

Wires & Tires

August 2021



www.memphisbritishcars.org

British Sports Car Club, LTD Memphis, Tennessee

BSCC Officers 2020-2021

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MG Marque Leader	Paul Burdette
Triumph Marque Leader	Jon Brody
Lotus Marque Leader	Chris Irving
Secretary	Jim Duke

Membership Meetings

Coletta's Italian Restaurant
2850 Appling Rd.

3rd Monday of each month
6:00 p.m. if you wish dinner
7:00 p.m. for our program

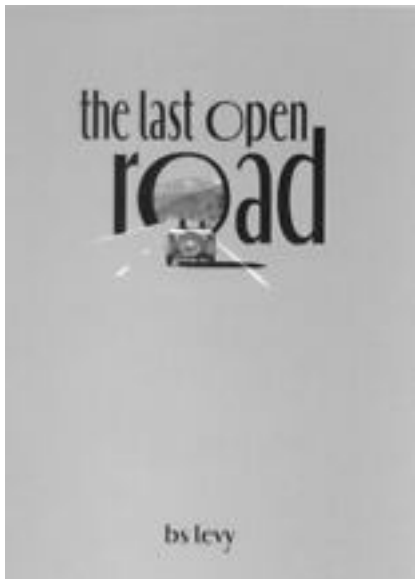
Markyourcalendar- **Monday, August 16**
Monday Sept. 20



2021 World Championship BSCC Scavenger Hunt/Rally/Social



A memorable and well-attended driving and social event merits a decent description. So, let's start with a short quote from Burt Levy, author of 'The Last Open Road' -



***“By the time I realized I was in deep-shit trouble, I was already in mid-air. Flailing away like mad (as you do) and falling fast towards certain...
...But maybe we should go back to the***

beginning, eh?”

Yes, let's go back to the beginning.

Chris and Pam Irving created a beautiful early summer drive along with a diabolically clever series of questions, aimed at amusing and stumping the sharpest tacks in our drawer.

Our Rally Master handed out directions and 'test' questions and set us to our task after the club had gathered at the Pleasant Hill Cemetery chapel on Brunswick Rd. First, we sought clues amongst the markers in the cemetery, then off we went along pleasantly empty and



cooked meal and refreshing beverages, our Rally Master had toted scores from the chicken scratched rally sheets, and summoned everyone's attention for handing out handmade awards for accurate answers,



winding country roads in search of answers to

life's persistent questions.

Our assigned route took us through bucolic scenery across northern Shelby and southern Tipton Counties converging to an end at the Irving home in rural Bartlett. Pam and Chris had spaghetti and toasted garlic bread waiting as we straggled to the finish line.

Chris took control of our poorly scrawled answers while the horde of ravenous club members swarmed Pam's kitchen, dining room, and outdoor eating spaces. By the time everyone had demolished the delicious home-



worst answers, worst luck and best vehicle.

Pam and Chris recruited young friend, Hyde Hill, to act as concours-level judge. Hyde selected Dennis & Kittye Norris' Morgan as 'Best Car and helped Chris hand over what we hope will be a permanent traveling trophy. We



have to presume Dennis' offer to Hyde of a short ride in his was not done as a bribe – such under the table transactions are severely frowned at, tsk, tsk.

At this point, let's return to Burt Levy's mid-air flailing. How do you suppose Burt's experience relates to the BSCC's excellent adventure? Well, one might ask Ileana Feltman. She, too, encountered an unexpected step-down into the Irving dining room and took flight with a full plate of spaghetti and sauce.

Both Ileana and the Irving dog, Archie, came away wearing marinara sauce, but Ileana had a reddened face, too. Fortunately, her only injury was a bruised ego, while Levy seems to have seriously damaged his knee.



Road Force Balancing

by Simon Dix, MG Club St. Louis

For most of 2020, I had debated getting new tyres (tires) for my MGB. For one thing, I subscribe to the theory of replacing tires based on age and frankly don't care what the tread looks like. Why? Because I've seen enough stories of MGBs being found upside down in a ditch along the Interstate due to tire blow outs. The tread looks ok, but the tire's body is not ok, and people drive to, say a national convention for example and run Interstate speeds on 20-year-old, or even older tires.

