



THE SPANNER

Monthly Journal of the Bluewater British Car Club

147 Watson Street, Sarnia, ON, N7T 6T9

Website www.bluewaterbritishcarclub.ca.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/326972914701507/>

Discovering British Cars....

Is this not how we all got started?

By Chris Gardner



My first experience with British Roadsters was probably in the early to mid 50's. A neighbour who lived across the street in Sarnia had a MG - T Series. Just about all on the street had American sedans, mostly Pontiacs and Chevrolets, in their driveways. Being seven years old and short of stature (somethings never change) the MG was one of the few cars where I could look over the door and see the beauty inside.

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The *Spanner* is the monthly newsletter of the BBCC.

Articles, pictures, ideas, etc. are welcomed and are to be submitted by the 20th of each month for inclusion in the next month's newsletter.

**Forward items to:
Allen Bachelder.**

**By email at
bachldr@comcast.net
or by post to:**

**3330 Deerwood Drive
North Street, Michigan,
USA, 48049-4405**

The Bluewater British Car Club

promotes interest in acquiring, driving, maintaining, & restoring all makes of British, and European Classics.

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in British and European cars. Meetings are held monthly, every 2nd Wednesday, 6:00 dinner, meeting 7:30 P.M. In addition, monthly club, driving and social events are scheduled throughout the year.

2020 Club Executive

President: Mark Jones, mowog73@gmail.com

Vice Pres: Michael Walton,

michael.walton933563@gmail.com

Treasurer: Chris Gardner, cgardner5@cogeco.ca

Secretary: Sandra Cronk, kindermomma@hotmail.com

Events Coordinator: Vacant

Spanner Editor: Allen Bachelder, bachldr@comcast.net

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In 1960, as I went into high school, my family moved to Toronto. One of my buddies had the use of his father's TR2 and another had an Austin A40. There was a beautiful 25 mph winding downhill street close to home which was a perfect stretch of road for little British cars. You know those kinds of roads.

Being young and a little stupid we thought the A40 would better negotiate our favorite right hand corner on this road by having the passenger open their door and lean out. This in theory, would move the center of gravity to the inside of the corner. The increased drag by having the door open was never thought about...

Being a student, and not having a lot of funds (a Saturday car wash job did not pay much) my first car was an eight year old Mini 850 purchased for \$75 somewhere north of Toronto.

The car had issues. At times, for some reason, it seemed like only three cylinders were fully engaged. The resulting 25HP meant the car's performance was rather lackluster. The mini, of course, also had electrical problems. You could only run the headlights for a limited time before you could smell smoke. It was not a real fire but it did limit your night-time mileage.

After that experience I moved to Frog eyed Sprites and TR 3's.

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The best car of the lot was a blue TR3. Eventually it too needed work. After I left home the car was stored beside the single driveway at the front of my Mother's house. Having neither space nor funds (nor skills to be honest) to sort the car out, it sat...and it sat... My Mother's patience finally gave out. The car did not really enhance the curb appeal of her house so, I was told to remove it. I do not remember the exact amount it sold for, but it did cover my apartment rent for the following month.

The only new car was a 1980 MGB; burgundy with Tan Interior. Most reliable British car I ever owned. Sadly the photos of all cars to that point probably ended up in my ex-wife's fireplace at some point in time.

The TR3 was the car I should have kept.

The last British car before leaving Toronto was a pre-owned 1983 Morgan 4/4. The car was imported by Chris Charles at CMC Enterprises. The idea was to modify it so Morgans could once again be imported from England. It was not to be; new Morgans were banned from import to Canada in 1994. I believe the required effort and cost to meet Canadian standards prevented further import.



A water pump problem somewhere near Aldershot put an end to a St Mary's weekend get-away. We were rescued by three gentleman who reminded Judy and me of "Daryl, Daryl and Daryl" of the Newhart show. They were truly kind people who towed the MOG to

their garage. They also offered us a drive to to the GO Station in the better car they had. Not the one in which the dogs used forah, how shall we say.....romance!

We were out of British Cars for a few years after the Morgan. Toronto had gotten so big and busy that country roads were rather distant. To get to that quiet country road it was either the highways or the "stop and go" city streets. Neither was ideal in a vintage British car.

