

## BRITISH

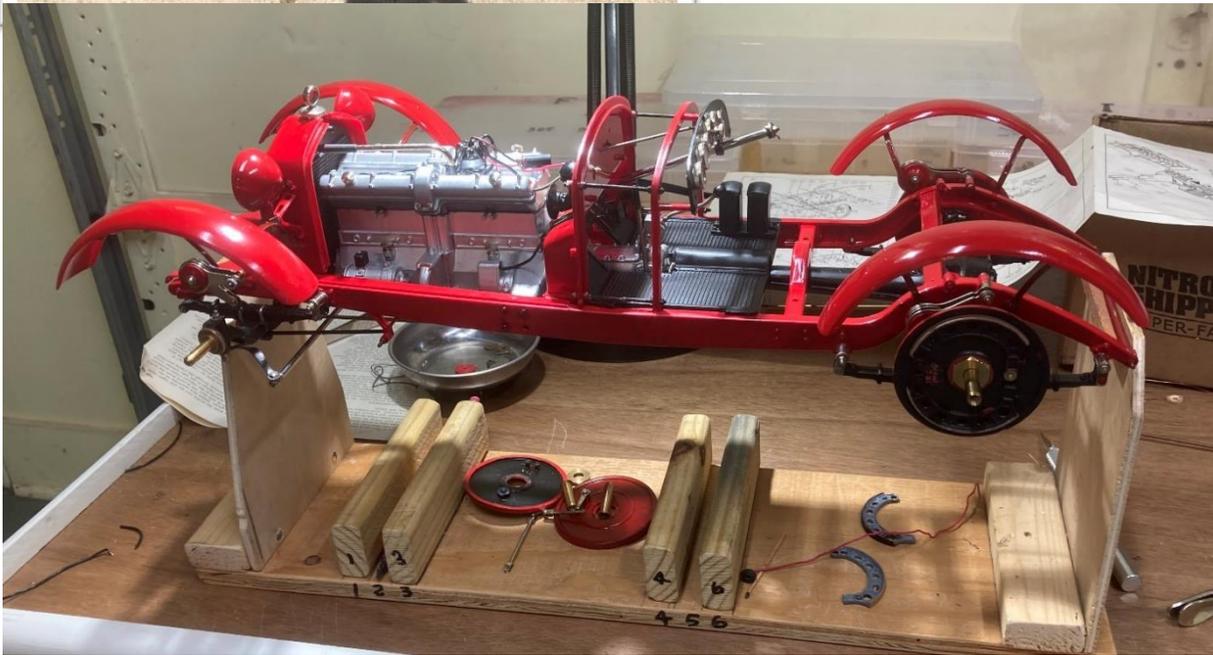


**“First car Photos”:** Last (?)\* but not least, Mark Cory sends us a photo of his first car, purchased in 1963 for \$500. He still has it and drives it!

\*Later – Not last

**BELOW:** Nostalgia? Not really. I found this unpublished photo of the model about one-half completed and thought to share it with you. The car sits on my born-of-necessity work stand, needed to install parts as shown, and also upside down, without putting any load on the body or fenders – about 1,500 parts, by the way!

Two brake shoes and the rear brake drums can be seen on the base of the work stand. The two odd looking



black lumps on the driver's floor area are realistic representations of the original Alfa batteries – a strange location. You can see a white retaining 'fence' around the edge of the work top, meant to retain small parts, such as spring-steel wire wheel spokes

from flying off into the nether regions.. It was about 30% effective. The very bright lamp over the model makes the color of the front fenders area look too light.

If I haven't said it before, I'm very glad the completed model found a good home.

