

**SYSTEM  
SALE**  
SAVINGS ON BRAKES, COOLING, AND MORE!

# *Moss Motoring*

ISSUE 1, 2025

## **Racing for the Rest of Us**

If you've never tried autocrossing your car, see what fun you've been missing.

Beginning on page 4.





## THANKS DAD!

Since our next magazine arrives near Father's Day, we'd love to share stories about the dads who have played roles in passing along the knowledge and enjoyment of British cars.

**“I grew up with a dad who was an airplane mechanic/engineer. When I was young we got our first MG Midget, which we worked on in the driveway. I loved the experience and wound up becoming a mechanic myself after graduating high school...”**

**—Rachel James**

Rachel's full story will appear in the upcoming issue of Moss Motoring.



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SAVINGS ON BRAKES, COOLING, AND MORE!



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Photo by David Stuursma at the 2024 Vintage Triumph Register autocross event.

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Published by Moss Motors, Ltd.,  
440 Rutherford Street, Goleta, CA 93117  
800-667-7872

Moss Motoring Team:

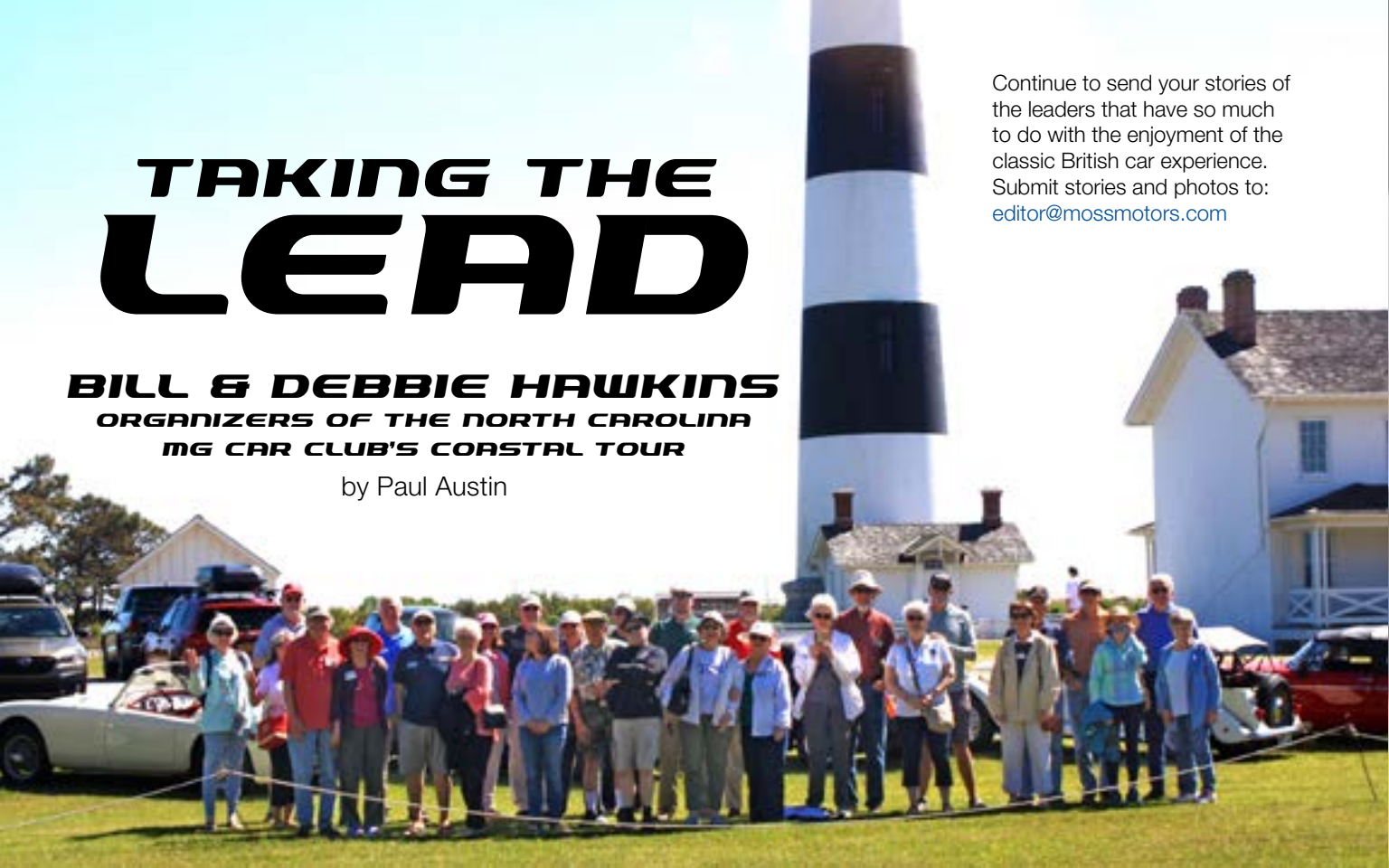
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# TAKING THE LEAD

**BILL & DEBBIE HAWKINS**  
ORGANIZERS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA  
MGB CAR CLUB'S COASTAL TOUR

by Paul Austin

Continue to send your stories of the leaders that have so much to do with the enjoyment of the classic British car experience. Submit stories and photos to: [editor@mossmotors.com](mailto:editor@mossmotors.com)



I have always enjoyed the Coastal Tour, Mountain Tour, and the Vineyard Tour. What could be better than motoring along a two-lane road, top down, the sky so blue above the rolling, lush farmland, the snatches of birdsong we hear as we drive past, folks in their front yards, waving to our impromptu parade of Little British Cars?

I typically try to get near the front, because I'm chronically afraid of getting left behind, or even worse, miss a turn and lead a string of other folks off in the wrong direction. See, I have zero sense of direction, and on the tours, I never have a navigator—it's a long story involving 40 years of blissful marriage to a curly-headed woman named Sally, who doesn't like driving at speed with the top down, and I don't like driving with the top up.

One summer, when I was about seven years old, our family visited our aunts and uncles in Oklahoma. One

of the aunts took us to a neighborhood swimming pool—they weren't members so we couldn't go swimming—but she thought my brother and I would like to watch the other kids swim. True story: my aunt thought it would be fun for my brother and me to press our faces against a chain link fence, and stare at other kids splashing, laughing, doing cannonballs off the diving board. To me, that's what driving with the top up feels like: watching someone else have fun.

But to Sally, driving with the top down, with the wind and the road-noise, feels like undeserved punishment. She'll endure it, but not for long. Our solution? She sends me off on the NCMGCC tours alone. Truth is, she's grateful for the peace and quiet. So, riding alone, and stubbornly enjoying the top being down, I try, as unobtrusive as possible, to get near the front so I don't get lost. And it is such a delight once we get started, driving

along, daydreaming, without a care in the world.

On the last Coastal Tour my MGB was in the shop, so I took my 1989 Dodge Dakota pickup truck. I asked Bill Hawkins if I could drive behind the sweep. My truck is not an eyesore, exactly, but I didn't want to mar the beauty of our procession, with my old blue truck. Plus, if I got lost, I had the GPS of our final destination and could catch up later without anyone finding out what a moron I am when it comes to directions.

On the second day of the tour, Bill handed me a walkie-talkie, a responsibility I had adroitly avoided up to that point. I had thought that there would be a lot of radio traffic on the walkie-talkie, but it was mostly Bill in his calm, polite voice, asking the sweep to let him know when everyone had made it through the intersection. It felt good, knowing that someone was paying attention, and making sure we all got to





where we were going. I'd expected the radio to be distracting, but the pleasant back-n-forth between Bill and the sweep was actually reassuring. I felt like a little kid, in the back seat of Mom's 1962 Pontiac Star Chief, overhearing the grownups talking. It was then that it hit me how much this club depends on the people who are doing all the work, making all the plans so the rest of us can take the top down and cruise along without worrying about anything.

