

THE OCTAGON NEWS



Volume XLIX No. 7

May 2023

Congratulations to King Charles III
100th Anniversary of MG



Presidential Musings

Dave Johnson

Push the Boundary! - Take it to the Limits! - Break the Barrier!

If I recall correctly, these terms referred to the aviation challenge to break the sound barrier. For a long time, pilots were testing the limits of their machines to get past the magical speed of 767 mph at ground level. When they were actively trying to get past that point, their plane would actually feel like it was almost being torn apart from the buffeting that the air pressure put on the airframes. Once they were able to cross the "line", all the buffeting stopped, and they had calm air. It was smooth and fast sailing from that point on.

Drive it like you Stole It! - First on Race Day! (Ford) - In The Driving Seat! - Put The Pedal To The Metal!

I admit, I enjoy driving, and I enjoy driving fast. There is something about driving a



Southwestern Ohio Centre -- MG Car Club
P.O. Box 20032, Dabel Branch
Dayton, OH 45420-0032

Club Membership Information

Membership dues for the Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club are **twenty-five (\$25.00)** per year, payable during September and October. On January 1st. the names of delinquent members are removed from the roster. See **Carole Looft** for further membership information.

MG Car Club Monthly Meeting

The Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at **Bennett's Pubical Family Sports Grill**, 67 South Main St, Miamisburg 45342, at 7:30pm. The next meeting will be:

Next meeting May 26th

MG Car Club Officers

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And special thanks to Ron Parks for proofreading.

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Upcoming MGCC Events

May:

- 6 – BTM Car Show
- 21 – Talk Like Yoda Day
- 20 – MG 100th Anniversary Tour
- 26 – Meeting at Bennett's Pubical

Jun:

- 4 – British Return to Fort Meigs
- 6 – National Drive-In Movie Day
- 28 – Meeting at Bennett's Pubical

Jul:

- 4 – Americana Festival Car Show
- 9 – National Sugar Cookie Day
- 26 – Meeting at Bennett's Pubical

See meeting minutes for other area activities!!

responsive car that just fuels my fire! I enjoy the stick-shift transmissions. There is a feeling of control that you have with a manual transmission. It is true, you become one with the car. You feel the engine revving. You feel the acceleration. You feel the wind blowing through your lack of hair... You feel the weight shift, and the suspension loading, as you dive into a sweeping corner. Downshifting to stay in the engine's power band. Accelerating out of the curve just past the apogee of the turn. It is exhilarating! It is something that I live for.

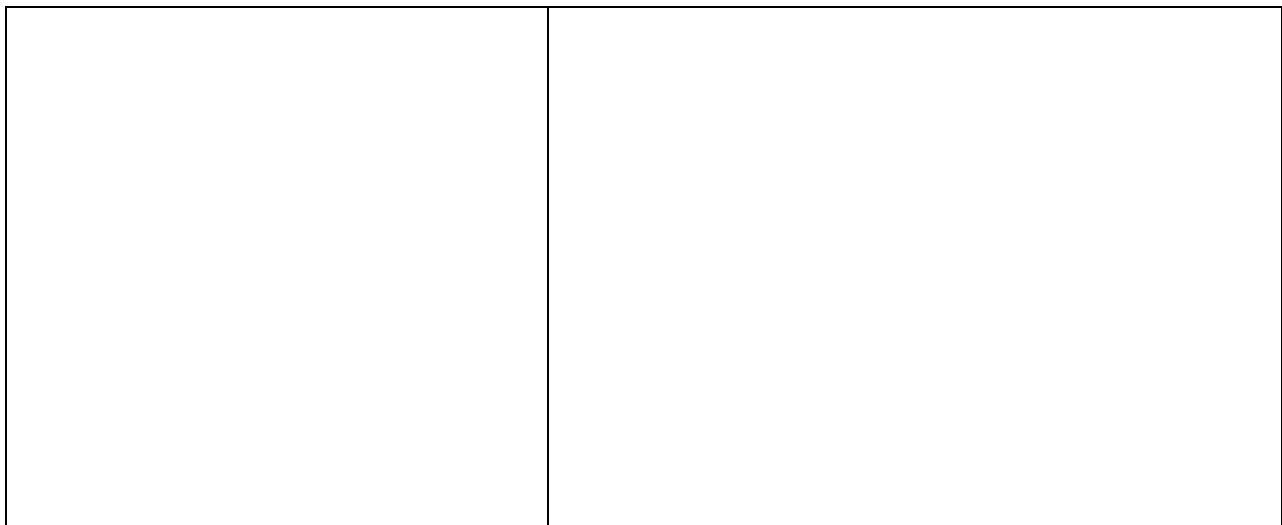
Safety Fast!

