

# THE OFF-SIDE UNDO

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“A gentleman does not motor about after dark” Joseph Lucas

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## The Leak Dr

By Charles Durning

“Give an Englishman a car and he’ll make it leak.” Those were the words of Waldo, my Brit car repair mentor. Waldo introduced me to the wonders of LBC’s while I was working at a VW/Porsche garage for \$1.50 per hour. I truly dislike doing things twice. What was supposed to be a quick job ended up taking all day. Believe it or not I have actually built leak free cars, on a rare occasion.



John checks for oil retention

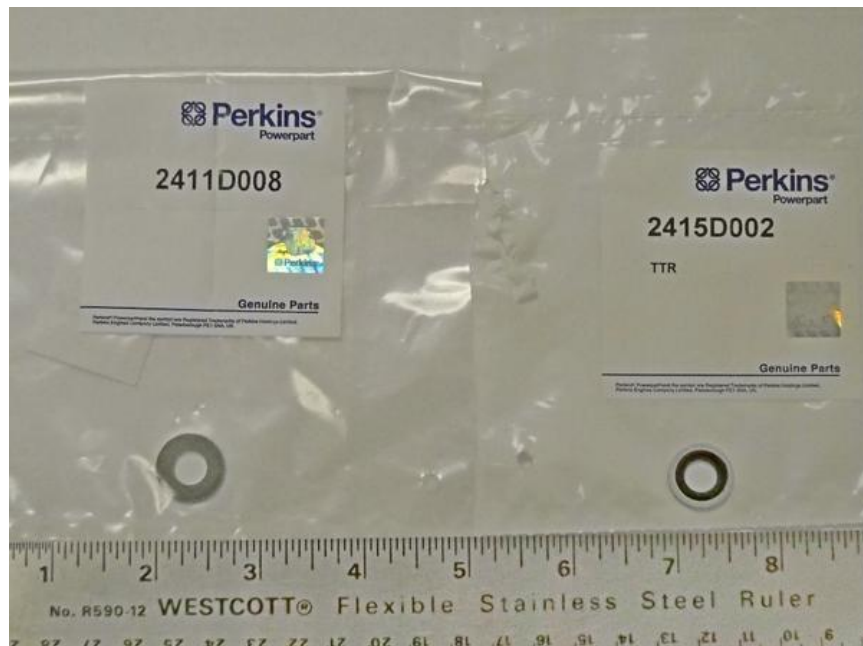
Photo Courtesy EMC

A few weeks ago I finally decided to put in my 3.90 differential in the Chick Magnette. After doing my due diligence to clean all of the mating surfaces and using my trusty HiTack sealant I still had a drip of gear oil. Schazbott. After a good cleaning of the area I discovered it wasn’t a leaky gasket, whew. I finally localized the source of the drip. The source was at the split in the lock washer and I also found that oil was wicking down the threads of the very bottom retaining stud. A copper washer and a nylock nut to seal

the threads fixed that. There's nothing like the feeling of a dry rear end. Next, was a water leak. The 55 year old drain valve started leaking after I cleaned the cooling system. I purchased a new valve from a reputable parts vendor. After installing the new valve it leaked like a sieve with just 4 lbs pressure. Since I wanted to get it out of the garage I drained the cooling system again, removed the new valve, brazed up the hole in the original valve and re-installed it. That fixed the water leak at the valve. The vendor was kind enough to give me a refund for the faulty valve. He had used a new vendor so he is taking those valves off of the shelf.

After the drain valve issue was solved the cooling system held 7lbs for 2 hours. So I drained the system again and filled with new antifreeze. Off I went for a 20 mile test drive. Near the end of the drive I noticed that the temp was indicating high and this was a cool/cold day. Back in to the shop. My trusty Harbor Freight hand held electronic thermometer indicated 205 degrees. Schabott. After the cool down I checked the water level and the system was full. Drain the coolant again. A test of the old 160 degree thermostat showed that it began to open at about 200 degrees. So, off I went to the local parts store for another thermostat. A test of the new thermostat showed that the new 160 degree thermostat began to open @ 165. The old thermostat gasket was cork and the only thing the parts store had was a FelPro hard blue gasket. I wasn't sure that the FelPro would seal on the rough surface of the head. That's what I had so I used it. A pressure check with the new thermostat and gasket checked out OK. Back out for a test drive. Everything looked good.

Back in the shop for a look and I found coolant leaking around the 3 nuts and washers that retain the water outlet to the head. Schabott. Apparently the FelPro gasket was not sealing the rough surface between the thermostat opening in the head and the studs. Enough was enough for one day.



Chick Magnette Parts?