I asked Bill and Debbie if I could meet with them, to find out a little more about the Coastal Tour. Of course, since I'd been on the tour before, I already had my little yellow duck. When I brought it up, Bill and Debbie said they had all kinds of duck memorabilia that had been given to them over the years. Even have a duck in the hot tub.

But before we discussed the arcane history of ducks and the NCMGCC Coastal Tour, I wanted to get to know them a little better. Married for 52 years, their 1977 MGB was the first car they bought as a couple. The dealer in Raleigh wouldn't budge from the asking price, so they went to Wilson, North Carolina, where a Cadillac dealership sold MGs on the side. They made a deal, bought the car, and drove it off the lot. About a mile down the road, the car stopped. Turn the key: nothing. Bill called the dealer, and explained that he'd just bought a brand-new car there, and it had stopped, dead. "Cadillacs don't stop," is what the guy on the phone told him.

"It's an MG."

They sent a tow-truck.

At the dealership, they wiggled some wires, got it started, and he drove it home.

"Out of necessity, I learned to work on it," Bill told me. Prior to that, he hadn't even changed the oil in a car. Although that car is no longer their daily driver, it now has 285,000 miles on it. Original owners, they still have the dealer's invoice.

Bill and Debbie met in school. He was learning photography, and she was studying interior design. He went on to a career in aerial photography and ended up working for the DOT making high-resolution photographs of railroad crossings, bridge replacements, shoreline erosion. Along the way, he got his pilot's license and instrument rating. He moved on from taking pictures to piloting the plane. Debbie became the procurement officer for Southeastern Electronics, dealing with the global supply chain. After that, she became a civilian employee of the National Guard, in charge of procuring everything from toilet paper to tanks.

I asked them to tell me about the first time they went on the Coastal Tour.

It was in 1993. The day before the tour, Bill was up in the sky as the navigator. It was a twin-engine plane, 520 HP each, and the left engine started vibrating, then quit. The pilot couldn't control pitch or power, so they turned off the second engine, and started their glide-path down. They slipped under some powerlines, buzzed across a road,

clipped a road-sign, trimmed the bushes, and finally stopped—right-side-up—on the soft sand of a cold, damp field.

"Were you screaming, or praying?"

"Praying."

"Were you mad at him, for almost killing himself?" I asked Debbie.

She leaned back and shook her head, surprised by the question: of course not.

"So, what caused the engine failure?"

"It was a confiscated drug-running plane," Bill said. "Who knows the engine's history?"

We were sitting in a Starbucks in Raleigh, young people working behind the counter, the hiss of steamed milk, the smell of roasted coffee. It was hard for me to imagine, one day being strapped in a plane with a dead engine, hurtling down toward the dirt of North Carolina, and then next day, buckling in to join a string of little British cars to the sand and surf of the coast. The next year, 1994, Bill and Debbie were leading the Coastal Tour, and they've been leading it ever since.

I thought back to the walkie-talkie on the seat beside me in my truck when I was following along behind, and how remarkably calm and pleasant Bill's voice had been. I guess that after you've ditched a plane and walked away from it, leading a squadron of Little British Cars, isn't all that scary. But I'll tell you something: I'm grateful for all the years that Bill and Debbie have led the way, sunshine or rain, so the rest of us could relax, enjoy our cars, and enjoy each other's company. *MM*



# **CONQUERING THE CONES**

## **THE CASE FOR AUTOCROSSING**

Photos by Shawn Frank and David Stuursma





## Stu Lasswell

**W**hen asked, “What is it that you love so much about British sports cars?”

I think the answer is right there in the name: *SPORTS car*! Sport, by definition, usually means some form of competition. For automobiles, that means racing! And when it comes to the cars we all own, know, and love, most were mainstays of amateur auto racing in their day. Now, 50 to 75 years on, their days of racing glory are long past. Or are they? Today’s vintage racing scene is strong and growing, and an exciting way to relive those days... if you have the skill, mechanical ability, and the money to participate!

Realistically, these cars aren’t the only factor that’s 50 to 75 years old. That describes the age of the typical vintage British car enthusiast, too. So, where does that leave us, with our outdated sports cars and our Walter Mitty dreams of glory? Well, have you considered autocross?

Autocross is a legitimate form of auto competition that is almost as old as road racing. SCCA, the “big dog” in auto racing in America since WWII, has been holding events since the early ’50s. There used to be local

club events in cities and towns all across the country, often in the parking lots of factories and shopping centers when they were closed on Sundays. (Remember those days?) Now SCCA and, to a lesser extent NASA, are the only organizations holding regular events, but their classing systems didn’t do us any favors, pitting our old cars against much newer cars. In response, a group within SCCA created a class specifically for older sports cars—Heritage Classic Street—in the hopes that having our own class would bring back the cars that filled the grids in days past. Unfortunately, that hasn’t happened, and the class has languished or been dropped due to lack of entries.

So, WHY AUTOCROSS? I think the real question is WHY NOT? Let’s take a look at the most common reasons that I’ve heard:

*#1 I don’t want to damage my valuable old car!*

Okay, that’s fair. But wrong! At all levels of autocross, safety is paramount. There are no other cars on the course, no hard objects to hit, and the cones are quite soft!

*#2 But what if I break something?*

True, something could break... you will be “pushing it.” But, the stress that could break that “weak link” could

also break on your next “spirited” drive through the twisties. I’d rather have that worn or weak part fail in an open parking lot than on a mountain curve! That being said, I’ve never broken anything on an autocross course.

*#3 I’ll embarrass myself! I’m old, the car’s old, I don’t know what I’m doing!*

Honestly, you probably will be slow. Experience is the only answer. There’s usually a novice class, so you won’t be alone. Coaching is available. Be open to instruction, and just try to beat your previous time! Your car is old and probably underprepared. Don’t expect to win. Odds are you will get nothing but positive comments and praise for bringing it out! Most car people love and respect the classics!

So much for the potential downside of autocross. What’s the upside?

*#1 You WILL become a better, safer driver.*

Do you know the handling limits of your car? They are probably higher than you realize. And your skills? Probably not as good as you think! In an emergency, most drivers panic, grip the wheel and slam on the brakes. When you really know what you and your car can do, you can react quickly and often drive around the hazard. You don’t know the car’s (or your own) limits until



you exceed them... and that should be done in safe and controlled conditions.

*#2 You will know your car better.*

You will come to recognize just what your car is communicating, be it through the steering wheel, the pedals, and the seat of your pants. You get a better feel for your tires' adhesion limits, the right timing to shift, what your steering or braking input will do, good or bad. And you will come to recognize where you can make improvements. Like tires. Brakes. Sway bars.

*#3 Hopefully you will see that the single greatest part to improve is that big nut behind the wheel!*

If you continue in autocross without making any changes to your car, I guarantee that you will still see drastic improvements in your times! There is no greater factor in going faster than experience.

*#4 Let's not forget the most important upside... FUN!*

There's nothing quite like trying to get the most out of your car, challenging yourself to find that extra tenth of a second on that course. The drive is short, but oh so exhilarating! Your pulse will definitely be quickened with the adrenalin rush of that 30 to 60 seconds of intense driving.

I've been autocrossing my Triumph TR3 for almost 20 years now. I was

'crossing a modern Mini Cooper... a competitive car, and doing okay, but at Triumph meets like VTR Nationals and Triumphests (a Western U.S. regional event), I found that I much preferred tossing around the old TR3 to competing in the Mini. The Mini was very competent—a better car than I was a driver—but just not as fun. So, I set out to make the Triumph a more competent yet still fun autocrosser. Stickier tires on wider rims, competition springs and shocks, more negative camber and a stiff sway (anti-roll) bar. And most importantly, I believe, was regular, almost monthly participation in events. And now it's pretty quick... for a TR3. An autocross-oriented build plus a lot of practice has brought me a modicum of success. The car now handles pretty darn well, but the trade-off is a stiffer ride and a less pleasant tourer. Something to consider.