This is the moniker of MG Cars. While our Little British Cars (LBC's) are not the fastest or strongest compared to today's exotics, these are nimble and fun cars to drive. So how do we interpret the expression "Safety Fast! ". Personally, I take it to mean... Drive fast... but do so safely. Yes, you can get into trouble with a MG. They are not the fastest cars in the world. Nothing like a Zero to 60 time of 22 seconds in a MGTD, when all the new cars are 5-7 times faster in that measurement. 0-60 in 3 seconds! Talk about driving a jet, or flying low...

Thankfully, our MG cars - all models - give you the feeling of speed without the highest speed that other cars can do. You FEEL like you are driving faster. You FEEL like the sound barrier is just out of your reach. Mostly due to the spindly suspensions we have from the 50's and 60's. But! You can still have a whole lot of fun in an MG. Just drive Safety Fast!

Speed Limits.... That is a whole other article..... Who needs them? Who wants them? Why do the roads we take on club drives have them?

Congratulations to King Charles III



Progress on BTM MGA Coupe

Ron Parks

British Transportation Museum's MGA Coupe was moved to Cincinnati for finish work and painting, thanks to several MG Car Club Southwestern Ohio Centre members. The sanding crew pictured (left to right) are Tom Leurck (the painter), Art Barnes, Ron Parks and Graham Cooper.



100th Anniversary of MG

Dave McCann & Ron Parks

One hundred years of MG cars! We plan to celebrate by taking a nearly 100 mile drive to the beautiful Hocking Hills area of Ohio. The plan is to meet at the courthouse on Main Street in **London Ohio** at **9:00am** on **Saturday May 20, 2023**. Refer to details published in the March issue of the Octagon News.

There is one change to the details published in the March issue. We will pose our cars for a photo at Lake Logan on Saturday evening. Our original plan was to take this photo Sunday morning before heading home. Doing it on Saturday, before going to the Motel and restaurant, allows us to include everyone in the group photo; those who are staying overnight as well as those who are not.

Adding to the fun, Terry and Carole Looft are providing commemorative T-Shirts and bumper signs for all participants. If you plan to go on the tour, please send your shirt size(s) to Carole. Carole@looft.net

Turn by turn instructions for the tour along with details and a map of the Hocking Hills area will all be sent again in an email message reminder shortly before the tour.



Pictures From Tune Up Clinic

Photos by Andy Hein and Steve Markman



Thanks to Steve and Mimi of MG Automotive for again hosting our Tune-Up Clinic

Pictures from 18th British Cars at the Museum

Photos by Ron Parks and Steve Markman



And the winners were...



Ron Ramer - MGB



Steve Markman – MG TD



Dave Gribler - MGA



Art Barnes – MGA 1800



Ron Parks – Triumph TR4A



Marc Masquelier – Austin Healey

Is Anything Really Simple?

Terry & Carole Looft

What started out as a “simple” engine/upgrade swap for Ryan’s 1100 turned into a much bigger project than planned. The under-bonnet paint was pretty much just thrown at the car and there were several areas where the paint was beginning to bubble. Overall, though, the car was quite nice and deserved a better engine bay. So, we undertook removing the complete subframe and broke down all of the suspension parts to renew everything. This would include a total stripping of all the paint, and steam power washing prior to repaint.



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It didn't take long to realize that a lot of the rubber bumpers, seals, and small parts were getting nearly impossible to find. Between finding the proper rubber, some gasket punches and the use of my hydraulic press I made most all the rubber bushes and bumps. You do what you've got to do for parts.

The displacers presented their own problems, mostly with the hoses. *(Editor's note – For those of us who didn't know what a displacer is, Terry explained it: "The rubber bladder at each corner of the 1100's suspension that are pressurized. They act as both springs and shocks. Separate left to right connected front to back of the car. It's the heart of the suspension.")* This is not the first time I had to deal with them. There are some that offer "re-hosed" displacers but for crazy money. Working with a local hydraulic shop we came up



with a hose of the right size. We cut off the old hose and re-used the original fittings. I was able to swedge the fitting on the loose end, but my hydraulic A/C hose crimper could not get into the displacer end. Thus a need for the pinch clamp. I did this on my other 1100 some years ago and it's worked fine.



