

Wyres & Tyres

British Sports Car Club, LTD - Memphis, Tennessee

March 2007

The MG 1100 Sports Sedan By Jerry Billmeier

In 1962, I became the proud owner of my very first new car, a shiny black MG 1100 two door Sports Sedan. This car was developed by the British Motor Corporation (BMC) and was basically a larger version of the Mini with which it had many interchangeable parts in the drive train. Dealer price was \$1,898..

The engine was a 1098cc A series 4 banger mounted transversely over a 4 speed transmission and driving directly to the front wheels. The transmission thus became the oil pan sharing oil with the engine. A "gut-wrenching" 55 horsepower was produced by this sturdy little machine and gave a driving feel much like the MG sports cars of the era.



Mini with a Hammerhead Shark in front of the British Museum in London, 2006. Photo by Rob Cosgrove



Jerry Billmeier looking very cool with his 1100 in 1962

The car came in a 2 door and 4 door model, but the 4 door is even more rare. A very remarkable feature was the "Hydroelastic" suspension consisting of canisters at each wheel connected via tubing. An alcohol/water mixture flowed through the tubing being forced from one canister to the other as road level changes were encountered thus raising or lowering the opposing corner of the car keeping the overall attitude level. A very smooth ride resulted which was later tested under the most severe road conditions while living in the Middle East.

Wheels were 12 inch diameter. Brakes were disc up front and drum in the rear.

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President's Corner - By Jim Duke

Ah, Spring! When men's thoughts turn to getting the British iron polished up and ready for a season of spirited top-down driving. Or, thoughts of finishing those late winter might as well tasks necessary to making the old LBC even better than before.

Whether you're in the first camp (cleaning & shining), or the second (rebuilding suspension, fitting new interior bits), you'll want to quickly get your British car on the road. Our early taste of mild spring weather probably won't last. We've enjoyed eight straight days of 70 degree warmth as of this writing. Normally the temperature tops out in the lower 60s this time of year.

The BSCC has plans for which you'll want to have your LBC road ready. First on the calendar is March 31st. Gordon Gold, the Empire Marque Leader, will lead us on a caravan to Shiloh National Battlefield Park to see a reenactment of one of the Civil War's pivotal battles. We'll have a pleasant two-hour drive on bucolic backroads, to the western bank of the Tennessee River. We'll lunch at the historic Bellis Hotel, a refurbished and converted old river barge. A luncheon buffet is slated at about \$10 each.

After lunch we'll see the battlefield, and view the reenactment before motoring south back along the path the Confederate Army took under General Johnson to meet the Union Army under General Ulysses Grant. Out travels will then follow Highway 72 home from Corinth.

Gordon wants everyone to gather at the Collierville town square at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 31st for what promises to be one of this year's premier driving events. And, the Mercedes Benz Club plans to join us on the tour.

April 22 offers a perennial club favorite our trip to the Rollin' J Ranch to savor both the drive and the warm hospitality of Judy & Jim Ostner. Not to mention a chance to visit the famed Garage-Mah-Hal.

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The MG 1100 Sports Sedan (from Page 1)

Dimensions were small (53 inch height and 93.5 wheelbase) but the interior was relatively spacious with room for my wife, daughter and 70 pound Weimaraner. An adequate trunk held all our luggage. Curb weight was 1,806 lbs.

I cannot remember the gas consumption, but a 10 gallon tank took us many miles, another advantage in the sparsely populated back roads of Turkey where this little car ended up.

These highly successful cars were manufactured by BMC from 1962 until 1971 when production ceased. Serious rust in the rear floor area which formed part of the subframe mounting resulted in the demise of many of these cars. It has been estimated that only 200 have survived.

My little 1100 carried us to and from Phoenix during my internship there, then on to Izmir, Turkey after being drafted by the Air Force as a General Medical Officer. The car faithfully navigated the rugged mountain roads of Turkey only becoming disabled once at a low water river crossing. A friendly Turk who was a rather large man came to our aid and simply lifted the submerged front end out of the river bed and we were on our way!

On leaving for the U.S. in 1967, I sold the car to an American school teacher in Izmir reluctantly parting with this little gem. I'd love to have this one back!