But let's be honest. It's all relative. Let me give you an example: I drove my TR3 from central Arizona to San Rafael, California, for a Triumphest/VTR meet. Won my class, and even set fastest time of day! Head swells! The very next weekend was an SCCA event in Phoenix. I believe my "raw time" standing was 143rd of about 200 entrants. Head deflates! Reality sets in: I'm pretty fast when competing with

other old farts in equally old cars, but most cars are inherently faster, and I'm not getting any younger. Enjoy whatever success you can achieve.

So, bottom line. Autocross can lead to new levels of confidence and competence in all your driving. You can scratch that itch to compete, in a safe manner. You can enjoy the sport at whatever level of intensity you wish. You can take your enjoyment of British sports cars to a new arena, beyond the car show and touring, and start enjoying an element of what these fine automobiles were truly built for!

So, where can you find information? Here are some resources:

All marques: Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) [www.scca.com](http://www.scca.com)  
Triumphs: Vintage Triumph Register (VTR) [vintagetriumphregister.org](http://vintagetriumphregister.org)  
Jaguar: Jaguar Club of North America (JCNA) [www.jcna.com](http://www.jcna.com)

There are many national and regional single- and multi-marque clubs that include MG, Austin Healey, Sunbeam, etc., but I can only name those that sponsor autocross nationally. Check with your local club, or the local sports car groups online, like BMW, Porsche, or Miata. Most will welcome "outsiders" for local events.





“I’ve learned with autocrossing that it’s more about skill and experience than horsepower.”

### Mike Schlundt

**M**y love for autocrossing is due to my dad, Tom Schlundt. In the '70s he ran a '62 356 Roadster and a couple Spitfires as well. In the late '80s, when I was able to drive, he and I took a '74 Spitfire through the cones, and together we wrenched on the car to give it more speed and better handling.

I became a truck driver and my time behind the wheel was primarily focused on hauling loads instead of pulling Gs for a couple of decades. But then “Otty” entered my life. Otty was a 1976 Spitfire my dad and I ran together. We made a ton of changes to the suspension, and swapped out the more fragile 1500 engine for a rugged 1300 small journal that could take our abuse—that is, until the bolts that held the flywheel came out and messed up the aluminum flywheel and crank.

We picked up a '69 Spit with a healthy small journal 1300, sold the

motor in Otty to buy another Spitfire with a rebuilt 1500, and with all these cars and parts we swapped things that broke, and ran whatever the SCCA approved depending on the ever-changing class regulations.

So, after a race, when confronted with another broken differential in Otty—and having another car laying around—I stripped the motor, trans, interior, and suspension in one night, went racing the next morning, and won my class. This is the beginning of “Ol Yeller,” my '75 yellow Spitfire.

Ol Yeller is a mutt. She’s a 1500 with a built small journal 1300, breathing through SU4 carbs and a Euro exhaust. She has a single rail trans. The rear diff is a 4:11 with welded spider gears out of the '69 and with the Mrk3 axle. I run a lot of negative chamber and a big front sway bar. Ol Yeller has GAZ shocks on all four corners with 300lb front springs; rear

spring is a stock 1500 swing spring with a 2inch lowering block on the rear. To run in a street class, the car wears 13-inch Toyo Proxes R888s.

I learned about VTR Nationals in 2019 and was all excited to go out to Texas. I had gotten into a pissin’ match with a guy over which is a better motor, the 1500 or small journal 1300, but in the end I wasn’t able to go. I finally made the trip to VTR in 2021. Unfortunately, I lost my dad the year before and he never got to see Ol Yeller take FTD (Fastest Time of the Day).

I’ve learned with autocrossing that it’s more about skill and experience than horsepower. I love how some people underestimate my car, only to have their more powerful more expensive cars run several seconds slower than mine. Autocrossing brings out the competitive guy in me. And it keeps me coming back for more.



## Tammy Frank

I have been riding as a passenger in a Spitfire for many years and many miles, alongside my husband Shawn. I bought him a project Spitfire for Christmas years ago and now I always know where to find him: in the garage. He built the car and named it Gertrude, but I helped him find parts, repair procedures, and even tools that he misplaced throughout the years.

This wasn't my first autocross, as I have ridden with my husband in Gertrude, but this event turned out a little different. Shawn and I planned to participate, but we had overdrive

issues on the road to VTR and, with a 600-mile drive home, we opted to not compete. Instead, I offered to take photos of the action. While we were walking through the paddock area, I said it would be fun to be a passenger. Mike Schlundt offered, I accepted, and then the hunt was on to find a helmet—and fast—since they were lined up and about ready to go.

As I was strapping on a borrowed helmet, Shawn laid it on thick, telling me there was an emergency seat fix very recently but he was unsure if it was the passenger or driver's seat that broke. He also told me that sometimes Spitfire

door latches come open, so I should hang on and buckle up. He finished his spiel by saying, "Don't be scared, baby. Mike knows how to drive, so you won't slide off the road."

We had three runs around the course, hugging corners like only a Spitfire can. As soon as we came back into the paddock, my husband asked, "Did he scare you?" I replied, "Nah, not at all. Neither one of you has ever really scared me." He knows I don't scare easily, but I think he was hoping that I would lie this one time. Lol.

Oh, and Mike's Spitfire had FTD with me in it.





## Evan Moore

In the early 1960s, as a young teenager my father, Jim Moore, rode with a family friend in his highly modified Triumph TR3 and was bit by the LBC bug. Dad's first Triumph TR3 came along in the late '60s while he was in high school, followed by a Healey 3000 and a few MGs. In 1981 my little sister, April, was born and shortly after, this particular 1960 TR3 was purchased. It arrived at our house in a lightly rusted patina along with several boxes of spares. The car sat for nearly 20 years, and during that time it doubled as a step ladder for retrieving items from our garage attic.

Around 2003, as empty nesters, my parents finally started on the car's restoration. Dad and our local hero Chuck McGuire (aka "Mr. Triumph") rebuilt the entire driveline, engine, suspension, frame etc., and the body work was done at a local shop. The car boasts several performance mods including a 4:10 Detroit Locker rear end and those one-of-a-kind, homemade Triumph/Ford racing wheels Chuck created during his racing days in the 60's.

This past year I convinced my sister to spend an entire week with me in Nashville, Indiana, at the VTR 2024.

It was her first time racing autocross and she won the women's division overall and bested many of the men as well. I raced, too, and also do a few local SCCA weekend events. The car is always a big hit with the drivers and spectators. It is very sentimental to me and has made for many enjoyable memories. The plan is upon my departure I will leave the car to one of my sons... likely whichever one bribes me the most.

## April Moore

A week-long trip to a VTR Convention was never really on my list of vacation ideas, that is, until my brother invited me to join him on an adventure. I jumped at the chance to spend some quality time with him and to see what all the fuss was about. In years past, my brother had usually taken our mother, so I was excited for my turn to see him in his element.

Although my brother and mother described previous conventions, I was a bit blind going in. My initial impression was "wow." We rolled up to the lodge and a sea of Triumph cars. A sight that would make any enthusiast giddy.

The schedule was packed full of activities, but I think we would both agree the Autocross event was a highlight of VTR. Cones were set

up. The course was walked. Helmets strapped on, and it was go time! I had driven the TR3 numerous times before my brother took ownership, but it had been about ten years since I was last behind the wheel. I was a bit nervous—never having run an autocross course before—but nonetheless thrilled to put my driving skills to the test. Plus, a few pointers from your brother never hurts.

