

THE OFF-SIDE UNDO

Volume 24

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Cool Tops Down

Rocky Springs, MS - Seventeen members of the English Motoring Club made the 2010 edition of our annual rite of spring. Cars started arriving just before the official start time of 10:00am on Saturday March 13, 2010 at the Clinton Mississippi Welcome Center just off the Natchez Trace. On hand for our send off was a blue grass band and warm coffee. When I arrived, a few minutes early Mike and Alice Gore had already made the scene in their recently acquired Series 1 Lotus Elan and yes, although it was a little cool, mid 50's at best they arrived sans top. A short time later Duke Baker arrived in his '58 TR3 also sans top. I was glad Ole Red was in the barn and I was in the GT. Brave souls they were as anytime you entered a shaded area in combination with the wind the temp immediately dropped at least ten degrees. Trey Decell came by in his MGB to see us off. He had chores that he had to attend to so he could not make it down. Trey recently converted from wire to aluminum wheels on his car and indicates that it drives like a different car. He can now handle the ever shifting Yazoo clay with the best of them. By our departure time at 10:30 the adrenalin was pumping and the over the road the temp wasn't so bad I was told.



LBC's at Tops Down 2010

Photo Courtesy Mike Gore

A total of seven LBC's made the one hour or so drive from the welcome center south bound on the Trace toward Rocky Springs along with the Alfa's of Andy and Bonnie Menapace and the Mazda of Bryan Anderson pulling chase vehicle duty. John Turbeville arrived a short while later in his MGB and shortly thereafter Jim and Faye Enzman and President Barbara Cashman arrived. In years past we've battled damp, dreary and cool weather. For 2010 it was only cool with periodic breaks in the clouds to let a little sunshine in on our party. As usual there was a little tire kicking and parking lot mechanicing that took place and everyone enjoyed the warm air radiating from the mid-day asphalt. The potluck lunch was enjoyed by everyone with Bonnie's warm stew taking the award for best and most applicable dish. After a short business meeting we all headed off to divergent points. Some went south one exit to check in on Royce Boyer who had made a side trip down to check in on the tune of the piano at Rocky Springs Church. All in all it was another great Tops Down. No breakdowns, no rain and sufficiently cool to invigorate.

Tech Session I

Vicksburg, MS - But allow me to digress just a moment. Keith Anderson dropped this note to me regarding the excitement of Tech Session I and delays that he and Dennis Loftin experienced on their way home from Vicksburg on February 20th.



EMC members at Tech Session I, 2010

Photo Courtesy EMC

Club members enjoyed good food and camaraderie at Tech Session I in Vicksburg as we replaced the rear brake calipers and lines on Pat & Barbara's '67 Jaguar Mk II. After getting everything buttoned up four Techies climbed into the Jag for a brake test on the hills of Vicksburg. I'm pleased to advise that Lockheed and Apple Hydraulics served us well. We wish to thank the lady's for all the wonderful food.

On the way home I rode with Dennis in his '70 Corvette along I-20. The impressive horsepower brought our speed close to triple digits a couple of times which I never get to experience in my Bugeye. Then Dennis noticed the temp gauge pegged at 250 so he quickly turned off the engine and we coasted to a stop on the side of the interstate. We found that the water pump had blown a gasket so we decided to let the engine cool, refill the radiator and slowly drive to the service station a 1/2 mile away.

It was already dusk as I jumped the 6 ft fence onto the Pearl High School campus to look for a container and water. I spotted a blue 5 gallon trash bucket on the "Pearl Police" campus patrol buggy with a water faucet nearby. I searched everywhere for a milk jug or coolant jug in the dumpsters and behind the bleachers for anything that would hold a gallon of water.

Let's just say that the security camera probably shows a fella trying to climb a 6 ft fence while carrying a 5 gal blue bucket filled with water. I found out that those twisty pointy things on top of a chain link fence can really draw blood when you're in a hurry. I was then faced attempting the pouring from a 5 gallon bucket into a small radiator opening with no funnel! All this as the evening shadows grew longer.

We slowly cruised to the next exit with the engine making a new knocking sound. While waiting for the trailer to arrive, the red Corvette attracted much attention from kids and adults. A well dressed lady in a new Lincoln Town Car told Dennis that she has a '69 Vette, trying to draw his attention. But this time Dennis was more concerned about his car than the interesting woman. We finally made it home a couple of hours later.

Dennis already has a replacement engine going in. I think I'll drive over in my 948cc Bugeye to see how the 5.7 liter engine swap is coming along. Size doesn't matter if you're having fun.

Keith Anderson

Other exhaust tones

Brother Clay indicates that a lot of folks have renewed for 2010 and we certainly hope that you're one of them. If not, don't forget to send in your dues. We're shooting to get everyone on board and our e-mail and subscription list updated by March 31 so time is drawing near. Still \$25.00 and includes club decals, the British Marque and good times. Mail your membership info to the EMC, c/o Clay Johnston POB 357, Mt. Olive MS 39119. Apps are located at www.msemc.org.

We'd also like to welcome our newest member to the EMC. David Gustafson and family and their 1978 Triumph Spitfire have recently relocated from Iowa to the Pine Belt city of Hattiesburg. Welcome to the EMC David and we hope you can catch up with one of our gatherings soon.

That's if for this edition of the Off-Side Undo. Don't forget to keep the cards, letters and photos coming. If you're not receiving e-mails, please let me know so I can correct.

Happy Motoring,

Gene Johnston

EMC

Events Calendar

March 19 – 2010 – New Orleans British Car Day / New Orleans LA

Grab your coat and hat and join the EMC for the 20th Annual New Orleans British Car Day. They throw a Friday night shin ding that always includes great food, good times and fun in the Crescent City. The EMC will caravan into the Big Easy so make plans on joining us. Detail: www.bmcno.org Travel plans with the EMC: Gene Johnston (601) 607-7021

March 27, 2010 – Deep South Alfa Romeo / EMC Fun Rally

If you didn't get lost last year and you weren't thrilled by touring the scenic twist and turns of a Mississippi Rally done right here's another chance. The questions will baffle but there's always a way home if you get in a jam and find yourself out of the way. A great and sometimes trying way to spend a Saturday afternoon. Details: Andy / Bonnie Menapace (601) 857-2829

April 16 - 17, 2010 - Brits on the Bay / Pensacola FL

Winter's over and it's time for the flight south to The Panhandle British Car Association's 18th Annual Brits on the Bay Show. Travel down to Pensacola with the EMC to join us for this yearly migration to sunny Florida. Enjoy the beach and the weather while viewing one of the nicest gatherings of Her Majesties' iron works around. The Friday night gathering is a do not miss so make plans early. Details: www.pbca1.com