

British Automobile



October 2022

A publication of the British Transportation Museum
321 Hopeland Street, Dayton, OH 45417
<https://www.britishtransportationmuseum.org>

Museum tours are available by appointment.
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The British Transportation Museum (BTM) is a 501(c)3 non-profit charity dedicated to preserving our British motoring heritage through education and vehicle preservation. ©2021 British Transportation Museum

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Paul Striby and Steven Solomon
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NEXT MEETING – 7pm October 19 (3rd Wednesday)

British Transportation Museum's
CHILI COOK-OFF
and **Cruise-In**
Saturday,
October 22
4pm-7pm
Tickets: \$10.00 donation
For tickets, more info, or to enter the Cook-Off,
please contact Amanda Hawker @
btmpkids1@gmail.com or 937.238.8451
Proceeds benefit
British Transportation Museum
321 Hopeland St. Dayton, OH 45417
britishtransportationmuseum.org



Bring your best chili recipe and WIN the 6th Annual Chili Cook-Off

Sponsored by the British Transportation Museum

Awards for:

Best Overall Chili (guest judge will select)
People's Choice

Contestants will participate in an *all in any style* cook-off.
Plan on bringing your favorite chili to be served to the crowd.

Details and Rules:

1. Each contestant must bring a minimum of 3 quarts of each type of chili submitted in the Cook-Off. Remember, the more chili you bring, the more votes you can receive!
2. Contestants are responsible for bringing their own heat source (crock-pot, etc...) as well as any unique toppings that are *specific* to your recipe.
3. Serving spoons and ladles will be provided.
4. Set up will be from 3:30pm-4:00pm on October 22.

The primary reason for this event is to have fun and raise money for the British Transportation Museum.

To enter your chili in the cook-off, please contact:
Amanda Hawker
btmpkids1@gmail.com
937.238.8451

Deadline to enter your chili is Wednesday, October 19.

Cost: \$10.00 (includes chili entry fee and ticket to event)

The Early Formation of BTM

The British Transportation Museum was the brainstorm of four MG Car Club (Southwest Ohio Centre) members in 1998. Over a few beers they thought about building an MG only museum. A few more beers and it had grown in their minds to a British transportation museum. I'm not sure that they fully realized at the time that the vision might now include airplanes, trains, and ships!

The guilty parties were Dick Smith, Mike Smith (no relation), Mike Edgerton, and John Wolf. Mike Smith was majoring in a museum curriculum at college which gave him the organizational resources and some of the early leg work might have been his class homework. The Constitution and Bylaws were drawn up. The Federal and State paperwork was completed and in 2000 "The Society for the Preservation of British Transportation in America" was born as a 501(c)3 Educational Charity. The "Society ..." is a bit of a mouthful making it difficult to promote so we were

doing-business-as the “British Museum of Transportation” for a few years. The catch was that none of the Officers were British and the museum was in Ohio not England. It was not good English to call ourselves a “British Museum”. We landed on the “British Transportation Museum” as being correct, brief, and functional.

Growth of the collection was slow. A 1964 Sunbeam Imp was donated to BTM in 2001 from Middletown, Ohio and later a 1967 Rover TC 2000 was trailered back from Florida just ahead of hurricane Francis. In 2002 an Austin A35 was donated by Hrach Chekijian and brought back from Watertown, MA. In 2005, a 1972 Jaguar XJ6 MK I and a 1978 Lotus Eclat Sprint were donated to us. The storage of these cars was a very real issue! Terry and Carol Loft came to the rescue with the loan of space in one of their warehouses in Wilmington, OH. This allowed for some maintenance and restoration work to be done. Growth of the collection continued and a few “Open Houses” were held to get the cars seen and to promote the Museum. By 2008 we had 16 vehicles and were out of space. BTM Member John Gray offered space in a building he owned in Dayton which allowed any new acquisitions to be housed closer to home. This also quickly filled up with another 16 cars, giving us a total of 32 in the collection.

All during this time the hunt for our own suitable museum building was going on with a very small budget. Any building that had the slightest chance to be in our price range was checked out. This had its own learning curve as we needed room for the existing 32 cars plus future growth. Location was important as we intended to be an attraction for visitors to enjoy. City rules and codes would need to be followed. Again, with very little money.

