



# Bits and Spares

For The British Motoring Enthusiast

Established in 1989

January 2022



Christmas 2021

**Prez Sez** by Fred Long



The holiday season was a little stressful with Jeanie and I in the midst of a little home remodeling that didn't go as smoothly as we had wished. I am not sure when we will ever get the garage back for parking cars.

The surprising 78 degree temperature on Christmas Day gave me an opportunity to drop the tops on the B and the Sprite and get one more open air drive in before the cold weather takes a deep hold on us.

Many thanks to Charlie Collins for arranging the Christmas Party and surprising everyone with the club picking up dinner. Food, fellowship and festivity were the name of the game. Also, thanks to Nick Dawson for sharing a slideshow of his visit to *The Great British Car Journey Museum*, it was really interesting, especially that you could drive some of the cars (for a fee of course).

This Saturday will be the first Marque event of the year with a nice run planned around Lake Maumelle and finishing up with a bonfire at Charles and Lisa's house. Hope that we have quite a number of cars at *Little Rock Cars and Coffee* to start the run so we can gain more visibility for the club. I hope this year we are able to offer more than the marque events each month so that we can get out and enjoy our cars more, I know I bought mine to drive them and I am sure most of you did as well. I am almost always up for a Sunday afternoon drive so just let me know!



**Stay safe and I will see you on the road! Fred**

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**MARQUE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Feb Event...TR  
TechTalk ... AH/Mini

March Event....MG  
TechTalk.. Empire

April Event...TR  
TechTalk..MG

## **BMCA Minutes Jan 4, 2022** by substitute *Lisa Hutchison*

Prez Fred opened the meeting with admonishment to kick 2021 to the curb and move on to a happy, healthy 2022. While there were no completely new visitors or guests, he welcomed some old members who have been missing in action. Bill Henry, one of our founding members, came after talking with Jack Brashear, and our membership chair quickly got him re-enlisted as a member. He still has that MG after all these years. Jim Wheeler was welcomed back after a few months' absence and still has his Spitfire.

The Secretary's Report was tabled, and Judy Ross was asked to review the Treasurer's Report and 2022 Budget recommendations. We had no income in December but made up for it with a lot of expenses for the end of the year and the Christmas party. Ending balance is \$7542.41. Questions about the budget were answered satisfactorily, and it was passed unanimously as presented.

We turned to old business with a recap of the Christmas Party by Charlie Collins. Those that attended enjoyed the meal furnished by the club. Nick Dawson shared a slideshow from his trip to England, specifically from his tour of The Great British Car Journey Museum.

New Business began with Charles Hutchison's announcement of plans for the Polar Bear Run on January 15<sup>th</sup>. Due to the extended Oaklawn racing season and the difficulty eating in restaurants, we will go back to our roots the way the first Polar Bear Runs were held by going on a short drive before ending at the Hutchison Estate for a hot dog lunch and bonfire. See details elsewhere in the newsletter.

Lance Felix provided details of the February Valentine's Run to Romance on February 6<sup>th</sup> where you can mail Valentines to your sweetheart and others who mean the most. He is still looking for a place to go for lunch in the area, as our previous spot has closed. Let him know if you have an idea.

Ron McLeod reported plans for the MOTAA Show and Swap Meet to feature British cars this year. It had been planned as a feature in 2020, but like many events, was cancelled. So here is the opportunity to support the museum and make the British car hobby known to the world.

Dates for local Cars and Coffee meets were shared. Dianna McCullough was commended on her skill at getting new members over 2021. If my math is correct, we had 15 new members based on the ones that need to renew and those we have.

Charlie Collins filled in for Gary Mackin, who is in the hospital, with the Tech Talk. He recommends everyone have a Jump Box to use if cars won't start, which is more common in cold weather. The newer ones are smaller, have extra features, and are affordable (good ones for \$50). Old farts were amazed at how a small box could start multiple cars before running out of juice.

