

## ***BRITISH 2, 2025***

### **A treasure in Rogers**



Walk into Heritage Motorcycle of NWA – Indian and Triumph dealers at 1711 W. Hudson Rd. – and this magnificent 1939 Indian motorcycle greets you. Magnificent isn't too strong a word; this classic has been restored to museum standards and looks flawless. The paint is so rich I suspect that it is leaded enamel.

In 1924 Indian bought out the Ace Motorcycle Co. of Philadelphia, PA, with all rights and tooling, taking over production of their 4-cylinder, in-line machine. It was in production for one year as an Ace before becoming the Indian 401 model. In the 'teens and 'twenties most motorcycles had one or two cylinders. A four cylinder bike was very unusual and expensive, as you can imagine. Despite all the lean years of the Depression, Indian kept this model going until 1942. The 401 didn't change appearance very much during all those years, although there were engine experiments in the mid-thirties. I'd think this model would have been popular with State Police and towns wealthy enough to afford them. It is a true American classic and deserves the fame of the premier British motorcycles, such as Brough or Vincent.

**Stop at the dealer at Hudson and N. Dixieland to see this and their new Indians and Triumphs.**



And this is 'Grandpa', a 1922 Ace; they were made from 1919 to 1924. It looks like Ace used chrome, more likely nickel, exhaust pipe covers to hold down on fried ankles.

# ***BRITISH***

>Well worth reading some of the time<

**February, 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.**

## **Contact Us**

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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, Jan 16<sup>th</sup>.** There were lots of times we've had a small turnout because of the weather or whatever, but can't remember the last time the weather forecast was so bad we had to postpone a week! Anyway, 38 folks showed up tonight, one week after the snow-threatened original date. Normally, this is where Yrs. Trly would complain about I 49's bad drivers, but not this time. Shirley wanted to try Rt. 71B, just to see how long it would take. Answer: 1 hour and 10 minutes from Bella Vista to the steakhouse – I lost track of the traffic lights. So it really isn't any faster than using the jammed Interstate; actually longer and slower and much more chance of an accident with all the merging side streets and an undivided road. But folks who think they are going to have accidents prefer slower roads. (*"I'm only going 45 mph and the car coming at me is only going 45 mph."* - someone skipped basic physics in high school). This concludes our scientific research on the matter. If you think all that nonsense indicates that Yr. Ed. has insufficient content about Meeting Night... clever you. Our seldom seen member Allen McReynolds was hospitalized in Joplin recently but seems to have recovered – you really should come to a Club event someday, Allen and Nancy! Doug Schrantz has loaned four tech manuals to our Brit Stop and we are now covered for MG 'T' series cars. Thank you, Doug! Our annual dues are trickling in and as of January 9<sup>th</sup> Elaine reported \$4,552 in the piggy bank... razorback hog bank? Several paid this evening. A Car Show Committee meeting was scheduled a few days before our regular Feb Meeting Night. Elaine still has some Club car badges available.

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

Doug and I had a good meeting (via Zoom) with the ALS Association folks the other day. The bad news is that they won't have anyone officed in NWA as they have in the past. The good news is that they think enough of our event that 3 regional ALS Association officers were on the call. Our direct contact will be Christy Galyean who officed in Oklahoma City. She does have family in Bella Vista and visits frequently. She is willing to do all of the things that Amber Clark, the former local representative, did for us. I hope she does, and we will see how it goes.

Also on the call were her boss from Louisiana and the development director who officed in Tulsa. They were very supportive and will just let us do things the way we have been doing them without interference or red tape (which I had feared was going to be a problem). One piece of interesting news is that the final accounting from ALS for our 2024 event shows that we raised in excess of \$69,000. My goodness, how this has grown.

I really, REALLY want to focus on increasing attendance at the event. The ALS folks told us that if we get materials to them and a list of clubs in their various areas, they will send ALS representatives to their meetings to promote our event. That has to be useful, and we will discuss that (or will have discussed that) at the committee meeting on February 6th.