Fundraising was constant with an annual car show and appeals. Two MGB’s and an MGB GT were raffled off over the years. They were very labor-intensive raffles but allowed our bank account to grow. That and very generous support by enthusiasts and car clubs. Fundraising will always be a fact of life for a non-profit museum. We are “asset rich but cash poor”.

In 2015 we found an 83,000 sq. ft. building with “good bones” but a real fixer-upper. After several visits with as many BTM Members as possible, we got BTM Board approval to negotiate on the purchase. The final price was \$160,000 and the owners would use a Land Contract to enable us to finance the purchase. We put \$30,000 down and had a balloon payment of \$98,000 to make in 3 years. The 3 years went quickly with that final payment looming over us. BTM Treasurer Tom Graff

came to our rescue with a zero-interest loan to cover the balloon payment. All along our cash flow from renting space and car storage allowed us to pay the bills but not enough to stash away for the final payment. We are now within a year of repaying Tom’s generous loan to us. Unfortunately, Tom Passed away in 2019 but he, and his heirs, have our everlasting gratitude for saving the Museum.



BTM is at 321 Hopeland St. Dayton, Ohio near the intersection of I-75 and US-35. It is a desirable location near downtown Dayton, the University of Dayton, and the Carillon Historical Park. A few offers have been made to purchase the building from us. Usually, the monies are not enough to move us up into a better building. With no firm offers in hand we are focusing more and more on rehabbing our old fixer-upper into a suitable environment for a Museum. With the collection now at 60 cars, a huge library, and tons of memorabilia; we have a responsibility to house it appropriately and show it off to the world. Our 83,000 sq. ft. building is a “fixer-upper” that we purchased cheap. Improvements are made as money allows. If you would consider a donation to help our all-volunteer efforts to preserve and educate about British transportation, it would be much appreciated. BTM is a 501c3 non-profit educational charity and donations are tax deductible.

Visit our www.BritishTransportationMuseum.org website and become a member. Our newest offering is a Lifetime Membership at \$1000 for individuals or \$1200 for families that gets your name on our Honor Wall Plaque plus supports our mission.

Can't attend our monthly BTM meetings in person?
Contact btmpres@gmail.com to get our zoom link.
NEXT MEETING – 7pm October 19 (3rd Wednesday)

BTM News, mid Covid

The education part of our Mission has dropped off considerably with the Covid. Car group events were cancelled with the lockdown. The trickle of masked

visitors is slowly growing as more people get their shots. We have had groups of visitors from institutions where everyone had been vaccinated. We continue to strive for a healthy environment and look forward to a more open and safe summer.

Rest assured that BTM is financially on solid ground. Memberships and donations plus our little enterprises of renting space, car storage, and parts sales/Gift Shop are keeping us afloat and paying down the 0% interest loan on the building.

We need to keep our building physically sound and presentable. To that end, we paid to have two large areas of fallen brick work repaired and window covers replaced. Upgrading fire extinguishers and the dry sprinkler system are our next top priority. All with the ever-present roof repair or replacement, if/when the money can be found, literally hanging over our head. Some low budget roof repairs were done to a few spots before the winter weather hit but it is now time for a better solution.

Never Again, Two Minis ...

Paul Strieby

I have said I would never undertake to restore another Mini.

Sometimes all it takes is an innocent stroll through the aisles of the Iola, Wisconsin car swap meet. Late in July, I went with my brother-in-law and his Wisconsin Oldsmobile Club friends to wander the incredible assortment of parts and automobile-related stuff that one finds at car swap meets. I have gone with this group for the last several years since I moved to Wisconsin. Usually, I see absolutely nothing that I could use for any of my British cars. We wandered up and down the miles of booths, looking at tools, LED lights, etc. We were almost done, having covered the entire fields, when I spotted a guy sitting in his booth and he had a sign board filled with some cars he wanted to sell and I spotted a picture of a Mini Cooper. I asked him about the car and it turned out he had two cars he needed to get rid of so he could vacate a building he was renting.

