

Wires & Tyres

Mid February 2021



www.memphisbritishcars.org

British Sports Car Club, LTD Memphis, Tennessee

BSCC Officers 2020-2021

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
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| V. President | Jeb Blanchard |
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| Austin Healey Marque Leader | Jim Hofer |
| Empire Marque Leader | Tom Wilson |
| Jaguar Marque Leader | Dave White |
| 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

Mark your calendar

For now, write TBD on all calendar pages!!!



From The Oval Office -

President Terry Roberts says, "Hi Everyone,
With the vaccine becoming available for more people in the coming months, the BSCC board is looking at starting club meetings and events in April or May. VP Jeb Blanchard is looking for speakers and the Marque leaders will work on events.

This is tentative depending on how the COVID pandemic progresses. A lot of us want to get back together in a safe manner, especially in the springtime with nice weather arriving. Stay tuned for further information."

ed. note: Your editor knows of at least a handful of BSCC members who have gotten both of the COVID vaccine shots; so some of us have attained bullet-proof status, and he is looking forward to everyone achieving that protection.

Terry's longing for balmy spring weather is belied by the snowy arctic blast we're enduring as these words spill from my semi-frozen brain. Still, it has been nearly a full year since the BSCC board was forced to pull the plug on the organized enjoyment of our LBC time machines. As the old saw says, 'Absence makes the heart grow fonder', and such a prolonged absence of our LBC get togethers is enough to turn our thoughts to gentler climes regardless the frigid snowdrifts outside.

Much, but not all of this issue will be devoted to the Triumph marque, in recognition of the 'International 'Drive Your Triumph Day' which was a few days past on February 10th.



Our own Joe Reed sends a couple of his photos demonstrating that LBCs are not always pampered garage darlings. Without photographic evidence, your editor boasts that even the deepest Wyoming snows didn't stay his noble 1964 MGB from progress.



An Ownership Retrospective (Can you stand it?)

Wil Wing

I owned my Triumph TR7 for about eight years.

TR7: THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

The spear-head, the arrow, the rocket.
From ancient instinct to computer design, the shape that cleaves the air is the wedge.
Now Triumph brings the wedge down to earth in TR7 — a fantastic new sports car to steal the American road.
Proven on the Grand Prix race tracks of the world, the edge of the wedge knives through the air, forcing the front wheels down. Handling is solid and uncannily precise. The air flows over the slippery shape. Drag is minimal. Power enhanced. Miles per gallon increased.
Under its skin, TR7 is a triumph of simplicity. It is utterly dependable, sturdy and sinuous on cantankerous roads and cork-screw curves. It means endless pleasure at moderate price and less maintenance; welcome news today and something no rival sports car can say.
All in all a simply beautiful and beautifully simple machine. Test-drive our words at any Triumph dealer.
For the name of your nearest Triumph dealer call: 800-447-4700. In Illinois call 800-322-4400. British Leyland Motors Inc. Leonia, New Jersey 07605.

TRIUMPH

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME
TR7

That time included many repairs including a total engine overhaul. It now seems that I spent more time working on it than driving, although I did log about eight thousand miles. That is enough experience to present an accurate verdict on the infamous TR7. It doesn't mean you are obliged to believe me!

I need to explain that my opinion is not without context. I serviced and drove dozens of the earlier model Triumph TRs and repaired countless other British brands during my business years. I serviced only imported cars for the first ten years or so.

TR7 CONS:

1) Based on my extensive mechanical background, the TR7 is sometimes about twice as difficult to service, compared to other British sports cars. Little thought was given to the ease of maintenance. It can be a mechanic's nightmare.

Want to fill the transmission? First remove the exhaust pipes. Want to bleed the brakes? There is only one bleed screw in the back —

I'm not sure I ever got all the air out. Etc, etc.

2) The steering was awful. I can't conceive how they ended up with such heavy steering at low speed. And it isn't just my age!

3) Looks and value: This is subjective and perhaps shouldn't be listed as a 'Con'. But – it truly is a factor, as the market doesn't like the TR7s compared to the earlier cars. Therefore, looks has a negative influence on value. I'd call that a legitimate 'Con', even if I don't agree with it.