I just finished up a very interesting experience selling my wonderful and much-loved old Jaguar sedan. David Ferrell had a good experience with Bring a Trailer.com ("BAT") and another guy I know who buys and sells a lot of classics also recommended them. So, I took the plunge. The initial cost is very reasonable - \$95 to list your car and the seller pays no commissions. I started trying to take all of the required pictures myself but ultimately concluded that BAT's offer to have them done by a professional for \$330 was a good deal and a wise move. The photo session took place on a lovely day in the parking lot by the old caboosie in Downtown Rogers. The photographer was experienced with BAT and had their checklist in hand. I thought he was very professional and thorough. The photos came out very well – honestly reflecting the condition of the car but also making the car look good on a sunny day.

Once the photos were uploaded (by a contractor with an arrangement with BAT) the listing was ready to go live within just a couple of days. Throughout the process I was assigned a representative who offered guidance and promptly answered my questions. The auction went live with an ending date one week out. Here is where I suffered a bit. It is my personality to get on with things and get things done. That ain't how this works. There was one lowball bid during the first 5 days, followed by another on the 6<sup>th</sup>. On the last day there were a couple of low bids that morning then IN THE LAST FIVE MINUTES there were nine bids. The last bid was still short of my reserve by a couple of thousand. Rats, no sale.

Well, wait a minute: as soon as the auction ended BAT sent me an email advising that they would allow the high bidder to make me one final offer within 24 hours and I would then have another 24 hours to accept or decline. Within 5 minutes the high bidder made an offer exactly on my reserve. I promptly accepted it, and the car was sold. The buyer called me a few minutes later very excited about his purchase. I am pleased and comforted that the old girl will be going to a good and enthusiastic home.

I had been told to prepare myself to deal with negative comments from trolls and spectators. That was not my experience. Every comment either had a legitimate question, asked for more information, just complimented the car, or reminisced about 3.8S Jaguars in their past. All very positive interactions.

Had I taken the car somewhere like Mecom I would have paid a \$750 entry fee plus a 10% commission. Even paying for the professional photos, using BAT saved me a good deal of money. I will use them in the future anytime I need to sell an old car.

I hope you will join us at the meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup>. We will set the annual calendar during this meeting.

## Club Staff

President – **Bill Watkins**  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – **Doug Schrantz**  
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Events Coordinator – **Marcy Denham**

## Coming Events

Events calendar coming soon

SEP 18-20: “Brits in the Ozarks” show

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Oh darn, your contribution this month has been misplaced.

Members have been very generous with newsletter contributions. Please don't stop now! Everyone has some beefs or praise for their favorite British cars (now least favorite?). Share!



Thanks to Doug Schrantz for manuals on MG 'T' series and MGB, we now have most popular Brit cars tech info at the shop. Don't forget these are on loan to the shop and are not to be removed except by the owners, who have signed their property.

(Of course, now that we have this info in hand, owners – victims – bringing in their cars for testing will remember to bring their own handbook and shop manuals)

It would be splendid if YOU shared some trivia from your life to help fill this space.

Late note: Just saw a You-Tube video claiming the Honda CB750 was the first 4-cylinder motorcycle! Wow! Some guys must hate research. The CB750 was very significant as it was so good it is sometimes credited/blamed for the downfall of the British motorcycle industry. But it was available in 1969, about 50 years after the Ace – and we don't know the Ace was first!

All this extra space. Please forgive the overkill, but next month I really want to see member contributions in our newsletter. Expect a pitch on Meeting Night.



# A STORY OF A 1968 TRIUMPH TR250 AND ITS OWNER, IN SOUTH ARKANSAS

By Robert S. Tschiemer

Co-Chair Triumph Marque

British Motoring Club of Arkansas

January 9, 2025

**Forwarded by Bill Watkins and used with the permission of the author**

Major Clinton Hawkins, Jr. and his Triumph TR250 sports car are residents of Dumas, in Desha County, Arkansas, in an area of the state where its citizens rightly express thanks and at times astonishment for the sight of this rare British car. The TR250 was only produced during the 1968-1969 model year and is a six-cylinder roadster with 2498 cc and 111 bhp. A total of approximately 8,484 were made for the American market, and estimates are that only 600 to 1,100 exist in the world today, with many of these in Europe. Major Hawkins obtained this in 2024.