Explanation for new members: This is a Pocher 1930 Alfa Romeo Monza C8 2300 race car model I assembled about two years ago. *Wil*

# ***BRITISH***

May, 2024 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.**

>Well worth reading some of the time<

**The British Iron Touring Club was started so long ago that no one can offer a specific date of founding.  
(There was a lot of heavy LSD usage in those days)**

## **Contact Us**

**- Our website is up, thanks to Malcolm Williamson: [www.britishironnwa.org](http://www.britishironnwa.org)**

**-To contact our President: [bwatkins@bwatkinslawoffice.com](mailto:bwatkins@bwatkinslawoffice.com)**

**Membership and Treasurer: Elaine Briggs [eb88cs@cox.net](mailto:eb88cs@cox.net)**

**-To contact the editor: 479-202-3235 or [briton4@cox.net](mailto:briton4@cox.net)**

## **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 having supper,

## **Other Meetings:**

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

**Thanks this month to Elaine and Malcolm for tech help and to Bill W., Phil Warner and Larry Smyth for contributions. Our cup runneth over.**

**April 11th Meeting Night:** A good sized group tonight with 45-50 folks attending, including visitors. Of course we couldn't hear everyone being introduced, but Mark and Beverly have a 79 (? that can't be right) Jag F-Type, another couple have a TR 6 and Jeff Pokorny and his wife have '61 R-R Silver Cloud II – and a great looking one. Our treasury report is about \$4,500 and thanks to member contributions, our donation to the NWA Food Bank was \$275 in honor of Jim Carney's memory. Local conversations varied from playing electronic golf games, toy cap pistols as kids, gun safes and where to buy alcohol-free gasoline. Barbara Coffee has a trip planned to Utah to attend a national fencing championship tournament. Because of road construction, our April road trip to Oark was postponed and we went to the new Marshall's Museum in Fort Smith. Report in this newsletter. Bill Watkins encouraged our efforts to take all paths for expanding our car show this fall. As of this date, our website is still down. Several members gave Yr. Ed. their 'First Car' photos – only one month late, but they are included within. **This report has been brought to you by the hearing impaired. All omissions and errors are entirely the fault of ... those who refuse to speak up!**

**A Membership renewal form is on the last page. Print and save.**

**Interested non-members should be advised to contact Elaine Briggs – [eb88cs@cox.net](mailto:eb88cs@cox.net)**

## BEHIND THE WHEEL (from the right hand side)

I had a phone call today from someone looking for an open car that could be used as photo prop at a wedding on May 25<sup>th</sup>. The wedding will take place at The Reserve at Osage in Cave Springs. I don't know the time. The couple is looking for something like an MG or Triumph to use for photos and be driven maybe 50 feet at most. If you are interested (or willing) let me know and I'll put you in contact with the woman who called me.

Last Saturday I drove down to Fayetteville for a Cars & Coffee at the Fayetteville Air Museum at Drake Field. This was organized by Hero's & Hot Rods in the Ozarks for the benefit of the Museum. It was a nice, if lightly attended event, but I did see a car there I had never seen before. This is a Noble M400 that the owners believes is one of only 25 in the U.S. The car has a 3.2 liter turbo-charged engine and, presumably, has no problem at all getting out of its own way. The construction and interior are really in the "race car for the road" idiom and it was quite impressive. The owner is from Ft. Smith and was excited to hear that there is a British car club in the area. He expressed an interest in getting involved with us, so I hope to see him at a club meeting soon. Why do I feel like this car is a prime candidate to join the Brewer / Bunch Touring Group???



I intend to call a meeting of the car show committee in the very near future at which Amber Clark will join us to describe the promotional resources she has available. I think she has some ideas and tools that we could use to make Brits in the Ozarks grow. If we are honest with ourselves, even though our fund raising has been very successful (thanks to the Kelloggs) the show really has not grown any over the past several years. We need to try to fix that.

Speaking of which, I'm headed (with Lisa) down to Ron McLeod's annual swap meet in Maumelle Saturday morning. While there I will shake some hands and leave 20 or so registration packets. It will be good to see our Little Rock area friends. Is anyone else planning to go down???

The 3.8S Jaguar is continuing to provide me with challenges. Having been through the cooling system, reinstated the mechanical radiator fan, fixed the wiring for the electric fan, and replaced the electric fan with one that does not peg the ammeter gauge, the water temperature gauge still shows it is overheating. Having my doubts, I bought an infrared hand held thermometer and, using it, I can find no part of the cooling system that is above 165 degrees. I did replace the instrument voltage regulator that controls the temp and gas gauges but the gas gauge is (I think) working fine. As I see it, either (a) the sending unit is bad, (b) the gauge is bad, (c) the new instrument voltage regulator is bad, (d) I really have an overheating problem, or (e) some combination of the above. The mystery continues. Once I get that sorted it is going on the market for real. If you have an interest in a wonderful old Jag sedan let me know. Priced to sell.