4) Driving satisfaction: This is not a 'Con', but it does have less torque than some other popular mid-priced British sports cars. Hmm... come to think of it, this is now a low-price sports car.



TR7 PRO: (and counter measures)

1) If you have little mechanical experience and need to rely on pro shops for your maintenance, costs will be higher. However,

(PRO), if you really like the car, DIY service isn't insurmountable. Repair jobs, well done, give the same satisfaction as any other car.

2) The steering was one of the first jobs I tackled and probably the one that gave the most pleasure. After-market electric steering kits are available (expensive), but I chose to do it myself. I was completely satisfied with the results, even though one continually reads criticism about electric steering not having 'sensitive feedback'. But it was a wonderful, transforming change. Downside? The system, like all electric devices with diodes, will fry if you introduce even a momentary electrical short.

3) Needless to say, I grew to like the TR7 looks very much. The older TR sports cars were always likened to cement block styling. The 'blocky' shape has an awful effect on drag. That

doesn't matter much at slow speeds, but if you like slow speeds, why are you driving a sports car? Truthfully, I always disliked the early TR looks and never wanted one. And I wasn't crazy about the TR7 either, until sitting in one and then began to appreciate what it has to offer.



4) Driving satisfaction: I'll just say it – the TR7 is a better drive than most similarly priced British sports cars and certainly better than the earlier TRs. Don't shoot! I accept that the TR6, especially, is still a great choice as a good, reliable road car and their owners love them. The low speed torque is satisfying. But Triumph car addicts seem to have forgotten that the TR7 was also a National SCCA Champion winner in its class. Uncle Sam made it slow, not Triumph.

I found it had a lower center of gravity, cornered faster and flatter than most others, had more suspension travel and comfort, and, with unit construction, was solid... just plain fun to drive fast. One of the few guys I talked into trying my car on his own (how we hate to risk jeopardizing our long-held prejudices!) drove it hard and was astounded—"Corners better than my TR6!" But I did boost the power back to the UK level, or a bit more. And who doesn't like air conditioning?

All in all, the car was reliable; I made damn sure that it was! This isn't just luck. Afraid to take your older British car on long trips? Shame on you for not making it reliable!

OK, now for my breakdown confessions –First



failure: the water pump failed me at about 50,000 miles when about 40 years old away from home. My fault! When I did the engine overhaul I ordered a new water pump, but couldn't get the oriental abortion to fit – finally said the hell with it and re-installed the original one. Second failure: Well, there wasn't one, although it was close. My battery died and I just barely sputtered into a Walmart. "Oh, those unreliable British cars!" Except it wasn't a British battery and I believe those sort of remarks reflect more on the speaker than on the cars.

Final comments: Happiest moments? Sitting comfortably in the car – not on it – cruising a little over the Interstate speed limits with the throttle just cracked and looking forward to hours ahead.

I've owned worse cars.

Would I buy another one? No. No more crawling around repairing any old cars. Enough already! Unfortunately, the statement "They are going up in value soon" never happened – and probably never will. But considering how little money changes hands to acquire a TR7, it should tempt younger guys to get a good one and install a late Japanese 4-cylinder engine. Or buy a TR8, although I don't know those engines well.



TR6 History



1968

- 9/19/1968-First prototype TR6 the CP25001;
- Karmann restyled the TR4 body using the substructure of the TR4/250 in only 14 months.
- 5.5" wheels replaced the 5" from the TR4A
- Front anti-roll bar accommodated
- Lucas fuel injection in the UK, twin carburetors in the US
- CP25003 built on 09/19/1968 – first carbureted TR6
- Rostyle wheel covers standard

1969

- First production year
- 16P brake caliper from the TR4 replaced with the 16B type
- Black spoked steering wheel with pierced holes
- Chrome valve cover
- Body color windscreen surround

- Lacock de Nomanville A-Type overdrive with TR250 gearbox
- Rostyle wheel covers ended with CC50000
- Breathing fabric seats featured



1970

- Disc wheels with 15 hole pattern
- Painted valve covers replaced chromed versions
- New inlet manifold on carbureted cars
- Steering lock on US cars
- Ignition switch moved to under

steering column

- Windshield surround black regardless of car color
- '72 spoke wire wheels still offered
- Steering wheel with silver spokes replaced black spoked version.