The TR250 model was fitted with a twin Zenith-Stromberg carburetor, and it has a top speed of 107. In Great Britain, which was not hampered with American regulatory requirements, the equivalent version was the TR5, was mechanically fuel-injected and had more horsepower, with a maximum speed of 120 mph.



The TR250 was an improvement over the TR4A because with its six cylinders, as explained by Ronnie McLeod, of McLeod's British Cars, and is smoother than an engine with only four. The TR250 model came with front disc brakes, independent rear suspension, rack and pinion steering, with its four-speed gearbox. At the time, the standard model cost \$3,175. There are numerous reviews of the TR250 on-line over the years and it is a highly sought version of the Triumph classic line of cars.

Major Hawkins was a Quartermaster (Logistic) Officer in the United States Army and saw not only behind-the-lines duty but also with the deployed forward troops. He was a paratrooper as well and made approximately 37 jumps. He ultimately retired from active duty and obtained his Bachelor's degree while he was in the military from the University of Arkansas. Major Hawkins met his wife, Debra, in his last deployment in Louisiana, and they married in 1995. They have two sons. Major Hawkins was originally from Dumas, so their return was a welcomed event.

It was in his first deployment in northern Germany that Major Hawkins came to appreciate British sports cars. His First Sergeant had a Triumph TR6, and upon first sight Major Hawkins was impressed with the car. He would drive around in the car and considered them well built. It was love at first sight as he recognized the unique British cars.

"I like small sports cars. When over there in Germany, I knew about the TR6. It seemed like a really cool sports car that had a lot of class. I love them."

It was not uncommon to see the British cars in use by United States troops in Germany, and each had special military plates for identification.



In south Arkansas, his car receives a lot of attention. He frequently is given thumbs-up displays of admiration, and motorists and truck drivers alike honk their horns in approval.

Major Hawkins has served in the following locations, in order, Fort Polk, Louisiana, Germany, California, Georgia, Missouri, Texas, Virginia, Egypt, Oklahoma, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Louisiana, a second time.

Following his first exposure to British cars in the captain's TR6 while in Germany in 1972 to 1976, Major Hawkins bought a 1972 MGB Roadster from another officer while stationed at Fort Leonard Wood in 1979 through 1981. While he later sold the MGB, his love of the British classics continued, and in 2024, he was fortunate find this TR250 on-line and to buy it from Pennsylvania Classic Automotive Dealership, of Morgantown, Pennsylvania, which shipped it to Dumas, at a shipping cost of \$1,200.



Major Hawkins has a certificate of authenticity by British Motor Industry Heritage Trust, "Certified Copy of a Factory Record." The certification document reflects that the paint is "Valencia Blue", with a tan interior and black roof. The car is immaculate. It came with a "Laminated windscreen, Heater, 185 x 15 Michelin X Redband tyres, Miles-per-hour speedometer, Jack, Tool roll, Spare wheel." It notes that the "hood colour also recorded as white." Finally, the document reflects, "This vehicle was shipped from the Navyard Wharf, Harwich, Essex aboard the vessel 'Wallenius Sailing'". The certificate shows that the date of build was March 27, 1968, and it was shipped on May 3, 1968 to Leyland Motor Group of North America, Jacksonville, Florida.

In starting the car, using its factory choke on this very cold January day in Dumas, its engine reverberates with the throaty sound typically heard with Triumphs. Major Hawkins primarily drives other cars but still takes the TR250 out from his garage weekly. If you see a green TR250 in south Arkansas, this is how it came to be here and is a beautiful sight on the country roads, in the midst of gorgeous fields stretching to the horizon in this part of the state.

About the author: Robert S. Tschiermer, is a member of the British Motoring Club of Arkansas. He and his wife Kimberly have five British sports cars. Robert has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism from 1978 at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Robert worked as a newspaper reporter at the St. Louis Argus, in St. Louis, and the Bolivar Commercial, in Cleveland Mississippi, where he was also a "stringer" for United Press International in Jackson. He returned to Arkansas and attended the Bowen School of Law, a part of the University of Arkansas, in Little Rock, from 1981-1984, where he was an assistant research editor on law review. Robert writes weekly case reviews under his name for the Arkansas Bar Association. His web site is [www.tschiermerlegalbriefing.com](http://www.tschiermerlegalbriefing.com)

**Congratulations to Major Hawkins on a splendid example that looks like a sure show-winner; check the engine compartment. And thanks to Robert Tschiermer for letting us use this article.**

## PREFACE

Part of the following article may be considered in poor taste. This story is about poor choices, bathrooms and the call of nature. Yrs. Trly is the only one who should be, and was, embarrassed.

