

***‘BRITISH’ September 2026***



***Betty White Auction MGA***

# ***‘BRITISH’***

>Well worth reading some of the time<

September 2026 Issue

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

## **Contact us**

**Our website: [www.britishironnwa.org](http://www.britishironnwa.org)**

**To contact our President: Brian Lea 918-440-9161 [brianlea@gmail.com](mailto:brianlea@gmail.com)**

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

**To contact the Editor:**

## **Monthly Meetings:**

At the All American Steak House and Sports Theater at 3942 W Sunset in Springdale. The second Thursday of the month, except for December.

## **Meeting Minutes:**

Brits in the Ozarks is next month! Registration increases in cost September 20<sup>th</sup>  
and 41 members are still not registered.

Continue to spread the word we are auctioning an MGA this year!

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Sun machine is still out for the count. We are getting closer to having to find a new solution.

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**NEWSLETTER HELP NEEDED! We still need an editor and another reporter.**

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Two club feather flags are here!

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**British Iron fundraiser at the Naturals September 13<sup>th</sup>.**

**\$6 of every ticket goes to the club!**

**Registration closes 11:59 on Friday September 11<sup>th</sup>.**

**See page 2 & 3.**

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Drive event to Lake Fort Smith 9:45am September 12<sup>th</sup> leaving from Drake Field.

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See upcoming events on page 4 or on our website. [Please RSVP for events.](#)

# Chairman's Corner

Brian Lea

My excitement towards the fundraiser with the Naturals extends farther than the fact that this fun social event raises money for our club. This event is a fantastic and easy way for us to grow our “brand awareness” that I have been talking about throughout the year. This event will get the club in front of thousands of people that aren't even aware our club exists. This could be potential future members, yes, but also business owners of future club or show partners. We all do things because we enjoy them, but my goal is to try and make these activities dual purpose.

With the baseball event, club flags, and running our social media pages (which have had over 26,000 visitors this month), I have been a little overwhelmed. With this I extend my apologies that my newsletter column has been taking a back seat. So, for this month I give you a list of questions that keep me up at night. Next time we see each other, I would love to discuss any of these!

What drives people to participate in a car club?

Are current members happy with what car clubs provide?

What are younger people looking for in a group? Or are they looking at all?

How do I give younger people the chance to fall in love with these cars?

Why don't more members want to attend drives or club activities?

Why don't clubs get 100% attendance of their members to their own show?

Are car shows dying?

What does the future of mechanic and restoration shops look like?

Will classic cars continue to be supported even if they aren't the most famous models?

Are there ways to prevent cars from continuing to become more fanatically out of r each?

Lastly, Brits in the Ozarks is quickly approaching with a registration price increase and removal of the free T-shirt going into effect after September 20<sup>th</sup>. Please sign up sooner rather than later! The show and Betty White (the MGA to be auctioned off) has been getting tremendous traction online.

## Brits in the Ozarks Schedule (October 22-24):

Thursday Drives: 9am

Torchy's Tacos Rogers Fundraiser: All day

Friday Drives: 9am

Friday Parking Lot Party: 6pm

Car Show: 10am – 2pm

Awards Dinner: 6pm





## ALL BRITISH CAR & CYCLE SHOW

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[britshironnwa.org](http://britshironnwa.org)

or contact

[britsintheoazarks@gmail.com](mailto:britsintheoazarks@gmail.com)

**Thursday Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

- ♦ 9 am: Driving tour –  
Holiday Inn departure
- ♦ 10 am – 9pm:  
Torchy's Tacos  
restaurant fundraiser

**Friday Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>**

- ♦ 9 am: Driving tour –  
Holiday Inn departure
- ♦ 6 pm: Cookout &  
preshow party –  
Holiday Inn

**Saturday Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>**

- ♦ 10 am – 2 pm: Show  
& silent auction
- ♦ 6 pm: Awards dinner  
& special guest talk –  
Holiday Inn



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# BEHIND THE WHEEL - from the right hand side

Bill Watkins

We have an album by Lyle Lovett that contains a song with the refrain “she wasn’t good, but she had good intentions”. That may accurately describe my changed plans for our trip to the Heartland All British Car & Cycle Show in the Kansas City area (actually, Merriam, Kansas) over the Labor Day weekend. I’ve never trailered a car to an event before and had planned to drive the Alvis on its first long adventure. But, the closer we got to the event date it seemed that the weather just got hotter. There came a point at which I became less concerned about the old car than the comfort of the old people (well, this old person) in the car. I decided to trailer the car to KC, ego be damned.

