

Wynes & Tyres

September 2021



www.memphisbritishcars.org

British Sports Car Club, LTD Memphis, Tennessee

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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 - Monday Sept. 20
Monday October 18



Who's Got The Blues?

By Carolyn Shepard. 8/15/2021

As usual, the British Sports Car Club didn't disappoint with the August driving event as we followed U.S. Hwy 61 south to its intersection with U.S. 49 in Clarksdale, Mississippi. With sunny skies, billowy clouds and the radio tuned to a local Blues station, ten cars - mostly late model Jaguars sped down Hwy 61, past Tunica's casinos, Dollar General stores sprouting their yellow signs every 15 miles or so, passing prosperous metal grain bins, with green cotton fields, and drying corn stalks flanking the road.



With help from southern-born club members, the reason



why the cotton fields were green vs. white was explained. The crop was still in the blossom stage prior to forming bolls. The growing season ends and picking of cotton takes place in October and November after the leaves are defoliated and bolls open. That's when the modern six-row cotton pickers rumble across the Delta landscape.

The hour and a half drive ended with our first stop at the

“Shack Up Inn” at the old Hopson Plantation* (see note at end) near Clarksdale. Anyone wanting to experience a night in an old sharecropper shack can spend a night in a completely renovated edifice that now includes AC and a flushing commode for about \$90 per night.



Anchoring these hotel shacks is a juke joint with a lodging registration desk and live stage adorned with



tschotskes from rural southern life. Bill Talbot, the proprietor, was happy to give us a tour of one of the sharecropper shacks - it included a bar, an old piano and he told the story of the previous



inhabitant of the three-room shanty who raised seven kids there without running water or indoor plumbing.



The next drive was past the ‘Cross Roads’ sign where Highways 61 and 49 intersect. The greatest blues singer was Robert Johnson according to Dave White, our tour leader and Blues connoisseur. Dave followed the Blues in Los Angeles where he lived for 27 years. He told the story of Johnson and his epiphany at



the cross road after selling his soul to the devil.

The Blues and the Blues singer had special powers over women. Robert Johnson was rumored to have any woman he wanted. And so when Johnson returned home with clear genius in his guitar style and lyrics, after he had left his community as only a mediocre musician, people said he must have sold his soul to the devil. That notion fits with an old African belief that the crossroads is where you find wisdom; you go to the crossroads to learn, and in his case to learn via a Faustian bargain with the devil. He sold his soul to become the

greatest Blues musician in history.

According to Dave, Johnson was poisoned by a husband of one of his ladies. Dave said he watched one of the blues players, who was with Johnson the night he was poisoned, play in a LA. Blues club. Dave's version is better than Wikipedia that says Johnson died of syphilis.



Onward to Clarksdale a sleepy, much neglected farm town along U.S. Hwy 61 (the Blues Highway). Actor Morgan Freeman, who lived in nearby Charleston, MS as a child, opened the Ground Zero Blues Club in Clarksdale several years ago. The un-prepossessing club is an



venue where Blues musicians play for donations and tourists stop for a hamburger or to lend an ear to delta blues. Ground Zero called our name, too. The entrance porch has old dilapidated

sofas and metal yard furniture for those who wait in line. A huge BBQ smoker lured us in with the smoky smell of roasting pork.



Rounding the day was a tour of the Delta Blues Museum just across the way. Dave did not disappoint on this front either. He was the best docent as we walked past a Muddy Waters display, and ethnomusicologist Allen Lomax's car set up with recording equipment and speakers in the trunk.





*The Hopson Plantation was where, in 1944, the first crop of cotton was mechanically planted and mechanically harvested. The backbreaking task of hand picking disappeared throughout the south within a decade. Eliminated, too, was a means of livelihood for hundreds of thousands of share croppers and itinerant day laborers.



Gasoline Is A Killer Degreaser

Via John Morrison

People have been cleaning greasy parts with gasoline for decades, and science explains why it works so



well: "The number-one rule of solubility is 'likes dissolves likes'," explained Zachary J. Santner, a technical specialist at Sunoco.

In this case, gasoline, oil and grease are all hydrocarbons. The big difference lies in the length of the hydrocarbon chains (science talk for how highly each product is refined).

More science explains the danger of using gasoline as a solvent. Compared to kerosene, diesel fuel and proper parts-cleaning solutions,

gasoline has a high vapor pressure, meaning it easily evaporates from an open container. Those heavier-than-air gasoline vapors then pool on the ground - picture the fog machine chugging away the last time you saw Iron Maiden or Judas Priest.

Now the big concern: those pooled gasoline vapors are extremely combustible, easily ignited by a welding spark, pilot light or other common source. Now you're standing in the middle of fire, which, despite what you might think, is not very metal.

How do we know that proper cleaning solutions offer a safer alternative to gasoline? Check the safety data sheets—easily found online—and look at the flash points.



