

# THE OFF-SIDE UNDO



**“A gentleman does not motor about after dark.”**

**Joseph Lucas**

**July 2022**

*O! say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming;  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming,  
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;  
O! say, does that Star-spangled Banner still wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?*

*Happy Independence Day!*

**Official Publication of the English Motoring Club of Mississippi**

**Online at [www.msemc.org/club-news/](http://www.msemc.org/club-news/)**

**Editor: Kelly Turner**

# DRIVE TO SHADY ACRES: NEVER TRUST THE WEATHER FORECAST

**By Charlie Durning**

Though the weather forecast looked to be gloomy for the May 14 drive to Shady Acres, it turned out to be a nice day for a drive. Only 6 brave souls and 4 cars showed up at the gathering point. I will admit the weather did look pretty bad. All braved a pretty good downpour on the way to the Love's truck stop in Magee. By the 10:30 departure time, the gray sky was clearing and blue sky appeared. The drive went out Hwy 28 and then a turn to the south along the tree lined twisty roads. The traffic was light to none. We did get a sprinkle or two but the roads were dry.

When we arrived at Shady Acres the parking lot was packed. Once we got inside it looked like most of the folks were just milling around. The best part is the chow line was short and the service was quick. The featured plate was a choice of Chicken, pork sausage, or pork ribs. YUM!! As usual, the food was great.

We spent an hour in pleasant conversation while consuming our lunches. After we were finished, some wanted to look around and others wanted to head south for errands. So we all went our own ways.

On the return drive, Roy encountered a misfire and an exhaust leak. He made it to Charlie's shop where both were quickly remedied. In the end it turned out to be a nice day to enjoy our little cars and friendship. For those who missed out, we will take the drive again.



# JULY TECH SESSION: PART 1

By Keith Anderson

There were 31 friendly folks who endured the 95 degree heat to attend the June EMC gathering at the Anderson's home. Most of the fellas were in garage for the tech session with the fans blowing and cold beverages flowing. The 12 ladies were smart enough to stay inside to enjoy each other's company. Our new member, Hal Fleming, drove up in his beautiful red fully restored MGA. The new member from last year, Don Dean, brought the wonderful smoked chicken. This was the first time that Kirk Anderson and his son Whitt, had attended one of our functions. They are restoring a '64 TR4A purchased from the Bebo Elkins collection. We welcomed them as new members and look forward to following their progress on the Triumph restoration. Richard Green's '77 Triumph Spitfire was the focus of our tech session at the gathering. His car has an after-market Lumenition ignition system, and it arrived running and popping on 3 cylinders. After members got their hands dirty, it was discovered that the #3 plug wire had high resistance of 18K ohms, while all other wires were in the 5-6K ohms range. A good used replacement plug wire allowed Richard to drive home with a smooth-running engine (Stay tuned for part 2 of this story from Richard).



# JULY TECH SESSION: PARTS 2-4

By Richard Greene

## Triumph Spitfire: Part 2

The last line of Part 1 stated: "A good used replacement plug wire allowed Richard to drive home with a smooth-running engine." Well not quite!

About 1 mile down the road, the engine just quit and I coasted to the side of the road. The ignition light on the dash would turn red with the key on and the engine would turn over fine but would not fire. I checked all the connections and they looked fine. I then decided to call Keith as I was only a mile down the road and realized that I didn't have him as one of my 13 contacts in my flip phone. I did have Charlie Durning listed, even though he wasn't at the tech session, and called him to call Keith to have him call me. Ring-a-Ding Dingy!



Keith showed up quickly with some tools and we again checked all the connections and plug wires. He had a voltmeter with him, and we checked voltage at the coil, distributor and about anywhere else that should have voltage. It should be noted that the car did not have points but a "luminaire" ignition system. This came with the engine when I got it from a wrecked spitfire. The car is a '77 but the engine is from a '76. After no luck in getting the car running, Keith returned home to get a towrope, and his son to help tow the car. Shortly, the car was back at Keith's and pushed into the garage. Keith then drove me home, what a guy. I told him I had the original ignition system, distributor, and control box somewhere in my garage and would dig it out. My garage is not as organized as the other members, and most of my stuff is scattered in boxes, pails, bags, and various other containers that are usually not labeled. So the next day, after rummaging around, I found the items and called Keith to tell him I could bring them out and help with the car. When talking to Keith, he told me that he had found the problem and that I could come and pick up the car. He found that the coil wire to the distributor had high resistance and he replaced it and the car was running fine. As my wife was not working that day, I told him that she would drive me out to pick up the car.



