



*smoke in the wires*

September '25



# From the President

Paul Reese (pbca1president@gmail.com)

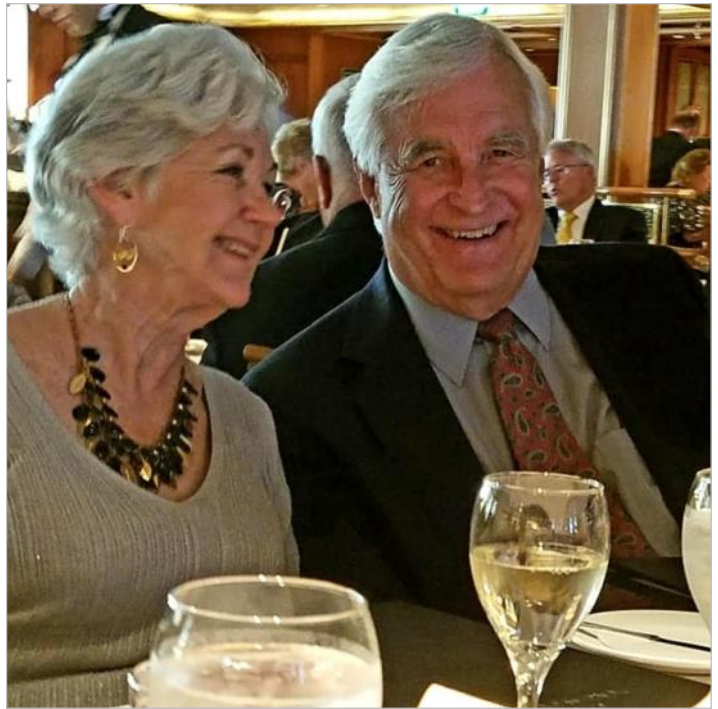
## Are You Ready for a Bed Race?

If you have not already heard, our 2026 Car Show (April 17 and 18) will include Family Promise, a non-profit homeless family support program. Family Promise has rented Fountain Park, but has been very positive about working with us during the show. They will have a fundraising bed race on Zaragoza St, the street that runs between Fountain Park and Seville Quarter. Here's a [link](#) to their Bed Race event.

Other news is that **Curt Derby** has graciously been coerced into doing our show artwork. It was the only way he could get his MGTD back from the Manske Garage after the last tech day.

Curt was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. His father worked for General Electric and after WWII, his family moved to Ohio, where his father was involved in the development of the first US jet engines. Curt worked in the area as a commercial artist. He retired in 1999 and moved

to Pensacola where his daughter lives. Curt continued to paint using watercolors and displayed them in Pensacola-area galleries. He is currently worked on a painting for the [Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum](#) in Coshocton, Ohio, where he and his family lived for more than 40 years..



Curt and Midge (photo from Curt's Facebook page)



Curt's MGTD was part of the display of MGs through the 100 years of the marque's history at the 2023 SABCC show (photo by Robb Ogletree, SABCC).

Curt was married to the love of his life, Midge, for 67 years. Sadly, Midge passed away in December 2023. She was survived by Curt, their daughter Hillary Hughes, son Daniel Derby, five grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren. Their older daughter, Lynn, died in 2013.

Thank you Curt again for doing the show artwork.

Cheers,

**Paul Reese**, President, PBCA

# Activities Calendar

**September 15, 2025**

## Monthly Club Meeting

Ace's Hangar Southern Grill and Bar, 3966 Avalon Blvd, Milton, 32583. Eat at 6:00, meet at 7:00.

**September 19, 2025**

## Monthly Tech Session

Manske Garage, 6129 Dutch Way, Milton, 32570, 10:30-ish.

**September 27, 2025**

## Big Daddy's Run

Watch your email for more details.

**October 11, 2025**

## Dog Daze Rally

Watch your email for more details.

**October 17 and 18, 2025**

## British Car Festival

Fairhope United Methodist Church; Fri. dinner 6:30 p.m.; field opens at 9:00 a.m. Sat.

**October 20, 2025**

## Monthly Club Meeting

Ace's Hangar; eat at 6:00, meet at 7:00.

