

# The Morris Gazette

British Motoring Club - New Orleans

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***BMC-NO is affiliated with:***  
North American MGB Register (NAMGBR)  
and  
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If you are a member of these or any other national register or club, please let us know.

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## President's Message

HAPPY NEW YEAR Welcome to 2003. Now that the holidays are behind us we can get down to business. Let's see...Super Bowl, Mardi Gras, St. Patrick's Day, the car show schedule filling up. When does it all stop? When do we get a break? My poor house needs a lot of work but there's no time. Oh..I need to go to work for a living too?

Really the calendar is filling up. I already have a couple of dates with two events on the same day. 2003 promises to be a very busy year.

Your board has already had their January meeting and started planning activities that include Roger's "Mystery Run" in January, Trip to Middendorf's in February, March car show, and crayfish on May 4.

With our full calendar you will want to have your British car in tip-top shape. Most of the British parts suppliers have their winter sales so now is a good time to get the parts you need.

Get those cars out from under their covers and bring them to a club meeting or event. You will both be happier.

Harold O'Reilly



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**Scrabble Rallye**

We had a perfect day for Roger Gibson's latest rallye. Ten British cars and 3 non-Brits met at Lakeside Mall under a clear, bright sky with delightfully cool temperatures. This year, instead of a Poker Rallye, Roger had planned a Scrabble Rallye. It worked along the same principles as the poker rallye. Participants were given a list of 6 coffee shops to visit: PJ's in Harahan, Coffee Cottage in Jefferson, Plantation Coffee House in New Orleans, Chateau Coffee Café and CC's Coffee in Kenner and Caffee Caffee in Metairie. But instead of drawing a playing card at each shop, each team drew 2 scrabble "tiles" (actually small cardboard cards each with a letter). Together with the 2 tiles drawn at the initial drivers' meeting, each team could acquire 14 tiles if they visited all 6 shops.

At the end of the rallye at Café Du Monde on Clearview, each team traded their rallye tiles (and a receipt for a purchase at any one of the stops!) for actual Scrabble® game tiles. They each picked seven letters to keep, then played single round of Scrabble. There were several boards set up to speed things along and standard Scrabble rules applied, with Roger's copy of Webster's New World Dictionary to be the final word on acceptable spellings.

First prize, a travel Scrabble game, went to Butch and Cindy Frutos with 61 points! Bill and June Harris won second prize, a British theme wall clock. Third prize, a Saf-T-Beacon, went to Bill and Sally Breithoff, who drove Sally's new MGB to its first club event. The "Good Sportsman" award, also a Saf-T-Beacon, went to newlyweds Karan and George Barton. The Bartons cheerfully helped new Baton Rouge members Gary & Theresa Hand find their way out to Jefferson, Kenner and Harahan then back to Metairie and New Orleans!§



Cindy & Butch Frutos, Roger Gibson



Roger Gibson and Bill Harris



Bill &amp; Sally Breithoff, Roger Gibson



Karan &amp; George Barton

### **Bradleys Hit the Road for New Year's** by Susan Bradley

Or should I say "Nueva Anno". Allen drove the MGB all the way to San Antonio, TX. We hit the River Walk and road on a brightly colored river taxi. The city carries on a holiday tradition of decorating for Christmas. The lights were all over the River Walk and very spectacular to view. A wonderful time to visit this city, lucky us!

We drove the Mission road to see Mission San Jose, founded in 1720. There we were introduced to the colorful history of rare and stately treasures. The missions are active parishes and while we were there (on New Year's Eve) a funeral procession appeared. We also visited McNay Art Museum. We saw an exhibit from France at this gracious mansion - once owned by an artist.

The Spanish Governor's palace (1749) was just like we stepped back in time to Spanish Colonial Texas. The period furnishings showed us how life was both harsh--and romantic.

On New Year's Eve we attended a mass (Spanish/English) in San Fernando Cathedral (1738) - very pretty and interesting. Then we hit the streets with 200,000 locals to bring in the New Year. Local music was all around and then fireworks by the Tower of Americas (1968 World's Fair).

We also visited Market Square, Sunset Station, La Vallita (San Antonio's oldest surviving neighborhood). The food was wonderful too. We sampled quite a variety. We even found a British and an Irish pub!

