healeys

Personal stuff first

Wil

My younger brother, Ed, saw the Austin-Healey 100 introduction at the NYC auto show and ordered one. His must have been a very early one in the US. And he had two more afterwards; a 100-6 and a 3000. By the time he had the 3000, he was a regional salesman for Purolator Oil Filters (Industrial Division) in California and realized that showing up at clients headquarters in a sports car wasn't creating the correct image. End of sports cars in his life. But earlier, he had owned a Jag XK140M and (briefly) a MG TC with a Ford V-8 '60' engine conversion. And first a '32 Ford channeled 3-window Coupe hot rod he built during high school.

**Bad stuff about 'Big Healeys':** They were very hot inside in the summer. The exhaust system was so low that a good pot-hole could rip the muffler and tailpipe right off. They seemed to have little road adhesion in the rain, but that may have been abused Dunlop tires? (Skidded without leaning)

**Good stuff about 'Big Healeys':** They are gorgeous. Probably Jag XK 120 and XK 140 owners wouldn't have traded, but look at those Jags in side profile and the bottom of their bodies – especially at the rear – the bottom looks to have been cut off with a chain saw. Healeys are completely curvaceous.

I worked on some over the decades, but I wouldn't say a lot. There were many more MGs and Triumphs than 'big Healeys'

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Everyone agrees that it all started at the Earls Court motor show in October, 1952, with Donald Healey's prototype sports car, called the 'Healey 100'. It was seen by Leonard Lord, BMC's managing director, and he was smitten. They made the deal – Healey would do the design work and BMC would tackle production, sales and marketing for the future 'Austin-Healey' cars. *The BN numbers are the factory chassis code numbers. Variations on standard models are indented.*

**BN1 100:** Built at Longbridge, 2.6-liter four-cylinder Austin A90 engine, three-speed manual transmission with Laycock De-Normanville overdrive on 2<sup>nd</sup> and top gears. Drum brakes and a fold-flat windscreen. Max speed 105. Built 1953 – 1955. *Common to the day, this BN1 features expensive Lucas bumpers.*



**100S:** 1955, 50 cars built at Healey's factory in Warwick. Light weight version of the BN1. Oval grill, no bumpers. Four speed manual transmission w/o overdrive. Max speed 117 mph. Four-wheel disc brakes.

**BN2:** 1955-1956. Slightly larger front wheel arches. Same engine as the BN1, but a new four-speed transmission with overdrive on the two top gears.

**100M:** (M for modified) 1956 only. Standard BN2 chassis were delivered to Warwick, fitted with 110bhp (Le Mans spec) engines, stiffer suspension and a front anti-roll bar. Many received a louvered hood and a leather strap at Longbridge. *Many more 100M's exist than were made.*

**BN4 '100-6':** 1956-1959. BMC's new six-cylinder engine made the 2.6 four obsolete. 2,639cc, 102 hp, overdrive optional on 4-speed gearbox. Max speed 103 MPH. Wheelbase two inches longer for '2+2 seating' (with no rear legroom! A padded parcel shelf, really). Wire wheels and hardtop optional. Heavier, more expensive and no faster than BN2. Air vent in bonnet with oval grill.



**3000 Mk I BN7** 1959-1961. Near identical with 100-6 except for badging. The engine was enlarged to 2.9 liters (124bhp vs. 117), more suitable gear ratios in the tranny. Most with wire wheels and overdrive and 2+2 seating (hilarious for a guy who was 6'4" from 17 to age 70). The "four-seat models were designated **BT7**. Front disc brakes. Max speed 114mph. Assembled in the Abington factory, which was an assembly facility only, not a manufacturing factory!



**3000 Mk II** 1961-1962. Mk II badging. Only 355 two-seaters vs. 5,095 2+2 built! Triple SU carbs, (132bhp) abandoned the following year. Specs show it to be two mph slower than the two-carb MKI, and 2 mpg less! Still called the BN7 and BT7. A new gearbox in 1961 with improved remote shift linkage. Keeping the engine in tune led to abandoning the triple-carbs.

**3000 MK II Convertible:** (1962-1963) 6,113 built at Abington. All 2+2 seaters, with wind-up windows and foldaway tops. More of a wraparound windscreen. 2,912cc, max aped 117. Back to twin carbs, but other improvements allowed the same output as the earlier MK II. Nine years of the 'big Healeys' in North America, but still selling well.

**3000 MK III** (1964-1967/68) Abington, 17,712 built. **Phase I** cars as Mk II Convertible, **Phase II** cars with different rear suspension – half-elliptic springs and twin radius arms.. 2,912cc, 148 bhp. MK III center console. It was dropped in favor of the MG MGC, which was introduced in 1967. It was dropped by BMC before the British Leyland merger because of new US safety and emission laws.