My Mercedes GLE350 has a stated towing capacity of 7700 pounds. I’ve pulled a heavy steel trailer loaded with rafting gear from here to Turner Bend (using I-49 and I-40) once before, so I felt pretty confident in its ability to make this trip. “My guy” Wade loaned me his 18 foot double axle car hauler for the task. The

Alvis weights 3250 pounds so I was confident that I would be within limits. The GLE 350 is the next-to-largest SUV Mercedes produces, if you ignore the G-Wagon, and is



powered by a 2 liter turbo four cylinder. I told Wade this and he became skeptical of its ability to handle the task. I am happy to report that the GLE made the trip in fine fashion, returning 15MPG and the temperature gauge never budged despite the heat. And the occupants remained comfortable!

At 11AM on Saturday, the 5th, Doug and Sharon Schrantz met us at our house with their rig pulling their freshly renovated XK 150 FHC and we started the journey. Lee and Karen Cowling met us in Neosho, pulling their hot rod TR6. An interesting convoy (Lee sent me a picture of the convoy but I could not work with the format. Apologies to Lee). We arrived in Merriam and checked into our hotel around 3:30, after a leisurely 60MPH drive.

After unloading the cars we drove to the show site in Merriam for the Friday night cook out and boot sale. Grilled hot dogs and lots of folks peddling their extra “inventory”. It was still hot. On the drive from the hotel to the site my navigation stopped giving verbal commands so Lisa was having to hold my phone while I tried to drive and look at it. I missed a couple of turns, resulting in some U-turns and backtracking. In this process Doug learned that his XK will overheat!

Sunday morning promised more heat as we headed back to the site for the actual car show. Lisa and I hit the lottery by being positioned right by a parking lot island with grass and trees and, therefore, plenty of shade. We hung out there all day and I enjoyed talking to all of the folks who wanted to know about the Alvis. It was a well run event and we enjoyed ourselves - but the heat was a bit oppressive. In the end, we won our class with the Alvis, but the only other vehicle on our class was a cute chartreuse Morris Minor panel van. Lee and Karen got first place in a tough TR6 class. Sadly for Doug, his great car was lumped in with the E-types and a glorious looking XK 140 MC roadster and he took home no hardware (well, plastic-ware).



The organizers had the good sense to wrap things up as soon as the votes were counted and we re-loaded the cars and headed home. The drive home was equally uneventful, with arrival around 5:00 is. Lisa and I were really glad that we had decided to trailer and, hard as it may be for my ego, I won't hesitate to do it again if conditions dictate. Unlike most of our road trips in the past,. This one came off without any issues or the usual adventures. A good trip..

## Club Staff

President – **Brian Lea**

Consigliere to the President – **Bill Watkins**

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

Membership and Treasurer – **Elaine Briggs**

Webmaster – **Brian Lea**

Events Coordinator – **Marcy Benham Davies**

Editor – ???

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## Coming Events Calendar

This is only the highlights. For more complete information, go to our website for times, starting points, etc. and to make reservations for activities when a headcount is needed.

[britishironnwa.org/events](http://britishironnwa.org/events) click on event for details.

| Month | Event Date | Description                                              |
|-------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| SEP   | 12         | Lake Fort Smith<br>Meetup<br>Mountainburg                |
|       | 13         | British Iron Fundraiser<br>at the Naturals<br>Springdale |
| OCT   | 4          | Special Blacktop<br>Rogers                               |
|       | 18         | Show work party                                          |
|       | 22-24      | Brits in the Ozarks<br>Fayetteville                      |



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# Mark Brewer Lives Longer in a Series Eight (C8) Corvette.

David Paul

As a child, I remember traveling residential streets in the family's 1953 Buick Road Master. We would come to a stop, and my mother's arm would swing out in front of me keep me from sliding forward. What's a seat belt? When both mom and dad were in the front seat, I would be in the backseat with my brothers for "safety". What's a kid car seat? We were jumping around on the wool fabric covered backseat. All of the internal surfaces of older cars were hard metal. The classic MGs, the Triumphs, the Healeys, the Jaguars, the Lotus, and the Rolls have those beautiful curves, a historical uniqueness, with a heavy portion of sentimental memories poured over them. But safe in an accident? Not so much.