Driving the TR3 hits all of your senses. Seeing nature's beauty so close you can almost touch it. Smelling the husky aroma of freshly burned fuel. Hearing the guttural growl of a finely tuned engine. Holding the wheel and feeling the steady vibration of a well cared for machine. Tasting victory of a race run and won. There is something very special about this car. Through it we get to feel close to our dad, and there's a sort of peace, too. A freedom.

All in all I'd say VTR was a success. It's quite the community and a thrill to see everyone come together and share in the joy of these cars. It was especially cool to see my brother enjoying his pastime. I'm glad he asked his pain of a sister to join him in the fun. It meant the world to me, probably more than he'll ever know. Love you brother.

Now for the next step: get my own car! *mm*



# Restoring a **Forgotten Piece** of Family History

by Nick Ginsberg

Dedicated to my grandmother, Susan Babbitz (1944–2020)  
and my grandfather, Stephen Babbitz (1943–2024)

September 14, 1976, two days after my grandma’s birthday, an ivory 1952 MGTD became part of our family. We still have the bill of sale—my grandpa paid \$1,000 for it. Growing up, I’d heard stories from my mom and my uncle about my grandma driving them to school in the TD. With only one available seat, one of them would have to sit in the “trunk,” if you can call it that. That was the *Safety Fast* ’70s for you.

By the mid-80s, the family had outgrown the car, and at some point it was put in the corner of my grandparent’s garage. The last registration sticker on the license plate was 1987, though my uncle remembers it being in storage for a few years before that. I was born in 1991, so all my life, that’s how I knew the family’s MG: A

cool old car that sat, tires deflated, boxes stacked on top, in the corner of my grandparent’s garage.

My grandmother passed away in August of 2020, while the world was in COVID isolation. A few months later, in November, with my brother Adam having been sent home from college on a pandemic driven extended Thanksgiving break, he and I masked up and helped my grandfather clean out his garage. After clearing a path to the MG, a thought occurred to me, “Could we get this thing running again?” My office was still closed for in-person work, my brother was home, if we were going to do it, this seemed like the perfect window of opportunity.

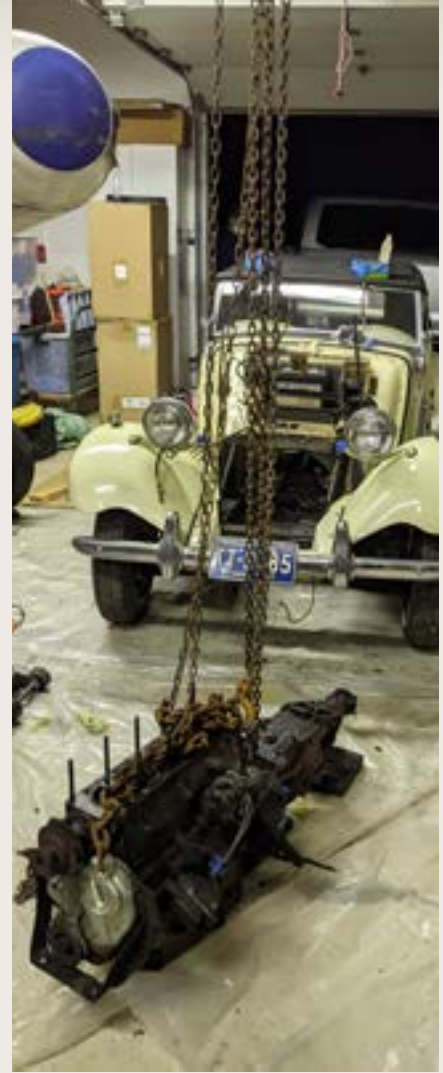
That afternoon, we hired a towing company to bring the MG to my dad’s garage, where we had tools and space

for such a project. But since none of us had ever attempted anything near this scale, we reached out to our friend Jim—an absolute expert in all things mechanical—who very graciously became our savior for the whole project.

Once situated in dad’s garage, we got to work. Two things quickly became apparent. First, there were dead mice everywhere—in the glove box, in the exhaust, under the carpet, between the seats. Second, the engine was completely frozen, and no matter how hard we tried, those cylinders weren’t budging. Even after a few days soaking in Marvel Mystery Oil, no dice. We were going to have to pull the engine.

With Jim’s guidance, we rigged a pulley to a steel beam in the ceiling to get the engine and transmission out.





We then hauled it to a machine shop where they were able to free the pistons and bore out the cylinders +0.120 over. Pandemic supply lines as they were, sourcing pistons proved to be a test of patience.

With the engine out, we focused on the other systems. Jim showed us how to replace and then bleed the brake lines and cylinders, we resealed and coated the gas tank, rebuilt the carbs, and started working on the cosmetics—shining the metal, touching up paint, and replacing the carpet.

We got the engine back after a few weeks. Though I broadly knew how an internal combustion engine worked, I'd never in my life fully taken one apart and put it back together again. After some painting and a lot of studying of workshop and restoration

manuals to get the details right, we carefully reassembled the whole system with fresh seals, new bolts, and dabs of Loctite. Now, six months into the project, we hooked our refreshed engine onto our jerry-rigged lift and slid it back home.

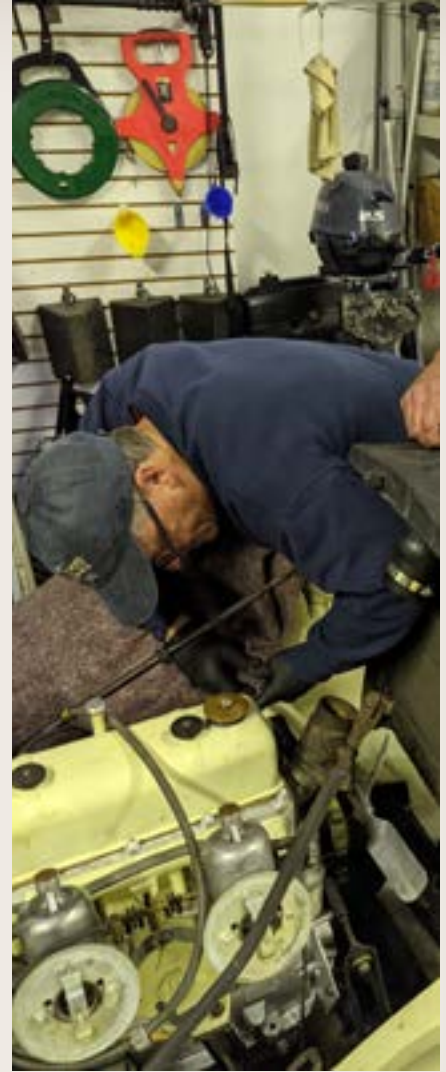
Around this time, the project started to slow—my office resumed in-person operation, Adam went back to school, and with the world opening up, there were finally other activities competing for time. But even as we returned to “normal” in the summer of 2021, I couldn't help but grow more excited that I would one day soon be cruising around in the TD on a bright sunny day.

As months progressed, I would head over to dad's garage whenever I could escape from New York City, spending days at a time on the project. Jim

would come give his infinite wisdom, and we'd get to work on whatever was needed next. We replaced the front suspension with rebuilt absorbers, flushed insane amounts of rust from the radiator, replaced the fuel pump and starter motor, fixed up the seats, shined the bumpers, and as my dad Ken often said, “put Humpty Dumpty back together again.”

That November, almost exactly a year after we began, we finally got the motor to turn over and run. Seeing and hearing the motor come alive that first time is among the proudest moments of my life. All those months of work, and all the help we'd received—it was finally coming together.

We were far from done, however. Even though it ran, the TD would stall at idle and wasn't delivering power



like it should. The carburetor was the apparent weak spot. We ended up shipping it out to get professionally rebuilt, and in the meantime, Jim suggested we get a Weber to bridge the gap so we could get it on the road. It turns out the Weber was far easier than the SUs to get running properly—even with my amateur knowledge. Last but not least, before we journeyed out of the driveway, we bolted in new seatbelts.