Gots and Goofs were solicited. Jack Brashear noted with the recent passing of long-time Healey owner, Jerry Adcock, an MGB he had bought to restore for his grandson was available. Grandson prefers Ram Trucks (poor misguided soul). Vera got a new MINI. There is a video of goings on at the MITO website that is worth a look. Jim Clark reported about the accident Shawn had with his TVR (reported previously) and also, that he is still working with insurance to settle with the accident in his Healey that occurred 3 years ago. January birthdays and anniversaries are John Peckham, Ron McLeod, Rosemary Hopkins, Mary Babineau, Ken/Aline Coyle, and Brock/Janet Moss.

Jim Wheeler won the door prize, a \$25 VISA gift card. The next meeting will be February 1<sup>st</sup> which will sneak up on you if you aren't careful.



**MINI ADS THROUGH THE AGES: PART ONE, THE "CLASSIC" continued**

Reflecting still prevalent attitudes in the 1960's and '70's, the next ad, starring Goldie Hawn, was very sexist about women's driving ability. Originally (for a few weeks at least), the ad was captioned "Even your wife can drive it!" In its amended style, it merely insinuated, by word and picture, that women would love an automatic Mini because it was so "simple". Although not offered in all markets, the Mini automatic sold reasonably well and not just to women!

The Mini Automatic. For simple driving.

The Mini automatic does one little thing more for you. It changes gear without you changing gear. This little thing can make a world of difference in all kinds of driving conditions. In congested traffic you don't fight a running battle with the gear stick. The gearbox fights its own battles.

When you're driving fast you keep both hands on the wheel all the time, which makes for a safer ride. And whenever you feel like a bit of fast streetwork through the bends, you can switch from automatic to manual. Then our automatic has some hidden benefits. You can't stall on the clutch because there's no clutch pedal to stall on. You can't grind into the wrong gear because you don't change gear. In fact the Mini automatic is the closest thing you'll find to a built-in chauffeur. It makes driving as effortless as sleeping. Sleeping, love. You lie down, close your eyes and...

**MINI**

Options, automatic transmission available on all models except G.T. and Cooper S. Recommended price list. All prices are in £.

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Classic Red Metal		Classic Seven Solar	ONLY £8,495
Classic Cooper Sport Interloch	ONLY £5,995	This is only a selection of fabulous Mini Accessories	
Classic Cooper Hatch	ONLY £5,995		
Classic British Racing Green	ONLY £5,995		

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01462 680000 - 01763 244244 - 01767 312884 [www.mantles.co.uk](http://www.mantles.co.uk)

The last year of production of the "classic" Mini was 1999, although some new cars were still on sale in 2000. In Britain, the Classic Cooper Sport 500 was the very final iteration of the 40 year old design and the price ... well, that had risen to over 11,000 pounds by then! The Sport 500 was limited to five hundred cars and had all known factory options including special wheels, a full set of driving/rally lights, fender flares and an uprated engine.

The new MINI was introduced in Britain in 2000 (2002 in the USA) and next month I will look at advertising for that car.

## A modern update for our older British cars

In the past I have struggled at keeping my MGs original or as close to original as possible. But, as time marches on, there are some updates that are nearly required, and some that just make sense. To me anyway.

Our combustion engines for the large part were set up to burn leaded, non-ethanol gasoline. Now, non-ethanol gasoline is not readily available much less leaded gasoline. Burning lower octane gasoline with ethanol can lead to issues to our LBCs. Books have been written about fuel, no lead and lead substitutes, ethanol gasoline and octane boosters. That's a story for another time. So, what about other options available for our LBCs. I have been resistant changing the originality of my cars, but some upgrades just make sense. For example: engine starters.

Most of our earlier 1950s and into the 1970s were fixed with "direct drive" starters. These starters worked better than the hand cranks that also came with many of the early cars. Hand cranks were rarely used. Why, because they were a pain to use. You were required to exit the car to insert the crank, that was stored in the boot, into the front of the car to butt the engine. Turn the crank and attempt to start the engine. If it's raining, you got soaked. And if you left the car in gear and it started, not good!

