

The Morris Gazette

The Official Newsletter of the British Motoring Club – New Orleans, Inc.

February 2001

Published Monthly

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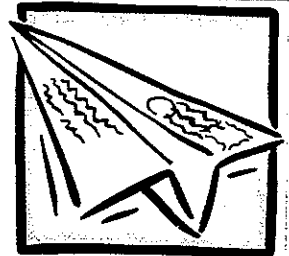
If you are member of these or any other national register or club, please let us know.

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President's Message

One of the many slogans for MG is "Safety Fast". Just how this came to be I'm not sure. Nevertheless, in combination these two words apply to all of us that drive, not only our beloved British cars but everything else too. This idea of safety was brought close to home at our outing to Middendorff's recently, when one of our club members had a blow out at highway speed while on the way to the restaurant. Both he and his wife are fine but the car suffered a good bit of damage. The exact cause, who can say? (No, they weren't Firestone tires.) One thing that is known about the tires, however, is their age.



Mr. Goodspaner and others have been telling the rest of us to replace old rubber brake lines, rubber clutch lines, rubber fuel lines, rubber this, rubber that... for a long time now. Many of us who have followed their advice were amazed at how good the parts looked on the outside but were equally alarmed at how bad they were on the inside. Aren't tires rubber too? The simple reason they give for renewing the rubber part is "when they get old they give out, usually when you need them most." Your tires may only have a few thousand miles on them but how old are they?

Please start now saving up your spare change for a spare change.

Charlie Ake



When was the last time you checked your spare?
And jack? (It's in here somewhere!)

March 2001

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		27 Mardi Gras	28	1	2	3
4	5	6 Board Meeting	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Goody Bag Pizza Party
18	19	20 General Meeting	21	22	23 Reception	24 CAR DAY SHOW
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Tue Feb 20—General Meeting: 7:30 New Orleans Hamburger & Seafood Restaurant. Veterans Blvd between Bonnebel and West End Blvd. NOTE DATE! Meeting moved up due to Mardi Gras.

Tue Feb 27 – Mardi Gras.

Tue March 6—Board Meeting, Harold O'Reilly. 7:00 FINAL CAR SHOW COMMITTEE MEETING!

Sat March 17—Goody Bag Assembly & Pizza Party. 6 p.m. -9 p.m. Lubriport Labs on Airline Hwy, behind NAPA, near the Airport.

Tue March 20—General Meeting—7:30, New Orleans Hamburger & Seafood Restaurant on Vets. NOTE DATE! Moved up for show.

Fri March 23—Red Beans & Rice Reception. 5-8 p.m. Join us at the Lafreniere Park Pavilion with our out-of-town guests. The club is providing red beans—bring a dish to share with our guests.

Sat March 24—11th Annual New Orleans British Car Day, Lafreniere Park, Registration 8-noon.

Future Stuff:

Sat April 21—9th Annual Pensacola Beach Bash and All British Car Show, Pensacola FL

Sun May 20—Crawfish Boil, Bogue Falaya Park, Covington

January Minutes

Club President Charlie Ake opened the meeting at 7:35. Guests included Ruth Davidson, new owner of a 1969 MG Midget. (Her husband joined her later in the meeting.) Also attending was returning member Tilden Holiday. Tilden told us he is back "after an affair with a Corvette" and is once again an MGB owner.



Richard Denneau reported on the Poker Rallye. The weather was perfect and the rally was lots of fun. Richard thanked Roger and Carol Gibson for the great job they did putting the event together.

Charlie reminded everyone of the Middendorf's run coming up on Feb 4th.

John Duram of Baton Rouge is having a show/swap meet on Feb 3rd in Clinton LA in conjunction with the Clinton Community Market. Entry fees will be minimal and door prizes, including Cajun Injectors (the kind used for turkeys, not fuel) will be awarded. They intend to make it a quarterly event. Mr. Goodspanner noted that turkey baster/injectors are handy for filling your hydraulic systems without spills!

The MG Odyssey this year will be in St. Paul Minnesota, July 2-6. No one present was planning to attend!

Bill Breithoff presented service awards to outgoing officers. (The plaques were not ready in time for the Christmas party.) Awards went to outgoing members at large Harold O'Reilly and Tippy Barback, outgoing president Bill Breithoff, and outgoing treasurer Roy Richardson. Bill's plaque will have to be redone, however. The engraver spelled "Breithoff" correctly but engraved "Bil" for his first name! And we finally caught up to Butch & Cindy Frutos to give them their E.E. Reynolds plaques.