In 2012 we moved to Sarnia and the Brit Bug bit again. ' Ended up with a TR3A with
(Discovering British Cars, continued on page 5)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2020

JULY	8	Monthly Meeting at Michael Walton's. No dinner, social distancing in the yard. 7:30 PM.
	18	Summer Drive - Kim & Laura. Meet at Global Doughnuts in time for a 10 AM departure.
AUGUST	12	Monthly Meeting at Judy & Mark's.
	23	Rally - Allen & Florrie. Only if bridge opens!
SEPTEMBER	4 to 6	Weekend Trip to the Bruce Peninsula -Judy & Mark
	9	Monthly Meeting - Venue TBD. Dinner at 6pm, Meeting at 7:30 pm
	TBD	Car Collection in Thamesville - Bill Vandenneuval
	11-13	Huron Steam and Thresher Show, Blyth
	13	Battle of the Brits, Freedom Heights, MI?
	14-17	Southeast British Car Show, Dillard Georgia
20	Bronte British Car Show Canceled	
OCTOBER	4	Pinery Market and lunch in Bayfield - Janet & Michael Kurasz
	14	Monthly Meeting - Venue TBD. Dinner at 6pm, Meeting at 7:30 pm
NOVEMBER	11	Monthly Meeting - Venue TBD. Dinner at 6pm, Meeting at 7:30 pm
DECEMBER	6	Christmas Brunch: Noon No Monthly Meeting <i>(Discovering British Cars, continued from page 3)</i>

(Discovering British Cars, continued from page 3)

which to enjoy the country roads that are now so close to home. After a year of owning the car was it became evident that there were issues to sort out. The main issue was the steering. As you increased speed it went from soft to loose to scary. It is currently being attended to by a professional. The full extent of the problems being corrected, and the improvements made, are being documented as we speak. It will be an interesting read.



Yes, to own a British car can be disappointing, impractical and at times, expensive. But you only have to head out on a county road, top down, on a crisp Fall morning to make it all worthwhile. You feel every twitch of the car, every bump on the road, As you travel, the road disappears behind you taking all the problems and frustrations of owning such an automobile with it. *(Ed note: may we add "...taking all the problems and frustrations of this 21st Century life with it!)*

Happy "vintage" motoring to all.

From the President's Garage...

Mark Jones

Hi Everyone, We have some good news: we will be holding our monthly meeting at Michael Walton's as planned! Michael has lots of room outside for us to sit, yet keep our distance from one another. There will be no dinner ahead of the meeting, we'll keep the monthly meeting short and sweet so that we can spend most of the time chatting.



More good news: Kim and Laura will be putting on a drive this month as planned. It will be a relatively short drive given that access to facilities are limited, but it is an opportunity to get together as a club. We are to meet at Global Doughnuts for a 10 am departure. There is lots of room to park, yet keep a distance from one another. Thanks Kim and Laura for being willing to put on a drive, we're looking forward to this activity. Unfortunately for our members on the US side of the border won't be able to join us, the border is still closed; sorry.

I hope you all saw my email back mid-June about the club's impromptu 2020 driving challenge. Visit the locations with your British or European car and take a picture of the location with your car in the picture. There are 12 locations to visit in any order. The winner of the challenge will receive a free Christmas brunch for two at the Club's Christmas brunch event on December 6 (location to be determined).

Please send the Challenge pictures, with description, by email to mowog73@gmail.com (please put the wording 'driving challenge' in the subject line of the email). We must have received your entries by the end of October. Allen's thinking of using these pictures in upcoming issues.

Don't forget about the weekend trip to the Bruce Peninsula for Friday to Sunday, September 4 to 6. I have secured a block of 10 rooms at the Best Western Inn on the Bay. This block of rooms will be held until July 28. If you are interested, let me know and I will send you details on how to reserve a room. If you book a room, they can still be cancelled without cost until September 3. If you have any questions about this weekend get away, please contact me.

It has come to my attention that The Bay Waterfront Grill has permanently closed its doors; sad news indeed. At this time we don't know when restaurants will be open for indoor dining, if you have any suggestion for a restaurant where we could meet once it is possible again, please forward your suggestions to anyone on the Executive.

Ah the Spitfire. The engine is back in but I can't get it to start. The best I get is backfiring through the carburettors. I'm guessing I don't have the crank and cam timed

properly, which isn't as simple as aligning dots as it is on a MGB's engine; there are no dots on the cam wheel and it can go on multiple ways. I'm about ready to throw in the towel on this one. Any member good at timing a cam to a crank?

Mark

Clutch Chatter...

Allen Bachelder

So here I am with a blank page staring back at me and my job, should I choose to accept it, is to fill it with a bunch of words that hopefully will entertain or inform you - or both if I'm really lucky. Hmm, what have I done this month that's fit to print? Yesterday I drove my MGC/GT to the bank... Seriously, it was fun! (And how low do you have to stoop before admitting that driving your vintage British car to the bank was worth writing about?)