I took a picture of his picture and a few weeks later I was talking to my friend, Tim, the President of our Fox Cities British Car Club about the cars. He took the guy's phone number and gave him a call. Next thing I know Tim is sending me a raft of pictures of what he found when, on a whim, he drove down to the guy's building to see what he really had. I sorted through the photos and it became clear there was a mountain of parts along with two Mini Coopers.

So, Tim and I sat down and went through the pictures. During the course of looking through all the stuff, Tim says, "Why don't we buy these cars and parts and put two cars back on the road?" Two weeks later, Tim rented a big Diesel pickup truck, and has another club member (a retired professional truck driver) who has a 20-foot trailer, and we are off to North West Illinois to start a Mini Rescue mission. 8 ½ hours later we are unloading all the cargo at the Club shop.



Closer inspection of the cars has revealed we now have a red/black 67 Morris Cooper with a 1275 A+ engine, complete with factory recliners (unfortunately painted black) and a 65 Austin Cooper S with no engine installed.



The Morris has a mutilated roof where there was a folding sunroof at some time in its life, but is in otherwise fairly decent condition. Its hydrostatic suspension holds pressure! After our evaluation, this car was found to be in solid condition and we plan to replace the roof and get it painted. We are stripping the car in preparation for roof replacement.

The Austin is another story: its body will require much work to get ready for restoration. Amongst the parts we picked up is a 1275 S engine that appears to be in good condition as well as a 4-synchro gearbox that looks like it has just been rebuilt that will match it well. This car will sit while we attempt to get the Morris back in action.

Never again, I said and now we are back in action. We hope to have the Morris ready to get back in action, perhaps on the Mark 1 Cosmic wheels ...

Meanwhile, Back at the Asylum ... Karl Strauch

I can relate to Paul's tale about two Minis. I bought my 1st Mini in 1978 and took it to my 1st Meet in IL in 1990.



I bought my 2nd Mini in 1984 and it took over 29 years for me to finally put "Humpty Dumpty" together again.



I bought my 3rd Mini in 1987 and eventually converted that 9 years later into my road/race Mini "Moonraker".



Everything we owned was stacked on decking above the 3 Minis in the van when we moved to Missouri in 1987. The morning after we moved in, one of our neighbors knocked on our door and asked, "Pardon me, do you have any little British cars here?" He said a friend of his also had 3 of them. That encounter led to the creation of the Mid-America Diehard Mini Enthusiasts' Network (a.k.a. the MADMEN) in 1988 and ultimately to several drives to Alaska and back with my youngest son Kraig in 1998 ↓ and my grandson Aaron in 2009. ↓



I edited our MADMEN newsletters for many years, but I'm now looking forward to helping the BTM and the *British Automobile* newsletter in whatever ways I can.



LONG LIVE BRITISH CARS, ESPECIALLY YOURS!! Karl

Brits at the Museum Car Show, May 21, 2022

Wedged between the Covid and the Monkey Pox, the British Transportation Museum was able to pull off its May car show as in years of yore. Formerly the "2nd Street Market British Show" and then "Brits at the Burg" in Miamisburg, we found a home at our very own 321 Hopeland St. building.

36 cars joined us on a beautiful morning. The weather forecast was threatening and probably kept the attendance down. A good time was had by all with old and new friendships keeping the enthusiasm levels high.

New this year a Dog Scent Trial was added for some family entertainment. The weather kept their numbers down as well. Maybe a wet dog scent in your car was not what was being sought. Next year we can try this again. They made a nice generous donation to BTM.

A food Truck rally was planned but none were available that weekend, too much going on. To fill the void our own Giuseppe, Master Mechanic and Gourmet Cook, fired up the grill and fed the masses. Thanks Giuseppe, it hit the spot.