At this point the car is back on its wheels. The major engine work is complete, but the gearbox is mostly a pile of parts. The car is now on hold until after MG 2023 and GT-48 with 4 cars to prep.



The History of Road Construction

Steve Markman

Another thing we probably don't think about much when we're out for a pleasant drive in our roadsters or with the family in the minivan is the road over which we're driving. Or, at least, not until we hit a giant pot hole left over from last winter and cut a tire and bend the expensive alloy wheel on which it is mounted. Paved roads didn't just show up with the invention of the automobile in the early 1900s, but cars certainly accelerated their evolution by a few orders of magnitude. Without good, paved, roads, most of today's automobiles would be a lot different, or wouldn't even exist.

The first "roads" certainly were just foot paths over which people and animals walked to hunt for food, get water, or eventually transport goods, and were formed by the compaction of soil by the repeated pounding of feet and hooves. They probably were narrow, allowing only for single file passage of foot traffic. But before the invention of the wheel, the footpath probably was good enough for tens of thousands of years. Following the invention of the wheel about 7,000 years ago, the larger, heavier loads that now could be transported showed the limitations of dirt paths that turned into mud when it rained. The earliest stone paved roads have been traced to about 4,000 B.C.E in the Indian subcontinent and Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq).

One of the strongest indicators of a society's level of development has been the quality of its road system. As settlements grew into towns and cities, increasing populations fostered the need for communication and commerce between them.

Early trade routes developed where goods were transported from their source to a market outlet. They often were named after the goods that traveled over them. For example, the Amber Route traveled from Afghanistan through Persia and Arabia to Egypt, and the Silk Route stretched 8,000 miles from China, across Asia, and then through Spain to the Atlantic Ocean. However, carrying bulky goods with animals over rough, unpaved roads was slow, dangerous and expensive.

The Assyrian Empire in western Asia began what is believed to be the first organized road-building around 1115 B.C.E., and continued for 500 to 600 years. Since they were trying to dominate that part of the world, they had to be able to move their armies with all their supplies and equipment easily. Their army's engineer corps laid pontoon bridges and created level tracks for heavy carriages. Around 800 B.C.E., Carthage, on the northern coast of Africa, began to use stones for paving roads. Although they may not have been the first to pave their roads with stones, they were among the earliest, and some people believe that the Romans imitated Carthaginian techniques.

But, the best-known road builders of the ancient world were the Romans, who built the world's straightest, best engineered, and most complex network of roads in the world. At their height, the Roman Empire maintained 53,000 miles of roads throughout all of England, most of Western Europe, and throughout the Iberian Peninsula, and encircled the entire Mediterranean area. Famous for their straightness, Roman roads were composed of a graded soil foundation topped by four courses: a bedding of sand or mortar; rows of large, flat stones; a thin layer of gravel mixed with lime; and finally a thin surface of flat rocks. Typically they were 3 to 5 feet thick and varied in width from 12 to 24 feet. Their design was the most sophisticated until the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Many modern European roads in use today were built over the remnants of original Roman roads. Part of the reason they lasted so long might be that they were not built on soft soil; the roadbed was excavated until firm ground was reached. Without modern construction equipment, they certainly were labor-intensive to build, but when you're using slave labor, and most likely didn't even pay for the land...

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Under Roman law, the public had the right to use the roads, but the district through which a road passed was responsible for maintaining it. This system was effective as long as a strong central authority existed to enforce it. As the Roman Empire declined, so did its roads, and they fell into disrepair all across Europe and Great Britain.

Meanwhile, in the western hemisphere, the Inca Empire developed in South America during a period that corresponded with the Middle Ages in Europe. Centered in what is now Peru, the Incas branched out into Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile. Like the Romans, they recognized the need for a system of roads to govern and expand their empire. However, the Incas built their roads without having invented the wheel, without the use of draft animals, and without a written language. Without wheeled vehicles, their roads could ascend steep hills via terraces or steps. In one place, a road going up a steep mountainside was built with 3,000 consecutive stone steps. Unfortunately, their well-constructed system of roads assisted in their downfall as the invading Spaniards used the Incas' own roads to move their armies.

In 18th century England, the technology of highway construction was advanced by two British engineers, Thomas Telford and John Loudon McAdam. Telford, originally a stonemason, came up with a system of digging a trench, installing a foundation of heavy rock, and then surfacing with a 6-inch layer of gravel. The center of the road was raised, producing a crown that allowed water to drain off. Telford built over 1,000 roads, 1,200 bridges, and numerous other structures.