Keith Vezina urged everyone to participate in the SCCA events. SCCA was holding an autocross on Feb 11. The previous event saw 93 cars, including a Cobra, an Alfa Romeo and, in the modified class, the world's fastest Yugo!

Car Show business:

We have three entries already, all from our Web page. Also, all parish permits have been taken care of.

Tippy Barback showed some designs and discussed the possibility of having this year's shirts airbrushed. There were some problems with that idea and it seemed unlikely.

We passed out the manpower sheets for members to sign up to volunteer for jobs at the show.

Cliff Hughes reminded everyone to check to see if they could get donations of items for the Goody Bags. If your business or employer has small "give away" items and you can get 100-150 of them, please do. We usually include items such as key rings, pens, and product samples, especially auto related items, in the goody bags.

WWL-TV is having us on the morning news again on Friday March 23. They prefer a convertible and a sedan (to give a nice contrast). The cars need to be in the studio by 5:30 am or in place on Thursday afternoon and left overnight. Allen Bradley will probably be bringing his newly restored MGB which definitely qualifies as the most improved car in the club. (It won the Goodwill Trophy at the UnShow in August.)

Roger Gibson is making Red Beans and Rice for the reception Friday march 23, at 6:00 p.m. He will be passing around a sign up sheet for other dishes and deserts at the February meeting.

Member Projects:

Floyd Friloux is looking for a chroming place that can handle BIG pieces such as the bumper off his fire truck. Eric's Bumpers was recommended.

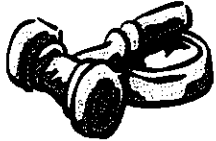
New member Don Marpe won \$26 in the 50/50 drawing. §

Club Officers – 2000

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 Treasurer Harold O'Reilly
 Secty/Editor Cathy Greensfelder

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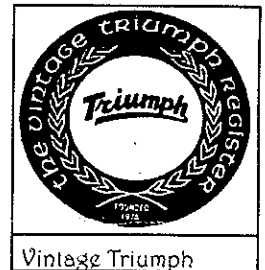
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Smoke & Wires by Cathy Greensfelder



I am fond of saying that I have the bare minimum equipment for owning and driving a little British car: a cell phone, an AAA Membership card, and, not a tow strap, but a fire extinguisher. I decide I needed the extinguisher shortly after I joined the club when Beverly Rice told me the following story.

Five or so years ago, around ten BMC-NO members were convoying to the Pensacola car show. About half way there, Roger Gibson's car's wiring harness caught fire. Roger said there were no flames, but there *were* huge billowing clouds of smoke coming out from under the bonnet. Roger immediately pulled over, and the entire convoy followed him to the shoulder. Every single driver jumped out of his/her car and ran to Roger's aid. And every single one of them was carrying a fire extinguisher! Now, where else would you expect to see ten cars, each carrying a fire extinguisher?

I figured they knew something I didn't, so I promptly went out and bought an extinguisher, rated for grease and electrical fires (*very* important, since an extinguisher designed solely for paper & wood fires would actually *spread* a gasoline fire), and set it behind the passenger seat, ready to hand.

Since then I've heard Roy Richardson say that little British cars run on smoke and the smoke lives in the wires. If you let the smoke out, you are in trouble. If you let it all out at once, you are *big* trouble, as your car generally will not run again until you get the smoke *back* in, which usually requires rewiring the little beast. And a good extinguisher. §



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I Like Myself Just as I Am, Thank You.

narrated to Mike Lewis by MG Y-Type #5020

I am a 1950 Y-Type MG, and this is one of my happiest memories. My owner, Mike Lewis, is writing this since cars don't write. Mike frequently talks with me. I think I am one of his best friends; we have known each other for over 17 years.

Just last March, about when I turned a mature 50 years of age, my owner took me to another car show. This one was the Tenth Annual British car Show at Lafreniere Park conducted by the British Car Club of New Orleans (I think I have been to all 10). The weather was nice and it was a beautiful show. All of us British cars were cleaned and polished with loving care by our owners, then we all assembled at the park to let people admire us. There were so many of us, all with our own special characteristics. It was wonderful, parked on the grass with all those people walking around looking at us and talking to our owners.