After countless hours working in the garage, dozens of YouTube videos watched, Google searches after Google searches, and, of course, generous help from others, by the summer of 2022 the TD was ready to be registered, insured and driven. I called the DMV and they asked, “Has the car ever been registered?” “Yes, it was previously registered,” I said. “Well, then you need to go online to the link in the form that

was mailed to you to re-register,” then they hung up on me. Somehow, we must have missed the online re-registration notice from Ronald Reagan’s presidency. After sorting out the DMV, we took our first legal trip, and since the rear shocks hadn’t been attended to yet, it was a very bumpy ride up the block to the Mobil gas station for a fill up.

With the car now drivable, we’ve enjoyed two summers so far with it—but there’s always something more to be done. Overall, it took about two and a half years, and 23 separate Moss Motors orders to get our project to where it is now. There will always be a section of paint that isn’t quite right, some bolt that’s in a little crooked. She may never be a prize-winning concours car, she may have a loose tachometer that comes unplugged if you pull your leg off the clutch and accidentally knee it, and she

may start to rattle a lot at 40mph. But the TD will forever be a labor of love and a part of our family. I plan to keep it that way for another 50 years. *MM*



Share your family history with photos and a story submission to:  
[editor@mossmotors.com](mailto:editor@mossmotors.com).



# THEN & NOW

by Pat Williams

I have been a Moss Motors customer for at least 44 years. The first receipt I have, which was filled out by hand, is dated September 20, 1980, and was for \$61.27. I had driven 150 miles up to Goleta for two windshield post pads, door seals, boot seal, and a rear view mirror.

\$100 bought me a 1960 Austin-Healey 3000 in 1974. Although the car was complete, it was a wreck, but the price was right for a 20-year-old college student. I picked up the car in the Hollywood Hills and trailered it to my parents' house in Newport Beach to begin the long process of restoring the car.

Finding parts was nearly impossible in 1974, although a British Leyland dealer occasionally had a few. Over the next few years, while I finished college, the engine and carburetors were rebuilt. Another year and a half was spent at the body shop getting repainted.

By the time the car returned from the body shop in 1980, Moss Motors had been growing their inventory of Healey parts and I started calling monthly to order the items needed to make the car really drivable. The flyers in the mail showing new parts were like leaving a bowl of candy in front of a child—irresistible.

Remember that first receipt? Those parts are all still available from Moss. I checked then-and-now prices. Those windshield post pads I bought in 1980 cost me \$3.49 each. Today they're \$4.49. The trunk seal was \$15.25. Today it's \$34.49. The rear-view mirror was \$15.25 and today it's \$38.99. Over 44 years, that beats the rate of inflation by a lot.

After all these years, Moss Motors still plays a big role in keeping our car running. Now, I am usually replacing something that has worn out—most recently a new propeller shaft seal and silicone rocker cover gasket to stem the endless oil leaks. The car is running so well these days that I would be very tempted to repeat the drive across the country that my new bride and I took in 1986. Luckily, she was a good sport when I announced a stop at Moss Motors to pick up a part while we were on our honeymoon trip to Santa Barbara. Maybe I can take her back for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary? *MM*





## The XK Engine

by Norman Garrett



I had the good fortune to own a Jaguar XK-E back in the '70s, when you could find them for hundreds of dollars, not tens of thousands. Mine was a '66 coupe, British Racing Green over green leather. It was languishing outside of an import car repair shop, like so many imports of the day, waiting on parts, or money, or both to fix it. I found it unlocked and scrounged up a piece of mail in the glovebox with a name and address on it. A quick trip to the white pages and I had the owner on the line. It was two weeks before tax time, and I could hear a baby screaming in the background, no doubt born since the E-Type had been left at the repair shop. He told me it was in for exhaust repairs, and that he had been waffling about investing any more money into the car. After a few minutes of polite conversation, I asked him if he would sell it to me. He told me to make him an offer.

"How about \$500," I said. (This was 1978.) "There's no way I could sell it for that," came the response. Disheartened,

I felt the momentum of the deal ebbing away. This guy must know what he has. "How about \$600," came his counteroffer. And that is how I got my first Jag at the age of 19. Dad hooked our trusty tow rope to the back of his Buick Electra, and we dragged one more dead British beast home, me using the emergency brake to keep from ramming him at each turn and intersection.

Decades later I still long for that car, which was sold for some long-forgotten justification only a few years after I got it back on the road. Aside from the wonderful shape of that car's lines, I miss the engine the most. Its wonderful throaty baritone sound, the way it stretched out under the hood like some polished piece of art, which, to my mind, it is. So, I found myself dangerously browsing an online marketplace for no particular reason, and I ran across a Jaguar Mark II for sale in a town about two hours away. Of course I had to consider it, for at least a moment, and in the description were the words "spare engine." An immediate

plan sprung up in my head: While I don't have room for another vehicle in my garage, an engine, well that's another thing altogether... hmmm.

A quick message to the owner started a conversation about what it would take to pry the spare engine out of his hands. I asked if the engine turned over with a wrench (to make sure it was not seized—I figured I could work with the rest if the cylinder bores were okay). I asked for some up-close photos. It looked like a good candidate for bringing back to life, and it was so appealing even just as a hunk of metal to me personally. A reasonable number of dollars was agreed upon, and I set myself in motion to pick up the hunk of British steel, bronze, and aluminum. I had no real plans for what I might do with it once I got it, but I knew that the experience of rebuilding it and polishing it up would be a great distraction for my mechanical bent. Much more entertaining than anything on any screen. Plus, my students would love to see it run on the university's





dyno once it was put together. I wanted them to hear that baritone roar and fall in love with it as I did when I was a young man.

A quick drive across state lines and my inspection began. The engine was not frozen-up, as promised, and it was largely complete with carburetors, manifolds, starter, etc. The aluminum cam covers were only slightly corroded and would polish up nicely. A look inside the oil cap showed a relatively clean cam with no oil sludge or scars on the one lobe I could see. The deal was done, and we loaded the lump onto my trailer. The seller turned out to be as deep a Brit car fan as I was, with a large backyard shop housing the Jag Mark II from the listing, plus a Lotus Europa, as well as a race-prepped Lotus 7, a couple of true Minis, and a Bugeye Sprite E-Production race car. Kindred spirits from the start. I resisted asking about the price on anything else he wanted to sell, and drove away with a new Jag project, albeit partial. On the way home I contemplated what to do

with the engine once I got it running. Man-cave coffee table art? No, this engine deserved to spin and to make noise and heat as it was intended to. Engine transplant? I had a few candidates in storage such as a Bugeye Sprite (probably too large), an MG TD (now that would be interesting), and a final-year Spitfire (that could be very interesting, someone stuffed a 3.8L engine into a Midget once...).

Back in my shop, I started the most-satisfying disassembly of the 3.4L engine. The serial number (and the internet) tells me it is most likely from a 1962 Mark II. I discovered that it had domed pistons with a 0.50" flat surround around the dome, which means it should be the 9:1 compression ratio. Only a few Mark II engines were built this way. The cylinder head has a "-8" suffix, so it is a normal 8:1 compression ratio head, so it must have been special order to get the high compression domed pistons. Lucky me.

After decades of working on Brit cars, I knew to be very careful not

to strip any fasteners as I started my disassembly. Copious dopings of PB Blaster plus some patience (waiting overnight) rewarded my efforts with nary a single stripped bolt or nut. Lots of Zip-lock freezer bags later, I had the cylinder head off and the pistons and bores exposed.

The aluminum cylinder head came off without too much fuss, but only after dealing with the wonderfully British dual cam chain drive that Harry Weslake devised in one of his many moments of brilliance. Knowing that the camshafts were the "shim and bucket" type, and that the cams would have to come off every 10k miles or so, Mssr. Weslake created a very clever way to "park" the cam sprockets on a front hanger, allowing the camshafts themselves to be removed and replaced easily. Brits have always led the world on clever mechanisms, and this is a shining example of this craft.