President's Corner (from Page 1)

The Motoring Tour of the Arkansas Ozarks has attracted a full slate of participants. We have booked the whole Inn at Mountain View (all 10 rooms) for the May 4-6 event. If we get late joiners, we may need to reserve space in one of the other nearby Bed & Breakfasts.

Though fleeting, the recent warm spell is a clear harbinger of things to come and an enticing call to the open road. So stop the spring cleaning, put down the gardening tools, stow the lawn mower, and forget about making final vegetable seed choices. Now is the time to do that last bit of final tuning to make your British car road perfect - or is that an oxymoron?

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The British Sports Car Club, LTD was formed in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1982 as an organization devoted to the preservation, restoration and enjoyment of British cars.

www.memphisbritishcars.org

Opposite – Your Wyres & Tyres editor with his newly acquired 1967 Austin FX4 London Taxi. A former movie car, It has a 4 cylinder diesel engine and proper right-hand steering wheel.

Upcoming Events

March 31st or April 1st (date tentative) - The Empire Marque Event will be a cruise to Shiloh to watch the Civil War Reenactment, followed by dinner at a local catfish restaurant before heading back home...

April 20-22, 2007 - MG Classics of Jacksonville is hosting The Gathering of the Faithful, South - Jekyll Island, Georgia

April 22nd - The Jaguar Marque Event will again be a visit to the Ostner's Rollin' J Ranch - one of our most popular events in recent years.

May 27th - The Austin Healey Marque Event - the annual Indianapolis 500 fish fry.

June 24th - The MG Marque Event (details to be announced)

July 22nd - The Triumph Marque Event (details to be announced)

August 26th - Garage Crawl

September 8th & 9th - The Germantown Festival - with the BSCC's annual Show & Shine

October 5th & 6th - The 24th Annual Memphis British Car and Motorcycle Fest

November 25th - The Car Show Rallye Replay

Ladie's Luncheon

The ladies meet on the last Wednesday of the month, usually at a different restaurant each time. Attendance is open to all club members (even the guys!) and friends. Questions or comments? Call Sharon Duke (901) 324-0909, or email at skduke4@netscape.net



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Monthly Club Meeting

Our monthly club membership meeting is held the third Monday of each month. We meet at Colletta's Italian Restaurant on Appling Rd and Hwy 64. The meeting starts at 6:30 P.M. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

WANTS and GOTS

WANTS:

Looking for R/H side motor mount mounting bracket/platform for '59 A-H 100-6. This is the heavy metal part that bolts to the frame and motor mount bolts to it. Paul Svoboda 618-588-3041

MGB metal bumper - Jack Reynolds..754-9889

Right turn signal unit, left lens for Series 2 E Type Knox Everson 754-1510

TR-6 Project. M Smith - britracing@yahoo.com

GOTS:

Signal light switch for MG 70-72 – a prize piece of iron, \$10. Marshall Bryant 754-4627

Tail light lens for Jag 85-91 761-1678

72' MGB Engine (short block) FREE - Larry Kiehna 901-850-0324

71' E Type - Knox Everson 754-1510

European Headlights for 1975-1980 Mercedes SL - Leslie Dale 937-0534

1948 MG TC / Good condition. In storage 20+ years. In need of restoration. Located in Laurel MS Gene Johnston / English Motoring Club johnston18@jam.rr.com 601 607 7021

Excellent rust-free 1973 Spitfire 1500. It's complete, and it does need restoring. comes with many extra parts. \$1500 contact Doug Taber Cambria, California 805.927.5044 or gdz54@charter.net

1970 XKE Roadster w/ Factory Hardtop

Thom.Perhac@fabsv.com

1954 Jaguar DHC completely restored - Jimmy Jones 901-292-6901 aircraftinteriors.org

62 Silver Cloud - Steven Gibson 409-5172

Hardtop for Triumph TR6 - Bill Whitley 526-9432

1986 Jaguar XJ6 Vanden Plas, New tires, upgraded engine, exhaust, Good leather, paint and wood. \$6,000 John Kovac 901 682 0723



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