

BRITISH – July 2024



In the beginning we had only these factory repair manuals: Austin A40 (Farina), Sprite/Midget, MGB and a TR7 owner's manual, all on the left. **Let the collection build!** I hope that it will soon be necessary to install another shelf for our collection. The donated manuals will be a permanent library for shop use only – no lending. Only the original donor may repossess his/hers if he/she should acquire another car of that type. *Political correctness is a pain in the*

Please donate your old British factory repair shop manuals. Incidentally, there are many good tech manuals at the shop on welding, Lucas electrics, Sun diagnostic manuals and a few American car repair books. Those may be borrowed to study at home. (*Yr. Brit Stop Club Librarian and Janitor – self-appointed*)

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Who was first? Are you sure?

My 1955 French Deutsch-Bonnet LM Roadster had big front disc brakes and they worked wonderfully. Never a hint of brake fade. They were made by Messier, a French supplier of aircraft hardware and fitted only for 1955. I thought my car was well ahead of its time, since most cars did not yet have disc brakes.

But I recently watched a YouTube video about Sir Sterling Moss and his special 1952 C-type Jaguar with experimental disc brakes, as used in the 1952 Mille Miglia. He ran near the front and the brakes were far superior to that of the Italian machines, providing much satisfaction. Unfortunately, Moss ran into a small boulder that had tumbled into the road and tore the steering rack off his car – it was DNF damage. As you know, the factory C-type racing Jaguars won Le Mans in 1953 with Dunlop disc brakes.

So, was that the first use of disc brakes? You know better.

Many American gearheads will say that the 1950 Crosley Hot Shot was the first US car with disc brakes (note that we are talking about manufacturing dates, not necessarily about great engineering). Those gearheads are wrong, of course.

The 1949 Chrysler Imperial was the first American car I can find with front disc brakes fitted as standard. Mind that the design may have precluded your ability to visually identify them as disc brakes! So, was that the earliest record for the automotive use of disc brakes? Hah!

We go back to William Lancaster, who patented disc brakes in the U.K. in 1902. Lancaster cars were produced from 1898 to 1955. However, drum brakes dominated on those cars.

Anyone know of disc brakes having been used on horse-drawn wagons?

It's usually very risky to proclaim, "This was first!" *Wil*

BRITISH

>Well worth reading some of the time<

July 2024 Issue

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

Founded in 1980 or earlier.

At last! We have the word from a very early member that our club... well, not our club exactly, but an earlier version, started with meetings at a home, then at a garage in Fayetteville and it slowly grew from that beginning.

As if we're going to believe that!

Contact Us

- Our website: www.britishironnwa.org

-To contact our President: bwatkins@bwatkinslawoffice.com

Membership and Treasurer: Elaine Briggs eb88cs@cox.net

-To contact the editor: 479-202-3235 or 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 supper,

Other Meetings:

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

Meeting Night, June 13th: Stop and go, stop and go. The same old story. Instead of complaining about I 49 every month, maybe Yr. Ed. should try a different route some day? Radical idea. Nice big crowd tonight. At our table the conversation was about wind/tornado damage, of course, nightmares (!) parts sources for old British cars and carburetor problems. Since Yr. Ed. was sitting next to Don Wiseman, there also were interesting racing stories. Bill Watkins reported about \$7,300 in the treasury, but that seems a big jump from last month, so maybe it was misheard, despite my new hearing aids (why is everyone shouting at me?). Brian and Justin seemed happy with the work done at our Brit Stop a couple of weeks ago. The trip to Springfield at the end of the month was sorted out and Yrs. Trly asked for someone taking that trip to send photos and a short story. I also repeated the request for old, unneeded work shop manuals for the Brit Stop and hoped that we could reinstate our drive to Oark for lunch when the roads are better. Personally, I really enjoy our Meeting Nights and the conversations with friends. What a lot of fun our club offers for a measly \$45 per year!