1971

- Gearbox parts from the Stag used
- 7-blade fan replaced the 8-blade unit
- US cars got square reflectors under the tail lamps

1972

- Compression lowered to 7.75:1 from 8.5:1
- Twin downpipe exhaust system for carbureted cars
- Gas tank reduced to 10.25 gallons
- Upgraded springs and wishbone brackets
- Deleted grease nipple on prop shaft
- Metric threads on brake calipers



1973

- Black plastic air dam introduced
- J-type overdrive introduced, 3rd and 4th gears only
- New steering wheel and instruments
- Union Jack decal replaced the TR6 logo on the rear fender
- The air intake on the cowl changed to a plastic grille
- Ammeter changed to a voltmeter
- Commission plate moved to the left hand doorpost
- Wire wheels no longer available after May 1973
- Chrome windshield wiper arms replaced with flat back units

1974

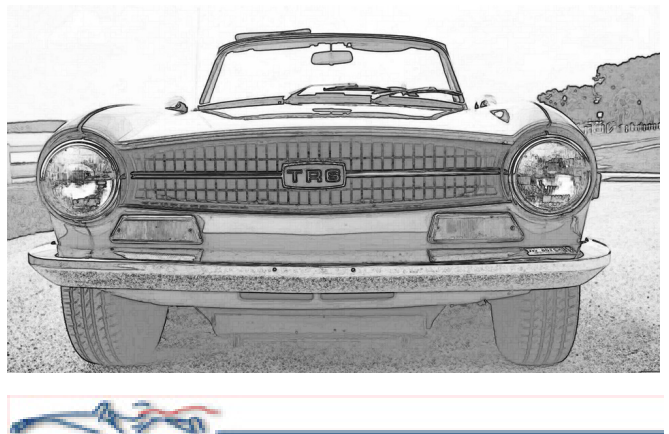
- Revised interior including center door pulls
- Chestnut and Beige colored trims offered in fire-resistant materials
- A full tonneau cover becomes standard

1975

- Black rubber bumper overriders (Sabrinas) on US models – meeting Federal requirements
- Front bumper raised
- Amber/white turn signal lamps placed beneath the bumpers
- Air injection system introduced

1976

- Triumph styled hardtop continued
- Front turn signals changed to amber
- **Last TR6 built on 07/15/76; CF58328;** some 1976 TR6s were sold in 1977 and may be registered as 1977 models.



A Dispatch From The Cotswolds

by Charles Wells

Not so long ago, "I was approached out of the blue by a fellow in Belgium who wished to buy my Volvo 850R. How on earth he found me I still



don't know but, as a keen collector of the marque, he offered me double what I had paid for the car and didn't even want to inspect it. Sad to say, I took his money.

Up rolled a transporter and off the car went to Europe: I doubt that it will be so easy to transact such deals in the future. And so I am now without a car of my own for the first time in almost sixty years, and missing it not at all.

However, with a sudden rush of blood to the head, I almost bought the world's oldest surviving 1909 Briton motorcar. According to the advert, this incredible car has been recently



exhumed from a cozy hibernation and given some very sympathetic pampering and starts and runs well. As a Veteran still eludes my motoring experience I was sorely tempted, but sense prevailed.

The Briton was developed from the Starling, a

small car made by the Star Cycle Company of Wolverhampton, which was a subsidiary of



Star Engineering, makers of the Star. In 1909 the Cycle Company changed its name to Briton, and the 2-cylinder Starling was continued under the new name, together with a 10hp four.



Briton was run by Edward Lisle Jr., son of Edward Lisle Sr. who had founded the Star company. My father's father was an investor in Star and owned an example of the marque, but rarely drove it. Like so many other car makers, Briton flourished during the Great War with military contracts but was out of business by 1928.