The early direct drive starters operated by electricity being applied to 2 magnetic field coils mounted to the starter housing. When power was applied to the starter motor an armature with a pinion gear assembly would spin causing a gear at the end of the shaft to engage with the gear on the fly wheel of the engine. This would turn the engine and if everything was optimal, the engine would start right up. Perfect!

So, what's the problem. Actually, there are a few. Many early starting systems used a manual solenoid. You turn the ignition key on the pull the starter switch which pulls contacts together in the solenoid sending power to the starter motor. The start motor immediately spins to full power, shortly afterwards engages the pinion gear with the fly wheel and varoom, the engine starts.

The early direct drive pinion gear sat forward of the fly wheel and when the starter motor spins up, the pinion gear is driven back by inertia and spun at a lower rmps then the starter motors. This caused the pinion gear to engage the fly wheel gear turning over the engine. The fly wheel is not moving, so the spinning pinion gear would catch into the fly wheel causing it to turn the engine over. It's not hard to see that that had the potential to damage not only the pinion gear but also the fly wheel gear, and over time that's exactly what happened. The gear on the starter and the fly wheel would require replacement.

This picture shows an older direct drive starter.

The pinion gear assembly is seen as well as the gap between the gear and the motor where the fly wheel gear is positioned. The gear drives back to engage the fly wheel gear. When power was removed from the starter, the gear is sent back to the "home" position. The advantage of this type of starter is that the tremendous power of the fully spinning starter motor transferred that power to the fly wheel and started the engine. The disadvantage is the damage to the gears previously mention but also, it required a lot of power from the electrical systems to spin the powerful starter motor. So, batteries need to be optimum.



The next generation which was available on MGBs and other similar era cars required improvements. It is known as a "pre-engaged" starter. This generation of starters has the electric solenoids mounted directly to the housing of the starter motor.

This picture shows a pre-engaged starter with the solenoid attached. The motor works the same as the earlier generation. The long shaft with an integrated armature runs the complete length of the motor and out the front. The armature spins when electricity is applied to the motor but that's where the similarities end from the direct drive starter. The pinion gear no longer is positioned past the fly wheel gear, but sits on the near side, so the shaft is shorter. When the key is turned on and the start engine switch is engaged, power first goes to the solenoid.



This causes the electromagnet to engage and pulls the armature of the solenoid back. This connects the contacts and sending power to the starter. There is an extension on the solenoid armature that is also pulled back. This extension is connected to a lever mounted on a pivot between the solenoid and the starter motor shaft. When the extension is pulled back, the lever pushes the pinion gear forward. The pinion gear engages the fly wheel gear just before the starter motor spins up so neither gears are not moving. Power to the starter motor comes shortly after the pinion gear is engaged, thus the name pre-engaged starter. Then the starter motor spends up turning the pinion gear and ultimately the engine. This arrangement minimized the wear on the gears. This is much better but there are still some better choices available today!

The latest generation of starters are called "gear reduction starters or high torque" starters and they are available for many LBCs. I have them installed on both of my MGAs. And they work great. The pre-engaged starters are better, but they still required a lot of power to spin the powerful starter motor. So, battery power is still an issue. And since most folks don't drive the cars daily or weekly or even monthly, keeping a battery hot enough to spin the starter motors can be a challenge, even when battery tenders are on the batteries.

So, what if a smaller starter motor which required less power was available and suppose is had a series of gears like a transmission. When I'm driving and need more power to pull a hill, I can shift the transmission to a lower gear, say 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> to gain the power required. More or less that's how this generation of starters works, but the shifting is designed within the assembly.

As the picture shows, the starters look very different. The motors are smaller and there is no long shaft exiting the motor with the pinion gear attached to the end. The starter is still pre-engaged like the previous generation, so the pinion gear is engaged into the fly wheel gear before the starter motor starts turning. It uses a series of reduction gears from the motor to the pinion gear. On the older starters the long shaft is spinning at the same speed the entire time. As the picture shows the shaft of the motor is unseen since it ends at the housing where it is attached to a gear. This gear engages other gears (reduction gears) ultimately reducing the output ratio or "downshifting" to the pinion gear. It creates more power or torque to the engines fly wheel yielding faster, easier starts. They are typically smaller and lighter in weight, and they are more forgiving to the normal battery issues.