**October 24, 2025**

## Monthly Tech Session

Manske Garage, 10:30-ish.

**October 25, 2025**

## Lillian "Best of Decades" Car Show

Lillian Methodist Church, 12770 S Perdido St, Lillian, AL 36549, 8:00 a.m., \$25 by Oct. 13 or \$30 thereafter.

## September 2025

SUN MO TUE WE TH FRI SAT

1 2 3 4 5 6

7 8 9 10 11 12 13

14 15 16 17 18 19 20

CLUB  
MEETING

TECH  
SESSN.

21 22 23 24 25 26 27

BIG  
DADDY'S

28 29 30

## October 2025

SU MO TUE WE TH FRI SAT

1 2 3 4

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DOG  
DAZE

12 13 14 15 16 17 18

SABCC SHOW,  
FAIRHOPE, AL

19 20 21 22 23 24 25

CLUB  
MEETING

TECH  
SESSN. LILLIAN  
SHOW

26 27 28 29 30 31

## Welcome New Members

Emily Sheffer and Marc Stone joined Panhandle British Car Association in August, They own a 1977 MGB roadster.

## Club Resource Directory

With help from many of you, our SABCC/PBCA Resource Directory has been updated. It lists vendors, shops, and other resources both local and outside the region. A copy was sent to everyone on the club email list, but if you for some reason did not receive it, please [contact Ed](#). We are also getting it added to the club website.

## smoke in the wires

is a publication of the Panhandle British Car Association and is published monthly for the benefit of PBCA members. Permission to use this material by other British car club publications is granted provided credit is given to **smoke in the wires**.



Address comments or submissions to **Michael King**, Editor, at [smokeinthewires@gmail.com](mailto:smokeinthewires@gmail.com).

Membership in PBCA is open to anyone with an interest in classic or modern British cars, and dues are only \$20 per year. To join, visit [www.pbca1.com](http://www.pbca1.com).

## British Car Festival 2025 Celebrating The Morgan Motor Company



Saturday, October 18, 2025

Fairhope, Alabama

South Alabama British Car Club

Promoting and Preserving Classic British  
Cars Since 1990

[Registration](#) is open, and [sponsorships](#) are being accepted. Please visit the [SABCC website](#) for more details.

## PBCA Club Officers

President	Paul Reese
Vice President	Paul Salm
VP/ Activities	Tim Witzigreuter
Secretary	Monica Bachmann
Treasurer	Karen Ianniello
Technical Director	George Bruno
Membership	Tim Garrold
Webmaster	Mike Japp
Communications	Michael King
Public Relations	Tom Schmitz
Parliamentarian	Taber Tompkins
Show Chair	Tim Witzigreuter



# Tight Connections

## Club and Member News

### Hadji Shriners Show

story by *Paul Reese*

Benefitting the Shriner's Hospitals, the Hadji Temple on Nine Mile Road hosted a Gumbo Cook-off, BBQ, Arts & Crafts show, and a Car Show with over 100 participants. It was a beautiful day with lots of beautiful cars. Several PBCA members participated.

First place went to **Dwyke Rushing** in his MGTD with the Stroker 383 V8. It does not have your daddy's tailpipes. Second place was **Tom Schmitz** with **Bob Manske's** former Jaguar XKR. **Jack** and **Sarah Cowsill** in their TR6, **Charley Dempsey** and his Triumph Spitfire, **Rich** and **Darla Willows** in their Austin-Healey 3000, and I with the MGA were all runners-up to the British Class first- and second-place cars.



*Dwyke's slightly-modified MGTD took Best in Class honors.*

I forgot to take any pictures at the show but did get a photo of Tom Schmitz safely making it home with his trophy. The first-place trophy was unique in that it was a polished 50mm



*Tom Schmitz and his Jaguar XKR (nee' Bob Manske)*

spanner. Part of the engraving is shown in the picture I've also included a picture of the awesome "Not Your Daddy's MGTD."