## Triumph Spitfire: Part 3

So I talked my wife into taking me to Keith's to pick up the Spitfire, of which it gave her great glee. She constantly reminds me of her feeling about my British cars, and now she had the chance to remind me of their unreliability. It was a long ride to Keith's. I had thought about bringing the extra distributor and ignition module. The car was (supposedly) running fine and I decided not to grab the parts.

As we were coming up Keith's drive we spotted the spitfire with the hood open and Keith assuming the Lucas position with his head under the hood. My reaction to seeing this was "On-No" with my wife gleefully going "See, what did I tell you?" Keith stated that he had driven the car around and it was running great. After he got it out of the garage for me to pick-up, it died again with the same old problem. Of course, I didn't have the parts with me, and they were sitting in a box on my workbench. We pushed the car back into the garage, and I told him I would come out the next morning with the parts and work on the car. My wife left and the short ride home was greatly lengthened with a lecture about how I should get rid of you-know-what and get a newer ride. She feels I spend too much of my retirement time working in the garage. Of course, she relates this to my older British cars. I may not be the smartest tool in the toolbox, but I knew not to mention of all time I spent on her crap-box Mini Cooper. So Part 3 ends just as it Part 1 ended.

## Triumph Spitfire: Part 4

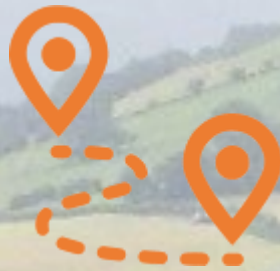
The next morning, I gathered up the parts and headed out to Keith's to see if we could get the car running. I knew better than to bum a ride with my wife and decided to drive out myself. Of course, when I arrived Keith was already working on the problem. He had the distributor out of car and was looking through his assorted parts for a replacement. Since I had a replacement from the original engine with me, it was decided to swap it out with the control module. The '77 distributor was wired with an "Alison" control box and the connectors were not compatible with the "luminaire." So the control boxes needed to be switched. When removing the "luminaire," Keith noticed that the grounding wire from the control box to the chassis of the car was quite rusted. It was a ring connector that had a sheet metal screw fastening it to the firewall. He cleaned up the ring connector and fastened it higher up on the firewall. After everything was returned to the car, it fired up right away, with all the original parts that the car had as the beginning. After timing the car, I was to drive it home with Keith following me in my Elise. The Spitfire ran great all the way home and we returned to Keith's with him driving the Elise.



Back in the driveway again.