Many thanks to Greg Bunch for organizing a drive to the U.S. Marshall's Museum in Ft. Smith. It was great to see Rita Carney who joined us at the take off point to say hello. A nice day, though not a single British car made the trip. Iffy weather, you see. Our next drive is set to go to Tahlequah, OK., for lunch. Details at the meeting Thursday.

Reminders: 2 Cars & Coffee events in Rogers the first and last Sundays of each month, the Euro Motor Extravaganza in Sand Springs May 31, and the GOBMC show in Springfield on June 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. I hope to see you at these events. See you at the regular meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>. *Bill Watkins*

**Ye Olde Staff**

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**CLUB CALENDAR**

**MAY 18** – Club ride to Tahlequah, OK, for lunch. Some nice roads.

**May 31, Jun 1** – Euro Motor Extravaganza, Sand Springs, OK

**Jun 28-29** GOBMC show, Springfield, MO. Free BBQ on Fri. More later.

**JUL 8-13** – A chance to join the British V-8 Club activities. More later.

**AUG 25** – Car Show Work Party at the Storey's.

**SEP 5, 6, 7** – Our Brits in the Ozarks Show at Agri Park, F'ville.

**OCT 25-27** – Fall Retreat. Details as the date nears.

**OCT 26** – Halloween Party at the Storey's.

**NOV** – To be announced.

**DEC 7** – Christmas Party at the Storey's.

**For Sale. V8 powered 1967 MGB.**

I've decided to allow my MGB V8 to pass on to a new owner. Buick 215 V8, Muncie transmission, E-type independent rear suspension. Major restoration including paint, suspension, interior and most recently hydraulics and tires and wheels. Email me at [def300s@cox.net](mailto:def300s@cox.net) for data sheet and view videos at <https://youtube.com/@DavidFerrell-mq1zn?si=tvVPI88EBzfqHJji>. Don't wait, as this will hit Bring a Trailer in May. Club members get first shot.

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Old memories that still work – an unsolicited 'plug': When still motorcycling, up into 2003, I frequently stopped at Granny's Kitchen in Huntsville for a late breakfast or lunch. Being in Huntsville on March 30<sup>th</sup>, I had to see if Granny's was as good as in the 'olden days'. No 'modern' improvements and I suspect it is still in the hands of the same family. BIG juicy, great tasting, cooked-to-order hamburgers - \$7.00 standard, \$8.50 with Swiss and mushrooms – nice looking friendly waitresses, etc. Big pie slices! It was a pleasure!

Minor grumps: Parking is marginal. Way more french fries than wanted, which is common, but I don't like brown french fries. They look like they have been cooked in engine drain oil. Haven 55 also serves them brown. *W//*

## HALLETT VINTAGE RACES SPRING 2024

A group of us left on an officially sanctioned British Iron road trip on the morning of Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> to see the vintage racing at Hallett Motor Racing Circuit just west of Tulsa. I, Larry Roe, Lee and Karn Cowling, Mark Cory and Brad Esslinger met at the Outlet Mall on W. Sunset in Springdale for an 8:00 AM departure. With the combination of the 80 MPH speed limits on some stretches of 412, the blessed completion of road work in Tulsa, and the new tolls system where you just drive right on through and they send you a bill, what was once a two-and-a-half-hour journey is now only two hours. Yaay!

None of us had been to Hallett in several years and we were all surprised by the capital investment that the owners have made since our last visit. Most obvious was the new tunnel under the track that meant spectators no longer have to wait for the current race to finish before crossing into the infield. Very nice.