## GOOD MECHANIC, BAD ARCHITECT

*Wil Wing*

Sometime in 1965, after leaving my partnership in Linden, NJ, I took a three-year shop lease in Edison. One of our foreign parts suppliers (mostly British parts) had a small addition to his warehouse available and thought having a dyno tune up shop on the premises would add to his prestige. Although the shop area was small, it certainly had advantages for me, with new parts only steps away, rather than waiting a day. It worked out fine, but by the end of my three year lease both the neighbors and my landlord were thoroughly sick of me. I was doing a lot of SCCA race car tuning and horsepower testing in an area with small businesses on the main street and a residential area behind me on the side street. At full throttle many of those cars could be heard blocks away and my landlord's counter men sometimes couldn't take orders on the phone. Everyone, including me, thought I should relocate to a more rural area.

About seven or eight miles south in No. Brunswick there was a 100 foot by 50 foot building that the owner wanted to divide and then lease half. It was an interesting story. The building faced the southbound lane of Rt.1, the main east-coast commercial highway (Maine to Florida) before the US Interstate highways. The other end of the building faced Livingston Ave., which ran south from downtown New Brunswick (home of Rutgers University and J&J headquarters) through North Brunswick (yes, North Brunswick was south of New Brunswick!) and finally terminated by blending into RT. 1 southbound just past that building.

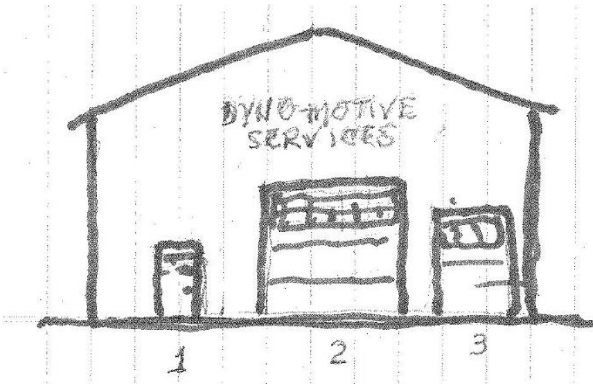
The whole area around there was, or had been, the property of the Orso family – a Studebaker assembly plant across the highway in the 'thirties (now Frito-Lay), a intermittently open golf driving range across from the building on Livingston Ave. and to the south the original Orso farmhouse and farm. And my landlord's home was to the north. Land rich by New Jersey, not Texas standards, but the brothers were all hard workers.

Anyway, Nunzie Orso and I agreed on a monthly rate and a length of lease. I ended up staying there exactly 20 years, from the spring of 1968 to 1988. The Livingston Ave. end of the building was formerly used for painting cars, but Nunzie, middle-aged, now concentrated on running his front end alignment shop and wheel balancing business. He also had rent coming in from the bar next door.

He divided the building in half and was very reasonable about later making changes to suit my needs – after I had proven myself as a reliably paying tenant! We got along well. I initially had to pay from a larger water line into the building and a larger water meter, needed for the dynamometer. Here is what the building looked like on my end:



- Door 1 – existing customer entrance.
- Door 2 – existing truck-size door. Manual!
- Door 3 – later added to allow driving straight onto and backing off of the chassis dyno.



This being my third shop setup, I was confident I knew how to organize things for efficiency. Let's take a look at the inside with a wide-angle lens:



1. Dynamometer rollers & machinery in floor
2. Engine analyzer for dyno use
3. Dyno meters readout suspended – road speed and horsepower
4. State approved exhaust gas analyzer
5. Parts room (behind)
6. Former service counter
7. Sun distributor machine below
8. Big lathe in front of van
9. Engine analyzer for shop use

This photo was taken in the 1970s, after I started working on American vehicles. During working hours, cars were angle-parked towards the left-hand wall.