Whether there is one wire running to the starter from the solenoid as on early MGs or three as on later cars, the gear reduction starters can be configured to work.

I do like this upgrade.

Other sensible upgrades are available for our LBCS. Some for convenience and some for safety. Let me know if you are interested in learning more!

Charlie Collins - MG Marque Enthusiast.

Empire Marque *by Charles Hutchison*

**WINTER IS HERE TIME TO PREPARE FOR SPRING.**

Happy New Year to all, and I hope that you had a pleasant holiday season. But playtime is over, and it is time to get to work on your LBC. Now is the time to prepare your LBC's for the upcoming driving season. We are fortunate in Arkansas to have this down time to take care of any issues that our cars may have before spring arrives.

I try to use this time to do a thorough inspection of the entire car making note of any potential problems, such as cracked bushings or oil leaks, so that they can be corrected. Also, look for any signs of nesting. Mice love to move into vehicles that have not been in use for awhile and can do a lot of damage to the wiring harness. After any issues have been corrected, I move on to changing the oil, filters (gas and oil), and topping off all of the fluids. Then it is time to clean and wax.

Spending a little garage time now with your LBC will help to keep you interested in it and will prepare it for the driving time that we all love. Speaking of driving, the 2022 Polar Bear Run is almost here.

This year the Polar Bear Run is getting back to the clubs early days. The event will be on Saturday 1/15/22. We will meet at the Little Rock Cars and Coffee (goes from 8am- 10am)

Located at the  
Cantrell Falls Shopping Center  
14908 Cantrell Road  
Little Rock

This is just West of Rahling Road on the right near the Burger King and the Fuller & Son's. We will depart there at 10:30am for a drive around Lake Maumelle and then on to the Hutchison residence, 26 Ferncrest Dr., Little Rock for a bonfire and hotdogs. Coffee, cider, and water will be provided. Hope to see you there.

Charles Cell is 501-413-8107.

BMCA is please to welcome a new member:  
Bill Henry, owner of a 1974 MGB.

Bill was one of the founding members long, long ago!  
He has rejoined after a 31 year absence !

**January Birthdays:**

1.....John Peckham ; 5.....David Fritchman; 8.....Ronnie McLeod;  
8....Sue Ollson; 24....Rosemary Hopkins; 25....Steve Jones; 30....Mary Babineau

**January Anniversaries:**

1.....Ken & Aline Coyle; 10...Brock and Janet Moss

## 2022 Calendar of BMCA and Regional Event

Jan 15.....Polar Bear Run (*details below*)

Feb 1.....BMCA meeting

Feb 6.....TR Rally to Romance (*details below*)

March 1.....BMCA meeting

March .....MG Rally

April 5.....BMCA meeting

April .....AH/Mini Rally

### Empire Polar Bear Rally January 15, 2022

We will meet at the Little Rock Cars & Coffee.  
We will leave there at 10:30 am for a drive around Lake Maumelle,  
ending up at Hutchison's home for a bonfire and hot dogs.

Charles and Lisa Hutchison  
26 Ferncrest Drive  
Little Rock, AR 72223

Charles Cell.....501-413-8107

### February Valentines Run to Romance      February 6<sup>th</sup> 2022

Here's your Chance at a Drive to Romance  
to send a Post to those who Mean the Most.  
So Get your cards Stamped and Sealed  
and make a Deal with your British Wheels  
to get you on your Merry Way for a Lovely Day.  
So after a While and Several Miles  
we shall arrive at our Postal Isle  
to send our Cards for Many Miles.

We will meet at McLeod's British Cars in Maumelle on Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of February at 10:00am for a 10:30am departure time. There will be driving directions and maps available for those who want them or you can just follow the LBC in front of you. We are looking into options for lunch after the run but have not found anything yet, one option has permanently closed. We will have more details at the February meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the Meeting in February,



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*"Arkansas' Classic British Car Specialist"*



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