Of particular interest to our group was former British Iron member Tim Webb with his newly completed Lotus Elan racer. Tim used to race the absolute wheels off of a Mini Cooper that he built and developed himself, so it was no surprise to learn that he was on pole with the Elan for his group race – against much more powerful Corvettes and Mustangs, I should add. What was a surprise was that his gearbox was acting up (more later) and he did it without fourth gear!! Sadly, once his race started, he was running off from the field when, as he put it, the gearbox “shelled” third gear and the Elan was done for the weekend. But Tim was not done as he had two other cars to race owned by a guy he provides driver coaching to: a Formula B Brabham – Cosworth open wheeler and a Sunbeam Tiger. Pictures of Tim and his and other interesting cars appear below. This was also a big weekend for Formula Junior cars. FJ later evolved into Formula 3 which still exists. The earliest FJ cars were front engined and there was one present. The dominant make was Cooper and there were several of those present as well as some Italian cars like a Stanguellini. Lots of interesting stuff. Hallett holds another vintage race in the Fall so you should join us next time.

Tim going out for his race in his Elan before 3<sup>rd</sup> gear went away and the Elan engine bay.





Here are a Cooper T-56 Formula Junior (left), an early front engine Elva Formula Junior (center), and a very nice example of an Elva sports racing car. The Cooper won its race both times I saw it while the Elva FJ came in on a hook the only time I saw it out. I never saw the sports racer in action which Tim Webb reports is not unusual for this owner.



The gentlemen for whom Tim Webb provides driving coaching owns a stable of race cars that he likes to have Tim exercise occasionally. One of his two cars present this weekend was this Sunbeam Tiger that is right hand drive and apparently famous in England. A documentary is being prepared on this car and Tim needed to provide some race footage. He duly did so, starting from the back since he had not been able to qualify it, and made his way up through most of the field before a suspected leaking axle seal resulted in a spin that ended his race. That is Tim in the background in the light blue race suit doing his pre-race stretch and preparation - he told us that driving this car was a workout. *Bill Watkins*

## My first car - Larry D. Smyth

During my junior year in 1967 at The College of William and Mary, I learned of a job on campus that looked quite interesting from a senior fraternity brother. Terry was delivering laundry bundles to the dorms including girl's (up to the third floor – made for interesting elevator rides!)

More than half the students signed up for \$5 each per year. Now that does not sound like much but there were over two thousand that used the service. \$10,000 was quite a bit of money back then! The job was approved through the college and not many people were aware of it.

I applied and got the job and then Terry sold me his 1960 Ford Van equipped to handle this for \$800 on credit. Payment would come from the separate checks written out to me that came in with tuition next fall! Took me over two full days to get the checks deposited and tracked. It required that the delivery boy have a van – not bad back then when no student was allowed to have a car on campus but I could with the van. This was before vans became popular for dating. My future wife Diane, and I could cruise around campus while others could not.

During the summer I was working with the family business using the van to sell cash registers in Holmes County Ohio – Amish country! Most interesting trying to sell them electric cash registers!

Well on July 25<sup>th</sup> of 1967 I did a substantial redesign of the van. I went through the windshield with the steering brackets restraining me and the motor behind me. Was in the hospital 35 days determined not to lose the \$10,000 that paid for my senior year, all past debt including the \$800 for destroying the van, plus quite a bit left over, and then graduate.

Well, I made it back with my weight down to 95 pounds after a couple surgeries and steel in my leg. Two frat friends helped me deliver until I made it off crutches. I had bought a new Ford van to use which I sold to the two fellows that got the job the following year. After graduation I bought a brand-new red '68 Camero, cash for \$2850 – my first real car! Should have never sold it, but did; to buy a '70 Dodge station wagon after we were married.

I needed it for work and family- O well.