*Polished, engraved spanners served as the Best in Class trophies.*



## Fancy Friday

*photos by Gail Sanders*

PBCA resumed an old tradition by hosting a "Fancy Friday" dinner at Global Grill on August 29. "Fancy Friday" involves making a group reservation for members at a restaurant that might be a little more "upscale" than where most of us go on a regular basis. **Paul Salm** coordinated the event, and provided this list of attendees:

- **Joan and Taber Tompkins**
- **Melissa and Bill Silhan**
- **Lee and Paul Salm**



- **Fred and Toni Veenschoten**
- **Gail and Keith Sanders**, and their cousin Myrna from Mobile
- **Karen and Joe Ianniello**
- **Cindra and David Anderson**
- **Sarah and Jack Cowsill**
- **Tom Schmitz**

*Top left, a group shot: bottom left, **Paul Salm and Tom Schmitz**; top right, **Keith Sanders** and cousin Myrna; bottom left, **Joan and Taber Tompkins**.*

# Wiring Diagrams

Tech, Tools, and Tips

## Two-Day Tech Day

story by *Tim Witzigreuter*

August's Tech Day was a two-day event. The projects were **Curt Derby's** MGTD, which had a non-starting problem, more work on **Monica Bachmann's** MGB, and my MGB's overheating issue.

**Fred Veenschoten**, **Joe Stephens**, and **Jack Cowsill** were under the hood both days on Curt's TD and it is now starting and running like new. Joe, Fred, **Eddie Toenes** and new members **Emily Sheffer** and **Marc Stone** were working on Monica's MGB. Jack helped me to remove water pump, thermostat, and expansion tank on my MGB Friday. On Saturday the new parts went on my car, and it ran too cool, so the determination was made that I needed 180-degree thermostat vs. the 160-degree we put in.



A crowd gathers around **Curt Derby's** MGTD, which was having trouble starting [sort of like me sometimes-Ed.]. Curt is second from left. (photo by **Monica Bachmann**)

Lots of camaraderie and laughter were had by all in attendance. Thank you, **Bob** and **Risa Manske**, for your hospitality and the awesome garage in which we do the work. The next

scheduled Tech Day is September 19th. I'm hoping my car isn't on the to-do list this time!

## A word from Fred on the MGB engine transplant:

A huge happening today at the Manske shop. After nearly a year of off and on activity we finally finished (almost) the engine swap in Monica's MGB. With assistance from **Eddie Toenes**, **George Bruno**, and **Bob Manske**, we got every thing hooked up, oiled up and watered down. It took a little coaxing but the engine finally fired off. **Jack Rowles** had donated his project car to the club and this engine had not run for some 20 years. It sounds strong, has good oil pressure and no smoke!



Has it really been just eight months since **Monica Bachmann** was prepping her new engine? (photo by **Bob Manske**)



# Spare Wires

## News on British Cars and the Hobby

### Captive Imports: The British Cars Sold by American Marques

*story and pictures by Rodney McDonald, SABCC*

There has always been a market for smaller cars in the USA and a number of automakers built cars here to meet the need. Prior to World War II, the American Austin Car Company produced cars under license from the British Austin Motor Company. Going bankrupt in 1934, its assets were purchased and rebranded American Bantam Car Company. It gained some fame as the designer of the World War II Jeep.

But, we want to take a look at those “captive imports;” i.e., cars built overseas by subsidiaries of American manufacturers specifically for their home markets. Some of them came to the US to be sold alongside their American stablemates as small second cars for prosperous postwar buyers.



1949 Ford Prefect (H&H Auctions)

Ford of Britain led the way starting in 1948 by setting up a North American sales office to explore the US market to help carry out the UK government’s “Export or Die” order, to bring in

desperately-needed foreign currency to settle its war debts.

Ford of Britain worked with US Ford dealers and found orders for over 12,000 UK-built Anglias, Prefects and Thames vans the first year of operation. By the mid-1950s, “English Fords” were accepted as more conventional than some of the oddities coming out of France and Germany at the time. In 1959, Ford sold over 42,000 UK-built



1959 Ford Prefect

cars in the US alone.