MVT was represented by Derrik Zimmerman in the only TR3, Scott Huey and Gerri Hickey in their TR6's, and Greg Schnittger's GT6 fresh off an Auto-X. They were all shined up and ready for the coming rain. It started with some sprinkles around 1:30 but the serious stuff seemed to stay North of town. Shelter inside was offered to the open top cars but they all hustled home. Stars of the Show (other than the Triumphs, of course) might be Richard Davis' Jaguar XK150 and Nick Besch's Aston Martin DB7. Neat cars! The Show drew many first-time visitors to the Museum, definitely a good thing. The BTM collection keeps growing and it deserves the attention it got. BTM also unveiled its long overdue signage to give a more professional appearance. Thanks to Scott Huey and his wife for sprucing up the planters adding to a much better look. Plan on attending next year for a bigger and better event!

38th Mini Meet East at BTM



84 Minis converged on the British Transportation Museum for the second day of Mini Meet East in Dayton, Ohio. 169 Attendees travelled from as far away as California, Texas, Florida, Connecticut, and Ontario to

share their enthusiasm for the Mini/MINI. Covid had cancelled the previous two years which made this a much-anticipated reunion for many old friends. The delay also meant that the Ohio Mini Owners 50th Anniversary celebration had also been put on hold. Some of the BTM Minis were brought out into the sunlight in front of the Museum to be used as a backdrop for the traditional panoramic photo done by Jay Best Photography. The photo always includes the gang that runs behind the camera to be in both sides of the panoramic. Great fun to watch as you are standing still waiting for the camera to wind past you. We are eagerly waiting for this year's photo. BTM has many past Mini Meet panoramic photos on display plus a few MG events. Visitors get a kick out of trying to spot their cars.



To get the youngsters involved, a special Mini was prepared as a blank canvas for them to paint.



Their creativity was given an outlet and they were kept engaged in the Meet. Tim Bosse had refurbished the Mini shell from its use as the "Kid's Mini" at the Mini Meet in 2005. We were waiting to see if a 10-year-old from the 2005 Meet, 17 years ago and now 27, might bring their child to paint! Don't think it happened though. The day before, 14 of the kids were chaperoned through the National Air Force Museum while the parents participated in the People's Choice Car Show. Many attendees had not been to BTM before and we received several compliments that boosted our spirits. We might be doing something right! Sales at the Gift Shop were brisk as might be expected, we are heavily Mini centric with the merchandise.

One of the highlights of the Meet was the rolling Tech Session done by John Twist. Problems were diagnosed

and repaired while John gave an informative talk on the Mini's progress.



Another highlight was the presentation to BTM of a wooden red ¼ scale Mini Moke made by the Moke Club in the UK. It was donated in memory of Debbie Franks, super Mini/MINI enthusiast, who played a part in getting the Moke into the USA.



Many awards were given out at the Monday MME Banquet. The highly coveted "Hrach" Award for "Spirit of the Meet" was well earned by Tony Burgess. He always displays incredible energy in organizing Mini Meets as well as the Columbus and Cleveland BCDs and his part in the MG Meets. Thank you, Tony, for your service to the British car enthusiast community.

The Best of Show Award went to Donnie Neron of Ontario, Canada for his Custom Roadster.



His Mini also earned him the “Brian Owens” Award which is a perpetual plaque listing all of the MME Best of Show winners.



Plans are underway for the 2023 MME in the Owensboro, KY area with East Meets West Mini Meet 2024 possibly being near Mount Rushmore. Mark your calendars and keep those July 4th weekends open.

CLUB SUPPORT

Four local car clubs have been actively working on BTM car restorations. The MG Car Club, Southwest Ohio Centre, has been assembling a 1959 MGA Coupe that came to us in boxes.



It became a frame-off rebuild with the frame blasted and painted. The cleaned-up suspension is now back on

and the engine is in and ready to be fired up. The body was massaged for proper panel fit and is awaiting a donated paint job by Euro Classics. They are top craftsmen and the look is going to be stunning in the original Orient Red with Black interior.



The Miami Valley Triumph Club has been steadily working on BTM’s 1978 TR7. It is a coupe with overdrive and one-of-a-thousand with the factory Webasto sunroof. MVTC had already gotten the engine running with the Stromberg carbs rebuilt, fuel system purged, and engine bay detailed. They were working on the brakes and suspension when the Covid slowed things down. The rear axle is ready to go back in with new brake lines attached and then the flushed gas tank gets re-installed. Scott Huey has been trouble shooting the retracting headlight covers which are close to being reassembled. A sub-project that is looming is sagging door hinges. Oh, what fun that will be!