Photo Courtesy Charles Durning

The next day I decided to see if there is anything at work that I could use to stop the wicking. Here is what I found. The washer on the left has a seal built in on 2 flat sides of the washer. The washer on the right has an o-ring built into the middle that stands proud of the flat surfaces. Next step is to try those with

a nylock or acorn nut. I discovered that the sealing surface of the left washer perished as the nut wastightened down. The washer on the right was a snug fit over the stud and sealed right up as the nylock nut was tightened. Success!!!!

Engine and transmission oil leaks will have to wait for another time.

## 24 Times

Photos Courtesy EMC

*New Orleans LA* – Other than post “K” word and last year when a weather system that passed thru the Central Mississippi area had done a number on cars with a hail assault and looking as though a repeat performance might occur Martha and I have been making the trip down and back to New Orleans for the British Motoring Clubs car show. The British Motoring Club of New Orleans 24 annual British Car Days held March 22, 2014 was another great show and we were glad that we decided to make the trip down.



Just a sampling of Healey’s at British Car Days

Steve Whitlow joined us for the drive down on a cool but clear Friday We left the capitol city in our mirrors and headed down to Florence and south to Georgetown with a waive to the ALCO steam engine of the Green Brothers as we made the left that carried us thru Rockport, Wanilla, Divide and thru Tylertown prior to crossing into Washington Parish near Warnerton arriving in Covington just in time for rush hour (rats!). We were rewarded after crossing Lake Ponchartrain with several cool beers, and grilled oysters with Blake Sonnier and EMC members Mike and Alice Glore. After washing down the road dust we continued over to the weekends welcoming reception. The food provided by BMCNO as always was great with something to fit everyone’s taste. We really enjoyed visiting with all of the friends that we’ve met during the ten or so years of our visits to New Orleans and other regularly attended shows that we’re able to make. As the evening wound down most all were rewarded with door prizes. A great spread is just what we’ve come to anticipate from the BMCO's reception and we weren't disappointed in 2014.

Saturday morning after a bite of breakfast at the hotel we all loaded up and headed over the show site, Martha and I traveling top up as the temp for the start of the day was a bit cool yet for tops down. Photos were taken after we rolled thru registration and parking was immediate. EMC members Clay and Debbie Johnston and Berry and Patti Schmidt were able to drive down and join the festivities during the day. Don Marpe was the Chairman for the 2014 show and he crew did a great job of keeping things moving along during the day. The last car count that I heard was that 122 cars were on the field during the show until close to 4:00pm. Some of the cars on the field that we've come to know like traveling friends were present along with several newbies to us including a Austin Mini pickup, a 1953 Arnold MG and Gene Gillian's recently acquired 1960 MGA Coupe that he indicated he just had to wash the bird poop off of prior to driving over. Well, not exactly far from the truth per Gene. The largest contingent of single makes had to go to the big Healey's group. I didn't get a count but I'd estimate close to ten were present and all very well presented. The popular vote count was completed right on time and the EMC members recognized included Steven Whitlow 1974 MG Midget, Martha Johnston's 1971 MGB and taking home the best of show Bill and Melissa Silhan with their 1953 Daimler Hooper Empress. A great time was had by all and thanks to all that worked so hard to make the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual British Car Days a success. We look forward to seeing everyone down the road and real soon.

## Fun? Rally? Really?

Photos Courtesy Michael Hemsley

**Points South MS** – For the April 29, 2014 Fun Rally Andy Menapace with the Deep South Alfa Romeo Club hired on the winner of the 2013 DSARC/EMC Fun Rally Steve Whitlow to develop a route that was truly diabolical. The easiest leg of the day was my trip down to Mt. Olive to join Clay Johnston for the



EMC'er Stephen Turner departs on leg 2

drive over to the starting point in Brookhaven MS. We arrived at the Amtrak station about 30 minutes prior to being given last rites ahhh...eeerrr instructions and three pages of what were purported to be coded questions and instructions and would result in us making a planned lunch stop. Off we tore in a generally easterly, southerly, westerly and maybe a northerly directions passing many of the nineteen or

so participants coming toward us, making turns in directions opposite of ours and generally feeling lost and confused. Clearly we were not alone. We've done worse, this year we may have made 45 minutes before we started questioning that last instruction and well, both of us still had most of our hair although there was a lot of head scratching going on. We finally located the lunch stop and this year we weren't the last to arrive. After allowing our stomach's to settle a bit we were even able to keep down the excellent lunch at Tina's Family Restaurant. Not allowing much for rest time it was back to the steeds this time with Bro. Clay



Keith and Bryan Anderson refreshed for leg two

deciphering instructions and me just braking, clutching, shifting and flailing away at the wheel as we covered some great roads that Steve and Andy had laid out. After a long day out in the outback of Mississippi we finally made the last stop of the day in Hattiesburg for the finish line and awards ceremony. Thanks to all that helped organize the 2014 Fun Rally, Andy and Steve for the miles they ran and re-ran to ensure clear(?) passage and to all the folks that manned the starting, check and finish line points. Everyone had a great time!

