



British Automobile.....Summer 2021

"Dedicated To Preserving British Transportation in America"

President...Pete Stroble Vice-President...Max Grattan Treasurer...Tim Bosse
Membership...Steven Solomon Newsletter...Andy Stroble

BTM News, (mid) Covid

The Covid pandemic has upset our normal routines. With everyone quarantining for good health, it is even more important that we keep BTM Members informed via the Newsletter. This is the first of a renewed effort to get the word out about all of the great things that are going on at BTM.

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. Our little enterprises of renting space, car storage, and parts sales/Gift Shop plus donations and memberships are keeping us afloat and paying down the 0% interest loan on the building. There was a "For Sale" banner on our building for a while but that was put there to try and leverage a \$1 Million sale out of a rumored "Call Center" nearby. Only time will tell on that scenario, maybe a 10% chance of us hitting that pot of gold, which would allow us to look for a better building.

Until then, 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.

BTM's 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 501(c)(3) non-profit educational charity and donations are tax deductible. Visit BTM's website, www.BritishTransportationMuseum.org 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.

British Transportation Museum's
CHILI COOK-OFF
and Cruise-In
Saturday,
October 16
4pm-7pm
Tickets: \$8.00 donation
For tickets, more info, or to enter the Cook-Off,
please contact Amanda Hawker @
btmkids1@gmail.com or 937.238.8451
Proceeds benefit
British Transportation Museum
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Museum Tours are available by appointment.
Contact Pete Stroble 937-546-0039 or
btmpres@gmail.com

The British Transportation Museum (BTM) is an all volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit charity located in Dayton, Ohio dedicated to preserving our British motoring heritage through education and vehicle preservation.

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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 belly pan 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 CooperS. They are getting a variety of experiences.



BTM VEHICLE AQUISITIONS

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 a spruced up again.

A 1957 Rolls Royce, Bentley conversion, is awaiting a new owner at BTM. For sale by its current owner at \$26,500, the suspension has recently been 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.



The BTM Morris Collection

The British Transportation Museum just received its fourth Morris to add to the collection. A 1961 Morris Minor Traveller joined our 1961 1000 Sedan, 1960 Morris Oxford Traveller Series IV, and 1947 Morris Z Van chassis/drivetrain cutaway. We have been truly blessed to have been gifted with these treasures. The “newby” 1961 Morris Minor Traveller was donated by Kent Halloran of nearby Columbus, Ohio. It was donated in honor of his parents, Philip and Rhea Halloran, who had purchase it some 16 years previously and then passed it on to Kent 6 years ago. Kent’s parents had a Morris Sedan when they were dating, fell in love, and married. The Traveller was purchased in homage to the good memories of those times.

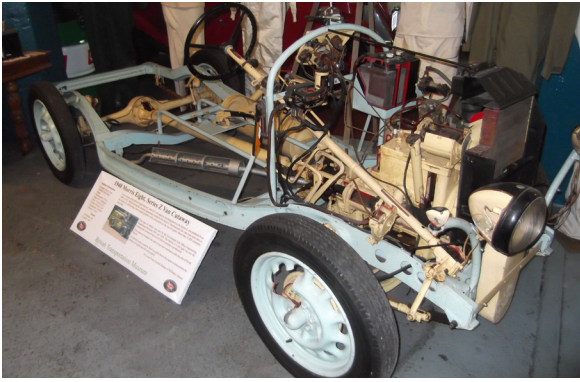


A 1960 Morris Oxford "All Steel" Traveller IV is one of the few vehicles that BTM has purchased. It was rare enough and reasonably affordable so the deal was made. A sponsor came forward to make it possible. This was a Canadian car that came to the USA on the West coast and eventually found its way to Virginia. The "All Steel Traveller" became the cars sales pitch as steel became more available. It was the first of the non-woodies. There was even a book of poems titled "All Steel Traveller" of which BTM has a copy. Ours is a light green LHD 5 door wagon that features two gas caps, one on each side, that fill a common gas tank. With the rear seats down it becomes a 6' by 4' bed. The body style has the charm of a scaled down 1954 Ford Station Wagon. The 1489 cc "B" series engine with a single SU produces 56 hp. The car weights 2659 lb. which brings its ¼ mi. time down to 24 sec. and 0-60 in 29 sec. Yes, it does not hit 60 in the ¼ mile!

The Traveller is RHD with the original 948 cc "A" series engine showing 84,571 miles on it. The interior is in very good condition, thankfully, as upholstery is not our strength. The negative is the wood. We either need to find a master carpenter or purchase a wood kit that we believe will cost about \$2200. Installing the wood looks to be a real character building adventure. And then the tires need replaced, brakes refurbished, plus the dreaded unknowns. In the end, the Museum will have a very presentable Morris Minor Traveller to represent the Marque. If you would like to help with this project, consider a donation to fund the restoration. Would your club like to adopt this cute orphan? The Museum's first Morris Minor was a LHD 1000 sedan. It was donated by BTM's founder Dick Smith. It had been upgraded to a 1275 cc "A" series engine with Sprite disc brakes. Two tone brown and tan paint plus custom seats and Minilite wheels make it a mild custom. Ohio Mini Owners had taken it under its wings and brought it back into running shape. The biggest part of the project was replacing the windshield rubber. The stainless steel trim would not cooperate. Kevin Jensen found a work around by going to a flexible chrome trim bead. Thanks Kevin for hanging in there.