Thomas Webb (we call him 'Tim') along with his story, sent photos of outstanding race cars he has driven, but there just wasn't enough room for them all. Page 6.

BEHIND THE WHEEL (From the right hand side)

The British Iron Touring Club had a successful road trip to the GOBMC all British car show this past weekend in Springfield. In attendance from our club were the Gutekunst with their fantastic TR3, the Porters with their MGA, Richard Davies and Marcy Benham with their XJ-S, Doug Schrantz with his XJ-S, the Cowlings with their hot TR6, Lisa and me with our Interceptor, Jeff Rajnowski with his Lotus Evora, Phil Warner with his modern MINI, and Greg Bunch with his new toy, the Jaguar F-Type. So, 9 of us all together. Almost everyone took home a trophy of some kind, including the Gutekunst with both a class win and People's Choice. A good haul.

The drive up was led by Greg and Jeff with Greg showing great restraint by progressing at a generally legal rate of knots. The Interceptor A/C had no trouble keeping Lisa and me nice and comfortable on the way up. It was a different story on the way home. The day started with cloud cover (it spit a little rain on us on the way up) but soon turned hot and sunny. It was a warm day. Fortunately, the show venue was an American Legion post that has a nice air conditioned facility (with a bar, as some who shall remain nameless learned early on - I'm told they make a good Bloody Mary) so it was easy to go cool down as needed.

I'd estimate between 65 and 75 cars were in attendance, so it was a good chance to hand out material on our car show - which we, of course, did. Almost everyone I talked to knew of our event, had attended at some point, and had good things to say. I was able to recruit a few who were not aware of us so maybe we will have some first timers. There was a nice variety of cars, though nothing terribly unusual. It is always nice to see a Lotus Elan and marvel at how small they are. There were a couple of truly beautiful Austin Healey 100s there as well as some very nicely restored MGs of both the "A" and "B" variety and a wonderful Morris Minor panel van. All in all it was a good event and we will certainly return next year.

Big kudos to Brian Lea for getting us set up for online registration for Brits in the Ozarks. We have already had a couple of online registrations so it seems to be working. There are still some bugs to work out - like how to stop PayPal from withholding 24% to cover any possible tax liability we might have, which will be zero - but we will get that worked out. Further kudos to Brian for leveraging our Facebook page to get our event out there on the Facebook pages of lots of other clubs in the region. It is good to have younger people in the club!

Our host hotel is happy with us since 60 room nights are already booked with some people staying 4 nights. That last point makes me think: someone coming here to spend 4 nights and to attend our drives and other activities is spending a fair chunk of change. Let's do our best to make it a wonderful experience for them. Which is a great segue into reminding everyone that it is CRUNCH TIME for car show preparation. Please, PLEASE pull whatever strings you have to promote *Brits in the Ozarks* to other enthusiasts and to secure donations of goody bag content, door prizes, and silent auction content. And, of course, cash! We need as much of all of the above as we can get and as many participants as we can round up. I would love to see us get to 200 cars some day - why not 2024??

This coming week, the 8th through the 13th, is the British V8 National Meet in Springdale. You can find their event schedule and information at <https://britishv8meet.org>. The Holiday Inn in Springdale is also their host hotel and, like us, they will have a gathering in the parking lot on their first night, Monday the 8th. Some of the events require registration since they include some ticketed events or pre-paid meals, but the Thursday drive, for instance, is no charge. We are all invited to participate, even if you don't have a V8

powered car. I hope to go by Monday night to schmooze and to participate in the Thursday drive. And, of course, hand out *Brits in the Ozarks* propaganda. Hope to see you at one of their events and at our regular meeting that Thursday night. *Bill Watkins*

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Ye Olde Staff

President: **Bill Watkins**

First Vice- Pres: **Doug Schrantz**

Second Vice-Pres: **David Ferrell**

Treasurer & Membership:

Elaine Briggs

eb88cs@cox.net

Web Master: **Malcolm Williamson**

Editor: **Wil Wing**

briton4@cox.net

CLUB CALENDAR

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.