Here is the physics:

If you don't want to read about the physics, just skip over this and read the ***bold-italics*** portion at the bottom of if this section.

When a car and passengers are moving at speed car and occupants have energy due to motion. If the car hits something solid, all of that energy of motion must somehow be dissipated. There are two aspects of this energy dissipation. The cars energy,  $E$ , can be transferred into breaking the wall, the other car, or bending the metal of the car, which is key. All this metal crushing dissipates energy reducing the size of  $E$ , Force of the impact, ie how hard the is the whack, is given by  $E = F \text{ times } d$  or  $E = Fd$  for us nerds.  $F$  is the force or how hard it the car hits the object, and also how hard the passengers hit the to inside panels of the car. The deceleration distance  $d$ , is the "crushing distance", the distance travelled between the solid object when the car comes to a stop. The size of  $d$  is the secrete to saving lives. Old cars were ridged, and in an accident, the car maybe gets smash-in a foot. The distance for deceleration is this foot;  $d$  is there, but small, so the force  $F$  is still big. The occupants smash into hard steel interior panels of the old car with a big force. If you can dissipate the energy over a longer distance, i.e. larger  $d$ , the force will not be as great. For example, if  $E = Fd$ , set  $E = 10$ , you can make 10 by having a force of 10 and a deceleration distance of 1.  $E = 10 \text{ times } 1$ . But if you can lengthen the deceleration distance to 5, the resulting impact force is reduced to 2, or  $10 = E = 2 \text{ times } 5$ . Modern cars are equipped with "crumple zones", bumpers that dissipate energy and engines that drop to the ground so the whole front of the car is allowed to crumple. All this metal crushing is not only dissipating energy, reducing the size of  $E$ , but also increases the distance for deceleration from 1 foot in the old car to 5 feet in the modern car, the distance from the front bumper to the windshield. The deceleration distance is larger in modern cars, and the force of the impact in this example is now 5 times smaller than the older car. ***The take home message is that the modern car is destroyed in an accident so you won't be. Add seat belts and airbags and you're about as safe as it gets.***

About the Chevrolet Corvette

Zora Arkus-Duntov, a Belgian engineer of Russian descent, who joined Chevrolet in 1953, he is considered to be the father of the Chevrolet Corvette. His early models, starting with the C1, were equipped with a 235cu line-six rated at 150 hp. As the years passed, each Corvette series advanced with more powerful engines and more features added. Major body style changes occurred in 1963 (C2), 68(C3), 83(C4-7), and 2020(C8). Arkus-Duntov proposed the idea of a mid-engined Corvette and developed a prototype in 1959. It never made it into production, and all Corvettes from 1953 to 2019 were front engine cars. Arkus-Duntov died in 1996, not living to see the mid-engine Corvette finally appearing with the C8 in 2020. C2-7 Corvettes were fast and powerful cars, but the mid-engine configuration made the C8 a super-car; stepping it up to be stable mates with Porsche, Dr. Hess and Linda's Lotus, and Ferrari.

Mark Brewer's Story

In 2021 Mark was delivered a Corvette C8 convertible with a Z51 performance package, vertical doors, seat belts, roll bar, lots of crumple zones, and specialty glass that does not shatter. On (month and year?) Mark was touring his C8 alone with the top and driver's window down, and the passenger window up. A car the caliber of a C8 can routinely take curves at twice the recommended speed or more. You don't even feel any centripetal



force. Mark is just driving the car as it was intended to be driven. Going around a curve at only twice the recommended speed, he swerved to avoid a dog. The car then found some gravel and dove backwards into a ravine. The car rolled end over end twice before coming to a stop at the bottom of the ravine. The seat belt cinched down automatically, and the crumple zones did their job. The left side and steering-wheel airbags deployed. When the car stopped, the fuel system shut off within 15 seconds to avoid the possibility of a fire. This level of technology is such that the car talks to you. The car informed Mark that the car was rolling over as it went down the ravine. The car was also linked to his cell phone and asked if he needed medical attention, Mark replied, "No".