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### **STOP!**

**THE PHOTO ON THE NEXT PAGE IS TO TEST YOUR ABILITY TO OBSERVE. STUDY IT FOR FIVE SECONDS AND THEN LOOK AWAY. AFTER THE FIVE SECONDS, NO PEEKING, ANSWER THE QUESTION AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE.**



## **My First Car - 1953 Studebaker Commander Starliner Coupe'**

Phil Warner

Just out of high school in 1960 and attending General Motors Institute, I was finally earning enough as a Frigidaire Co-op to afford my first car for the drives between Dayton, Ohio and Flint, Michigan. When I began looking for a car, my two "dream cars" were either a 53/54 Mercury Convertible or a 1953 Studebaker Commander Starliner Coupe'. Well, I found the Studebaker first, a shiny black Commander with red interior and an inverted H pattern manual shifter put up for sale by a local gas station mechanic, and I took the plunge into auto ownership for the princely sum of \$500. The H shifter had a habit of popping up before the transmission was completely shifted from first to second and then refusing to go down again leaving the transmission locked in first, so I carried a blanket in the trunk to lay on the ground so I could try to stay clean as I slid as far as possible under the low sill to jerk the shift linkage back into neutral; bad weather was a real challenge to this operation and after several unpleasant episodes in the rain, I loosened the transmission tunnel carpet so I could wriggle a hand down beside the shifter from inside to move the linkage. This was a great improvement over the wriggling underneath method. I drove that Commander for two years before swapping the Studebaker 232 V8 for a Chevy 265 V8 with a 4-barrel carburetor, which added a few horses, and I finally managed a linkage adjustment that solved the shifting difficulty.

The Commander made many a trip to Flint with the back seat cushions stacked to one side so a small filing cabinet with my school work could sit on the floor behind the driver's seat, and it moved me to Ohio State when I transferred several years later. I tinkered with it quite a bit, replacing the brown carpet with black and white Berber, adding a padded dash shelf for sun glasses and maps, installing a Corvette steering wheel, and giving it a "Daimler Dart" mouth by inverting and welding a second air scoop above the original and shortening the hood to match (Raymond Lowey would not have been pleased). Over my college years it suffered the indignity of being parked on the streets around the Ohio State campus and it eventually sustained a hit to one side which prompted me to buy a "sister" 53 Commander for parts, but other cars and priorities came in between and the Commander was never restored to its former glory. A move to Arkansas and a later divorce left it and the sister Commander locked in a pole barn in Ohio, and I do not know to this day the fate of either one.

I think we all remember our first kiss, our first love, and our first car (although perhaps not in that order and the latter two may be the same thing) with a special reverence and even a special longing as the years flow more and more quickly by. That Studebaker Commander Starliner Coupe' still haunts my reverie as one of, if not THE, favorite first of my life.

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**Question: What kind of footwear is the guy wearing?**

OK, the final '1<sup>st</sup> car' entries.



Far left: Alan Meyers' 1<sup>st</sup> car. What a good choice!

Left: Bryce Storey's '93 Geo Metro 3-cylinder in '97 when he was 16.



Far left: Sue Storey's '69 MG.

Robert Storey's '59 TR 3

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### April 20<sup>th</sup> club ride to the Marshalls Museum, Fort Smith



Greg Bunch, second from left, gets our thanks for organizing a very pleasant ride to the U.S. Marchall's Museum and a very good lunch at the Bricktown Brewery in No. Fort Smith. Wil and Shirley behind the camera. There were only 10 of us. Absentees missed a fun event! We all learned some important and impressive history at the new museum. There were stories and laughs at lunch, but unfortunately the interior noise level was too high and harsh for Yr. Ed. **Mark Brewer offers regrets and thanks for our 'Get Well' card. He found it three months after his operation!**

## British Iron Membership Application

**Name (Member 1):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Nickname

**Name (Member 2):** \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Nickname

**Address:**


**Contact Information:**

Member 1	Member 2 (if applicable)
Home phone: _____	Home phone: _____
Mobile phone: _____	Mobile phone: _____
E-mail: _____	E-mail: _____

**British Car Description:**

Year	Make/Model	Color	Condition*

\*Show (S), Touring (T), Being Restored (BR), or Just Sitting (JS)

**Fees:** Annual dues are \$45 for two members at the same household. New members joining after July 1 get the following year free.

**Name Tags:** If you would like a name tag or tags please add \$5.00 per tag to the above amount and state **EXACTLY** how you would like your name(s) to appear here:

\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Fees Enclosed:\$ \_\_\_\_\_

A check for the total made payable to British Iron must accompany this application.

**Send Check and Form to:**

Elaine Briggs  
 707 NW 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
 Bentonville, AR 72712