Big Surprise at the Museum



BTM was lucky enough to receive on loan 1947 Morris Z Van chassis and drivetrain cutaway from Gerald Strange of Indiana. Gerald had imported it from England to add to his Morris collection but it was not getting seen in his barn. It was loaned to BTM so that many more could enjoy it. It is believed that this cutaway might have been a training aid as after WWII there was probably a shortage of mechanics due to war casualties. The Z Vans were used by the Post Office and by the Telephone Company. They were maintained by their in-house mechanics. The cutaway displays a 918 cc 4 cyl. side valve engine that has a thermo siphon cooling system. Cutaway lever action shocks and exposed trafficators reveal some of the engineering mysteries of the time. Only the Z Van does not have the front torsion bar suspension that our other three do. It must be a well-engineered system as our three don't seem to have any problems. The Z Van has a front beam axle with leaf springs. Our Morris line-up is a tidy little collection. How can we augment it? With a Pick-up? Let's see what the future will bring.

There is always something new and different going on at the British Transportation Museum. But the biggest surprise ever was the arrival of the 1949 Austin K8 Lorry, commonly known as the "Mini Mover". It was in the middle of the July 3 "Minis at the Museum" event being held to reunite Mini enthusiasts suffering Covid Mini withdrawals.

The day of socializing, eating, and drinking was interrupted by the dramatic appearance of a triple decker approaching. Derick and Lorine Karabec's rollback recovery vehicle was hauling the Austin K8 Lorry which was carrying their Classic Mini Cooper. It was a very impressive sight! Everything came to a halt as this unique rolling art took center stage. Gary and Cathy Schaffer were in the Mini on top with Tim and Sherry Bosse in the Lorry as Derick and Lorine drove in. There was much shouting and waving at this great bit of showmanship. The Austin K8 Lorry has a bit of history with the Mini community in the East. "Big Al" Guest had bought it in 1990 from Roger Bellwood in Canada. The K8's, rated at 25 cwt, were sold in Canada but were not a huge success. A total of 26,500 were sold worldwide between 1947 and 1954. Al had brought his to a couple of Mini Meet East events with a Mini on its back. Al took only back roads and traveled at 50-55 mph due to the gearing. What trips those must have been! Al eventually sold it to James Gocke in Goshen, NY. James replaced the starter and, being a diesel mechanic, got it running. There were many other issues that kept it from being a diver. BTM had been lusting after the "Mini Mover" for many years.

There are not many British commercial vehicles in the USA. When Al tipped us off that James might be willing to let go of it, we contacted him about a possible donation. He was glad to make the donation and find the lorry a new home. The next problem was getting the 6700 lb. beast from New York to Ohio. Should we contract with a hauler? Should we work on it ourselves and drive it back?



It was only after much head scratching that it was discovered that the Karabecs were only 30 miles away. They had hosted two Mini Meets and were avid enthusiasts. Derick offered to take it to his shop, Beek's Auto in Gardiner, NY, and look into the issues. He got the Nissan diesel running again and replaced the clutch. With inner tubes, the tires now hold air but are really not road worthy. It has a strong brake pedal but very poor brakes. We did not know that Derick had been working on the lorry until he surprised us with its grand appearance at the Museum. Thank you Derick! To top it all off they transported it 1400 miles round trip to get it to Ohio! All this to support the Museum and save a neat bit of British motoring heritage. Derick and Lorine have to be the ultimate British car enthusiasts. Many thanks! BTM's short term goal is to get the brakes working and take the lorry to the local Dayton British Car Days. This is less than a month away. The wood deck needs to be replaced plus a lot of TLC applied everywhere. Wish us luck!





R.I.P Dick Smith

Our BTM Founder and the real man behind the curtain, Dick Smith passed away October 27, 2020. He had been in ill health when the Covid caught him in the rest home. Dick had just celebrated his 83rd birthday. With the Newsletter being so late, we were not sure if the word had gotten out to everybody.

Dick was one of the founders of the MG Car Club, Southwestern Ohio Centre. It was there with other like-minded MG owners that the idea of an MG Car Museum was born. This morphed into what has become the British Transportation Museum. Dick did all of the behind the scenes work of getting us legal as a 501c3. He launched British Automobile to keep us in touch with members. He was Treasurer and the main promoter of the Museum for many years. With money always critical, Dick launched several fundraisers to get us on the path to where we are today. Dick was always a positive influence and he will be greatly missed as a friend and co-conspirator in bringing about this grand endeavor.