Despite being aluminum, the cylinder head was not particularly light to carry, but wrestling it onto my



When keeping everything organized, part-time perfectionist traits come in handy with engine work.

The oil pan is a work of art unto itself, and quite a complicated casting.



workbench gave me a clear view of a wonderful combustion chamber staring back at me, born from a drawing board 70 years ago. With a smooth semi-hemispherical shape with two ample valves and a near-centrally located spark plug, this design cannot be improved upon by much in the modern world. In fact, other than a second spark plug, the chamber looks very similar to Dodge's much-lauded modern Hemi engine. Weslake knew his basic principles.

As was taught to me by a dirt track racer back when I was a boy of ten, I ran my fingernail up each exposed bore in the engine block and was delighted to not detect even the slightest ledge in the zone where the piston rings don't drag—a very good sign. The piston tops were only slightly carboned, with an appropriate layer of around one eighth of an inch. Sure, it was a sedan's engine and probably mated to an automatic transmission, so the lack of "Italian tune ups" to decarbonize the chambers can be forgiven.

Popping off the oil pan gave me further warm feelings for this particular example, plus some wonderment on how the engine's bottom end was designed. There was no oil sludge to contend with, and the pan was free from debris or unwanted matter. The large crankshaft is supported by seven large main bearings, and each cylinder's bore has a boxed cast iron chamber surrounding it, as if it were six separate engines cast together. Stronger than a bridge, and invariably stable. Alas, it is also why this engine weighs as much as four average men, and twice as much as a modern V-6 from the current Jaguar fleet.

Each piston slid out easily and showed no adverse wear on the major thrust side of the skirts. The rings themselves were stuck solid in their lands, the one tell-tale that this engine had been sitting for a long time. I was saved the dreaded "cast iron ring rusted to an iron cylinder" plague that comes with many stored engines, so the moisture had been kept from this

engine over the years. Thank you, previous owner(s) for making my life much easier. A quick hone and some new rings should bring this short block back to life.

For the cylinder head, I stripped it fully down and bead blasted the exterior. The valves, both intake and exhaust, looked very good and will respond nicely to some light grinding followed by lapping. The head itself has alloy seats pressed into the aluminum base metal and these, likewise, will machine-down well with a triple-angle valve cut. The guides turned out to be in great shape, even the exhaust guides which tend to wear more (higher temperatures affecting the oil and the oiling itself), so they do not need to be changed. The coolant passages look very clean, considering their age.

After removing all the pistons and rods, I used a micrometer on the exposed connecting rod big end journals and once again was pleasantly surprised to find them within factory tolerances, with an acceptable surface finish.





Most cathedrals have less structure than this stout boxed bottom end of the XK engine.

Likewise, the main journals are in great shape, again thanks to the oil-mindedness of the previous owners. Some pipe cleaners through the oiling holes and the crank will be good to go. The rear seal is of the funky “rope” type, which I will address at some level. I am not too worried about authenticity or concours judges, but balk at the prices charged for the full-on modern lip seal conversions. Most of my cars leak oil, so I may knowingly create another “rust proofing” assembly with this engine.

I spent a good hour on the Moss Motors website, shopping like a lottery winner to get what I needed for the refreshing/rebuild of the XK engine. New bearings, seals, piston rings, gaskets plus some miscellaneous hardware and I’m good to go for the re-assembly after some machine work. Stay tuned for the progress report in the next issue. *MM*

To be continued...  
Part 2: The Assemblage



**Norman Garrett** was the Concept Engineer for the original Miata back in his days at Mazda’s Southern California Design Studio. When he’s not curating his small collection of dysfunctional automobiles and motorcycles, he teaches automotive engineering at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

# Triumph over autism

by Matthew Edwards



**T**o start, I know that technically, autism should be capitalized. That is just not going to happen. Ever. I hate that affliction, and everything associated with that cursed word, so I will never capitalize that word.



Rote sayings, endless repetitions, and patterns are the benchmarks in my son's life. When he stopped talking at two years old, we feared he had damaged his hearing, but the truth was he was autistic. There is a huge spectrum of autism, but my son is on the higher-support-needs end of autism. He rarely has spontaneous speech and will only speak in phrases he has memorized. Frustrating is not a strong enough word. To be fair, we are not frustrated with him, just frustrated with the difficulties he faces communicating, showing emotion, and functioning day to day. He displays glimmers of brilliance, but then goes back to his repetitive refuge of things he likes. Deviations from his routine are frustrating to him, and there are very few deviations he is comfortable with.

Through an absolute miracle, I got a Triumph TR6 a few years ago. That purchase story is incredible, but that is for another day. This story is about Joshua. When I first got the TR6, I was infatuated; it's a car I had dreamed of since I first saw one in 1979. As a child, I fell in love with the styling and the engine sound—the almost perfect harmony of the British parts moving in synchronicity, clothed in Coventry steel. And this TR6 did not disappoint. Painted a brilliant red, it retained the original wooden dashboard and manual transmission. This car was a dream, and now she was parked in my garage.

Funny how the world turns. Soon after I got the car, my almost entirely nonverbal son walked up to me and said, "1974 Triumph TR6 four speed with overdrive." Astounded, I stepped back and wanted to verify what he had just said. Surely, he does not know the details of this car. My son then repeated the phrase. With tears in my eyes, I asked, "Do you want to go for a ride?" His answer was typical. He said, "Do you want to go for a ride?" which in Joshua-speak that means yes. So we got in the car and drove the short distance to our town square. People have a tendency to honk and wave at

the Triumph, and the normally subdued Joshua waved back in his own way and smiled. Of course, I wanted to extend this time with him, so I asked him if he wanted to ride more. "Do you want to ride more," was his reply. Okay!!! So we drove to the other side of town through the shopping areas. Once again, people waved and Joshua waved back. The funny thing is, it was not only Joshua smiling, it was everyone else, too. Joshua calls this part of the drive our "Victory Lap," and it is perfectly named.

Every Saturday we go for a drive in the Triumph, only missing days when it rains. This ritual has continued every week for years. Joshua turned 18 a few weeks ago, and although his body is 18 years old, he is still the little boy that wants to go for a Saturday drive. I treasure these times with him, knowing I get a glimpse into his mind for the duration of the drive every week.

**“I treasure these times with him, knowing I get a glimpse into his mind for the duration of the drive every week.”**

He will put on one of his TR6 shirts (always red) and wait for me to get the keys, then walk out to the garage and get in the Triumph, waiting for the ritual to begin.

We take the same route, and he has a 1970s playlist that he will listen to and sing along with. When we get to the short highway part of our drive, Joshua will raise his hands up, feeling the wind blow his arms back, and laugh. Every week, he raises his arms and every week I smile, knowing we connect during that brief moment.

There are so many things about this drive that I could write about that Joshua wants on every drive. The list is exhaustive, but a few are worth noting: he requires me to wear my US Navy Garrison cap and my sunglasses, and we have to start each drive with the song "Ballroom Blitz." He has to tell me how to start the car (choke all the

way out, clutch in, when it starts, choke halfway in....) Finally, every time we end our drive, coming back into the neighborhood, he turns to look at me, waiting for the denouement. When any part of this sequence is missed, he will not participate until I do the sequence correctly. So I will end this narrative with how we end our drive, every Saturday.

"Josh, buddy, I hurt my arm and can't shift... what are we going to do"? Joshua will then put his hand on the gear shift...

Engine revs in first gear.... I begin by yelling "Wait for the clutch.... Ok!!! Second gear!!!" Joshua then puts the transmission into second gear.

I continue, "Third gear... Josh PLEASE wait for me to push the clutch in!!!!!!" Joshua will shift to third gear.