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MEA CULPA – WEA SCREWDA

But, an opportunity for a member

Headline: our exhaust gas analyzer doesn't work.

Although I was told that our latest ex. analyzer would work with a tailpipe pickup, it doesn't. The salesperson said "It may read a little low." To me a 'little' means a little. Old pre- catalytic converter cars show air/fuel ratios of about 12:1 (rich) to about 15:1 (lean). Those readings mean air (by weight, not volume) to fuel. But the new analyzer shows about 22:1 at idle and about 18:1 if you accelerate the engine to make it rich – ridiculously lean numbers that no engine could run on. After a lot of testing, studying the instruction manual and head scratching, Larry Goodsell and I called the dealer, describing our problem. The answer was "It doesn't work with a tailpipe pickup." **We was lied to!**

So, this unit isn't suitable for our application, **but it would be fine installed in a car, where air/fuel ratios could be monitored.** The kit includes the weld 'bung' for installing the ox. sensor into the header downpipe. This would be especially valuable with a car with non-standard carbs or for a conversion to after-market fuel injection. The unit cost us about \$300. Offers near half that price would be considered. Check to 'British Iron'. For more info, contact Wil Wing.

OVERHEAD DOOR COMPANY
OF SPRINGDALE, INC.
P.O. Box 131 • 2400 S. Thompson
Springdale, Arkansas 72765

GREGORY BUNCH
Office 479-751-5921
Fax 479-751-3228
Cell 479-530-2792
gbunch@ohdoor-spd.com

Bristol Cars – the early years

Like many other post-WW II manufacturers, the Bristol Aeroplane Company faced a slump. They no longer had government contracts coming in to keep them going. But with a large pool of skilled workers management formed a car division in 1945 in a modest factory at Filton Aerodrome, near Bristol. **Bristol Cars Limited** from the first, intended that the cars were to be built in small numbers, to the highest possible standards. A recipe for financial woes? Throughout their history, they maintained only one showroom, in London.



Left: The Bristol 400 was their first car, introduced at the Geneva Show in 1947. This car used a 1971 cc in-line six-cylinder engine. Bristol inherited the blueprints and some tooling from BMW as war reparations. So, the average enthusiast would think he was looking at a pre-war BMW 328 engine. That Bristol was revised toward improving the roadholding and there were some metallurgical upgrades (!). The chassis used torsion bars and linkages to control the rear live axle and independent front suspension with transverse

leaf springs and upper wishbones. LJK Setright rated them as equal to or superior in handling to any car of the day, short of purpose-built race cars. Effort was made to make them aerodynamic, using Bristol's own wind tunnel, and to keep them lightweight.

To give an indication of performance with the 2-liter engine, the **Bristol 401** model, introduced in 1949, had a top speed of 100 mph and with higher gearing lapped the Montlhery Circuit at 107 mph and averaged 104 for one hour. The 401 was mechanically similar to the 400, with the 85 hp version, but was slightly more aerodynamic and had aluminum body paneling.

The Bristol history is long and complicated. Here are two indexes to make things easier:

Bristol-engined cars

- [Type 400](#) (1946–1950)
- [Type 401](#) (1948–1953)
- [Type 402](#) (1949–1950)
- [Type 403](#) (1953–1955)
- [Type 404](#) (1953–1955)
- Type 404X [Arnolt Bristol](#) (1954–1958)
- [Type 405](#) (1954–1958)
- [Type 406](#) (1958–1961)
- [Type 450](#) (1953–1955)

Chrysler-engined cars

- [Type 407](#) (1961–1963)
- [Type 408](#) (1963–1965)
- [Type 409](#) (1965–1967)
- [Type 410](#) (1967–1969)
- [Type 411](#) (1969–1976)
- [Type 412/Beaufighter](#) (1975–1993)
 - Beaufort

Cars made after 1993 not included – very limited production.

