

# **British Automobile**



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A publication of the British Transportation Museum  
321 Hopeland Street, Dayton, OH 45417

<https://www.britishtransportationmuseum.org>

Open Saturdays and Mondays from 10am to 4pm.  
Museum tours are available by appointment.

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**NEXT MEETING – 6 pm Dec 13<sup>th</sup> – HOLIDAY SOCIAL**

## **MGC from Oregon**

The latest donation to the BTM collection is a beautiful red 1969 MGC Roadster from Downers Grove, IL via Oregon to Ohio. Jack and Louis Feldman made the contribution after enjoying it for many years. It made the trip west to Louis' home after an MG Meet rather than trek back to Illinois with Jack and his MGB GT.

MGC's are relatively rare in our neck of the woods. There were 4.6 times more MGB's built than MGC's. Only 4544 roadsters were built over 3 years from 1967 to 1970. The "C" is noted for the bulge in the bonnet that hides the 2.9-Ltr. 6-cyl. engine. With two 1 ¾ SU carbs it produces 145 hp and can do 0-60 in 10 seconds. It is a very durable engine with 7 main bearings to handle torsional vibrations. To handle the 209 lbs. of extra weight on the front end due to the larger engine, the MGB's coil springs were replaced with torsion bars and a stiffer front anti-roll bar. Telescopic shocks went on the back instead of the MGB's lever arm shocks. With a bit of tweaking of tire choice and tire pressure, the understeer from the extra weight could be minimalized. 11-inch disc brakes on the front with 9 ½ inch rear drums and a power booster gave very good stopping performance.

The MGC made the 2370-mile trip East on an eighteen-wheel car hauler. Even though it was loaded up in Oregon in the rain and unloaded in Ohio in the rain with just the tonneau cover for protection, it came through in great condition just needing a wash. As with the 1972 MGB GT Jack and Louis had previously donated (and was featured in an earlier article), the "C" is in excellent condition. It will help to fill out the MG story at the Museum as the breed was ever evolving.

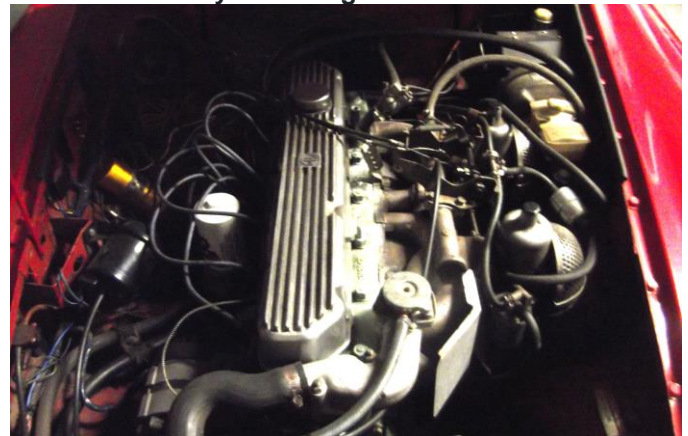
## **MGC arriving from Oregon just off trailer**



## **MGC in the rain**



## **MGC 2.9-Ltr. 6-cylinder engine**



## Culture Works Mural at BTM

BTM was awarded a Culture Works Grant for \$9200 for a series of murals to adorn our building. Atalie Gagnet was recruited to do the art. Atalie's fame in the art community might have been the hook that got us the grant. She has a very large resume of beautiful art projects that she has done around the state.

The first of the series of murals being painted is a huge 20 X 40 ft. mural on the south brick wall by the parking lot. Atalie sketched several designs around the theme of a red "small mouth" TR3 winding down the road. A Union Jack design is at the top and the BTM logo is in the lower left corner providing a photo-op for visitors and their British cars.

The techniques for doing such a large-scale mural were interesting to us non-artist newbies. A projector was used at night to shine the design on the wall which Atalie and a friend, Maggie, traced in about 1 ½ hours. This was done from a rented boon lift to get to the high parts. While the weather was good, Atalie painted in the traced design. The high parts were done first in a week's time so that the rented lift could be returned. The lower parts were completed the following week working from a ladder.

Atalie has a very good sense of color and the mural really "Pops!" It can be seen two blocks away. The winding road is yellow bringing to mind, "follow the yellow brick road" which we certainly hope visitors will do. The TR3 is an artistic monochromatic red which stands out from the road and surroundings. This is the only mural in the Carillon District of Dayton.

Next up will be three smaller murals 8 X 11 ft. on the Hopeland St. front of the building. The theme of British cars on the winding road is to be continued. Iconic British marques are to be chosen to represent their brethren. This will have to wait for us to rebuild the panels and for better weather. The TR3 inspiration is from the red 1957 TR3 in our collection that was donated by Carolyn Meyer of Oklahoma. It is in memory of her husband James who died way too early. Carolyn and James restored the car over 13 years while being transferred 3 times. They enjoyed driving it for 10

years taking it on some lengthy trips to car shows out west. Let the mural be a fitting tribute to their enthusiasm for British cars and a memorial to James.