We saved the Alamo for New Year's Day. There is a very nice walking tour and quite a history lesson. On the road again, spend the last night in Houston. Of course, more shopping. The MG was great and we loved traveling during this time of year. Susan & Allen Bradley §



Remember New Orleans' "Festival of Fins"?

San Antonio had a "Cows Parade"!

## **Dorset Madness (A British Street Rod) #5** by Jim Jones

I just received word from Ray Klackle of PmB Systems that the media blasting of my 1949 Austin of England Dorset's body will begin in early January of 2003. I will transport the car to him bolted on its fully suspended frame. It is easier for me to load it on my trailer that way.

At Ray's business, I will unbolt the body from the frame and he can lift the body off the frame with his forklift and begin his work.

After that is accomplished, Peter Brauen of BMC Restorations can start on the sheet metal repairs. Pretty much all of the rusted away metal is located at the engine bay firewall down to the front of the floorboards and the fronts of the door concealed running boards. None of the fenders (wings), hood (bonnet), trunk deck (boot), and doors have any heavy rust damage. The exception is the hood's latching plate; it is just about gone and will have to be reconstructed. The trunk floor has some rust damage. I have reconditioned a late model MGB two-speed wiper motor for use on the Dorset. I cannot handle the original one speed wiper motor (very slow for British mist & fog use). Morris Minor wiper arm wheel boxes will be utilized for two reasons:

Firstly, the original Dorset wiper box shafts were "sealed" from the rain by cone shaped rubber grommets. Peter Brauen says that these grommets, although still available, did not seal against the weather very well even when new. The Morris wheel boxes utilize a threaded shaft housing, a chrome cap, a chrome securing nut, and a flat rubber seal that does actually seal against the weather. The chrome caps will have to be re-shaped at their bases to match the curved sheet metal on the Dorset. After this is done, the caps may have to be re-chromed. They are made of pot metal, but I know of a place that specializes in the re-chroming pot metal car parts.

Secondly, the Morris boxes provide the correct degree of angular sweep for the wiper arms as they transverse the windscreen. The Morris boxes also use the same diameter drive cable as does the two-speed MGB wiper motor assembly. The Dorset's wheel box drive gear & operating cable was smaller in diameter than the MGB's.

I have turned my attention to the car's windscreen assembly. The two piece polished stainless steel frame is in good shape and is held to the car's body with fourteen small bolts from the inside of the car. The flat one-piece glass is cracked and will have to be reproduced by a local glass shop. I have obtained a new glass-to-frame gasket and a new frame-to-body gasket.

I have been sending off chrome bits for re-chroming a little at a time. The car's four-section chrome grill is in pretty good condition and I have deemed that polishing it is all that is necessary. The car's front and rear bumpers and four over riders (bumper guards) will be the last parts to be re-chromed. One of the bumper over riders is very badly pitted. Anyone out there have a unit suitable for re-chroming? One can try asking. You never know!

I am moving right along, however slowly, with my British Street Rod! More to come as it happens. §



**NOTICE TO MGB OWNERS!**

Our club is affiliated with NAMGBR, the North American MGB Registry. This affiliation provides our liability insurance for events. BMCNO must maintain 8 registered NAMGBR members in our club to be affiliated. If you own (used to own, or would like to own) an MGB, please join NAGMBR, then tell the newsletter editor, Cathy Greensfelder. (She's the keeper of the membership list.) NAMGBR dues are \$25 and the newsletter *MG Driver* is worth it. Cathy will have NAMGBR membership applications at the next meeting.



VINTAGE TRIUMPH REGISTER

**ATTENTION TRIUMPH OWNERS!**

Our club is a Vintage Triumph Register (VTR) zone. We need 10 VTR members in our club to become an affiliated chapter. There are insurance and other benefits to becoming a chapter. If you own (used to own, or would like to own) any type of Triumph, please join VTR, then tell the newsletter editor, Cathy Greensfelder. (She's the keeper of the membership list) or Harold O'Reilly, the VTR liaison. Cathy will have VTR membership applications at the next meeting.