The rakish 105E Anglia brought styling similar to that seen in late-1950s Detroit Ford products. Built to a price, Anglias were on most buyer’s



1960 Ford Anglia (Flickr user autohistorian)

lists for that second car that marked a certain social status. Later, the larger Cortina hit the US

*(story continues next page)*



## Captive Imports, continued

market and found sales success with both the Mark I and Mark II versions with sales peaking in 1968 at over 22,000 cars. US sales of UK-built Fords was ended in 1970 with the introduction of the US-built Ford Pinto.



*Ford Cortina Mk II (Brightwells Classics)*

Although a little later to the game than Ford, General Motors needed to find an offering for smaller car buyers as well. Pontiac was designated as the US seller for GM's captive import: Vauxhall's Victor Super.



*Vauxhall Victor Super (Wikipedia)*

US Vauxhall imports began in 1957 with the Victor saloon and estate body styles. GM arranged for 1,500 cars per month to be brought into the US with retail prices starting at just over \$1,800 (or about \$21,000 in today's money). The Vauxhall Victor's style was somewhat reminiscent of Chevrolet's "Tri-Five" series of sedans, which gave them a bit of panache in American buyer's eyes.

By 1961, the Vauxhall party was pretty much over. GM introduced their line of "compact" cars and Pontiac's Tempest offered more room, comfort and power than the British alternative. Today, US-specification Vauxhalls are indeed rare.

To not leave out our Mopar fans, we have the Plymouth Cricket. Coming along much later than the initial wave of captive imports, the Cricket was a product of Chrysler-owned Rootes Group in the UK. Known there for marques such as Humber, Sunbeam, Hillman and Commer, Chrysler chose the Hillman Avenger to become Plymouth's captive import.



*Plymouth Cricket (Flickr user philippos)*

The 1971 rollout of the Cricket resulted in sales of 28,000 cars. Soon, customer complaints of poor workmanship, rough running and worst of all, body corrosion caused the Cricket to be struck from many buyer's shopping lists. No amount of "groovy"-themed advertising could divert attention from the car's poor reputation in the market. Fewer than 14,000 Crickets found buyers in 1973 when Chrysler pulled the plug on the Cricket.

Soon, Chrysler would sell the Rootes Group – by then renamed Chrysler Europe – and all of its marques to Peugeot-Citroen.

*[Rodney sent some vintage ads for the "captives;" they're on the next two pages-Ed.]*



# The Finest Examples of British Good Taste and Craftsmanship . . .

## VAUXHALL Victor Super

Behold the low and lovely lines of this elegant successor to the American-made-the-overseas Vauxhall Super. It's got an eye for beauty, a taste for luxury—and a shrewd appreciation for value, then this is your car!

The Englishmen who make this Vauxhall fully understand American demands for convenience and comfort. You'll find superior roominess for feet . . . vacation-size luggage space . . . panoramic windshield and rear window . . . and American style graphics.

**VICTOR SUPER** offers you a choice of seven long-lasting exterior colors: Black, Silver Grey, Royal Blue and Kewanna Green. Four-tone exterior color combinations include Royal Blue, Silver Grey and Kewanna Green with Regency Green interior body.

## VAUXHALL Victor Estate Wagon

As England's most popular all-purpose conveyance, this lively new Estate Wagon widens horizons, gives new meaning to the word versatility. Just in a twinkling, you can convert from handsome five passenger sedan to useful load carrier—with 3 thousand wonderful uses.

Note its big 8-door convenience . . . its smart long, low lines. You'll discover there's a dashing new look and elegant style in the . . . new streamlined design and four parking lamp assembly . . . new wrap-around bumpers that offer effective side as well as front and rear protection.

**VICTOR ESTATE WAGON** offers you a choice of four solid exterior colors: Black, Silver Grey, Royal Blue and Kewanna Green. Four-tone exterior color combinations include Royal Blue, Silver Grey and Kewanna Green with Regency Green interior body.

## beautifully styled inside and out!

British good taste and craftsmanship are reflected in every line of the Vauxhall. Exteriors achieve that graceful, low styling without the slightest sacrifice to space or comfort. The body work is tight, exact, solid. There are four easy-to-enter doors. Interiors reveal the best of traditional tailoring and painstaking hand work.