# THE BRITISH TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM

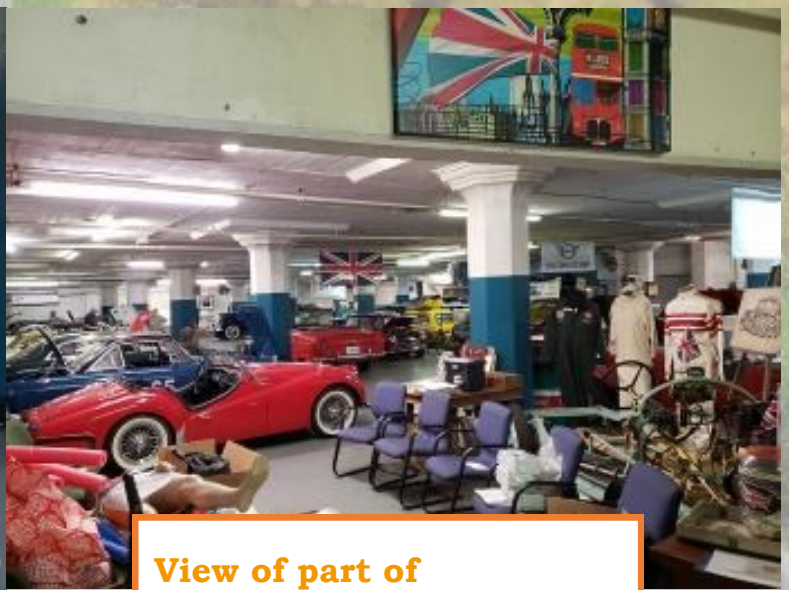
By Gene Johnston



**DAYTON, OH June 13, 2022** Martha and I stopped in at the British Transportation Museum in Dayton OH while we were headed to Peterborough, ON for the Vintage Automobile Association of Canada's vintage races (VBCC) at Mosport Park and MG22 (NAMGBR) (More to report on that next month). When we entered, we were greeted by museum president Pete Stroble. Pete pointed us around the museum's working area and was happy to show us a couple of works in progress that will be added to the collection or sold to support and improve the BTM. Believe you me, this old grocery chain warehouse is being put to good use. There were cars and other modes of transportation everywhere. I specifically enjoyed the Peerless and the Lotus Elan, and Martha really liked the gray MGA 1600. We enjoyed visiting with the in-house workers and discussing progress on necessary repairs. If you are ever in the Dayton, OH area you should include a trip to the BTM. I guarantee your visit will put a smile on your face.



1950 MG YA Saloon



View of part of the collection under roof



**1960 Peerless**

**Peerless Interior**



**Unk YR Triumph TR3**



**1960 MG A**

# THE PERFECT PICNIC

From Hilda Leyer's *The Perfect Picnic*

## *Menu No. 6*

*Hard-Boiled Eggs*

*Sausages & French Mustard*

*Ham & Watercress Salad*

*Ripe Pears & Almond Cakes*

**Fried Sausages** Cook the sausages in the usual way, but they must be very thoroughly browned all over. This means very slow cooking and constant turning. Every part of the sausages should be covered with a thick brown crust. Serve with French mustard.

**Ham & Watercress Salad** Wash the watercress and drain it in a wire basket, and place in a salad bowl. Chop finely some cold lean ham and mix with the watercress. Then, prepare a salad dressing of oil and vinegar, pepper and salt, and sprinkle over the top of the salad.

**Almond Cakes** Preheat the oven to 180 deg. Celsius. Grease and line the base of a 15cm round cake tin. Separate 3 eggs and set the yolks and whites aside. Beat 125 grams of butter and 150 grams caster sugar until light and creamy. Add three egg yolks one at a time and stir in with 1 teaspoon almond extract. Beat well. Sieve in 40 grams self-raising flour and 75 grams ground almonds and mix gently. Beat the 3 egg whites in a clean, grease-free bowl until very stiff and then fold into the mixture. Bake for 50–60 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean. Serve with ripe pear slices.





# AUTOPSY OF A NOISY 1098: PARTS ACQUISITION

By Charlie Durning



Once the engine was stripped down, the block, crankshaft, and connecting rods were sent to the machine shop for inspection. Apparently all were in pretty good condition, given their age. The block was given a nice glaze breaker hone job and new cam bearings installed. The crankshaft was polished, and 3 rods got new small end bushings. The 4<sup>th</sup> rod was not salvageable. The best part is both the block and the crankshaft remained within standard specs.

At this point, decisions needed to be made about replacement parts. To my surprise, the 1098 engine is not the “hot ticket” to rebuild. It’s sort of a red-headed step-child among the A Series engines with parts unique only to the 1098 engine. One such part is the connecting rod. I was lucky enough to find a NOS 1098 connection rod in Canada.

For the pistons, the most common are pistons with 5 rings. I just felt that I did not need the additional friction the 5 rings provide. 3 ring pistons would be ideal. In the end the only 3 ring pistons I could find were 10-1 compression and only in .030 oversize. Didn’t need those. Finally, I found a supplier in England that offers 8.9-1 compression ratio 4 ring Country brand pistons in a standard size. The best part was it was 1/2 the price compared to the other options.



NOS  
Rod

Rod, main, and cam bearings were no problem since they are shared throughout the A Series engines. Gaskets on the other hand was a bit of a challenge. The Payen/Fel-Pro composite type of head gasket is the preferred gasket. That would be a dream come true now-a-days. The copper sandwich head gaskets are common and shared with the smaller 848 and 948 engines. My past experience with those was not good. The Payen/Fel-Pro is only available for the 1275 engines right now and are not a good fit for the 1098. What I did find was a Lucas brand gasket on eBay. It is an odd mix of composite and sheet metal. A bit of a compromise but has to be better than the copper sandwich gasket. Now I need to figure out which way is up.

