

The Morris Gazette

British Motoring Club - New Orleans

March 03

Published Monthly

BMC-NO is affiliated with:
 North American MGB Register (NAMGBR)
 and
 Vintage Triumph Register (VTR)

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

As I write this, my mouth is watering at the thought of thin fried catfish at Middendorf's Restaurant. As you read this, we have already been there. I hope I saw most of you as this is one of our most popular events.



Some of you may be confused by the date of this newsletter. Most probably didn't notice. Since the newsletter comes out near the end of the month, and to make it's date agree with the events calendar, we have "skipped" a month. Don't worry, you will still get 12 issues.

I have been pleasantly pleased by many of the changes in government lately. For the last 20 years everyday brought news of something that aggravated me. Lately the news is mostly good. Most of you know the good things Mayor Nagin is doing in New Orleans. La. State Treasurer Kennedy has been hard at work returning lost funds to their owners. Now good news from the Office of Motor Vehicles. They have an excellent website for information and renewals.

WWW.EXPRESSLANE.ORG has all the information you need on the hundreds of special license plates available in Louisiana. There are pictures of the plates along with requirements for each. If you enter your current license plate number, it will print out an application form, figure the cost, and list all requirements for antique, personalized, or other special plates.

If all government agencies worked this well, what a great country we would have.

Harold O'Reilly



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January 28 Minutes

New Members: We had the pleasure of meeting a new member, Rick Huber, who is currently living in Baton Rouge and owns three MGBs. Rick is restoring a '65 & '66 and drives a '75 with a V8 engine. Rick is originally from the Baton Rouge area, then moved to NJ and has returned.

Past Events: As this was the first meeting of the New Year, Harold O'Reilly talked about the Christmas party at Bill and Sally Breithoff's. Good food and great company made for a wonderful time. Thanks again to Bill and Sally for opening up their home to us.

The club officers have already had two meetings to plan events for the car club and car show coming soon.

Roger Gibson discussed the Scrabble Rally he put together January 19th. The event was attended by ten British and three American cars. Leaving Lakeside at 1:30 pm, participants received two Scrabble letters and were to travel to six different coffee shops and pick up an additional twelve Scrabble letters. At the end of the run, seven letters were to be discarded and the one with the most points creating a word won. First place went to Butch and Cindy Frutos, second place Bill and June Harris and third to Bill & Sally Breithoff. See January newsletter for more details and pictures. This was Roger's third rally in recent years. He has put together a poker, scavenger and Scrabble rally. Thanks, Roger for all your hard work! The Delgado body shop class did not happen as George Torlage could not be reached. Eight people had signed up. Harold O'Reilly will try to reach George for a future class.

Future Events: The Pensacola car show has been postponed because of Easter, but now it will conflict with the VTR Regional. Keith Vezina talked about a car show in Panama City, FL on March 8th. Roger Gibson mentioned The Dock where The Bounty used to be and suggested this as a possible end destination for a car run. May 4th is the planned date for the annual Crawfish Boil.

Members' Projects: Sally Breithoff has just purchased a 1977 MGB named Scarlet (see January newsletter for details and pictures). This makes another mixed marriage of MG and Triumph. Allen and Susan Bradley also have both. Would be great to hear from other members about their experiences of a "mixed" marriage! Cliff Hughes talked about a good brake repair shop on S. Broad in New Orleans and handed out business cards to those who were interested. Cort Musgrave (Sr.) replaced his clutch line in Land Rover and also added a relay to save the Land Rover ignition and headlight switch.

Car Show: Bill Breithoff summarized the plans taking shape for the show. Martin Straka will be producing the T-shirts and should have them ready for the Middendorf's run. Goody bags

will be put together March 15th at 4:00 pm at Lubriport Labs. Donations are still needed for the goody bags. We put together approximately 144 bags. Valve cover races are still planned for our show this year with Dave Hayden heading up this endeavor.

Cort Musgrave (Jr.) suggested raising money for charities by charging for rides in a British car. Trophies this year will be a wooden state of Louisiana with a brass plate. Entry fees for our show have gone up this year to meet the rising costs of the show. Early entry (by March 12th) will now be \$25.00 and \$30.00 after that. Car show registration forms were passed out. Vendors will attend our show and the club will be selling hats, shirts, license plate holders and soda can cozies. At the February meeting, the list for the Hospitality Dishes will be passed around.