Mark asked "Where is my phone?" The answer came back. The car then called the sheriff and three people on his contact list informing them of the accident and giving GPS coordinates of the location.

By design, the C8 was destroyed, and by design Mark got out of the car to climb up the ravine on all fours. He was scratched up but no worse for wear. Had he been driving a classic 1961 Corvette, you would not be seeing him a club meetings anymore. 60 years of automotive safety development paid off.

For myself, I doubt I would have the presence of mind to do all the things Mark's Corvette did for him during the accident. As far as safety goes, technology is a wonderful thing. Are we going to dissolve the Club because our motoring passions are unsafe? No way. So am I going to give up restoring my MGA because it was not supplied with seat belts? No chance. Life is full of risks and the excitement that goes with it. I will add the seat belts to the MGA.

# Cough-ee (As they say in New Jersey)

**Don't expect conventional opinions.**

**Wil Wing**

Intro: Two Scotsmen are in a bar having a friendly but intense discussion on the merits of their favorite whiskeys. They argue about barley varieties, water source, cask wood and aging, yeasts strains and terroir, neither willing to make any concessions. Then, after a conversational lull, one guy blurts out, "I like mine with lots of ice, mixed with Cherry Coke and two maraschino cherries. How do you take yours?"

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I don't remember coffee in the house growing up. Either my parents don't drink it regularly, or I've just forgotten. My 'addiction' started in the Air Force, trying to stay alert studying an oscilloscope for eight hours – that is, if our relief plane was on time.

In my twenties and thirties, on the east coast, '*Dunkin' Doughnut*' shops were everywhere and that was the standard for good coffee. Not the best, but good. These days in Arkansas and most everywhere else, *Starbucks* is the standard. Why, I'll never know. Here is their recipe, as far as I can tell; Take one ashtray full of weeks-old cigarette butts. Add boiling water and filter out the large chunks. Sip and throw up... or enjoy? Not me.

I was very pleased when the first *Dunkin' Doughnuts* opened on Rt.102 in Rogers 5-10 years ago. One of our cultural shocks in the early years here was places like *Daylight Donuts*. Amazingly cheap donuts compared to the east coast, and then we'd sip the coffee when it cooled down. Good grief! Dishwater. We found that Middle America likes almost everything insipid or bland. Gummy bread and rolls, for instance. I guess I must mention *Crispy Cream* doughnuts. What a terrific name! But I call them 'soggy-too-sweet'. My desire to avoid mixing excess sugar with diabetes may be the problem there.

The Internet tells us that the best coffee beans are grown in a belt around the earth and at higher altitudes. They mention such places as Ethiopia, central Africa, Colombia, Central America, etc. Years ago, someone from the club told me about Hawaiian coffee, Kona, which has a rich flavor, but is less acidic. Not bad. I have tried coffee beans from the 'Prime' countries and have been disappointed. But then, those beans might have sat in their open bins for years.

Full disclosure: There are things I won't try. For instance, no matter how fond you may be of monkey poop, I have no interest in the fad for coffee beans that have passed through a monkey's digestive tract. A few years ago, a friend told me he would try anything once – call me a wuss if you like, but that's not my style. Also, I should explain, I've no desire for sweet, trendy concoctions. Frappe, latte, and all the buzz words young women spout off make me wince. I like straight, black coffee. I have had superior coffee in fine restaurants, but have been unable to duplicate the experience at home. It's kind of discouraging.

The Onyx coffee place in downtown Rogers has a top rating in the area, but I've no idea who does the ratings, except they must be under twenty-five years of age. What a rotten experience! Noisy, confusion and all the coffee seem to be various concoctions. My choice was the most expensive undrinkable stuff I've thrown away recently.

Oh, well. I think it is time for a cup of pretty good coffee. Mine comes exclusively from Columbia and is called *Dunkin' Doughnuts*, available by the bag, whole bean or pre-ground, in Walmart. 'Outstanding' seems to be too elusive for me.

OK, you may be thinking, “What has all this to do with British cars and touring?” Thought you’d never ask. Mixing coffee into the equation results in more stops and slightly slower trips, at least for me. I don’t care! I’ve done fast and have trophies to prove it. Yes, they are very old trophies.

P.S. If you know of premium coffee beans available in NWA, please let me know your favorite. If you put sugar or flavored ‘creamers’ in your coffee, please just ignore that request.