**Cathy's MGB** by Jim Jones

A nice rubber bumper MGB, but it has needed a lot of attention for some time. I have been advising Cathy about some of the parts that she needed to order for the car and she has been stocking up. I am located quite a ways from her Algiers, Louisiana home and until now the time available for car work has not been nonexistent.

Cathy and I have been working on the car for a number of days in my Covington, Louisiana garage. We accomplished many repairs, so many, in fact, that I will only relate the major ones.

Cathy mentioned that the ignition key was giving her some trouble. It was hard to move to the different positions and was not returning to the "on" position after starting the car. I removed the ignition key assembly's electric switch and found the internals full of caked up grease and the start-return spring was clogged with rust. I disassembled it, clean everything up, and reinstalled the unit. I told Cathy that it should do until she could obtain a new one, as the switch's plastic case was not in good condition. More on this "fix" later.

The alternator was not keeping the battery charged. It was only producing about 11.5 volts max across the battery. It was not a Lucas unit. Later, I learned that it was a Bosch alternator used on a Ford compact. Deciding that this unit, although it fit up well, was not always readily available, we chose to adapt a GM Delco alternator to the car. Although we knew that the car would be running on the battery alone, we drove it to the local parts store to have the battery and alternator checked out.

They checked the charging system and declared the alternator to be at fault. (Turns out that the guy checking the alternator used to work at a Baton Rouge import dealer and worked mostly on MGBs.) Cathy purchased a rebuilt GM alternator for the conversion. We went back out to

the car and when she attempted to start the car - nothing. Not a grunt, not a click! The ignition switch's plastic housing had given up the ghost and popped out. There it was, the backside of it hanging from its wires and all the little detent balls, springs, and contacts lying on the floorboard! That fix did not last very long!

We went back into the store and purchased a pair of small wire jumpers. I used them get the car started and we headed back to my garage traveling the less used roadways. (I did not want to push-start the car on East Boston or Hwy 21 if it stalled out.) Nothing to do now but wait for a new switch to arrive. But Cathy now knows how to hook up a jumper wire to power the coil so the car can be started without the ignition switch - assuming the key will release the steering column lock. I advised her to go to Radio Shack and buy a set of heavy-duty wire jumpers with spring-clips on both ends and keep them in the car for just such emergencies.

So that Cathy could drive her car back to Algiers and install the new ignition switch when it arrives, I thought of a way to allow her to start the car without the use of jumper wires. I cut the wires from the backside of the old switch base. I tied the necessary wires together to power everything up and installed a push button starter switch to energize the start relay. The ignition key is still needed in the start position to ensure that the steering wheel will not be locked while driving the car.

With this rig, Cathy or Mark can plug in the cable then push the button to start the car all while seated behind the steering wheel. Charles Ake suggested that I place a large washer on the switch's shaft to make it easier to hold the unmounted assembly while pushing the button. After the car starts, the switch assembly is draped over the steering column to keep it from getting literally underfoot while driving.

The alternator conversion took some time as I have never done it before. It was not a simple bolt-on job. But, the end results were very professional looking and the GM unit places 14.5 volts across a half charged battery. Look for another article on the GM Delco conversion later on. §

### **Introducing Scarlet!** by Sally Breithoff

May I introduce the newest of the Breithoff Fleet.....Scarlet (she was already named when we bought her). She's a 1977 MGB and please do not tell her she's really Burgundy....she doesn't know!



Can you believe I bought her on EBay.....I have never bought anything on EBay.....but we knew the car was for sale in Hammond from Cliff Hughes, but we just could not get there to see her over the holidays. By the time we went to see it Mike and Rhonda had put her on EBay and they had a bid on her. So with 23 minutes left I registered and placed a bid and got her!



Then we went to pick her up Sunday night. We got around the corner to the gas station and she died. Could not start her.....I had only owned her for 15 minutes and she had left me

stranded.....can anyone beat that time? Any way, we pushed her (in reverse) to get her started and drove back to Mike's. The next day he put a new alternator in and we picked her up on Monday night after work.

We were headed home and Bill was following me in his Blazer and says " I am doing 50mph, what does the speedometer say?"

I happily answered, "It says 50mph, too!" Then he said "How many rpms?" "2600", I answered. Then when I looked back at the speedometer it was on ZERO..... we were barely out of Ponchatoula! OH THE JOY OF OWNING A BRITISH CAR !!!!!