"OK! Now fourth gear!!!!!! PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE WAIT FOR THE CLUTCH!!!!!!!!!! Great job. I couldn't have done it without you."

And truthfully, I really could not do this without him. I will never take for granted the wonderful gift God has given me, giving me a peek into my son's mind; all made possible by a car factory in Coventry, England, 50 years ago. One day we will make the trip to Coventry, and visit the site where the Triumph was made, showing Joshua the town that made all of this possible. I doubt anyone on the factory line in 1974 would have guessed the impact they have made on our lives, but I would love to tell them how grateful I am for the gift they gave me and my family.

This is our Triumph. *MM*





# The Timeless Tiger

by Tyler and Andy Osborn



**T**he term “Holy Grail” is surely subjective depending on what revs your engine. If you happen to be an aficionado of the classic and storied Sunbeam Tiger like I am, then we might agree this car hits the redline.

It is 1967 in Portland Oregon, and John is looking for a car that's more fun than practical. Enter the Sunbeam Tiger. He found two in town, at different dealers. He looked both over carefully, made his decision, and signed the deal on the Forest Green one with white and black stripes, LAT 70 alloy wheels, LAT 5 Traction Master bars, concave lens Cibie headlights, and a Motorola radio. The dealer prepped it for delivery. Less than 24 hours later, on a Wednesday morning, John fills the tiny trunk with supplies necessary for a long vacation, helps his wife into the passenger seat, points it south and heads for Acapulco Mexico! Thus begins the story of this rare find Tiger.

After the trip, John is drafted and sent off to Vietnam. The car is carefully tucked away. You may be thinking you know what the next line in this story is, with so many of our brave soldiers not making it home, but fortunately that is not how this story goes. John comes home after serving his country proudly for over a year, pulls the car from its nest and takes to the road. Soon after, at a trip to the grocery store, he walks out only to see an elderly lady backing into the passenger side of his pride and joy. Not good. Fortunately, the damage was minor and quickly repaired.

As life goes sometimes, a year or so later John was not feeling quite right and went in for a checkup. It was then that he was diagnosed with cancer. Being a dutiful husband, he concluded that his wife may need a house more than a Tiger if things were to not end well. He sold the car and bought the house. This was 1970.

The second owner, also in the Portland area, enjoyed the car until

1973 when the clutch finally went out at 45,000 miles. He started to pull the transmission, but gave up and moved on to other activities.

Jump ahead 48 years to 2021. I am looking for Sunbeam GT Coupe parts and met up with a fellow who had just what I needed. In our discussion he mentioned he had a very rare 1965 Alpine 260 he purchased when stationed in Germany. It was a very cool car, but it was not for sale. When chatting with him a year or so later, he said he still was too attached to his Alpine, but maybe his brother would sell his Tiger. I was intrigued to say the least. Unnoticed by me and buried only about 30 feet away from where I stood was the silhouette of a familiar shape. It was tucked under a storage shelf, behind a utility trailer and under a lot of blankets. After peeling away the layers, that classic Forest Green color, the white stripes, one-year side trim and eggcrate grille of a MK2 Tiger revealed themselves. Tucked in the passenger





window were dozens of insurance cards. One for every year it had been in storage. On the rear package shelf was a fully stuffed, olive drab duffel bag. Time capsule, for sure.

It took another year or so to close the deal, but in 2023 this Holy Grail Tiger was being loaded onto a trailer making its way to a new life in Washington State.

Since that day, every mechanical system in the car has been refurbished, but nothing has been cosmetically restored. The car is original right down to the spark plug wires, water pump, clutch, and exhaust system. We know the car has not been altered because we were fortunate enough to track down John who is now in his 80s and still living in Portland. His wife brought him to our shop to be reunited with his old car. He told us, of all the classic and sports cars he owned over his life, this one was his favorite.

At his visit, John brought photos of the car when new and repair receipts

from his Mexico trip when the Lucas fuel pump died. He then looked under the car, he said "Yep, those are the glass pack mufflers I had installed because the car was just a bit too quiet."

The car is now with its new owner and as of this writing has several hundred more miles on the clock. It will be shown next season in the Preservation Class at some local concours, going on tours and enjoyed at local events. Wearing its history, all dings, scratches, and glass-pack mufflers will be in place. We may even put the original spark plugs back in.

When we were cleaning out the car, a particularly pleasant smell seemed to be emanating from the console storage compartment. Pulling out the various bits of the usual stuff, fuses, Kleenex packages, and more insurance cards, the smell became stronger. Buried deep back in the rear of the compartment, to our surprise, was a bar of Irish Spring soap still in the box. A clever air freshener that was fulfilling its purpose

after 50 years! Makes me wonder what kind of chemical concoction is in there. None of the change that was in the ashtray is more recent than 1973. We left the coins and the soap where they were. Some things just do not need to be messed with. *MM*

**Rule Garage** is a full-service specialty vehicle restoration and repair shop in Washington State. Founded in 2018 by the father and son team of Andy and Tyler Osborn. We build and maintain classic and specialty vehicles for owners who love to drive! We have some incredible projects in the pipeline.

Check in with us on Facebook or Instagram @rulegarage, or on our website [rulegarage.com](https://rulegarage.com).

# WINTER DRIVING IN BRIT CARS

by David Mathias



**I**t's mid-November and I live in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. This morning I showed a friend a picture that was taken yesterday of me driving my 1952 MGTD down a country road in the snow. I was simply test driving it, but he asked if it was going to be my winter car. To this I responded, "My winter driver? I wish. Just try finding chains to fit those skinny tyres." He expressed some concern over the car picking up some road salt. I don't think there was much, if any salt on that particular road this early in the season and of course, I wiped it down pretty well and covered it before putting it away. No, that was my one and only ride—just to test it out.

I had been having problems with the car all summer and as anyone who has ever owned a British car will tell you, the cause of issues can be quite mysterious. Several weeks ago I was working on the car at the storage unit just a few yards from the local Laundromat. A fellow came out with a basket of laundry and noticed my car. He became very excited and

came over, asking if he could look at it. "Well, of course," I responded. Then as he drew closer I noticed he smelled like he had just crawled out of a bar. It was 12:30 in the afternoon, but then again this is the Upper Peninsula and so a certain amount of slack has to be given. He expressed great joy and told me of his love for vintage automobiles. I told him about the problems I had been having all summer and how I flushed the gas tank, replaced the fuel fitting, replaced the fuel filters and cleaned the carburetors. I told him how the car acted up whenever it would heat up... sputtering and choking out completely—especially when going around a turn. He suddenly became quite sober and said, "Don't overlook the coil. When coils go bad on these old cars, they act just the way you described, and everyone tends to think it's a fuel problem."

"*Okay my inebriated friend,*" I thought to myself as I rolled my eyes, but then later gave the free advice some serious consideration and began searching everything I could find on the

internet about faulty coils. Honestly, there's not much information out there on faulty coils. If you do a Google search on '*British sports car stalling out when going around a turn*' you will get quite a bit of information on the power steering belt for your 1980 Ford Granada. This whole internet thing might catch on when they can do a better job of reading our minds... and to some degree they have done a good job with algorithms, but they haven't factored in the frequent abnormalities of our British automobiles.

Okay, the car would stall out terribly when going around a turn. Thus, why wouldn't one think it was something sloshing around, making its way over to the filthy screen at the fitting located at the sludgy bottom of the 71-year-old tank? But a new coil is relatively inexpensive and so I ordered one. I removed the old coil and installed the new one which is no easy task as anyone who has done so on a TD will likely testify. I think my right arm and fingertips grew an extra inch or two from wrenching on the bolts located





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on the bulkhead while simultaneously reaching around to the nuts and washers that are just above the pedals inside the car. I felt great pride in getting the new coil installed with dropping a lock washer or nut only a dozen times in the process and surprisingly not filling up the swear jar.