The winners of the 50/50 included: Carol Gibson – Cash, Jeannine Richardson – T-shirt, Cathy Greensfelder and Harold O'Reilly – flasher relays.

Much declining was done during this 50/50, as the same people kept getting their ticket numbers picked. Where were our lucky ladies Beverly and Sheila? §

Easy Hydraulic Lines by Mr. Goodspanner

For years I have been forced to make up new British hydraulic lines from scratch. I had to order the needed new fittings from a supplier of British car parts, purchase a new American ready made line from a local auto parts store, cut one end of the line, remove the American style fittings, replace them with British style fittings, and then remake the flange at one end for each line used. It took about as much time to accomplish as the length of the above sentence.



Now the work can be reduced considerably. Club member Charles Ake has found that ready-made hydraulic lines with British fittings already installed on them, can be purchased locally! Advance Auto Parts, formerly Discount Auto Parts Stores (DAPS), has them in stock at the Covington location. The lines are manufactured by AGS Company out of Muskegon, Michigan.

They are listed by the parts store computer as “metric”, but are in fact 3/16” diameter tubing and the threads on the fittings are U.S. standard (universal) threads. The ending fittings are the British type. The flares at the ends are of the bubble type that is used on almost all British car brake systems.

The lines are sold in various lengths, but are seldom of the proper length needed for a particular job. So, you will most often have to cut the line to the desired length and re-flare one end. §

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Dorset Madness Wiring Harness by Jim Jones

The custom wiring harness is coming along fine. The rear wiring harness running from the front right hand side of the engine compartment firewall under the car to the tail lamps, etc. has been completed. I wrapped the harness using non-sticky black vinyl tape. It looks as well as any factory job.

Wrapping a wiring harness is not the easiest job to do. I straightened the wires so that they would be lined up neatly. I taped the wires together every so often using sticky electrical tape and at the break out junctions to hold the wires in place while I wrapped.



The non-sticky tape must be stretched as it is wrapped along the wires and secured in place using the fingers as the wrapping continues. My index finger and thumb were pretty sore after completing the rear harness. The roll of tape must be passed around the wires as the wrapping is done. Wrapping a small number of wires, as in break-outs, is particularly difficult and hard on the fingers.

At the end of a wrap, I am using a small black wire tie to secure the tape rather than knotting the tape around itself or using sticky electrical tape (which will come loose later on).

Separate rear turning signal light bulbs have been installed (the car was not manufactured with conventional turning signals) mounted through already existing body holes under each rear light lens. I did not want to use separate light assemblies at the rear of the car for turning signals as the previous owner had done. The reinforced sheet metal holes were enlarged using a Uni-Drill and angled parallel to the ground in order that they could clear the rear glass lenses' thick outer edges. Small modern side marker sockets were used to hold the small turning signal bulbs. I fabricated clips from strap metal to hold the side marker sockets in place, securing them with an existing screw.

A period after-market steering column mounted turn signal unit which the previous owner had installed on the car will be re-mounted to the steering post to activate the conventional signal lamps. The Dorset will retain its trafficators (semaphore signals). They will be operated by the stock lever switch for that purpose which is mounted above the center top of the horn push

button.

The main wiring harness behind the dash, through the firewall to the engine compartment, and front lights, etc. has been bench tested (more like "floor" tested). I started with a '72 MGB wiring harness, unwrapped it, and removed or added wires to suit my needs. It is now being held together using small wire ties.



I laid the custom front wiring harness out on my garage floor, hooked everything up, and tested the assembly. I used a small output 12-volt power supply unit with a built in circuit breaker. This supply unit pops the breaker with even a small overload. All the better to not to burn wires if I had made a mistake in constructing the wiring harness! All went well!

All of the wires in the custom wiring harnesses are of the proper British wiring harness colors with a few exceptions. Utilizing longer continuous wires instead of the connectors has eliminated many rubber-sleeved connectors. I have drawn the complete updated wiring diagram for the Dorset on my computer using 14" length paper. Everything is spread out nicely making it very easy to decipher. §

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

NAMGBR, 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.



National MGB Registry



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.