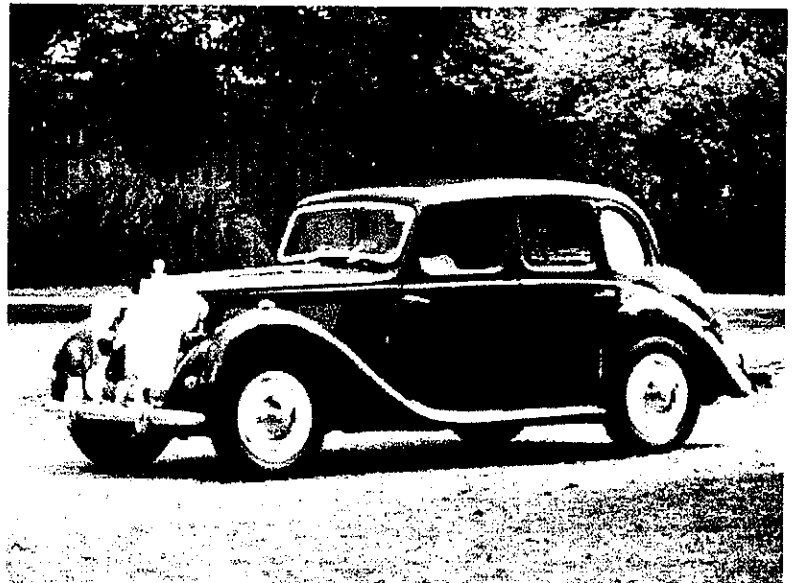
All of our owners voted on the cars they like the most. I didn't get excited because the special awards usually go to the newly restored exotic cars. People are so fickle and predictable. Still, we had so much fun with all the people who came to visit us British cars and talk with our owners. All too soon the show was over and Mike took me home, put me in the garage and covered me up (he likes to get me home before dark and usually mumbles something about Lucas electrics).

Mike & Sharon usually go to bed early, so they didn't attend the awards banquet. I usually get some class award, people like me because Mike keeps me in pretty good condition and I am a bit unique. The next day, one of his friends called to say he had picked up an award for me and would bring it over that evening. Dave and Chesney Loeb came over carrying a box and something wrapped in a towel. Happily, Mike met them under the carport, opened the garage (where I live) and invited them in.

Most people invite guests into their homes where us cars don't know what they do. I was under the dust cover and they were not talking loud enough for me to hear what was going on. Then Mike uncovered my grill, lights, bonnet and wings, and then got down on his knees in front of me where I could see, unwrapped the thing in the towel and read the inscription to me. It was a crystal bowl that said "Tenth Annual New Orleans British Car Day, Best of Show, Mike Lewis, 1950 MG Y-Type, March 25, 2000 (Sponsored by Gibson Photography)!" We were both so excited! Mike was bubbly, I could only smile and beam with joy!

Mike got several phone calls congratulating us on our Best of Show! They said it was nice to see such an award go to a car with character instead of the usual fully restored cars (if Mike could afford it, I know he would probably restore me, but then I worry that he might not drive me to places the way he does). But Mike keeps fixing me up so he can take me places like car shows. I know my paint is getting scratched and chipped, but Mike keeps touching me up with a small paint brush and my wood trim and leather show my fifty years of age. I will always remember this honor and hope some of my British car friends at shows will also be recognized, even if we are not perfect. "I like me just as I am, thank you."

Narrated to Mike Lewis by MG Y-Type #5020." §



The Woody, the Snow and the Rat by Jim Jones

I will start at the beginning. Club member Cliff Hughes was visiting in-laws in Charlotte, NC when he picked up a classified newspaper at a local convenience store. In it he came across an ad for a "Morris Station Wagon" in the town of Nebo. Figuring that this must be a Morris Minor Traveller (woody) and knowing my interest in Morris, he phoned me with the information, as he did not have the time to check it out himself.

I was hooked right away! I contacted the seller by phone and made arrangements to purchase and transport the vehicle back to Covington, LA.

Upon his return, Cliff said that he would love to come along with me to retrieve the car and it was a good thing that he did because I would need his assistance.

Not having a car transporter at the time, I attempted to rent one from U-Haul. But, they would not rent a trailer to be pulled by my Toyota Previa van, class "A" hitch or not, because it had a four cylinder engine and an automatic transmission. It did not matter that its four cylinder engine was more powerful than a V6 or that the transmission was solid as a rock! So, I contracted to pick up a dolly-type transporter in Charlotte, NC.

A few days later, the adventure began. Cliff and I hopped into my van to begin the trip to Charlotte. We stayed overnight at Cliff's mother-in-law's house. The home is old, but nice, and is built on very uneven land. Even the telephone was old. It was black, very large, weighed about five to seven pounds, the rotary dial was at least four to five inches in diameter, and the handset was connected to its base by a wire the size of a heavy duty extension cord. If you dialed the "zero", the dial took what seemed like forever to return to its starting position. Being in the house was like returning to a bygone days!