The car fired up and ran smoothly, but the big test lies ahead in test driving it the same 20-mile trip with its hills and curves that had been giving the car such a problem the last three times this summer.

I was quite pleased. The car ran exceptionally well and gave absolutely no signs of sputtering or stalling out. It was a true champion. And as it turns out, this morning my local Jeep mechanic said the inner core of the faulty coil could in fact, move side-to-side when going around a turn and really screw up the polarity of the magnet resulting in ...*something* ... *something*. I zoned out right after I was satisfied that I heard what I needed.

On reflection, it was really quite serendipitous running into that daytime drunk with the advice about the coil. I wish I could track him down and buy him a pitcher of beer... maybe a bottle of cough syrup. Ah, but we've all moved on from those days.

So, today I find myself harkening back to the winter of 1978 driving in a British sports car. I can just imagine this as a story for the grandkids. The words "*Gather around kiddies*" would be followed by groans and heavy sighs.

My '65 Triumph had nothing but a quarter-inch piece of plywood for the driver's side window and believe me, driving that winter was a challenge. Seriously, you know those Brits had no idea of what a heater and defroster were supposed to do.

My car's nickname was "Mevy." I saw an ad in the Wausau Herald for a "1965 Triumph Mevy 350" for sale by Lake Dubay near Steven's Point. This old guy was a real hack. It was a TR4 and one of the front hood hinges had rusted away and so he put a pair of cabinet hinges on the back of the

hood (by the wipers) and had hood pins holding it down. He had a cut-off broomstick to hold the hood open. He probably used the sweeping end of the broom on another project. It was \$500 and so I forked over the money. Before leaving I asked, "So, what's a Mevy 350?" I'll never forget the expression on the old guy's face as he looked at me squinting one eye. He replied, "I don't know... what is a Mevy 350?" So, obviously it was a mistake in the newspaper. I actually made it all the way back to Wausau before the brakes gave out and I nearly clipped some guy on a bike. It was only after this that I learned of the expression, *Caveat Emptor*.

I still have a small piece of the broomstick. A memento for the sentimental old fool I am. I suppose I'll be cremated with it, and a few key fobs, hood emblems, and shift knobs.

**“I’ve already spent any inheritance that might have been there for my children, their children, and their children’s children on my British car habit.”**

The following spring I found a hood hinge at Don Bennet's Sports Cars in Hortonville, Wisconsin—a junkyard that specialized in foreign cars. Wow, that place was a trip. Forty acres of Mercedes sedans, Porsches, Peugeots, Mayflowers, Fiats, Alfa Romeos, Magnettes, MGAs, Heralds, TR3s—any old foreign car you could think of. They'd all be worth countless bucks now—priceless vintage tin. I returned there in the early '80s to buy a BMW 530i—trading off a Volvo wagon. There wasn't a single European car in the place—all Japanese. I remember considering at the time that maybe I wasn't doing a very good job of changing with the times... nah. Well, I did a valve job on Mevy and the investment at that time was the cost of a set of gaskets, since my brother had a valve grinder in his shop. After driving Mevy for a

year or two, I sold it and went back to restoring my '66 TR4A.

The Fox Valley of Wisconsin has always been a hotbed for sports cars—maybe because of its proximity to Road America in Elkhart Lake? I don't know, but every region of this great patchwork we call the United States of America seems to have its unique attributes and peculiarities. Napa Valley for wine, Los Angeles for movies and pretentious actors, New York for its Wall Street wizards, Wisconsin for cheese, beer, beer and more beer, Florida for alligators, hurricanes and other methods of untimely and horrific death, Kentucky for horse racing and Iron River, Michigan, for its locals driving their ATVs down the street past my house full throttle at 3am to get in line for the dispensary when it opens at eight.

I've already spent any inheritance that might have been there for my children, their children, and their children's children on my British car habit. I will sell plasma again this week to help offset the overwhelming costs. I'm down to 97 pounds and dare not venture out in a strong wind. Maybe I could start a 'go fund me' page. People will read: "British Car Owner" and immediately get all emotional, shed a tear, and pull out their wallets.

They say that misery loves company. Personally, there doesn't need to be two of us sitting on the side of the road and so that expression makes absolutely no sense whatsoever.

*Well, things could be worse and things will get better*—now those are two catch phrases for the hopeless, the naïve and your typical Brit car enthusiast! *MM*

**David Mathias** is a retired global advertising exec and writer living in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. His work can be viewed at [authordavidmathias.com](http://authordavidmathias.com)





# MODERN SOUND FOR CLASSIC CARS

## HEAD UNITS



### RetroRadio

The RetroRadio looks like your vehicle's original factory radio while adding all the modern audio features found in your daily driver. Classic push buttons, replica knobs, and a period-correct bezel or faceplate combine with the radio's display to create a truly authentic look.



### Europa

The Europa Radio is designed to replicate the look of the original, complementing the interior style of your classic car while updating audio technology. It features replica knobs, large push buttons, pinstriping, and an elegant chrome trim. A new Din Kit is included for an easy installation.



### Grand Prix

The Grand Prix perfectly compliments the interior styling of the 1980s while updating the audio technology to today's standards. The unique design features paddle-style controls with low profile push buttons. A new Din Kit is included for an easy installation.



## MOTORS

RetroSound radios are a modular design. Assembly is required. This design allows for a more adjustable fit and to offer different style options. RetroSound Radios are only compatible with 12V negative grounding vehicles.



	Motor 1B	Motor 2B	Motor 4HD
AM/FM RDS Tuner with 30 Pre-sets	✓	✓	✓
Selectable 12/24 Hour Clock	✓	✓	✓
Selectable Tuner with USA/EU/Japan Frequencies	✓	✓	✓
Clock-Off Feature	✓	✓	✓
Built-in Bluetooth®	✓	✓	✓
Non-Volatile Memory	✓	✓	✓
Front and Rear RCA Low Level Pre-amp Outputs	✗	✓	✓
Subwoofer Output with Variable Crossover	✗	✓	✓
Made for iPod® / iPhone®	✗	✓	✓
USB Port for WMA/MP3 Music Files	✗	1	2
Auxiliary Inputs	1	0	1
Display	White	32,000 Color Display	32,000 Color Display
Power Output	18 watts x 4	25 watts x 4	25 watts x 4
SiriusXM-Ready®	✗	✗	North America Only
Built-in DAB/DAB+ Tuner	✗	✗	✗



[MossMotors.com/Brands/RetroSound](http://MossMotors.com/Brands/RetroSound)



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# Vitesse

## Five Speed Gearbox Kits

Built on the superb, tried-and-tested Mazda MX-5 gearbox, this conversion kit offers smooth gear changes and relaxed cruising in 5th gear. Each kit comes with a new, fully assembled Mazda gearbox, and a bespoke cast aluminum bell housing designed to fit directly to your engine. The custom shift lever, and included shift knob, retain the existing shifter position. Installation is straightforward, and includes a full set of instructions. With proper tools and some automotive competency, you should be able to fit a Vitesse gearbox.



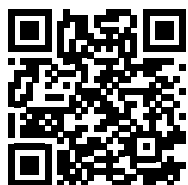
- **MGB**
- **MGA**
- **TR2-4A**
- **TR250**
- **TR6**
- **TR7**



***Throw it into 5<sup>th</sup> Gear!***

### Kit includes:

- New 5 Speed Mazda Transmission & Clutch
- Custom Shift Lever & Shift Knob
- Concentric Slave Cylinder Assembly
- Braided Clutch Line w/ Remote Bleed
- Drive Shaft
- Pilot Bearing with Mazda OE Needle Roller Bearing Assembly
- Speedometer Drive Cable
- Gearbox Rear Mount Bracket Assembly & Isolator
- Complete UNF Fittings Kit
- Clutch Alignment Tool



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