### Mural design projected onto building at night for tracing



Atalie painting from a lift without a net



### Mural around the corner from the front entrance





## The completed mural



## The Nut Behind the Wheel by Karl Strauch

*(This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> in a series of anticipated tales about people who made significant contributions to the British transportation industry as I have read their biographies in various sources. I will refer to this person by his middle name ... until I reveal his full name in a brief obituary at the end of this article.)*

Barron was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1933. When he was 9, he learned the basics of car control when a local clergyman left him an invalid carriage in his will. We don't know what make and model it was, but here is an Argson De Luxe invalid carriage manufactured between 1926 and 1954 ...



Barron subsequently acquired a motorcycle which his father equipped with a sidecar because he felt it would be much safer. When he entered Trinity College in Dublin to study Engineering, he acquired an Austin 7 Chummy and began rallying.



Barron dropped out of college because of his dyslexia, worked for a Volkswagen assembler, and began to collect and rally VW Beetles. His first win was in a VW at the 1953 Cairncastle Hillclimb. *(This might be a good time to remind you that VW's huge bombed-out plant was in the British-held zone in Wolfsburg, Germany and it was the British who rebuilt VW's manufacturing after WWII, so it would not be unpatriotic for Barron to race VWs in 1953.)*

Barron began his professional racing and rally driving in 1955 with a Triumph TR2



Standard Ten – 1956 RAC Rally  
Standard Eight – 1956 Tulip Rally in Netherlands  
Hillman Husky – 1959 Safari Rally  
Sunbeam Rapier – 1959 Alpine Rally  
Sunbeam Rapier – 1960 Safari Rally  
Sunbeam Rapier – 1961 Alpine Rally  
Sunbeam Rapier – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1961 Circuit of Ireland  
Sunbeam Rapier – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1962 Circuit of Ireland  
Sunbeam Rapier – 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1962 Monte Carlo Rally



Frustrated by a number of engine failures within a short time at Sunbeam, Barron switched over to British Motor Corporation in 1962. That relationship proved to be a winning combination.

Austin-Healey 3000 – 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1962 RAC Rally  
 Mini – 6<sup>th</sup> in 1963 Monte Carlo Rally  
 Mini – 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1963 Tulip Rally  
 Mini – 6<sup>th</sup> in 1963 Liège-Sofia-Liège Rally  
 Mini – 4<sup>th</sup> in 1963 RAC Rally  
 Mini – 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1963 Tour de France Auto Touring  
 MGB – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1963 Le Mans 24 Hours  
 Mini – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1964 Monte Carlo Rally  
 Austin-Healey – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1964 Osterreichische  
 Mini – 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1965 Bathurst 500 in Australia  
 Mini – *Coupe d'Argent* in 1965 Alpine Rally  
 Mini – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1965 Circuit of Ireland Rally  
 Mini – DNF in 1966 Bathurst 500 in Australia  
 Mini – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1966 Alpine Rally  
 Mini – 4<sup>th</sup> in 1967 Bathurst 500 in Australia  
 Mini – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1967 Circuit of Ireland Rally  
 Mini – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1967 Alpine Rally  
 Mini – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1967 Rally Acropolis

Barron was elected as a life member of the British Racing Drivers' Club and married his wife Jennifer in 1967. They had three children and six grandchildren. His wife was High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire in 2005 and Vice Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire from 2006 to 2011.

*(Quoted from article on Wikipedia website:)*

"In 1968, at the London-Sydney Marathon, he gallantly gave up any chance of victory on the penultimate stage to rescue the Bianchi-Ogier team then in the lead, whose Citroen DS had just collided head-on with another car on a road supposedly closed to traffic. He and his team-mate managed to pull out occupants from both cars that were starting to burn, probably saving the life of severely wounded Lucien Bianchi in the process. The accident happened just ahead of his Austin 1800. By driving back to warn onlookers and the police, he and his co-driver likely also prevented another crash with any incoming participants. His crew went on to complete the rally in second."

2<sup>nd</sup> in 1968 Rally de Portugal  
 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1969 Circuit of Ireland  
 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1969 RAC Rally  
 Triumph 2.5 PI – 4<sup>th</sup> in 1970 London to Mexico Rally



Citroen CX 2400 – 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1970 London-Sydney Rally

In 1969 and 1970, Barron helped to create and edit a weekly comic strip in the Sunday Mirror that was intended to make people better drivers.

Mini – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1982 RAC Golden 50 Rally  
 Mini – 1<sup>st</sup> in 1990 Pirelli Classic Marathon  
 Rover Mini – 60<sup>th</sup> in 1994 Monte Carlo Rally

In 2010 Barron was among the 4 inductees into the Rally Hall of Fame. In addition to all of his other interests, he was a vice-president of the British Racing Drivers' Club and a strong supporter of WheelPower, a charity promoting a wide range of wheelchair sports.



Paddy Barron Hopkirk passed away July 21, 2022. "His family, friends and fans will never forget his sharp wit and wicked smile. He brought fun and joy to everyone in his company and inspired many."

