

British Automobile



September 2025

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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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.

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Have a relevant story to share? Send it over!

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**Next Meetings Wednesday September 17th and
Wednesday October 15th. Always the 3rd Wednesday of
the month.**

Chili cook off coming up in October!

The British Transportation Museum is having its 9th annual Chili Cook-off Saturday October 25 from 4pm to 7pm. The event is at the Museum, 321 Hopeland St. Dayton.

Trophies, gift baskets, and bragging rights for Best Overall Chili and People's Choice Chili. Enter your favorite chili or come enjoy the talents of others. Salad, beverages, and Ben & Jerrys Ice Cream are included. All of this while surrounded by beautiful British cars. Tickets are \$10. For tickets, more info, or to enter the cook-off contact Amy Fent at BTMchilicookoff@gmail.com or 937.546.0039. Proceeds to benefit the British Transportation Museum Building Fund.

Chili cook-off
line-up (Circa
2024, colorized)



Donation to BTM in Memory of Roger Larson

By Pete Stroble



Roger Larson in his Triumph Herald

Philip Larson recently made a \$1000 Donation in memory of his Dad, Roger Larson, to the British Transportation Museum. Roger passed away in August of 2017. He had previously donated his 1962 Triumph Herald 1200 Convertible to the Museum after almost 30 years of ownership.

The Herald had been originally been purchased new by Tom Blakney, a US Naval officer stationed in Naples, Italy. He brought the car to the USA and continued to enjoy it until he decided to sell it in 1984. Philip worked with Tom and bought it from him just before Christmas in Laurel, MD. Philip drove the Herald back to Ohio, in treacherous winter weather, as a surprise Christmas present for Roger. It was partial payback for wrecking his

Dad's 1963 Karmann Gia convertible when Philip was sixteen. Philp and Roger enjoyed and maintained the Herald over the years.

Roger was a member of the Miami Valley Triumphs. I remember conversations with Roger at MVT Meetings when they were held behind the Dayton Mall (Red Robin?). Many years later, MVT helped fix some glitches with the Herald at a few Tech Sessions at BTM's temporary home on Broadway. Motor mounts were replaced and the carb rebuilt.

Roger's Herald is in excellent condition and has represented the BTM at the prestigious Dayton Concours d'Elegance.

Our thanks go out to both Roger and Philip for helping to further the Museums goals of preservation and education. The Herald is a fitting legacy to Rogers's enthusiasm for interesting cars.

Dr. Jack Feldman Memorial

By Pete Stroble

Dr. Jack Feldman passed away August 17, 2025, a month short of his 92nd birthday. It is believed that he had a stroke and hit his head.

Jack had been donating his auto magazines to BTM over the years. As he approached his 90th birthday he made the big decision to donate his two MGs to BTM. His 1972 MGB GT and his 1969 MGC are both beautiful cars with many nice touches to make them more enjoyable. Jack and his son Louis had driven the MGs to many meets all over the country.



Jack donating his 1972 MGB GT to BTM

The enthusiasm that Jack brought to the hobby will be missed. Thanks Jack for allowing future generations to learn from and enjoy your creations.



Jack's '69 MGC at the Dayton British car day.



John Gray's Jaguar XK 150 at Oakwood's "Classics on the Lawn" Car Show



BTM's 1989 Rolls Royce Silver Spur at "Classics on the Lawn"