For me, if they are 8-10 years old, they are being replaced. Mine had a date code of 0111 (1st week of 2011). I also thought a front end alignment would be good as I'd done a steering rack boot replacement, and despite closing counting the tie rod rotations I could have been a bit off as there did seem to be some wear on the tire's outer edges. However, 2020 was 'special' as we all know, and with no big cross-country trips planned, my hemming and hawing went on most of the year with no action taken – until late November or December.

That's when I came across an article on Road Force Balancing from my friend Rick Mills in Kansas City. This really piqued my interest and the short version is that he was able to get a great road force balancing service at Santa Fe Garage in Independence, Missouri, and it eliminated an annoying vibration issue. They have top end Hunter Engineering equipment. Mike Barnes, here in St. Louis, who works for Hunter knew of the garage and said I'd be very happy with the outcome.

So, what does road force balancing actually do? As described by Tirereview.com, road force balancers, in addition to performing a traditional spin balance, measure both the wheel and tire by pressing a large roller against the tread of the spinning tire. The

roller applies 1,200 pounds to 1,400 pounds of pressure to simulate the weight of the vehicle on the tire as it rolls down the road.

The machine's computer, along with various sensors determines variations of tire stiffness, radial run-out, and anything in the tire's construction (such as inconsistencies in the belt package) which would prevent the tire from rolling smoothly when weighted by the car. By measuring both the wheel and tire, the road force balancer tells the technician where to move the tire around on the wheel until the effective high spot of the tire (when rolling on the car) matches the low spot on the wheel – a more sophisticated method of match mounting.

So, I ended up talking with Santa Fe Garage and spoke with Greg Smith. It quickly became apparent they were going to be great to work with, and are 'car people'. Greg had owned MGBs in the past! I made an appointment for December 8. That gave me some time to complete my purchase of tires through TireRack.com (a first for me, but local choices of 13-inch tires are extremely limited locally). Although I could have had them drop shipped to Santa Fe Garage, I got them delivered to me. I wanted to have them with me in case there were weather issues getting to Independence, and because I wanted to check the sidewall date codes on the new tires. For my MGBs, I won't accept tires as new if they were manufactured more than six months before I buy them since I'll never put enough miles on them to wear the tread out and will eventually replace them based on age.



Full Car & Travel Buddy.

The tires arrived very quickly via UPS – it gave the delivery driver a change from dropping off the usual boxes. And, I was delighted to see the date code on all four tires was 2420, so I was all set.

I made an early start, getting on the road

about 5:30 a.m. to ensure making the appointment time of no later than 10 a.m. It was much colder and foggier in the middle of Missouri than where I'd set out, but after a couple of brief stops, I made it to Santa Fe Garage in good time.

We got started right away and had the car up on a lift and did a very thorough check of the suspension and



Suspension Check

steering rack – problems here will affect ride smoothness and the alignment. Nothing major was found other than a little wear in the driver side tie rod. Next up was the tire install and balancing. Each wheel is tracked / numbered from where it comes off the car and then each old tire is removed and new installed and the balancing performed. The numbering becomes important in deciding where each new tire is placed on the car – best results from the balancing go on the front wheels and the worst result tire / wheel pair go on the passenger rear.

Socially distanced and masked the whole time, I was able to watch the entire process and try to understand everything as it was being explained to me. Frankly, a good conversation was something that happened as a car enthusiast was doing the job –



it not a job to them, it's a mission. Based on the machine's findings, it was necessary to rotate the tires on a couple of my wheels. That required marking the positions, breaking the beads, and making adjustments to put the tires

in specific positions on the wheels. Fortunately, there weren't any major issues with my wheels (rims) being out of round or buckled / bent.

Here's a link to a short video showing the Road Force Balancer in action –

https://1drv.ms/v/s!arubojrxnuwrzcqeo2xq_u8m-warp



End results.

As you may be able to see from this results sheet, the best tire/wheel goes on the driver front and we work our way around to leave the worst on the passenger read, as mentioned earlier. Last up was the alignment check – given that only one adjustment, the toe-in, is possible on an MGB. That was also done on Hunter equipment. Once done, all that was left was a quick road test to ensure all was OK and that the steering wheel remained straight, as it should be by using a device to keep it in position during the alignment.