## COMPARE VAUXHALL FOR VALUE

A Quality Product of England Since 1904—Your Best Import Buy!

### AUTOMATIC FUEL ECONOMY

—Don't let performance and economy get you to appreciate whatever you travel. With big bore and short stroke design, Vauxhall's exciting new 4-cylinder "over-square" engine offers you efficient high speeds in low gear ratios. In low gear and low speed, it has a 100% torque reserve and a 100% torque reserve.



### FULL INSTRUMENTATION FOR EVERY NEED

—Vauxhall's smartly styled instrument cluster is easier to see and better easy reach. State the American way, I want to know what's going on inside each hour . . . the standard type American instrument cluster is easy to see.

And, you're sure to appreciate the panoramic view ahead that affords unsurpassed vision . . . its hands free-to-use heater, radio, heater, and heater panel (standard at no extra cost).



### A CHOICE OF INTERIOR TRIM AND COLOUR

—Vauxhall Super offers choice of interior color and trim—standard or all-weather, or fabric and leather. And, you're sure to appreciate the panoramic view ahead that affords unsurpassed vision . . . its hands free-to-use heater, radio, heater, and heater panel (standard at no extra cost).

There's no silliness mounted on the back of the front seat. The rear door handles have "true wheeling" safety lock buttons—on their panels especially appropriate. Also, four cornering for Super model is outside front, carpet rear (rubber mat, front and rear in Estate Wagon).

# VAUXHALL

Sold and Serviced by Pontiac Dealers Throughout America!

## . . . trim, taut and precision-built!



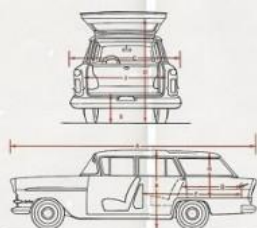
### Converts Either Way In Seconds!

Looks over—and it's! Just lift the rear seat—push forward against the back of the front seat. Then, lower back of rear seat—down all doors. In 30 seconds, you have a two-door model. Or, you can convert it back to a four-door model in 30 seconds. It's that easy. (Note: Rear seat is not to be used as a seat. It is for storage only.)

EXTERIOR DIMENSIONS	
A. Overall length	187.7 in.
B. Overall width (excluding mirrors)	68.3 in.
C. Overall height	61.8 in.
*Wheelbase	109.8 in.
*Track (front and rear)	59.1 in.
Minimum ground clearance (3-point, level)	6.3 in.
D. Head room, under lowest set door (height)	65.3 in.
E. Rear loading height (curb weight)	53.5 in.
*Landing rails	34 in.
INTERIOR DIMENSIONS	
Head room (passengers uncompressed) (front seat)	54.2 in.
Leg room (front seat)	42.8 in.
Trunk room (rear seat)	28.8 in.
*Hip room (front seat)	52.8 in.
*Trunk seat	52.8 in.

LOAD SPACE DIMENSIONS	
F. Floor length (rear seat folded down)	63.5 in.
G. Floor length (front seat folded down)	40.5 in.
H. Maximum cargo area length at floor	25.0 in.
I. Maximum cargo area width at floor	52.0 in.
J. Tail door opening width (maximum)	36.0 in.
K. Tail door opening height (maximum)	17.0 in.
L. Cargo capacity of load space limited by weight and distribution. Always use proper tie-down technique. See label for load capacity and distribution. Always use proper tie-down technique. See label for load capacity and distribution.	2,000 lb.
M. Cargo weight (Super)	2,000 lb.
N. Gross weight (Super)	2,000 lb.

You'll love the Vauxhall Estate Wagon for a million reasons! It's neat, compact—and so mighty quiet. Yet, this double-duty beauty affords you access of carrying space plus the convenience and reliability of a sedan! There's easy access to all load areas through rear doors as well as tail gate . . . a big, counterpaneled tail door that can be opened with one hand! And, it maneuvers like a dream.