It would be impossible to show all the models made, but on the next page we'll have some examples.



The **2-liter Bristol engine** (ex-BMW) had a cam-in-block design, yet had a cross-flow cylinder head with inclined valves and a hemispherical combustion chamber. The intake valves operated by vertical pushrods. The exhaust valves utilized horizontal cross pushrods and rockers. This arrangement allowed three downdraft Solex carburetors to feed the intake passages directly without restrictive turns. Note that the exhaust manifolds are designed to provide a tuned, free-flow system. A very slick design altogether.



Left is the Model **404** (1953-55) introducing a new body on a shorter chassis. Two versions of the 2-liter engine were offered; touring with 105 bhp or the sporting version with a 'hotter' camshaft gave 125 bhp. This two-door version didn't sell well – it cost more than the four-door and they only made 40 cars.



The **406** (1958-61) back on the longer 114 inch wheelbase offered disc brakes all around and the rear axle located by Watts linkage. By this time the cars were accumulating weight and an alternate engine search was under way. Looking at the model numbers, you can see we skipped a few. We now go on to the Chrysler engine cars.



The **408** (1963-65) was their second car to have the Chrysler of Canada 5.2-liter (318 cu. in.) engine with automatic transmission. The engines were rebuilt by Bristol, using high-lift camshafts and solid lifters and gave fine performance. The front suspension was now double wishbones with coil springs. The car could reach 122 mph in relative silence.



The **410** (1967-69) offered a top speed of 132 mph, as did the 409. Engineering details were improved, as was typical of all new models. Spare tire and battery were stored in compartments behind the front wheels.

The **411** (not shown) model used a larger 6.2 liters (388 cu. in.) Chrysler engine and was faster, but late versions of that model have a grill too ugly to display.

Editorial comments: I lusted for a Bristol with one of the smaller (lighter) Chrysler engines. This despite my mild prejudice against Chrysler V-8 engines – they all seemed to start burning oil at a lower milage than either Ford or GM cars - bad ring design or material? No matter, I couldn't afford a Bristol, of course. They were always rare and expensive. In our part of the world now, the only one I know of belongs to former member Toly Arutunoff.

While I think all the later cars were handsome, not beautiful, some of the trimming and grill designs were peculiar. For instance, did the 409/410 really need two spears of chrome trim down the sides? I wonder who made those styling decisions. Perhaps they were negatively influenced by American design.

I have not attempted to outline the many ownership and financial struggles of the Bristol Car Company.

Most of this information was gathered from 'The World of Automobiles' and the Internet.

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We have a 'bringing you up to date' article from former member Thomas (Tim) Webb:

Hi,

Since being a member, when we lived in Fayetteville, the 'kids' have left home (Emily – lawyer in Dallas, Ali professional ballet dancer in Chicago) to pursue their dreams while Cindy and I moved to Tulsa since 2016.

I joined the club through Mark Cory before the club got the name British Iron. I bought a 1966 Austin Mini Cooper S in 1995. I relied on Mark for all things British car. I have always wanted to race. As a kid I raced motocross bikes and never got the racing bug out of my system. The Mini was what I needed. Over several years, I converted my lovely street Cooper S to a very potent racecar. I began racing in 1997 and haven't stopped. If anything, the bug is a larger presence in my life and my wife's.

Racing started as a trip to Canada to attend the Jim Russell race school at Mt. Tremblant. This was a great way to begin racing. Along the way, I infected Mark Cory and before long we were trailering up to Michigan to race our small 4-cylinder racecars. We raced together at many tracks enjoying great friendship and fast company. Early on I had good success in the Mini and was usually at the front of the grid. I sold the mini in 2007 to a gentleman from Toronto, but it now lives on the west coast where I have seen it race on several occasions at both Laguna Seca and Sonoma. (it's fun to see that my paint job has held up well after 20 years. With Mark's guidance, I stripped the Mini to bare metal and sprayed it in his workshop.)