The Ohio Mini Owners have tackled our Morris Minor Sedan and the “Orange Crush” Mini Ice Racer projects. The Morris needed the windshield seal replaced which became learning by trial and error. The stainless-steel finishing strip would not go in. A work around was devised by going to a flexible finishing strip. It now looks great!



The Mini Ice Racer had a donor engine installed before the pandemic hit. Progress has slowed with the focus now on the fuel system and electrics. Pretty soon it will be time to fire her up. Then there are the unique

items to attend to; the bellypan and wheel discs that keep snow from packing into where it shouldn't be.

Ohio Mini Owners did get distracted for a bit by helping to sort out the BTM Gift Shop and Memorabilia area. Peg board was hung to cover over the inoperable front windows. This converts unused wall space into a very nice display area. If things ever get back to normal and we host many visitors, the Gift Shop might become a much-needed revenue stream.

The University of Dayton Motorsports Club has been giving BTM a big hand on several projects. They completely went through our 1972 MGB; engine, brakes, and suspension plus they converted her from defective wire wheels back to steel. This car is not quite museum quality so it has become a rolling lab to learn from. It did one Autocross and the clutch was found to be lacking, out it comes.



UD has also worked on the 1959 Ford Consul, the 1964 Sunbeam Imp, and the 1967 Mini Cooper S. They are getting a variety of experiences.

BTM VEHICLE ACQUISITIONS

The Museum has seen eight interesting vehicles come in to the collection over the past year and a half. They all have interesting stories which will be detailed in future Newsletters. In December of 2019, thirteen Museum Members donated to the purchase of a solid 1970 Austin America that had been sitting inside for 30 years. Tim Bosse took the engine through Sinclair College's automotive course for a rebuild. Some brake and clutch hydraulic work by Tim and it is now a good looking runner once again. In May of 2020 a 1969 Sunbeam Alpine GT Fastback became available at a bargain price. It had a single down draught carb on it which was swapped for a correct pair of Stromberg carbs. The engine is running nicely, so brakes are the next task ahead of us. Plus, plenty of additional TLC for the solid body and original interior. In June of 2020, a 1969 Citroen Mehari was donated to us. It is not British but will be marketable once running to support the

Museum. Surprisingly, the Mehari was in a garage only one mile away from us. Phil Henry donated it to us in memory of his father, Dr. Jack Henry, who bought it new after seeing them in Australia. They are of French design but were manufactured everywhere but France. Also in June, a very nice 1987 Jaguar XJ6 was donated by Dr. Samia Borchers in memory of her husband, Dr. William Borchers. After repairing the ignition module, the big cat was purring again. Silver paint with chrome wire wheels really make it shine. A fixer-upper came to us in the form of a 1976 MGB that was a daily driver in Alaska. A fuel leak was repaired and the engine fired up. It has a very nice dash assembly but is need of floors and rocker panels. The question is whether we restore her or part her out. Which path helps with our preservation efforts?

In December of 2020, a 2010 MINI Cooper S was donated by Rob Signom from New York to BTM. A replacement ECM got her running and a few electrical gremlins were de-bugged to get her in top shape. It came to BTM with "no strings" so that we can sell it to fund other BTM projects. Interested in a fast, sporting sedan? Contact BTM for details.

Bill Jacobs donated a 1971 BSA Thunderbolt that had been passed around his family on the East Coast. It is the first motorcycle in the Museum's collection. Bill has undertaken putting it back together from the boxes of parts that came with it. The big question is, why had it been taken apart in the first place? Bill is digging into the mystery.

Most recently, a very complete 1967 Austin Healey Sprite was donated by John Chapman in memory of his father, Leroy Chapman. The engine had been rebuilt but the car had been sitting outside without a cover. Everything looks straight and even the paint might clean-up. BTM already has a 1967 MG Midget so we might display these as an example of British "badge engineering".