This Vauxhall Victor brochure from 1960 emphasized the "good taste" of the British-built car, but according to the "Curbside Classic" blog, the car suffered from corrosion issues, was slow, and at \$2000 for the saloon and \$2400 for the estate, was priced close to contemporary full-sized Fords and Chevrolets. Contrast this to the Cricket (see ad, next page), which sold for \$1915 eleven years later, compared to \$1780 for the base model VW Beetle.



# Cricket. (Chirp, Chirp)

All-new from Plymouth. The little car that can. \$1915\*.

Happy day. Plymouth comes through with the little car that can.

Which means you can, too . . . Have more fun. Get good economy.

And have some nice things you can't have in some of the other import-sized cars.

Because we've taken some extra steps. We made our new Cricket a four-door,

and gave it the kind of tender lovin' engineering care we put into all our cars.

At a sacrifice of economy? No way. Cricket's priced down at \$1915\*.

To sacrifice fun? Just the opposite. We've expanded it. Gone to four doors, with safety locks to keep kids in. No climbing over other passengers. No lifting packages over the front seat. Everybody's happy.

You can park Cricket like the little car it is; ride in it like the bigger car it isn't. You can get good gas mileage from its thrifty Four. Choose from an optional

automatic or manual transmission.

There's standard power disc brakes up front. And 14 cubic feet of trunk space in back.

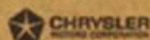
If nothing else, depend on this: Cricket is Chrysler-engineered, Chrysler-built—and that can make all the difference.

Cricket. Available at selected Plymouth Dealers\*.

\*Manufacturer's suggested retail price for a Cricket. Price excludes state and local taxes, destination charges, and suggested dealer new-car preparation charges. Whitewalls shown are \$28.65 extra.



**Coming  
Through.**





## SABCC's Newest Taxi Owners

*story and photo by Mac McNamara*

Kathy and I are the new owners of Peter Lee's FX4 (London Taxi). We will be working towards making the driving car stop easier than it does right now. We discovered the front brakes are not engaging when the pedal was pushed. By



the show, one of us should be able to drive the car to the Fairhope show (and stop once there) while the other brings the Anglia. We may not be able to give Bob Zabzdyr. a run for the money, but one day, we may be able to say it is comparable. I took a note from some of the *Motor Trend* car fix-it shows and wrote a bunch of stuff to do onto the windshield. (That will ensure the front window is clean at the show, at least!)

### The History of the Austin FX4

*(excerpted from an article on the London Vintage Taxi Association website)*

In 1958, the most famous of all London taxis, the Austin FX4, was introduced. It remained in production, with various modifications, for 39 years. This wasn't because it was such a good vehicle—it had many shortcomings—but because neither Mann and Overton, Carbodies nor Austin could find the money to replace it in the troubled economy of the 1970s and 1980s.

Carbodies made two attempts to produce a taxi of their own, the FX5 of 1978 and the CR6 of 1982, but neither went into production. In 1982, Carbodies bought the production rights to the

FX4 from Austin's owner, British Leyland. In 1985, Carbodies' owner, Manganese Bronze Holdings Plc purchased Mann and Overton and formed London Taxis International Plc (LTI) and they developed three new versions of the FX4 with Land Rover engines, being the FX4R, the FX4S, the FX4S-Plus. The final version, the Fairway of 1989, was powered by a 2.7 litre Nissan engine and was considered to be the best version of all. Production of the Fairway ended in 1997 after a total of more than 75,000 FX4s had been built.

## Auction Roundup: London Taxis

### 1967 Austin FX4



**Sold** for \$14,175 on Hemmings

*This taxi, powered by an Austin 2.2-liter gas engine, was extensively refurbished by the seller over a ten-year period. The only noted flaw was that the meter did not work.*

### 2003 LTI TXII London Taxi



**Sold** for \$4,000 on Bring a Trailer

*London Taxis International introduced the TX-series to replace the FX4; this car was built for the North American market. Powered by a Ford Diesel, it had several issues.*

### 1949 Nuffield Oxford Taxi



**Sold** for \$17,500 on Bring a Trailer

*This FX4 predecessor with a Morris 1.8-liter four was in top condition, as reflected by the winning bid.*



## History of the Bugeye Sprite

*adapted from a presentation by Robert  
"Bugeye Bob" Willsie*

*[The Bugeye Sprite is the featured car at the PBCA 2026 Brits by the Bay show. Member Bob Willsie made a presentation on the car at the August PBCA meeting. It's recapped here for those that missed it.-Ed.]*

The Austin-Healey Sprite Mark 1, known as the "Bugeye" in the US and the Frogeye in the UK, was introduced in 1958 and sold for three (model) years, when it was replaced by the "square Sprite" and its platform mate, the MG Midget. Sprites remained in production until 1971, while the Midget soldiered on until 1979.