OSHA (yeah, we know many folks spit on the ground at mention of that agency) defines a flash point as “the minimum temperature at which a liquid gives off vapor within a test vessel in sufficient concentration to form an ignitable mixture with air near the surface of the liquid.” Then there’s a line for those who don’t own a lab coat: “The flash point is normally an indication of susceptibility to ignition.”

Gasoline has a flash point of 40 degrees below zero, meaning it’s flammable once it’s warmer than that temperature; CRC Industries Parts Washer Solvent, in contrast, has a flash point of 204 degrees Fahrenheit. “The liquid won’t produce enough vapor to support a fire until 204 degrees,” Sunoco’s Santner explains.

Another alternative: water-based cleaners that, Santner, continues, “Rely upon surfactants and emulsifiers to suspend oil and grease in the cleaning solution and remove them.”



Maybe the feeling is mutual - broccoli doesn't like you either.

Whence The Blues?

Our trip to Clarksdale got me thinking, so a bit of research found this.

Called the most southern place on Earth, the Mississippi Delta is claimed to begin in the lobby of the Peabody Hotel in Memphis and end on Catfish Row in Vicksburg. Despite the name, this “badly drawn half oval” of geography (sewe map), is not the delta of the Mississippi River. The ever-changing river delta at the mouth of the Mississippi on the Gulf Coast below New Orleans lies some 300 miles south of this area, and is referred to as the Mississippi RIVER Delta. Rather, the Mississippi Delta is part of an alluvial plain, created by regular flooding of the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers over thousands of years.

The land is flat and contains some of the most fertile soil in the world. It is two hundred miles



long and seventy miles across at its widest point, encompassing about 7,000 square miles of alluvial floodplain. On the east, it is bounded by bluffs extending beyond the Yazoo River.

Driving south down U.S. Highway 61 from Memphis it is hard to sense a change in elevation. First, as the Mississippi state line rolled beneath our tires, we saw the roadside trees thin and retreat both sides. We soon saw trees only along the bluffs retreating away to our left – the east. The bluffs had faded from view by the time we reached Tunica, leaving us sailing across a sea of broad, flat agricultural land. Occasionally we’d see a copse of trees, mainly bald cypress, hugging the banks of an old cutoff lake or ox-bow along the geologic banks of the ever fickle Mississippi.

South Memphis sits about 280 feet above sea level. We had descended only a little over 100 feet elevation by the time we reached Clarksdale. But, we seemed to have gone

farther back in time than down in elevation.

Sociologist Rupert Vance wrote in the 1930s of the "cotton obsessed, Negro obsessed" Mississippi Delta as "the deepest South." A half century later, writer Richard Ford called the Delta "the South's South." Cotton culture dominated the Delta. David Cohn referred to cotton growing in the Delta as "a secular religion," one that "was the staple of our talk, the stuff of our dreams, the poesy of many of our songs."

Delta society, through the 1960s was rigidly segregated along racial lines, and blacks living there in the early twentieth century had to watch the annihilation of their post-Civil War dream of the Delta as a place for upward mobility. They faced declining economic fortunes, political disfranchisement, rising violence, especially lynching, and virtual powerlessness in the criminal justice system. An interested reader might consult Pulitzer Prize winners, "The Promised Land", and "Rising Tide" to get a deeper sense of some effects of Delta life.

African Americans in the Delta produced a vibrant culture that sustained them through those hard times. The region produced the "Blues", a secular folk-music that grew out of traditional work songs and expressed the sufferings of blacks and illustrated how music



could transcend them. The simple but expressive forms of the blues

became, by the 1960s, one of the most important influences on the development of popular music—namely, jazz, R&B, rock, and country music—throughout the United States.

If you had to pick one single spot as the birthplace of the blues, you might say it all started right here," said the late and great



B.B. King while standing in front of the Dockery seed house just down the road from Clarksdale. King, who grew up nearby, knew that the sprawling Dockery plantation, which at one time covered 40 square miles and was home to 3,000 people, was the home base for blues pioneers for more than three decades. Musicians who called Dockery home included Charley Patton, Tommy Johnson, Willie Brown, Eddie "Son" House, and Chester (Howlin' Wolf) Burnett . Roebuck "Pops" Staples of The Staple Singers lived there in the later years and blues legend Robert Johnson joined in what were sometimes all-night performances on the plantation.

Crossroads by Robert Johnson

*I went to the crossroad, fell down on my knees
I went to the crossroad, fell down on my knees
Asked the Lord above, "Have mercy, now, save
poor Bob if you please"*

Mississippi Delta Blues by Merle Haggard

(covered by Leon Redbone)

*Way down on the levee, strolling in the pale moon
light.*

*You can see those steamboats, and fields of snowy white.
That's a feeling, I can't lose - muddy water in my shoes.
When I get those Mississippi Delta blues*

Mississippi River Blues by Jimmie Rogers (1929)

*I've often ridden on your bosom from Memphis down to New Orleans
Dreaming over muddy waters flowing through familiar scenes
And when I hear the whistle of an old steamboat
Down that Mississippi River again I'm going to float*

Walkin Blues by Son House

*The blues aint nothing but a lowdown shakin' chill
If you aint had 'em I hope you never will
Oh, the blues is a lowdown old shakin' chill
If you aint had 'em boys, I- I hope you never will*

With apologies to Paul Simon

*For reasons I cannot explain
There's some part of me wants to see
Clarksdale
..
Maybe I've a reason to believe
We all will be received in
Clarksdale*



A dung beetle went into a bar and asked, "Is this stool taken?"