We are standing at the opening of the large center door. Nunzie had a restroom built into the far-right corner for me, backed up to his restroom for the least plumbing expense. The service counter and small office were originally all the way at the rear, which frequently gave me a chance to appraise new customers as they walked in. And it was convenient to a hidden, loaded 12 gauge shotgun.

**“Oh”, you may be thinking, “a paranoid and a gun nut!” Not an unreasonable thought for us lucky enough to live in the civilized and civil parts of NW Arkansas. But imagine you were in business in North Little Rock, or Chicago or any other large city where some people migrate to be closer to their unemployment checks, a ready supply of hard drugs and lots of people to rob. There was one murder in the street directly in front my building, a customer from New Brunswick was shot dead reading the paper on his front porch during a drive-by shooting and the local papers had mayhem reports almost every day. No, my business was never robbed, just frequently vandalized by drunks. But Shirley came home from a quick grocery trip while a young thief, having broken into our house, was walking around looting with one of our big kitchen knives in hand. He was still in the house when she pulled into the garage. No confrontation, Thank God.**

So you see the shop was laid out for efficient service, but I stupidly put the service counter near the restroom! In the first year I had a couple of instances where my mechanics were out, no one was around and I had a sudden nature call. Soon a woman’s voice would be calling out “Hello? Is anyone here?” I’d say nothing unless they were exceptionally persistent – then I might shout out “FIVE MINUTES!” One woman started telling me about her car problems through the door! **Good grief!**

Most mothers would think little of changing her baby’s diapers and the foul smell, but with adults that odor is not something we want to share with those of the opposite sex!

I was soon framing out a new office and service counter in the opposite corner of the shop, near the customer’s door. I can’t say I lived happily ever after, but it did reduced the number of times I wanted to strangle my customers. But it was all my fault.

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### *Two short ones please, bartender*

## **Daydreaming**

Thinking of nothing important, I realize that I’ve owned four cars with free-standing headlamps. No, not suspended in space, I mean the old fashioned type that are not incorporated into the bodywork. I guess Pierce-Arrow was the first US car to blend headlamps into the front fenders, but free-standing headlamps were around for a long time. My personal examples, chronologically by ownership, were 1930 Packard, 1952 MG TD, 1931 R-R PII, and 1934 R-R 20/25. I don’t expect any more! It seems to me that one of those cars had shaky headlamps at night, but I can’t remember which one.

Having three examples from the 1930s seems natural enough, but what jumps out to me is that my MG was still using them in the 1950s, twenty two years after the year of my first car! You think maybe there is something to the British reputation for conservatism?

No sooner said than a British *radical* example pops to mind... the cross-eyed Morgan aerodynamic cars.

## **It's not a lie! It's a large humorous misrepresentation!**

Near the end of the 1970s I had finally finished the R-R Phantom II restoration and gotten it out of my life. The 20/25 had been sold years before. Shirley and I were making decent wages and we wanted a bigger property and mainly more privacy (neighbor's dogs barking 24/7, mostly) We lucked onto a beautiful wooded lot on a thirty foot cliff overlooking the Delaware and Raritan Canal (a NJ State Park), the towpath and the Raritan River beyond. Someone steered me to a good architect and we were on our way to our obligatory 'dream house on the water'.

We moved into the new house in 1980. Naturally, we soon had house warming parties with lots of friends and neighbors. One reaction I enjoyed and often got was "How can you ever afford this place?" – meaning, I think, "you are just a mechanic and a secretary" (and the speaker went to college). I loved that question and had my straight-faced answer ready, "***We made the hard sacrifices most people aren't willing to accept. We sold both of the Rolls and the Mercedes.***"

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## **January 18 brunch at Roaring River State Park**



The weather was clear, if cold. The roads were entertaining. The lodge is beautiful. The view is super. The food was initially hot and excellent, as always. Portions are self-served (large). The waitress was good. The coffee was pretty good. The photography is poor.

I'd willingly drive there just for the fluffy, homogenous, delicious scrambled eggs!

**Next year let's pay an extra \$5 per seating and maybe they will give us some heat!**

Wolfing down our food on a cold plate in a cold room was disappointing.

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