But have you ever tried to access an ATM from the seat of a little British car? Makes you feel like a 5-year-old in a pedal car, right? (Is that really Chris Gardner in the cover picture?) Back to the ATM: what's that huge computer-like thing way up there on that post? I have to reach up and put my card in where? Way up there? OK, I try... And I do just barely reach it. And then... enter my passcode where? I see a nine-key keyboard up still higher. I stretch out the window as high as I can get. My ears pop. I finally manage to reach those keys. And I finally get that cash I came for. But it's way-the-hell up there. In an act of monumental desperation, I try a sort of jumping act from the seat of my GT, clobbering my head on the fixed roof, seeing stars, but recovering the \$140 I came for, before it would otherwise mysteriously disappear back into the mysterious innards of the machine - for lack of an eager recipient. Strange... I had been there a week earlier in my truck and found the ATM machine down near the ground. I had to practically open the door to reach down and put my card in. ' Guess they must have raised the machine in the intervening week.

It is with the greatest pleasure that we welcome two major contributions to your July Spanner - from Chris Gardner and Michael Cromwell. Please join us in thanking Chris and Michael for these splendid stories coupled with warm anticipation for what comes up at the next bend in the road.

We are encouraged to hear that circumstances will now allow us a few club activities - within a few restrictions that is. Of course these activities cannot include your humble scribe from that country on the other side of the River That Cannot Be Crossed. But we wish you the greatest enjoyment of these grand opportunities. Take lots of pictures!

Speaking of pictures, don't forget our Driving Challenge! The instructions appear on page 8. You need pictures of you and your car at various and sundry landmarks. When you send them to Mark, please send copies to me. They might all appear in the Spanner and you'll be famous!

' See you on the road...



BCC 2020 Driving Challenge

Since we can't yet get together as a club for drives and social gathers, we are challenging you to get out and drive your British or European car through a driving challenge. Visit the locations below with your British or European car, provide the date and a picture of the location with your car in the picture. There are 12 locations to visit in any order.

Please send the Challenge pictures with description and date visited by email to mowog73@gmail.com (please put the wording 'driving challenge' in the subject line of the email). We must have received your entries by the end of October.

The winner of the Challenge will receive a free Christmas brunch for two at the Club's Christmas brunch event on December 6 (location to be determined).

So, let's get driving!

LOCATIONS TO BE VISITED IN 2020 by end of October

1. Town Hall or City Hall (other than of the municipality where you reside)
2. Business with a prominent neon sign
3. Roadside fruit or vegetable stand
4. Municipal airport (not Sarnia's) – include sign identifying the airport
5. Old roadside motel (1940s, 50s or 60s vintage)
6. Museum
7. Next to a farm vehicle (no pickup trucks)
8. A Candy Store
9. Car junk yard, extra point for British (and not your own)
10. Show and shine
11. A Chip truck
12. Operating gas station with service bays (not a modern gas bar)

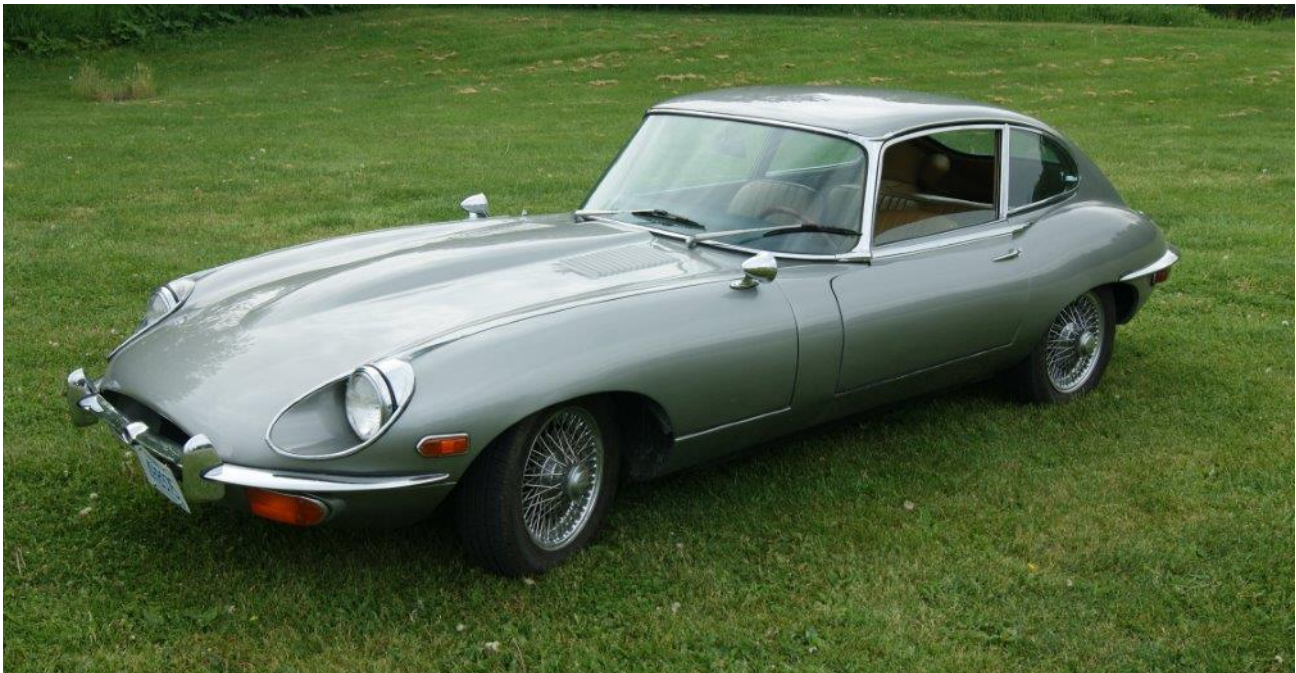
Our First British Car....