Just as neat as BTM's acquisitions are the cars that are loaned to us. Currently we have a 1939 MG WA loaned to us by Nancy Nowak. It had gone through a restoration 10 years ago and is now getting spruced up again. A 1957 Rolls Royce, Bentley conversion was on loan while waiting for a new owner. The suspension was rebuilt to get the handling back to new. Pete Melville loaned us his bright red 1949 Triumph 1800 with gleaming chrome accents. It has a beautiful art-deco look to it.

And to help us with all of the above, we have acquired some equipment to improve our productivity. Three BTM Members purchased and donated an Eastwood Tire Machine. A larger sandblast cabinet was

bought and a donated SU fuel pump test stand was shipped in from Oregon and set up. All to aid in our restoration efforts.

Visiting Rolls Royces

Interesting prestigious vehicles sometimes grace us with their presence. Such is the case of a 1929 Rolls Royce 20 that had some repairs done at BTM while its owner looked for a buyer. It had a Sedanca DeVille body manufactured by Barker Coachworks of London.



It had a larger 3.7-liter engine from a 1933 Model 20/25. There were many period features that made it a great car to explore. The side panels had been painted yellow which gave it the look of the 1930's Phantom II used in the movie "The Yellow Rolls Royce" starring Rex Harrison. Phantoms are much larger vehicles than the Model 20 which we found out from our current visitor.



A 1926 Rolls Royce Phantom I is now on loan to BTM. The RHD chassis/drivetrain were imported from England and then taken to Brewster Coachworks in Long Island, NY for the addition of a custom body. It is an impressive vehicle! The engine is a 7668 cc 6 cyl. with twin spark plugs per cylinder and two distributors. The engine fires up but there is a serious carb leak that keeps it from being run very long.

The Phantom came out of a horse stable (now workshop) in Lodi, Ohio. Mr. Farr had owned it for 30 years before he passed on. He had many interesting automotive projects and it would have been great to sit

down and hear some of his stories. It took a tractor to load it onto our trailer and two forklifts in series to get it up the Museum's ramp. We "guesstimate" that it weighs in at about 6000 lb. With the owner's permission, we hope to enter it in the "Preservation Class" at the September 18 Dayton Concourse.

Fiscal Year 2022 Activities

Our members over the past fiscal year have helped with the on-going growth of BTM. They have allowed 6 additional donated cars to join the collection and 9 large groups to visit us. Six fundraisers were held to augment donations and other income sources. Member financial support permitted the much needed \$31K replacement of the "alleyway" roof and the upcoming replacement of 3 large malfunctioning overhead doors. The 6 cars new to the collection included 2 beautiful Jaguars, a 1983 XJ6 and a rare supercharged 1995 XJR6. A 2006 MINI with an interesting roof rack came in from Andy Vanko in Chicago and a 1965 Triumph Spitfire MK 2 came in from Red Myers in Florida. Locally, a 1979 MGB was donated to us and was quickly made into a runner. Another rare beast that we acquired from Indianapolis is a 1968 Austin Gipsy. It is a runner with a solid frame and drivetrain but some serious body rust issues has it sidelined for the moment.

Among the groups that visited BTM were the Antique Automobile Club of America, the Mercedes Clubs of Cincy and Indy, and a local BMW Club. The stream of casual visitors has picked up and is heartening. They all express their appreciation for what we are doing. Small fundraisers helped to keep the finances in the black. A post-covid "Minis at the Museum" gathering mixed generous donations with a fun reunion. The Fifth Street Brew Pub hosted a "Brits at the Pub" brunch/fundraiser. BTM's annual Chili Cook-off and Holiday Social are always highly anticipated and FUN. BTM's annual car show "Brits at the Museum" was moved to the Museum and made for a successful event. The publicity brought in new members and first-time visitors to BTM. All of the above activity leads to us having to "pay the piper". Our responsibility for housing the collection in a fixer-upper home means mixing sweat equity with paying for repairs. Currently Clyde Collins is leading the charge on replacing the 3 large overhead doors. Even with volunteer labor the project will be close to \$12K. Our elevators need to be brought into compliance with a "re-rope" and load tests at \$9K for one elevator. Sprinkler tests, alarm replacement, and restroom upgrades are additional expenses to be tackled.