On the other hand, McAdam's system was based on the principle that a well-drained road made of suitable material does not need the stone foundation of Telford's design, but could be built directly on the subsoil. First, McAdam placed a closely compacted 10- to 12-inch layer of stone, broken to inch-sized pieces, and also raised in the center to facilitate drainage. This was followed by a layer of finer grained stone. The greatest advantages to McAdam's system were its speed and low cost, and it was generally adopted throughout Europe. While good at first, the eventual arrival of heavier motorized vehicles and the lack of a firm foundation resulted in poor durability. For that reason, Telford's system of construction became the standard on roads that had to support heavy loads,

With industrialization in the 1700s and 1800s, the British government couldn't keep up with the demand for new roads. Private individuals built roads themselves and then charged for their use. The owners typically blocked the entrances by setting a long pole, called a pike, across the road. Once the toll was paid, the pole would be turned out of the way, allowing the travelers to pass...thus, the name "turnpike." By 1829, 3,783 different turnpike companies operated 20,000 miles of roads throughout England. However, during the latter half of the 19th century, canals and railroads, which could carry larger loads more economically than smaller horse-drawn wagons, surpassed the turnpikes in importance. This was the status quo until the advent of automobiles in the early 1900s.

Back in America, early roads often were no more than widened Indian trails which had been leveled and filled, and often were full of tree stumps that tripped horses and damaged wagon wheels. The expression "I'm stumped" derived from this era, when vehicles frequently were damaged and had to be repaired before they could continue.

As in Europe, the advent of the automobile and truck also changed road building in America, and spawned the "Good Roads Movement." But, some credit must be given to bicycles for bringing attention to the need for better roads, since these vehicles were enormously popular in the late 19th century. Many clubs and cycling societies existed. The League of American Wheelmen, a national organization founded in 1880, began advocating for better roads. The first definite success of the fledgling Good Roads Movement was achieved in 1891 when New Jersey became the first state to establish a state-level agency

for improving roads. Massachusetts followed this example the following year, and by 1917 every state had adopted similar programs.

A few last thoughts, on the economics of designing and building roads. We've all witnessed roads being dug up, often down to the dirt on which they were built, and then rebuilt from scratch. "Why didn't they just build it better in the first place?" you probably asked yourself. Taking into account the cost of building any road, think for a moment of everything that must be considered before construction begins. What kind of traffic will it handle? Will that traffic grow? What property needs to be purchased? How many bridges will need to be built? Will water drain properly? How much money is available? Will we be voted out of office if we raise taxes to build it right, rather than just enough to get by for now? The list goes on and on. Making it a foot thicker most likely will make the road last longer and require fewer repairs, but that will make it cost more to build today. Future savings can be promised, but future repair bills can be passed on the next generation of taxpayers, and future decisions about upkeep made by future bureaucrats. The list and decisions go on and on.

Sources:

Special thanks to Shirley Sponholtz for her great article at:
<https://www.triplenine.org/Vidya/OtherArticles/ABriefHistoryofRoadBuilding.aspx>
from which I borrowed extensively, supplemented by information from:

<https://www.civilknowledges.com/history-of-road-development-construction/>

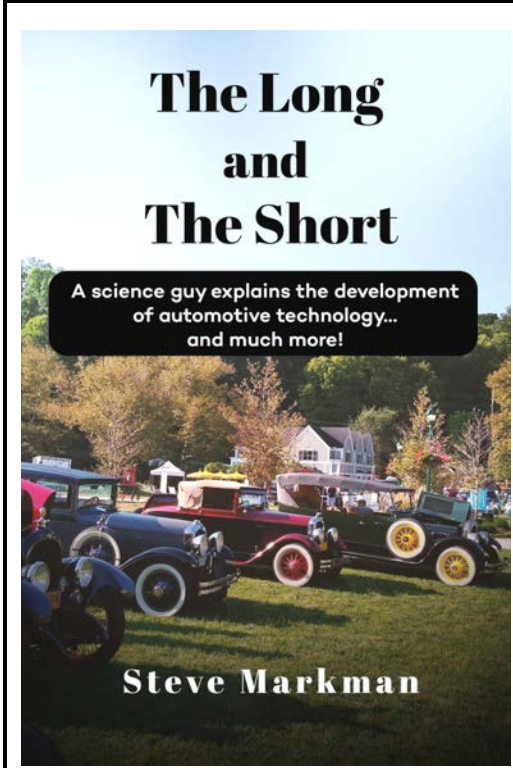
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/back0506.cfm>

<https://www.roadandtrack.com/car-culture/a4447/the-road-ahead-road-evolution/>

Classifieds

Nothing?