By Michael Cromwell

I've always wanted an E-Type Jaguar but never thought I'd have one. Cost aside, my wife and I were always involved in coaching, driving, fundraising and what have you for our three children's dance, soccer, basketball, robotics, music lessons... you get the idea. Realization hit when the kids started to graduate school and we found ourselves with time on our hands to have hobbies of our own in 2014. Then the hunt for the elusive E-Type started. Like any good hunter would do, I searched out a knowledgeable guide and was introduced to John Holmes who has a plethora of information on our rare quarry.

After a false start looking at an E-type not too far from Sarnia, I was a bit down due to the scarcity of them. In 2016, while clicking through Kijiji, I saw a picture of a Bug-Eyed Sprite for sale and in the corner of the photo, I saw just a piece of what I was sure was an E-Type. I messaged the owner of the Sprite and complimented him on his fine car and then asked about what I thought was a Jaguar. He said it was, but it wasn't his. It was just in the storage building beside his car.

I quickly got the storage-facility owner's name and found out that it was a series III and not for sale. He said he knew a guy that might have one for sale but the potential seller was hard to contact.



Mike and Cathy Cromwell's stunning 1969 E-Type series II, 2+2

(Our First British Car, continued from page 9)

After two agonizingly slow months, Cathy and I drove down to the Bloor and Spadina area of Toronto and meet the owner. I loved it at first site. This is only the second time in my life I could say that, and my 29-year marriage is a testament to the first time. It was a



silver 1969 series II, 2+2. Trying to be a s h r e w d negotiator, I was desperate to come up with reasons for the owner to come down on the price, but then Cathy just up and said, “Just Buy It”. All my negotiating leverage seemed to

fade away with the owner chuckling. He tried to soften the blow by saying that he was selling it for what he paid for it as he just buys cars to drive for a few years and then sells them to try another. I might add that he had a beautiful Series III OTS in Heather in his driveway and a 1967 Mustang, so he had to be telling the truth, right?

None the less, I bought it and while making the arrangements to pick it up, told the seller that I would be nervous driving it in downtown Toronto. He replied that he would move it to his golf house in Fergus and I could pick it up there. A few weeks later, we made the trip to Fergus and I drove back nonstop. I wasn't sure how comfortable a drive it was going to be as the seats looked spartan compared to today's vehicles but I survived the journey with only a soreness to my cheeks for wearing what must have been a huge grin the whole way and waving to all the passersby that took notice of me. This will be the fifth summer we have had our first British car and the bug has gotten to me. I've already bought our second British car and have my eye on a third.

I just need to figure out where to put it!!

HAPPY CANADA DAY!

PLEASE READ THIS

We have no idea how long the COVID 19 Pandemic might last. You will note that most of our club events are NOT marked "**CANCELLED**". Not yet anyway.

The point is that there is no guarantee that we will not have to issue further cancellations and/or postponements in the coming months. With all club events, **PRESUME NOTHING!** Always verify club events in advance. We will get through this.

Bluewater British and European Car Club Membership Application/Annual Renewal form

Submit with your \$20 dues payment at AGM January 11th, 2020

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Province/State: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone: _____

*Car(s) Owned: _____

*Car(s) Owned: Please exclude your modern or non-collectible vehicles. Include only those that support your membership in this club