A ghost of the Briton continues today – the company limped on in various forms and became 'Tractor Spares Ltd' in 1940 and still exists as such.



Fate and Perfection



In a sudden rainstorm, a man flagged down a passing taxi. On getting in the car, the cabbie said, "Perfect timing. You're just like Frank."

Passenger: "Who?"

Cabbie: "Frank Feldman, he's a guy who did everything right all the time. Like my coming along when you needed a cab, things happened like that to Frank Feldman every single time."

Passenger: "There are always a few clouds over everybody."

Cabbie: "Not Frank Feldman. He was a terrific athlete. He could have won the Grand-Slam at tennis. He could golf with the pros. He sang like an opera baritone, and danced like a Broadway star. And you should have heard him play the piano! He was an amazing guy."

Passenger: "Sounds like he was something really special."

Cabbie: "There's more. He had a memory like a computer. He remembered everybody's birthday. He knew all about wine, which foods to order, and which fork to eat them with. And he could fix anything. Not like me -I change a fuse, and the whole street blacks out. But Frank Feldman, he could do everything right."

Passenger: "Wow, some guy then."

Cabbie: "He always knew the quickest way to go in traffic and avoid traffic jams. Not like me, I always seem to get stuck in them. But Frank, he never made a mistake, and he really knew how to treat a woman and make her feel good. He would never answer her back, even if she was in the wrong; and his clothing was always immaculate, shoes highly polished too. He was the perfect man! He never made a mistake. No one could ever measure up to Frank Feldman."

Passenger: "An amazing fellow. How did you meet him?"

Cabbie: "Well... I never actually met Frank. He died, and I married his bloody widow..."



An Engine Tuning Mystery

Wil Wing

This little mystery assumes you are working without the benefit of an engine oscilloscope.

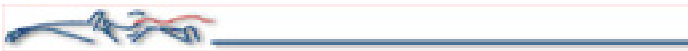
If you do lots of engine tuning, here is a peculiar situation you will come across eventually. In attempting to determine why an engine is running roughly, you start pulling off spark plug wires, one at a time, to see which cylinders aren't working. Doing this creates an obviously additional roughness, indicating that that cylinder was developing power. But then you pull off one spark plug wire and the engine speeds up! Why?

First, check that the spark plug wires aren't in the wrong order. This is most likely to happen after things have been apart. But if the wires are installed correctly it means that there is a carbon crack in the distributor cap. The spark is taking the easier path to ground by jumping to an adjacent cylinder that has less pressure. If the adjacent cylinder is just starting its compression stroke, the burning



fuel tries to push the piston back down – in the wrong direction! Hence, taking away that spark allows the engine to run more freely. But don't stop there.

Unless the cap has been dropped or hit with a hammer (physical crack), the carbon crack got there because there is an 'open' wire at one end of the crack. Replace the cap and use an ohmmeter to test all the wires and eliminate the bad one, at least. And now you know one instance where spark-ignition engines can run better by removing the spark!



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Wants & Gots

Terry Roberts has been contacted by a lady from Alabama (a member of the British Sports Car in Panama City) who is searching for a classic car to be used for transportation at a wedding in Memphis.

The wedding is scheduled for April 16, 2021. The classic car is needed to take the bride from the Peabody hotel to Graceland for the wedding, and then return the happy couple to the Peabody for the reception.

If a Rolls Royce or Bentley classic car is available, they would be thrilled. If not possible then any classic 4 door sedan would work.

If you have such a car and are willing to participate in this event, please contact Terry Roberts and he will put you in touch with the lady in Alabama.

Steve Harvey needs a driver side front fender (wing) for a 1972 MGB. If you have or know of an available one, please contact Steve at - sharveywas@protonmail.com or 901-848-8122

TR6 hard top - Free!

Paul Burdette encountered a gentleman at a recent Cars & Coffee and received the following missive -

I believe you're the guy I spoke with Saturday at the car show at Shelby Farms. I mentioned I have a Royal Coach hard top that I would love to give to someone that can use it. As I said I cannot find the hardware.

Robert Vaughn
901 219-6656