Free classified policy: We are happy to run your auto-related ad for three months free of charge, but may cut older and non-MG related ads as space requires. If you wish to continue the ad for an additional three months, contact srmarmman @att.net or 937-886-9566.



**The Long
and
The Short**

A science guy explains the development
of automotive technology...
and much more!

Steve Markman

Available at the May club meeting.
Price \$17 (beats the publisher's price,
and no shipping charge!). Check or
correct change appreciated!!

Minutes from April Club Meeting

Diana Hodges

The April 2023 meeting of the MGCC SWOC was called to order by President Dave Johnson at precisely 7:30. President Dave, "I know historically, you like the President to stand up and talk about what they've been working on, but all I've been working on is the house. I was looking for my MG flag and that got me thinking about an MG pledge of allegiance. I came up with this, 'I pledge

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allegiance to the MG Flag, and to the car culture for which we enjoy, one club under the MG Car Club of Abington, divisible from all other English sports cars, with Lucas and oil leaks for all’.”

Vice President’s Report was next. V.P. Ron Parks, “I’ve been working like crazy on the MG. Clutch hydraulics and other things. I’ll have some tech tips for later.” Terry Happensack, “Are you sure it wasn’t the Triumph he was working on?”

Minutes were next on the agenda. Art Barnes motioned to accept the Minutes as reported. Dave Johnson seconded. Minutes approved as reported.

Treasurer’s Report was next. Treasurer Sue Scocozzo, “I have the receipts today. There was some discussion about the Webmaster and Treasurer living in the same house. I now have those receipts. The MGCC had gains of: Squat. Nil. Bupkis. (\$0.00). Total gain to the MGCC was \$0.00. We had total expenses of: P.O. Box Rental (\$176.00) + website expenses (\$30.16) + Erie Insurance Premium (\$240.00) + Mother Club Membership (\$66.24) + Tune-Up Clinic coffee & donuts (\$18.62) for a total expense to the MGCC of \$531.02. Monthly total gains when subtracted from the losses means a loss to the MGCC of \$531.02. When subtracted from our beginning balance of \$4,946.28, leaves the MGCC with an ending balance of \$4,415.26 in the primary checking account. The savings account now has \$382.13, with cash-on-hand of \$30.00. Total ending balance of all accounts was \$4,827.39.” Dave McCann, Sr. motioned to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented. Terry Looft seconded the motion to accept the report. MGCC voted. Treasurer’s Report approved.

Membership was next. Carole Looft, “You currently have 64 members with no new members joining.” Dave Johnson, “I have a prospect. He showed up to Biscuit & Tea and has a 1974 MGB GT. He’s from Alaska but he was interested in joining the club.”

April Birthdays: Linda McCann, Ron Ramer, Tim Dunham, Dave Estelle, Jeanne Youngblood, Gordon Lindsay and Mike Maloney

Activities with Eddie. Eddie Hill, “I got nothing. This Saturday (4/29, and you’ve missed it) is the rescheduled Tune-Up Clinic.” Mimi, “Don’t be there before 9:00.” Eddie, “If so, you will be cleaning restrooms. The British Museum’s annual show will be Saturday, May 6th (again, you’ve missed it) Pre-registration is \$15, day of show is \$18.” Ron Parks, “We’ve got the Spring Tour planned. Be at the Court House in London at 9:00am. We’re leaving at 9:30. Cedar Falls is where the picnic shelter is reserved. We’ll then head down to Hocking Hills, Ash cave, and a couple other sites. It should take a couple of hours we should hit Logan lake around 4ish for the picture.” Eddie continued, “June 4th is MGs at Perrysburg. Memphis is June 12-16. MGB’s are in Calgary 17-21 of July. BCD is Sat. Aug 5th. University Motors is Aug 18 & 19 for the reunion picnic.” Dave McCann, Jr. “There’s a concours in Lexington on July 15th at Keeneland Horse Park.” Dave McCann, Sr., “Interesting fact I learned was that Harold LeMay of Tacoma Washington had the worlds largest collection of fire trucks outside of a municipality. He had over 3,000 cars when he died. If you’re ever in that part of the country, there’s the LeMay museum that has the collection.”