The Sprite resulted from a "meeting of minds" with the goal of making a cheap sports car. The conspirators were Leonard Percy Lord, President of British Motor Corporation (BMC), and Donald Healey, champion rally driver and designer, and their target was a sports car for the price of a Morris Minor (£600 in 1956, or roughly £19,000 or \$26,000 US today.)

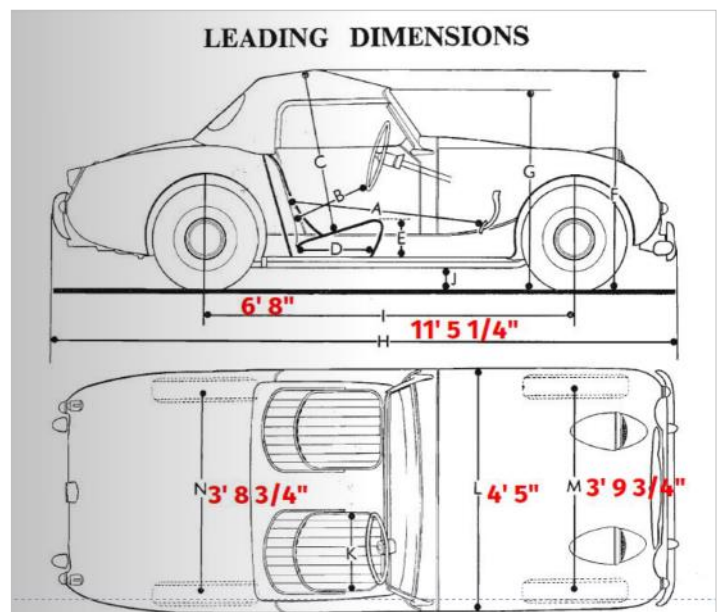
Primary design duties were turned over to Geoffrey Healey, Donald's son, with chassis work by Battle Bilbie and body by Gerry Coker, designer of the Austin-Healey 100. They were told to make it simple and inexpensive to produce, out of components already in BMC production.



*The Bugeye's fac was the result of serendipitous cost-cutting.*

The original design was to have rotating headlights for a streamlined hood. That lasted until the first cost accountant showed up and left us with the grinning face (and fixed headlights) we see today.

Power [a relative term-Ed.] was by the 948cc Type A Engine, a four-cylinder, overhead valve mill. Fuel was fed through twin 1 1/8" (HS2) SU carburettors. The engine produced 43 horsepower at 5,500 rpm, and 52 lb-ft of torque at 3,300 rpm. This was sent to the rear driving wheels via a 4-speed 'box, with synchromesh in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th gears only. The hydraulic clutch master cylinder was in the same body as the brake master cylinder, and actuated a Borg & Beck single dry plate clutch of 6 1/4" (16 cm) diameter. The throw-out bearing was carbon graphite or copper graphite. The rear axle, with a 9/38 ratio, was described as "3/4 floating" perhaps because it hangs off the 1/4 elliptical springs.



*Key dimensions of the Bugeye*

In the front, the car's independent suspension featured coil springs, solid upper coil mounts, floating wishbone (A-frame) lower coil mounts,

*(story continues next page)*

## History of the Bugeye, continued

and lever shock absorbers. Steering was rack-and-pinion, and drum brakes were used. Out back, 10-leaf 1/4 elliptical rear springs were used, with one end socketed into the body and the other attached to the axle. Radius arms prevented axle roll. As with the front, the rear had lever shock absorbers and drum brakes. The parking brake was a manual link.