Everything was fine, and I left for home about 12:30 p.m. I took Interstate 70 east as far as Warrenton before seeking backroads to test a little cornering at speed. I was a happy camper.

I'm sure you can find shops with this equipment in your area, but this was a fun adventure, and I now have a really smooth ride.

Eating too much cake is the sin of gluttony. However eating too much pie is okay because the sin of pi is always zero.

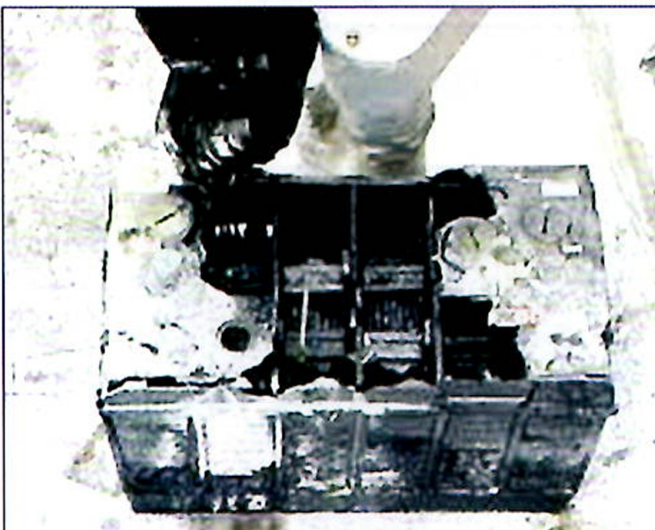
$$\sin \pi = 0$$



Battery Explosions

By Joel Hoffman – NC MG Car Club

I'm now repairing a car that had a battery



explosion. Like all of us, I've read about how to charge a battery, connect cables, etc. The current repair is a clear reminder that these cautions / precautions should not be give just lip service.

The chemical reaction that produces electricity in your car's battery produces hydrogen gas, a highly explosive element. It's used to send rockets into space. You do NOT want to generate a spark near hydrogen gas. Normally, the advice we get about this is that, when attaching jumper cables, it is important to connect them to the discharged battery first

and then to the battery providing the jump. We are told to attach the ground cable to a bare metal part in the engine compartment that's not adjacent to the battery so that any spark triggered while completing the connection won't be near the hydrogen gas. The other caution we normally get is to plug in a battery charger AFTER attaching the cables to the battery for the same reason.

There are other important battery precautions and maintenance issues to be aware of, and it's likely one of these issues caused the explosion on the TD I'm working on now. First, make sure the metal plates in each battery cell are covered with electrolyte. If accessible, top the cells off with distilled water and only fill to the indicator above the plates. If the tops of these plates are exposed while charging or rapidly discharging the battery, they can warp, making contact with each other and cause an internal spark. This consideration is especially critical with newer higher capacity batteries. Those batteries have more plates in the same size case as the lower capacity batteries. The increased plate count is accomplished by fitting the plates closer together. If they spark internally, the gas likely present can or will explode, blowing the top off the battery and splashing sulfuric acid in places you don't want it. This stuff easily corrodes metal, damages hoses, and, of course, can blind you if it gets in your eyes. Obviously it is serious stuff. Wear protective eyewear when working with batteries.

Another continuous issue for all of us is corroded battery terminals. Such corrosion



Dirty bad, clean good

doesn't just cause issues when starting the car. That's easy to figure out and correct with cleaning and brushing the posts and terminals. There's also a danger most of us don't think about – a weak connection between the terminal and battery post can trigger a spark under load. So, you hit the starter, a spark leaps between the post and terminal, and BANG! Keep those terminals clean!

Another issue is electrical shorts caused when the hot battery cable wears and shorts against metal parts in the car. I've had this happen before. The cables are often un-fused, and can get hot enough to weld metal, and cause a fire. The same thing can happen when a piece of metal contacts the hot battery post and a metal ground near the post. You may have had this happen while connecting or removing the hot battery terminal – your wrench touched another metal part of the car. There was a big spark, and a weld mark on the wrench. Prevent that from happening by always detaching the ground cable before removing



Keep batteries strapped down.

the battery, or attach the hot (positive) cable first when installing a battery. Other ways those accidental battery shorts can happen



Rubber boots over the positive terminal is a good idea.

include touching the battery tie-down to the hot terminal, or have another metal part of the car come into contact with the hot terminal. You've probably noticed that modern cars typically have a rubber or plastic cover on the hot terminal. It is an obviously good idea to do this on your classic British car, too.