I've got to say that the 'big Healeys' have appreciated in a wonderful way.

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### A 1964 MGB in a vacant lot

By Dave Paul, dpaul@uark.edu

This story is from 1974 about my first MG and about my father who was part of the greatest generation that went through the depression and WWII.

In 1970, I was in high school in Austin, Texas; I would walk down the street to catch a ride to school with a neighbor. The path leads me past an MGA, a car I really admired, and hoped to have one someday. That day finally arrived in 2014. The car now in my garage is in pieces, but the MGA story is for another time.

My parents moved to the Rio Grande valley in 1974, and while on a visit, I passed by an MGB sitting in a vacant lot. At the time I was driving a 1968 Pontiac GTO, which I soon realized stood for Gas-Tires-and-Oil, but the real issue for me was that I was just not a muscle car guy. The MGB was sunk down in the mud due to recent rains, with plenty of weeds around to boot. Finding the owner was not too hard. He was in a beer lounge just down the street. His story explained that at highway speeds the oil pressure line came loose and the loss of oil caused the engine to seize.

Being a broke student, my father did the negotiations for the sale. His price was \$250; Dad responded with \$200. After a huddle with my brother and Dad, we agreed with the \$250. I do not exactly remember how we got it home but my guess is a tow truck was NOT called. The family tow was a chain around the front bumper MGB to a junk tire, then a second chain from the junk tire to the back of the tow car. The tire acts like a rubber band that cushions the starts and stops during the tow. It was how you did things in the 1930s when there was no money.

Back at home in garage, we tore into the car discovering all the surprises. At that time, there were only

hand tools and a bumper jack available: no welder, no sheet metal break, no hoist, no engine stand. But there was Dad, a share cropper's son, born in 1920. There was no money on the farm during the depression. If something need repair, you did it yourself. It was a sad state to be in but a great training ground for DIY. The floor pans were rotted through in places on the B, so my brother fiberglassed over them. The engine, we lifted out by hand (I was younger then). The engine went to a machine shop for restoration, and I went back to school. Christmas break came, and I returned home to an almost completed car. My father was aligning the front end. He would make an adjustment, then drive the car. Once returning to the garage, he would feel the tread on the front tires; rough edges meant additional adjustment was needed.

Compared to the GTO, the B handled like a dream. On a straight and flat road, you could take your hands off the steering wheel and the car would track straight without pulling left or right which was a testament to my father's work.

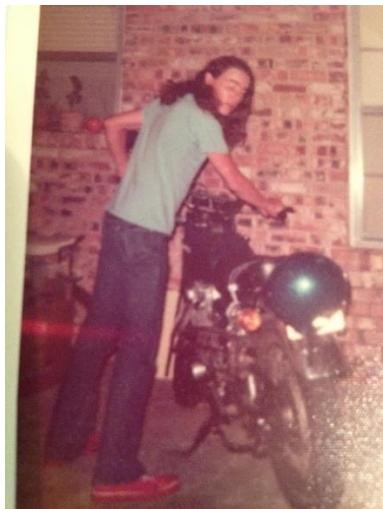
On that Christmas break visit I took a little redhead girl with me to meet the parents. She asked my mother why I was always in the garage with the MGB. 49 years later she is still asking the same question about the A. I am a shop guy, hoping to drive someday.

Note from Little Redhead Girl: When the MGB was "completed" David brought it back to college. Although late for more than a few dates because of a "minor mechanical needs", David drove us many a time down the backroads of Texas. It was a glorious feeling!

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### **Reducing the Carney stable - Rita**

Below you see Jim's first and last motorcycle! I do not recall what his first motorcycle was any more, just that he tore it down and rebuilt it in his living room at his rent house! The red 1976 Bonneville 750 Triumph was at the Brits of the Ozark's 2024 show. It was not running at that time. Since then, thanks to our club member Hess, it is now running but requires some more work before taking it on any lengthy road trips. I still recall the day Jim came across this bike for sale on craigslist (still have that ad and all the service receipts). It was located outside of KC in Shawnee KS. "We could visit our daughter Sarah in KC and go check out the bike". I knew after 30 years of 'check it out' that really meant 'buy it' as long as it was as advertised. This sweet bike had been in the same family for all but its first 2 years and had low mileage. This picture of the Bonneville was taken a few days later in August 2012 in our shop (You can see behind it our 1961 MGA). Getting the Bonneville encouraged Jim to get his 1980 Suzuki 1000 running again too. Due to the severe arthritis in Jim's hands, he quickly discovered with great disappointment he could no longer ride.