I sold the Mini to buy a modern Formula Ford, a Swift DB6, with the goal of reaching the SCCA Runoffs, which I did.



Tim at the helm of a \$1M Bizzarrini

Some members of the club came out to Hallett to see the vintage cars race with the Corinthian Vintage Auto Racing (CVAR) club and saw my first outing in the Elan.

Since 2014, I have been providing racecar coaching. I have coached at the pro level for teams in the Pirelli World Challenge as well as coached drivers in vintage racing. This has provided me with an entrée into



many high dollar events including the Monterey Historics and the Velocity International. I have also had the good fortune of racing in these events in some unbelievably historic vehicles a lovely 1966 Bizzarrini 5300 GT, the 1971 Clemons Camaro, 1964 Zagato bodied Aston Martin DB4, 1971 Chevron B23, 1969 Chevron B16, 1972 BMW 3.0 CS Batmobile, and more. All of this began because of my participation in vintage racing with a 1966 Mini Cooper S. When I bought the car, I had so little working car

knowledge that I needed help changing a water pump. Now I do all my own maintenance. As I type, the Lotus is up on jack stands waiting for a motor reinstall with an all new gearbox.

This summer I will once again be headed out to Laguna for the Historics and to Sonoma for the Velocity International. These are two events that are a must see if you like vintage racecars. I'll be coaching, but I never go anywhere without my driving gear. On a few occasions I have been drafted to race at the last minute.

Regards, Tim

P.S. Someone left for me a green, brand new, Gold Bug Lotus polo shirt during the CVAR race. It must have been left by a British Iron member. I don't know who left such a lovely gift, but I want to say thank you to the anonymous gift giver.

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June 29th trip to GOBMC's Springfield Car Show: Well, Shirley and Yr. Ed. didn't do the convoy thing – for us it was Interstate Highways all the way. Easy driving and no chance.... one of us... would get car sick



on winding roads. With the TR7, which cornered flatly it was no problem, but with grocery-getter cars it is 'lurch and lean' in the corners going fast. One problem with Interstate highways is that it is so sad: all those poor dead tires. It seems that at least one exploded tire or one new truck recap is

required per mile. As a former motorcyclist, it is cause to be mad, not sad. Ever hit big, exploded tire chunks at night on a motorcycle? Very exciting. The tire recapping industry should be against the law (my very restrained comment). Anyway – GOBMC had a better turnout this year and it was pleasant at the American Legion 639. The red MGA closest to the camera was a personal sunny-weather favorite. Bill Watkins had a small note on his Jensen passenger door "Tornado reminder", next to a very small ding – a tree landed violently on his

garage, knocking it into a permanent tilt. The shock knocked a creeper into the Jensen. We saw several outstanding cars. Nice facility. The strange thing was that apparently, they didn't want any conversation on the grounds, because the loudspeakers **were very loud!** Let me out of here!



About 8 member cars participated in this event. Pictured below are our friends who showed up for departure in north Rogers at the proper time (early). Bill W. was behind the camera.

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GRUMPY WIL!

Of interest to Yr. Ed. and anyone who may be considering buying Windows Office 365:

DON'T!

I had an article for next month's issue and just recently visited the Storey Collection (thanks,

Robert) to get an accompanying photograph.

Despite the fact that I cannot find a way to 'Delete' used articles from the list – the only option is to 'Hide', and they then reappear the next time – my article has disappeared!

Fortunately, I still have a copy of the photo. So either the article may 'reappear' like magic or I'll have to try and rewrite the whole darn thing (yup). Ain't the latest technology wonderful?

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Last thoughts: The Silverstone F-1 race on July 7th was the best in years. Multiple World Champion Sir Lewis Hamilton managed to win in front of his home crowd after a 2 ½+ year winless drought. Lots of lead changes, rain on and off and it couldn't have been better. Yr. Ed. isn't grumpy.