The battery is a necessary device that contributes to our cars starting and operating properly. It is also a powerful and dangerous device that needs to be treated with caution.

Let's all pay attention to the threat, and avoid what I'm working on now – or maybe much worse.



Wants N Gots

Wants & Gots has been laid off due to an absence of things for sale, for give away, or things folks need. It's back!!

Terry Brown (901-859-3256 Cell) has three Jaguars on offer –

A 1999 Jaguar XJR In almost show room condition; \$12,500.





A 1986 Jaguar XJS V12. It has been dry stored last 8 years with all fluids drained. Low mile car with new tires. Needs to be serviced. Solid car, no rust. Offered at \$4500.

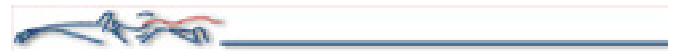


A 1983 Jaguar XKS. It has been in family since 88. The engine has 115K miles. It has been sitting for many years. There's rust on body



and floor boards. Interior seats are in excellent condition. It will make a good project . Offered at \$2500.

Contact Terry Brown at 901-859-3256



Turns out that Adam and Eve owned the first computer.

It was an Apple, but with very limited memory.

One byte and it crashed!

TACO TUESDAY

Like welcoming home the returning prodigal, the BSCC warmly embraced restoration of Taco Tuesday on July 16th. Ileana Feltman had selected 'Rio Azul Mexican Restaurant' (near Macon & Houston Levee) as the site of its homecoming. The renewal of our monthly tradition was greeted by an overflowing crowd – almost more than the restaurant could handle.



Good food, good beverage, and great company seems to always be a welcome event, especially as an ending to our long COVID-induced hibernation.

We don't have photos from Taco Tuesday's rebirth; I guess everyone was too busy chatting, eating, and laughing to drag out a camera.

But keep your eyes and ears open for an announcement of the next culinary trip south of the border in August.

Coming soon, and thanks to Ileana!!



Keep Your Eye On The Horizon

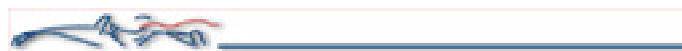


What's that on the horizon? Is it a cloud of dust? Smoke from the western U.S. wildfires?

No, it is an upcoming trip down the Blues Highway (US 61) to Clarksdale, MS – legendary home of the blues, and 'The Crossroads'. Clarksdale was home to several famous blues musicians – John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters, for example. It is home to the Delta Blues Museum, the Ground Zero Blues Club, and it is where the Sunflower River Blues Festival is held each August. And, the nearby Hopson Plantation is where American agriculture was radically transformed in the late 1940s by the mechanical cotton picker.

Don't know about you, but I'd rather pick a blues guitar than a row of cotton!

So, while we're still waiting for final word, save the date on August 14th, and get your British cotton wagon ready to roll south.



- 1] - Put the lid of the toilet UP. Add 1/8 cup of pet shampoo to the water in the toilet bowl.
- 2] - Pick up the cat and soothe her while you carry her towards the bathroom.
- 3] - In one smooth movement, put the cat in the toilet and close the lid. You may need to stand on the lid.
- 4] - The cat will self-agitate and make ample suds. Never mind the noises that come from the toilet, the cat is actually enjoying this.
- 5] - Flush the toilet three or four times. This provides a 'power-wash and rinse.'
- 6] - Have someone open the front door of your home. Be sure that there are no people between the bathroom and the front door.
- 7] - Stand behind the toilet as far as you can, and quickly lift the lid.
- 8] - The cat will rocket out of the toilet, streak through the bathroom, and run outside where she will dry herself off.
- 9] - Both the commode and the cat will be sparkling clean.

Sincerely, **Rex, The Dog**

Wyres & Tyres is a publication of the

British Sports Car Club, LTD

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Les Dale's soapbox racer