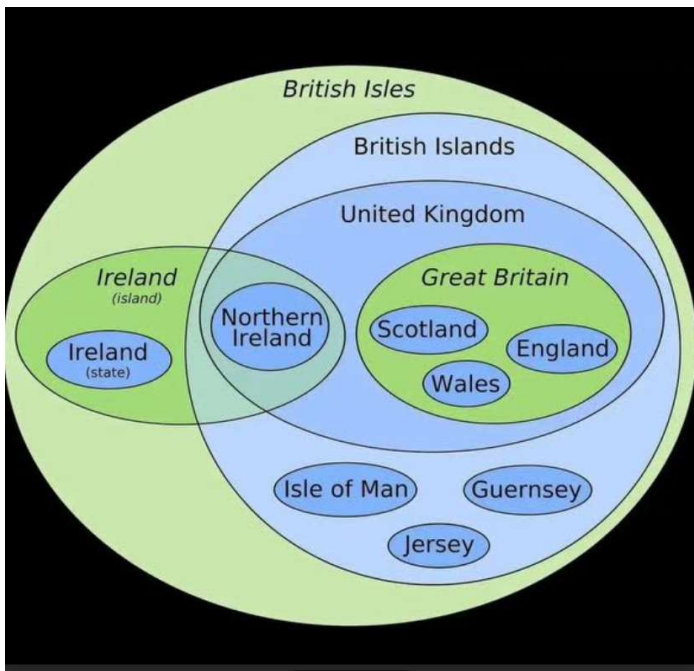


Lotus visitors from LOG 44 in Pittsburg heading home.

somewhat confusing status of “Crown dependency” that is neither completely British (in terms of governance and international recognition) nor completely not. It hosts a famous and long-running motorcycle race every summer that will almost certainly be a topic of a future article.



Arguably less practical than a moped, the Peel P50 trades comfort for being able to stay dry when it rains. Rear-hinged “suicide” doors, always a classy addition, make it as easy as possible to get in and out of the car.



The smallest car in the world, a product of an island you probably haven't heard of.

By Nathan Vaughn

It may not come as a great surprise to you that the British Isles, so named for being land surrounded by water, are comprised of islands. Although the main 2 islands are too large to make it, in my opinion, a true archipelago, there are plenty of smaller islands as well in the collection. One such island is the Isle of Man (Or Mann if you prefer) which functions as a bit of a tax-dodge destination with a

Today though, I'm talking about the Peel P50. 54 inches long. 39 inches wide. Weighing in at 130 pounds! Less than most adults! You would be forgiven for assuming the Isle of Man never manufactured any cars of it's own. Even today, it has less than 100k people and not much land to build factories on. But Peel is a town in the Isle of Man, and the car company was named for, and set up shop in, that town. Most famous as the Guinness world record holder for smallest production car, or for the hilarious Top Gear segment, the P50 was advertised when new as being able to seat “one adult and a shopping bag”. Accounting for inflation since the 1960's, it's fair to say that the car may still be able to hold an adult, but probably not the shopping bag. And the adult may need to skip breakfast.

Powered by a 3 cubic inch (49cc) engine presumably purchased from a maker of push mower engines, the P50 was surprisingly set up with a 3 speed manual transmission. I say surprisingly, despite the fact that 3 speed manuals were exceedingly common for the time period. I don't know what I expected the transmission to be, a CVT from a moped or a bike chain most likely. But no, sure enough, the P50 was a proper car. Or a proper city car anyway, the top speed was only 38 MPH. More than

enough to scoot around town, and it would have been too scary to exceed that speed. If any of you have ever driven a P50, especially at top speed, please email me and tell me what it was like.



With 3 pedals, RWD, and no power steering to numb the road's feedback, the Peel P50 makes for a very authentic sports car.



Here we can see the engine (between the front and rear wheels, and suspension of the Peel P50. Also notice the attention to detail with a windshield wiper, turn signals, side mirrors, and everything needed to be a roadworthy vehicle.

With 3 wheels, but 2 in the front, the Peel P50 made use of the more stable "tricycle" configuration. It had no reverse gear, but did have a handle on the rear to help you pull it back when needed. As you might imagine, at only 130 lbs and sporting wheels, this was a very minor concern. It was rear wheel drive, as it pretty much had to be, making it a true 1 wheel drive car. You don't have to settle for an open differential 2wd, get the real thing.

With 6 inch wheels (not a typo) it would have been a difficult task to source what are essentially wheelbarrow wheels but rated for 38MPH. They used an inner tube, rather than being tubeless like every modern vehicle tire. Some mopeds still use tubes, which makes sense because the Peel was legally a moped for tax purposes.

Unsurprisingly, the P50 was not a massive seller. The market for small cars such as the Mini and the Fiat 500 was well established in Europe at the time, but the P50 erred too far into absurdity to make a practical purchase for basically anyone. Only 50 were made but there was a fantastic survival rate resulting in at least 27 still being known to exist.



The Peel P50 compared to a modern smart-for-two, which could be considered a bit of a spiritual successor.

Based on my research, one could expect more than 80MPG from a P50. The savings were worth it for around 50 buyers in the early/mid 60's.