**THE TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE  
WAS SOLD ON  
APRIL 27.**

For Jim and my 25th wedding anniversary in 2006, we decided to get as a gift to each other another British car. I was always partial to the sleek lines of the MGA and it was also one of the autos on Jim's lengthy wish list. Jim started his search! He found the white with red interior

1961 MGA in Virginia (some papers referenced it as a 1959). The seller had purchased the car from an owner in Denmark who had purchased it from an owner in Puerto Rico. The car had a history of auto shows throughout its life and had been well maintained. Off to Virginia with the truck and trailer! We enjoyed driving this jewel for several years before it broke down right near the Lowe's in Bella Vista. I don't recall exactly what was wrong but as part of the plan to get the MGA back on the road Jim had bought what turned out to be a boat anchor sold as a rebuilt MGA/MGB 1800 motor in 2017. As time went on and Jim got past his lost investment in that rebuilt motor and started prepping for the reassembly with a different motor. Not liking his first attempt



to repainting the engine compartment he was sanding it down and getting ready to repaint to test out the fix to his painting challenge. This little beauty sits on a lift disassembled in the shop, surrounded by its parts old and new, hungry for a new owner to take on a project with a sweet reward at the end. If anyone is interested in the Bonneville, the MGA project, or the Suzuki, no reasonable offers will be turned down. There are also many MGB parts (new bumpers, fenders), sets of 14" and 15" wired wheels and an extra set of MGA steel wheels (one set goes with the MGA project). Any and all can be seen by appointment.

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## **Different target shooting perspectives and our club**

And a politically incorrect question, not a statement

*Wil*

We have a handful of members, men and women, who enjoy target shooting and have used Meeting Nights to arrange get-togethers at public ranges. Might this cause concern or even alarm among some? Let's address that.

Why are some folks fearful of guns, scuba diving, sailing, flying or things like that? 1) Obviously, because they have never been trained in those activities or else they bring personal experiences or childhood fears with them. 2) Or, God forbid, live with unstable people, or were raised in a city. Of the first group, most of those reasons can be lumped under 'irrational emotions' or a background of extreme sheltering. On the other hand, we all have some reservations and I'm sure there are some sports activities that seem so foolish none of us would ever give it a try. Me too – bungee jumping! But on one of those sports I have lots of experience. My father was an infantry soldier in wartime, there were unloaded guns in the house as kids (DON'T TOUCH!), we lived in the country with space for a small target range, my father shot small-bore rifle competition in a gun club in the 'thirties and I got my first .22 rifle when I was 12 years old. I was given that rifle and taught safe gun handling by my dad after he decided I was old enough to have developed moral responsibility. How very different from the life of a city kid!

After some National elections, the folks on the losing side start writing letters about "dissolving the electoral college." In other words, they want American life-style, morals and politics as lived by Big City People. That *does* scare me – are they Americans or 'Big City People'? Don't answer that question here.

Back to scary guns – they are exactly as scary as the people who have them. One time I'd just set up at the Bella Vista range (25 + years of enjoyment there) when a young family showed up with a ten-year old and the mother

proudly proclaimed, “We’re going to teach our son to shoot!” Said son was very excited. I started packing up and Mom said, “Oh, don’t let us scare you off!” Never fear, common sense scared me off. The kid looked too emotional and why would I want to be next to an immature beginner?

So we come back to the main question: Is target shooting dangerous, even with trained, responsible people? Well, it might be, in a way. Some shooting friends at the BV range once jokingly called me a ‘wuss’ because I don’t like hunting. Hmm...naturally, I couldn’t let that insult to my manhood pass unchallenged. My macho response, expressing my deep concern for their opinion; “Hey, target shooting can be dangerous. If I ever get a paper cut, I’m going right back to teddy bears!”

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**April 12 Tech Session** at the Brit Stop: What’s under guest Richard Parker’s TR6? Some deranged suspension



parts, apparently, as the rear wheels don’t seem to be pointed as they should. About ten of us showed up this morning to scratch our heads and practice squats under the lift. Richard brought donuts, so from a personal standpoint I’d say it was a success. Since Yr. Ed. has nothing to contribute to projects that lack pistons or electrics inside, ‘we’ just enjoyed chatting and roadtested the new bar stool donated by Ron Shrum. Lovely morning. Thanks to David Ferrell for the photo. A more informative message about this session was sent by Roy Chinn, forwarded by Doug Schrantz, on the BI-List on April 14.

Richard joined our club at week latter.

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Phooey! This space was for the Wiederkehr Fun Run that didn’t happen. We hope it will be rescheduled at a dryer time.