### **Other Exhaust Rattles**

Another successful trip to the Ozarks was undertaken by nine members and friends of the EMC April 1 (yes that date) thru April 5, 2014. The only casualties was one alternator, spare was in hand and one battery of unknown but admitted elderly age. This year Ole Red I believe reached a high mileage mark for what has become an annual trek with the odometer approaching the 1,400 mile mark, certified as accurate by Nisonger. We got in a visit with Ron McLeod of McLeod's British Cars in Maumelle AR, man he has some stuff there and visited the Railroad Workers Park in scenic Cotter AR. Along the way we all ate well including Elk burgers in Jasper and great burgers at the mid- point of a long days drive in Oark.

Clay Johnston after a tussle with the crank pulley on his B made trips to New Orleans, a rally and a trip Arkansas without too much oil left behind. John Turbeville's B continues an adverse oil consumption trend. I foresee a couple of engine pulls on the horizon. I keep telling both of them that it's when it stops leaking that you need to worry. Steve Whitlow's 1974 Midget made it to New Orleans and likely as

many miles in the hills of Arkansas as Ole Red and seemed none the worse for wear. Pat Cashman is scheduling maintenance on his TR-6 after his first trip into Arkansas. Tech sessions anyone?



LBC travelers the end of the road in Oark Arkansas

Seldom seen Trey Decell has been busy on his '74.5 MGB GT. You can check out his work posted at <http://www.tdecell.blogspot.com>. I continue plugging along on my GT, the interior is now about 50% completed. As they say all good things come to those that wait....and work.

New members are lining up. During March Charles Tribble from here in the capital city joined and in March Richard and Sandra Story pushed the EMC past the 80 family mark. Richard and Sandra are caretakers of a 1961 TR-3a and a 1963 TR-4. During April Jaby and Jennie Denton joined the EMC and are owners of a TR-6 and a 1973 Jensen Healey Roadster. Welcome all and please keep an eye on the calendar. We hope that we see you at an EMC gathering during 2014.

Membership reminders have been e-mailed and mailed out for 2014 if you have a question on your membership please let me know and I'll pass the question along. Membership remains at \$25.00 and includes colorful club decals, good times and of course the British Marque eleven times a year. If you're reading this and not receiving e-mails please contact me at [jjohnston18@msemc.org](mailto:jjohnston18@msemc.org).

That's it for this edition of the OSU.

Happy Motoring

The EMC

## Calendar of Events

**April 19, 2014 – Coffee and Cars / Flowood MS** – In the second installment, Mike Marsh has organized a great addition to the early morning Primos breakfast gathering with an open invitation to join other car enthusiasts in the parking lot that is shared by Primos and Antonelli college out on Lakeland Drive. It's fun and it's free and you can come and go and enjoy a great breakfast outing. From 7:00am to 10:00am. Details: Mike Marsh (601) 946 – 1950 or [mike\\_marshall@bellsouth.net](mailto:mike_marshall@bellsouth.net)

**April 25 - 26, 2014 - Brits on the Bay / Pensacola FL** - The 2013 Brits on the Bay had a record number of entrants. For the 22nd annual show they'll fill the field with friends, fun and automobiles. Make plans to attend a great weekend this time promised to be in the sun. Travel down to Pensacola with the EMC to join us for this yearly migration to sunny Florida. The Friday night gathering is a do not miss so make plans early. Details: [www.pbca1.com](http://www.pbca1.com). Travel plans with the EMC: Gene Johnston (601) 201 – 0801.

**May 17, 2014 – EMC's Drive Thru History** - 2013's event was one to be remembered with a trip to the BB King Museum in Indianola a stop in Greenville for the 1927 Flood Museum and ended our trip with a great supper at Doe's Eat Place. We had a great time thanks to our host Tommy and Kathy Hart. Plans are in the making for another great event so stay tuned for additional details.

**June 15 – 19, 2014 – North American MGB Register Annual Event / French Lick IN** - Details: <http://mg-2014.com>. Travel details with the EMC: Gene Johnston (601) 201 - 0801.

**July 19, 2014– EMC Lotus Weekend / Braxton MS** - I'm sure we'll find some interesting roads on our way down to the beautiful burg of Braxton. Come and join the drive and the visit with Mike and Alice. Bring a dish and enjoy lazing on a sunny afternoon in the summertime with the EMC. Lunch starts at 12:00pm. Details: Mike / Alice Glore (504) 231 – 5801.

## Upcoming National Events

**October 9 – 12, 2014 – 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Six-Pack Trials / Oxford MS** - Details: [www.2014trials.com](http://www.2014trials.com). EMC Rendezvous info: Ken Dolhonde (601) 876 – 0031 or Stephen Turner [sdturner@juno.com](mailto:sdturner@juno.com).