I drove her to work last week and she did fine.....but it is a humbling experience.....I have to get used to people passing me up! I guess I was just a little scared to go much faster . . .Scarlet and I are still getting to know each other. She is an official "antique" at 26 years old. Which is exactly HALF my age!



Anyway I am excited about getting her. And I look forward to many happy hours on the road.

See y'all soon.....Safety (not so) Fast

Sally

(Editor's I guess this means Sally & Bill are now in a "mixed marriage": MG and Triumph!)

### **More is Not Necessarily Better (After-Market Fuel Pumps) by Mr. Goodspanner**

Replacing your Lucas electric fuel pump with an after market fuel pump is doable. NAPA supplies an electronically controlled fuel pump for about \$40. It is smaller than the Lucas pump, easy to mount, less expensive, and more reliable. But, you can have problems if the job is not done correctly. Twice now I have been involved with cars having fuel problems caused by the use of an after market fuel pumps of the incorrect pressure rating.

The first car was an Austin Healey Sprite. The fuel pump was so noisy that it could be heard running even over the sound of the engine. Some of the noise was caused by the fact that the pump was not mounted with any insulating rubber grommets. An "under the bonnet" fuel regulator was installed (the kind you see for sale in J. C. Whitney catalogs). It was installed to prevent the pump from overpowering the carburetor float valves. The above items told me that

the after market fuel pump was creating too high a fuel pressure. The pressure rating is not listed on these pumps. You can only know what the pressure rating is by reading it on the side of the box it came in when it was new or testing the pump with a pressure gauge. The fuel pressure rating for most British four-cylinder engines is 1 1/2 to 3 pounds per square inch. (For six or eight cylinder engines check the repair manual for the recommended pressure.)

A proper after-market pump was installed on the car, mounted with the use of rubber grommets, and the regulator removed. After that, the only time that you could hear the fuel pump running was when you first turned the ignition key to the "ON" position.

The second occurrence was when an owner of a Morris Minor complained that his engine compartment mounted after-market fuel pump was getting very hot to the touch. The over-powered pump was working its little heart out. The installed fuel regulator was placing too much back pressure on the pump. I advised him to purchase a pump of the proper pressure and remove the unnecessary pressure regulator.

Even if you desire to retain that Lucas fuel pump, (the more expensive electronic Lucas pumps are more reliable) having an after market pump on hand is a very good idea. You can make up the necessary wires, connectors, and hoses which will allow you to install the setup under the bonnet in about three minutes if your Lucas pump fails and be on your way once again.

Do not forget to install an inline fuel filter between the fuel tank and the pump. In this position, it will protect the fuel pump as well as the carburetors. The "see through" type of filter is the most desirable.

email me with your LBC problems at: [bmcno@i-55.com](mailto:bmcno@i-55.com)

If I do not have the solution, I will find someone who does. §

## For Sale

**1962 MGA Mk II**, #109023, 21,000 mile unrestored, near perfect, rust free, complete and almost 100% original. OEW/Red, original paint, chrome, interior, hood, side curtains, tools, etc., etc., NAMGAR 1st place 1998, "Best Original" New Orleans 1999, "Most Original" Fairhope 2002. \$27,500. Tom Page 251-989-0143, 251-98-68-1966, [tpage@baldwinemc.com](mailto:tpage@baldwinemc.com) or [stpage@gulftel.com](mailto:stpage@gulftel.com) (1/03)



**57 MGA**, restored. White w/ red interior, spoke wheels, badge bar. Asking \$17,500. Darryl Moran (504) 220-3995 (1/03)

**80 TR8** green, 84,000 miles, A/C works. \$5,000 Bill Langenhienig (985) 626-8296 (12/02)

## WANTED:

TR6 in good running order. Bill McQuade (985) 624-2820 (11/02)

## Newsletter Submissions



Electronic submissions are greatly preferred. Email to [MorrisGazette@cox.net](mailto:MorrisGazette@cox.net) or bring a diskette to the meeting. (MS Word or plain text preferred.) Bring written articles to the meetings, or mail to P.O. Box 73213 Metairie LA 70033

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