The camshaft was easy. I had acquired a new cam a few years ago in anticipation of doing an overhaul. The new cam came in a nice white box. On the box there is a label that says “Fast Road Cam with Isky lifters”. Hey. It’s got to be good with that label. Yep, the Morris gets a sporty cam.

Back when the head was off for a leaky exhaust valve there were no valve stem seals to be found for the 1098 engine. Since then, and after some research, I found that the Rover A+ engines had valve stem seals. So I got a set of those in anticipation of success. I popped the head apart and sure enough, the valve stem seals fit.

The cam timing components will remain the same since I updated those to use a Rover A+ timing chain tensioner and front cover a few years ago.



Then there is a consideration about the bypass hose between the head and the water pump. That little hose does not last forever. There are 3 ways to deal with that failed hose. 1: remove the water pump, 2: remove the head, or 3: get a “field installable” hose. Since none of those are a wonderful option I decided to go for option # 4. Convert to an A+ water pump without a bypass and eliminate that hose. On this engine the bypass is no longer needed since I created a bypass at the rear of the head for better water circulation at the back of the engine.

And lastly, a decision had to be made about the notoriously leaky scroll rear main seal. There are conversion kits available to resolve that problem. What’s confusing is the pricing is all over the place for those kits. Most have horrid reviews, except for one. I’ll give that one a try. Hopefully, the rear seal conversion will work.

More on how it all goes back together, stay tuned.



Water pumps, new and old



Camshafts



Rear seal



Tensioner kit



Head gasket 1



Head gasket 2



# UPCOMING EVENTS

**July 16, 2022 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.

**August 20, 2022 EMC Garage and Food Tour / Brandon, MS** - The Bailey family throws a great party in lead up to the EMC show. Come on out and see what has added or improved on for 2021. Always lots to see and do along with a great meal what else can you ask for. This will be the pre-Brits on the Bluffs gathering so bring along a dish and enjoy the fun. Gathering starts at 11:00am. Lunch starts as 12:00pm. Details: Jo Ann Bailey (601) 992 - 8566.

**August 29 - September 1, 2022 Vintage Triumph Register North American Challenge / Galena, IL** - If you're looking for a national convention to attend this one is a bit closer to home. Tech sessions, vendors and autocrossing along with all sorts of other fun. Details: <https://vintagetriumphregister.org>

**September (date varies, usually in September), 2022 Brits in the Ozarks / Fayetteville, AR** - Still looking for excuses for a mountain drive? Here's another chance to see the Ozarks in all of their colors and have a car show at the end of your drive. The 19th Annual Brits in the Ozarks will be there waiting for you. Details: [www.britshironnwa.org](http://www.britshironnwa.org)

**September 9 - 10, 2022 Shoals British Car Show / Rogersville, AL** - If you haven't had the pleasure of visiting the Shoals British Car Show at Joe Wheeler State Park in Rogersville AL you should. This will be their 24th annual event. It's a laid back gathering on the banks of Wheeler Lake. Everything including rooms, meals and Friday night's reception are within walking distance. Details: [www.shoalsbritishcars.org](http://www.shoalsbritishcars.org).

**September 16-17, 2022 EMC Brits on the Bluff / Natchez, MS** - We have the promise of a perfect weekend for the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual BOTB. Hang out on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River starting with our Friday night party and spend Saturday with us under the oaks at Bluff Park. 2022 information and registration form will be posted approximately 60 days prior to the event. Details: John Turbeville (601) 940 - 5288, Gene Johnston (601) 941 - 4892.

**September 30 - October 1, 2022 Renaissance Euro Fest Car Show / Ridgeland MS** - Come to Ridgeland Mississippi and enjoy the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Renaissance Car Fest. The 2021 event was one to remember. Lots of participation from EMC members as well as friends from surrounding clubs will be the order again for 2022. When posted get your entry in early and make plans to attend. You'll see cars that you don't get a chance to enjoy often and in the surroundings of the Renaissance. It's just magnificent. Details: [www.eurofest.net](http://www.eurofest.net) Mike Marsh (601) 946 - 1950.