The next morning we awakened to discover that it was snowing. Oh well, it was off to locate the neighborhood U-Haul dealer. We found it only a few blocks away in a combination gas station, small grocery store, mechanics garage, and rental business.

The transporter dolly was out back, but the U-Haul dealer was nowhere to be found. Turns out that he had been arrested and jailed the night before for driving without a license. We were promised that he would come to work soon. He was a little late, but he did finally show up and we eventually acquired the dolly.

It was back to the house to make a phone call to the seller of the car. We contacted him on the first try at his engineering office and set a time to meet him in what we thought of as the town of Nebo. Cliff said that he knew how to get there. (Cliff always seems to know where he is going even if he has never been there before.) It turns out that Nebo is not a town at all, but just an intersection of a state highway and a country road. No gas station, no nothing. I can only assume that there was something there at one time as it is shown on the state map.

The seller shows up after awhile and we follow him down the country road to his farm which is even further out in the middle of nowhere. The Traveller is parked in an open fronted building attached to the side of a barn. There it sat with the engine on the ground, the transmission missing, signs that some sort of rodent had taken up residence in the car, and shelf fungus growing out of the rear right-hand wooden pillar post.

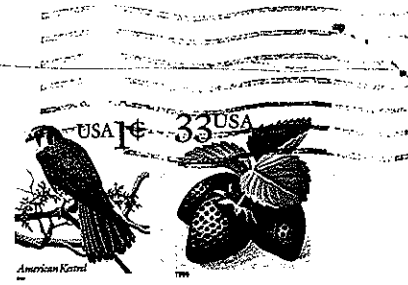
The road leading onto the farm was covered with gravel, but the road leading down to the barn was not covered with anything. Remember that I said that it was snowing? It was still cold, but the snow melted after it hit the ground, which, of course, was composed of nothing more than red clay. Sticky, wet, soft, red clay!

The car's right hand side was within inches of the barn's wall and, you guessed it, all four of the tires were flat. Thank Goodness, I had the foresight to bring along my floor jack and four wheels with brand new tires from my Morris Sedan. We jacked up the left hand side of the car and mounted two of the wheels. In that condition, we managed to push the car outside of the shed and jack up the right hand side. We replaced the front wheel, but I thought that we would never get the last lug nut loose from the rear wheel. After much effort, the stud broke off and we were able to install the last wheel. Next, I had to get under the rear of the car to ensure that there was enough oil in the rear end as the rear wheels would be on the road and rolling for the entire trip back home. A piece of cardboard

(Continued on page 7)

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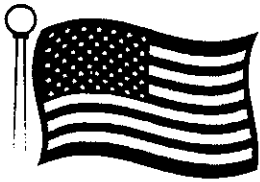
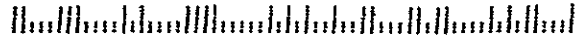
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February 2001



March 24th, Lafreniere Park
2001 British Car Day!

Middendorf's Cruise by Bill Breithoff

It was another beautiful day to cruise to one of the club's favorite eating places, Middendorf's. At the Kenner Welcome Center, 10 British cars and 9 other cars assembled for the South Shore convoy to Manchac. The drive was nice, as the sun was shining and the temperature was cool and crisp.



The South Shore Convoy arrived first and had begun to enter the restaurant when the North Shore Convoy showed up. They had begun to file in as well, when a lady drove up and said that Fred Mayer had had a blow out and wrecked the front and back of his TR6. She asked if we could call a tow truck to bring the car in from the bridge. Cliff Hughes got on his cell phone and called a tow, and Anne Friloux jumped in her TR6 and headed out to bring Fred's wife Mavis in while Fred waited for the tow.

We were enjoying our thin and crispy catfish (which I think was better this year than in previous years) when Anne returned with Mavis. To everyone's relief, Mavis was unharmed by the mishap. Fred came in a little later and spent the rest of the meal answering questions about the blowout and the condition of the car.

After lunch, we all went outside to take a look at Fred's TR6 and to take a few group photos.** After some car talk in the parking lot, everyone headed out. A few of us went to Ponchatoula for ice cream and antiquing, but the majority of members headed home, probably for a nap after all that catfish.

On the way home, Sally commented on how we always have a beautiful day when we go to Middendorf's and I think she is right. Let's hope that we have great weather next time we go, and no blow outs.

There were a total of 17 British Cars and 47 people attending this year. This is a great turnout, although it falls a little short of our record of 63. If you missed this year, try to make it next year. Getting together and interacting is what makes any club worth belonging to. §

**If you take pictures at an event, develop them right away and get them to me for the newsletter. Our publishing deadline is the weekend after the board meeting. §

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