Sunshine Committee. Carole Looft, My foot is well, so I’m doing better. Terry’s Looft’s ‘driving’ finger, has a bunch of stitches in it (*Terry of course ‘shows’ us the middle finger with all of the stitches*). Ron Parks, “I got a thank you card from Charlie McCamey’s daughter thanking us for the flowers.

Newsletter Editor Steve Markman, “I don’t have anything, literally. Did you know there’s actually Koi rescue groups? If you no longer can care for your koi, they’ll find new homes for them.” Dave McCann, Sr., “If I show up with a fly rod and some bait, I’m here to rescue your fish.”

Webmaster John Scocozzo, “Our internet host has been having an issue with BCD registration. After a

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couple hours on the phone, I finally got it resolved and now it seems to be working.”

President Dave Johnson, “We’re having a Zoom meeting with Skip tomorrow to talk about BCD. Hopefully he’ll be here next meeting.”

Beer Brake called 7:50.
Back from Break 8:00

President Dave, “Does anyone have any old business to discuss?” Carole, “I talked to Skip today and he suggested putting off the banner for the MG celebration until May. It can be made in a couple of days so there’s no reason to rush.” Eddie Hill, “Our tour in May is to commemorate the 100th anniversary, do we want to take the club banner along for the photo?” Lois Gribler, “That’s a good idea.”

MGA Coupe update. Ron Parks, “Whatever it was primed in was okay for the paint that Dale was going to use, but the new painter doesn’t like that so it’s going to be stripped again for painting.” Lois Gribler, “The primer that’s on there is about 15-20 years old and its incompatible with modern paint.” Ron, “We’re going to Cincinnati Thursday 4/27 (*luckily, you missed this one too*). We’re going to go down and start sanding.” Dave Johnson, “I work, but I might stop by for the free pizza and beer afterwards.”

New Business. Lois Gribler, “Steve Markman has an ad for his book in the latest edition of MGA Driver on p.8.” Steve M., “I still don’t have my copies of the book yet!”

Tech Tips. Ron Parks, “I’ve got two. Regarding hydraulics. I’d forgotten that if you screw the slave cylinder onto the hose before you put it in the car, you’ll kink it. If you loosen the jamb nut, you can reinstall it and then tighten it down. The whole thing’s easier if you take the starter out of the way.” Steve Powell, “Would you go over that again?” Dave Gribler, “If you take the starter out, you need to take the distributor out too.” Ron continued, “The last time I did a master cylinder, I swear, I did it by myself and it wasn’t a problem. This time, Terry Looft had to come up and help me. It really is a 2-person operation.” Terry Looft, “Before you hard mount the master cylinder, get everything started.” Steve Miller, “Use some grease to hold the washer in place.” Terry, “I use this stuff called Dry-Tack to hold that kind of stuff in place.”

Dave Johnson, “Other clubs have working meets where people just show up and work on cars. Any interest in doing that? Just throwing it out there.”

Gumball Rallye was won by Dave McCann, Sr.

Meeting adjourned 8:19

 <p>www.BritishTransportationMuseum.org 321 Hopeland St., Dayton, OH 45417</p> <p>Giuseppe Automotive Restoration (818) 269-3240</p> <p>Your antique/classic maintenance and restoration expert</p>	  <p>Parts, Service and Restoration for MG, Triumph, Austin Healey and Related Autos</p>  <p>Steve Miller 3733 Wilmington Pike Kettering, Ohio 45429 (937) 294-7623 e-mail: MgAutomotive1@aol.com</p>
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Don't forget to register for British Car Day. Use this form to register via snail mail. Better yet... go to www.britishcardaydayton.com to register online.



British Car Day 2023 Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

e-mail _____ Miles Driven to BCD _____

Yr./Make/Model _____ Class _____

Require trailer parking Yes _____ No _____

Advance registration (includes free t-shirt) \$25.00 _____

Deadline: Must be received by July 22, 2023

T-shirt size S _____ M _____ L _____ XL _____ XXL _____

Additional t-shirts (day of show \$20) \$18.00 _____

S _____ M _____ L _____ XL _____ XXL _____

Vendor registration \$30.00 _____

Total _____

Make checks payable to: British Car Day 2023

Mail to: BCD 2023, 1754 Lindenhall Dr. Loveland, OH 45140-2120

Neither I, nor my heirs, will hold the Miami Valley Triumphs; The MG Car Club, Southwestern Ohio Centre; Five Rivers MetroParks, or any other sponsors or persons associated with this event, liable for any personal injuries or any damages done to me or by me, my party or my car, while engaged in this event or while traveling to or from this event.

Signed _____ Date _____