

# Featured Car(s) of the Month

## My British Cars Story

By Jamie Thornberry

I first purchased a 1963 Austin Healy Sprite with my oldest brother back in 1979 as a project car. The body was in good shape, but the mechanicals were not well looked after. It was a constant challenge to keep the Sprite running and we only kept it for a couple of years. I'm sorry to say I don't have any pictures of that car, but that was enough to give me the British car bug.



Fast forward to September 2021: after the kids were grown, I could look for another project to work on. I found a blue and white 1973 MG Midget in West Chester, Ohio, which seemed to be what I was looking for. I bought it and trailered it home. This car was just the opposite of my first venture: the mechanicals were solid, but the body was rough. It was a fun car that my wife, Lorie, and I could tool around in and have some fun, but I needed to get to work on the body. My biggest concern was that the seat belt mount on the passenger's side had rusted away. I purchased a new mount and contacted a couple of welders. The first told me there was not enough solid metal to work with and the second confirmed it by stripping back metal and body filler from wheel arch to wheel arch. I really loved that car, but it was time to move on.

My third car was a beautiful, red 1973 MG Midget that I purchased out of the Cleveland area. It was a well-maintained automobile that ran (kind of), drove (kind of) and stopped (sort of). I dropped the car off with Steve Miller at MG Automotive for his expert assessment before bringing it home. There was a list of repairs that Steve took care of, but overall, it was a solid car. The repairs did not end there. The hubs on two of the wheels were shot, so I replaced them with new painted wire wheels and new tires. The wiring under the dash was a mess: the ignition switch had been moved to the dash and had a short in it, the radio was not operable, and the wiper switch was busted. That made me nervous: looking at the car with the steering wheel hanging, the dash a mess, and wires everywhere. It did (eventually) come back together though. Lorie and I tackled the new carpet kit, which turned out to be more tedious than we thought. The hardest part was getting the seats back in place. That took some time, but we got it done!





We really enjoy the car and love cruising through our neighborhood on sunny days. It makes us smile when we drive it and we get a lot of questions like “How do you get in?” “How do you get out?”, and “Can you fit under a tractor trailer?” It is surprising to me how many people tell me that they had a Midget, MGB, or Sprite at some point in their lifetime. It makes for great conversations.