Laws of Physics for British Cars by Rex Funk* (from the Internet, author unknown)

Sir Isaac Newton, an Englishman famed for his discovery of the Law of Gravity, has a branch of Physics named for him. The real breakthrough in physics in the 20th century has been the development of Quantum Physics. Often startling and unconventional, the laws of Quantum Physics explain heretofore little understood phenomena. Yet no one has fully explained the

perplexing contrivance of Newton's countrymen: the British car. Indeed these cars, which we know and love, defy all known laws of physics. In an effort to bring some clarity to the conundrum of the British Car, I offer this treatise in hopes that it will account for some of the idiosyncrasies of these venerable but unpredictable vehicles. This seminal dissertation will no doubt be widely, if not soberly, debated. While I support the prerogative of the reader to question my conclusions, I challenge skeptics among you to propose equally plausible, lucid and concise explanations for the phenomena in question.

1. Law of Accelerated Entropy: Entropy in British cars proceeds at twice the rate of that of normal electro/mechanical devices. Entropy is the propensity of matter to break down to its simplest form (ultimately the hydrogen atom). This previously unknown law has been deduced through observation, and is supported by the now famous Lucas Corollary to Murphy's Law.

2. Law of Inverse Practicality: The most desirable British cars are the least practical to own and operate. This is also known as the Law of Sadomasochistic Attraction.

3. Law of Momentum and Inertia: Most simply stated this law is British cars are hard to start, but once you get them going there is no stopping them. Also known as Girling's Law, this explains why most older British sports cars which still run, need bodywork on their front wings, bonnets and/or front aprons.

4. Law of Inverse Complexity: Mechanical devices on British cars have twice as many parts as those on other cars. In Social Science literature this is referred to as the British Labour Party Law of Job Security and Feather-bedding.

5. Law of Obscure and Obtuse Nomenclature: The names given to parts of British cars have no rational explanation outside of certain esoteric circles. Cases in point: a Hood is a convertible top, the Bonnet is the hood over the engine, the Boot is the trunk, and a King Dick Spanner is an adjustable wrench. Recent research has confirmed that these arcane terms were coined by early British auto makers as an inside joke while in an ale-induced stupor during nightly visits to the Lucas Pub and Electrical Works in Coventry. The same beverage was consumed in quantity by writers of technical and shop manuals with similar unfathomable results.

6. Law of Agricultural Lineage: With notable exceptions, stock British car engines look and sound like tractor engines, from whence many of their original designs came. If it could plow a field, it could power an auto.

7. Cultural Phylogenetic Law of Electrical Systems: British car electrical systems recapitulate British society in that their designs are rooted in tradition, but their components often go on strike, fail to work together, and are filled with caustic and incompatible constituents. These social conditions are exacerbated by the fact that much of the populace own Lucas refrigerators, and are forced to drink warm beer.

8. Law of Inscrutable Variables: Also known as the Stealth Corollary to Murphy's Law, this law states that anything that can go wrong will be well hidden until it does, and will often defy diagnosis. This explains why British cars are chock full of so many delightful surprises and enigmas.

9. Law of Cyclic Effort in Restoration: Similar to the example of the process of painting the Golden Gate Bridge, this law states that as soon as one need or problem is solved, another will pop up to take its place. Thus a British car restoration is never completed, but always in progress.

* With tongue in cheek, and apologies to my friends across the pond. §

Middendorf's Run

There was a good turnout considering the



weather with 41 BMCNO members & family. Eighteen British Cars and two non-Brits made the trip. And Allen Bradley made the trip with the top down despite the fact that it drizzled on & off all the way there & back. As usual, the food was scrumptious and the conversation entertaining.

Fran & Rodger Talley won the \$10.00 drawing from the members that drove their British cars. New members Rick and Mary Lynne Huber from Baton Rouge attended with their MGB V8. §



New Members Rick and Mary Lynne Huber

Rodger & Fran Talley, Allen Bradley

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Parts:

Car Lift—6,000 lb rating, \$2,000. Gene Graham (504) 833-3437

Newsletter "Re-Numbering"

One of our members pointed out that it was disconcerting to get the February issue at the very end of February with the March calendar in it. He thought it should be called the March issue. After thinking about it, the board decided he was right—it would be more logical to have the issue match the calendar. And it would be easier to find past events if we didn't have to do the mental subtraction of looking in the January issue to see what happened in February. So we have started naming/numbering issues accordingly beginning this month, making this issue (which would have been February) the March issue.

Newsletter Submissions

Electronic submissions are greatly preferred. Email to 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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