*The 943 engine*

The Sprite featured monocoque or “uni-body” construction, meaning no traditional frame was under the body. Frame rails and cross members were used for the engine mounts and front suspension. The floor pans, driveshaft tunnel, sills, and the cockpit and rear bulkheads are main structural components. Both footwells are punched for easy building of left-hand or right hand-drive versions. The spare tire goes in the “boot area” behind the seats, and the cars did not have a trunk (boot) lid. so good luck on finding anything other than the spare tire that gets put into the boot area.

Early cars had nine studs on top of the windscreen for attaching a hood (top); later cars had

slots on top of the windscreen. Hard tops and tonneau covers were “accessories.”



*Top, a needy Bugeye; middle, the first production Sprite, ANL/501, which needs nothing; bottom, Bugeyes remain popular in vintage racing events.*

According to Wikipedia, 48,987 Mark 1 Sprites were produced. The cars remain popular despite their low power output and “basic” construction, usually commanding much higher prices than later “square” Sprites and Midgets.



# Wire Nut

Michael King, Editor, "Smoke in the Wires"

## Resources

Last month, I asked you to send me updates to our club resource directory, a compendium of parts houses, mechanics, trim shops, and other resources you might need to restore your British car, or help you keep it on the road. I'm grateful to each of you who responded, and I sent out an updated directory last month. If you didn't get it, let me know (I've asked it be added to the website under "Technical Resources").

As you may recall, I'm working on a "carport find" 1967 MGB. "Working" might be stretching the truth, because I've only been able to get to the Eagleson Garagemahal a couple of times to do some actual wrenching. I'm pleased to report that due in large part to help from **Noel Eagleson**, with assistance from Tom Renick, the little car's original engine spins freely!



*Look at how clean that valvetrain is!*

What I have been doing is assembling the resources I need to complete this project. Mostly, that means parts. So far, I have on hand a new fuel tank, a new radiator, water pump, and hoses, most of the ignition components, a new (blue) soft top, and lots of other bits, some new

and some vintage. I'm awaiting delivery of my (blue) seat covers, (blue) trim panels, (blue) carpet kit, (blue) seat belts, and (blue) fuzzy door seals.

I know I will still need a set of tires; the Michelin XZXs on the car have plenty of tread and are still holding air (or at least the inner tubes are) but they're definitely out of date. Other parts will need to be cleaned, painted, or refurbished, but I and my banker are hopeful I have most of what I need.

Along the way, I've made a decision to avoid the largest and best-known parts house, not because I think they're inherently evil, but because I wanted to spread the wealth (literally – I have the receipts) to smaller vendors, as well as individuals selling parts online. I'm a frequent visitor to the MG Experience's buy, sell, and trade forum, and I've been able to source a number of items that way. Most fun are the couple of times I've bought "grab boxes" of parts because they contained a couple of items I needed. Look for me to have a bigger presence at the November Autojumble.

But resources are more than parts. I've already mentioned my good friends Noel and Tom. They, and SABCC president Ben Cummings, helped me to get the car out of that carport and to the Garagemahal, and they are always ready with advice and assistance (Tom even erected a canopy with an old dropcloth over Noel and me to shade us from the August sun while we freed up the engine). Rodney McDonald also inspected the car, and has been a font of expertise.

And that, friends, is what a car club is all about. Car shows, events, meetings, and the like are great, but what really makes being a part of a British car club worthwhile is the sharing of knowledge, support, and even commiseration as we try to keep these old cars on the road, and this hobby alive. Those resources – well, they are priceless, and irreplaceable.

# PANHANDLE BRITISH CAR ASSOCIATION

## 2025 "Brits on the Bay" All British Car Show

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Just one more thing, please . . .



*Want a Rolls-Royce that will fit in any garage—or playroom? You just missed out on this Tri-Ang pedal car, built in the mid-1960s in the UK. Mechanically, it was well-sorted, but it might have electrical issues—a battery is not present, so the lights and horn might not work. Nonetheless, it sold Sept. 12 on Bring a Trailer for \$7,000 (!).*