The Moronic Moped Marathon

Via the BBC News

What might you do to both honor a departed friend, and to raise money to fight the ailment that took the friend? Ordinary efforts seem to not be in the British idea box. Quaint, unorthodox, peculiar, or even odd acts appear as normal among our friends in the 'sceptered isle'.

After his friend Alexis Leventis died at age 55 of cancer last year, Paul Taylor, from Wantage,



Paul Talor (R) with friend Alexis Leventis (L)

Oxfordshire wanted to do something "to help beat this awful disease" and believed his "Moronic Moped Marathon" was "a suitably ridiculous place to start". Riding a 50cc moped, Mr. Taylor made a charity fundraising trip through places with rude names in the UK. The trek started in Shitterton, Dorset on August 18th, and reached Twatt in Orkney on the 25th. Although his moped broke down leaving him to finish his challenge by hire car on Saturday.



"It's been an adventure, Mr. Taylor reported."

Mr. Taylor said there was no sign outside the end point at the Worcestershire village of Bell End, his end point, which was a "bit annoying". He theorized that it may have been stolen, or removed because it was "too offensive or risqué".

His trip raised more than £20,000 (nearly \$30,000) for the Institute of Cancer Research.

His journey began on 18 August and saw him take in Booze in the Yorkshire Dales, Brawl in the Highlands, and Cockpole Green in Berkshire. Street names on his itinerary included The Knob in King's Sutton,

Northamptonshire, Butthole Lane in Shepshed, Leicestershire, and Titty Ho in Raunds, Northamptonshire.



Before it broke down, Mr Taylor's Slovenian Tomos XL45 Classic had a top speed of 28mph.

Speaking on the morning after completing the challenge, Mr Taylor said: "I'm pleased to be going back to see my wife and my dogs." He added: "When you have a mission or purpose you keep going... and then when you stop you realize how tired you are.

"I'm tired and happy and reflective on what happened and how crazy it all was. Obviously this is a different period of my life that will probably never be repeated again. "Everything goes back to normal now, it's obviously quite a mad time."

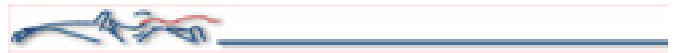
However, Mr. Taylor said he was considering a "Version 2.0" of his journey in the future, this time travelling west to east.

"You couldn't squeeze all the silliness in one expedition," he said.

Locations visited on the Moronic Moped Marathon included;

- Ass Hill, Wimborne, Dorset
- Sandyballs holiday village, New Forest
- Pishill, Oxfordshire
- Titty Ho, Raunds, Northamptonshire
- Willey, Warwickshire
- Penistone, South Yorkshire
- Upperthong, West Yorkshire
- Cockfield, County Durham

- Ogle, Northumberland
- Cockermouth, Cumbria
- Clitheroe, Lancashire
- Bell End, Worcestershire



I went to the doctor recently, and he told me, "You're obese."

I said, "I want a second opinion."

"You're ugly, too," said my doctor.

Wants N Gots

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

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



Also, 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.

Finally, a 1986 Jaguar XJS V12. It has been dry stored the last 8 years with all fluids drained.



Low mile car with new tires. Needs to be serviced. Solid car, no rust. Offered at \$4500.

Contact Terry Brown at 901-859-3256

Paige Ford is offering the 1977 MGB formerly owned by her Dad, Larry Evanson. She says, "My dad bought this in 1978. It was his baby.



The color is the same as when he bought it, however I don't know if the paint is original. The car has been kept in a garage covered since he purchased it. Chrome wire wheels, full tonneau cover, and I believe new bushings on the rear springs. Engine has a GM alternator conversion. Emissions are deleted. Has a Weber carburetor.

For what it is worth, this car took first in our car show in 1989.

Contact Paige Ford at (901) 488-7822

Josie Howser is offering her beautiful Jaguar for sale. It is a one-owner Jaguar XJS V-12,



purchased new in 1991, beautiful looking, all original. Approximately 72,000+ miles.

Contact Josie Howser 901-581-8543.

We're told she is open to all bids.

Finally, Charles Rye, an inactive member, says his cousin is seeking to buy an Austin Healey 3000 for her husband.

Contact Charles via 901-849-4926 / franklinflyer@yahoo.com

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I was invited to a wedding that said “black tie only”.

But when I got there, everyone else was in tuxedos.