

Celebrate British Car Week May 28-June 5!

British Marque

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On the scene since 1990!

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Have a great time for a worthy cause!

by Scott G. Helms
British Car Week Curator

British car enthusiasts from all over will be celebrating the 20th Annual British Car Week during the extended week of Saturday, May 28th through Sunday, June 5th.

This is a time set aside each year for all drivers of classic British cars to get their vehicles out of their favorite resting places and onto the roads of their communities to show them off to the general public. Most people who have any kind of interest in automobiles appreciate the sight of these famously spirited, stylish and sporty cars of the past driving down the road in high fashion.

These cars are a special breed. Their simple, attractive, creative styling surpasses anything built previously, and due to modern restrictions, they will never be fully replicated. As many testimonials record, the experience of watching one driving down the road often creates a long-lasting interest in classic British cars that eventually leads to ownership.

Helping to keep these automotive legends from becoming forgotten relics of the past has always been the purpose of British Car Week. Since the classic British car hobby is mostly owner-driven rather than sponsored by large corporations, it's imperative that each individual car owner does his or her part to help promote the cars and the hobby.

In turn, this will help keep all of the crucial clubs, fellow hobbyists and businesses alive and well, and that will help keep all of us informed and stocked with high quality parts to keep our cars safely on the roads for present and future generations.



Share the experience (and fun) of owning a classic British car. Win new friends and influence people!

Marque file photo

Inside...

Dust-offs, racing at Amelia

...and more!

For those of you who are located in the more wintry climes and put your cars to rest for the season, this is a great time go over all of your maintenance checkpoints to make sure your vehicle is ready to drive and enjoy.

Since the days these cars rolled off the assembly lines in Great Britain, they have found homes in all of the far

reaches of the world. Thanks to the convenience of modern computers and the Internet, owners have been able to keep better track of the cars, their previous owners and their whereabouts. This opportunity has helped strengthen the hobby among current owners, but it doesn't necessarily
(See More BCW, page 19)

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Enough already with the snow! Photo by Rudy Streng

Here in the Berkshires, as elsewhere in the Northeast, April exchanged its showers for snow, having more snowfalls and accumulations than the entire winter season. Last month's sounds of British cars enjoying an early spring were quickly changed to the sounds of tools doing their magic to adjust, tweak and massage whatever to ensure as trouble-free as possible the upcoming season with our cars.

Several BBMC members have been upgrading transmissions, ignition systems and other mechanical wonders. Some are installing comfortable, adjustable seats to enjoy their rides, while others have been attending to making their British cars more "proper" as to original fittings. All in all everyone's been busy, just not out and about like last month.

Karting, anyone?

Several of us did a mid-week reconnaissance run to Pioneer Valley Indoor Karting in Hatfield, Mass., to see what they offered as a potential event.

Karts have gas engines, are capable of 40mph, and run on a tight, multi-turn (seven or eight of them) course. Safety gear consists of a full face helmet, neck brace (gloves if you want) and a required introductory safety and driving video for those at the facility for the first time.

Normal track time is eight minutes, with three sessions and having a five- to eight-minute break between sessions. Taking a break between runs is quite welcome as track time is exciting and tends to drain energy.

I'll be the first to admit I'm no Hamilton or Rosberg and I could profit from taking lessons from those I went with (lapped not once but several times), but what a hoot! If you ever wanted to get a taste of what it's like to be behind the wheel of a racecar, this comes rather close.

Granted, not everyone looks for that thrill and may prefer a less intense driving experience. The owner of PVIK, Ryan Bouvier, has that covered when it comes to group/club events, and highly suggests more relaxing runs such as timing a driver pushing a soccer ball around the course,

Berkshire Brits

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Pownal, Vermont

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May... the warmth be with us!

by Al Chicote

or their version of "blind driver" (like the back seat driver competition at British Invasion in Stowe), where the driver is blindfolded and has to follow the verbal instructions of a team member walking alongside the kart. Or...

Ryan has several fun things to do with the karts other than racing. Over and above karting Ryan suggested a barbeque in the parking lot (we cook on their grills) along with a mini-Brit car show that he can promote locally and offer awards if 20 or more cars show up for the event. Ryan's willing to have a closed event if the group is large enough. "Most accommodating" and "flexible" comes close to describing Ryan's desire to help make it a fun and memorable group event. Watch for a future account in these pages of a BBMC Day at PVIK.



Karts lined up at Pioneer Valley Indoor Karting. The checkered flag beckons! Photo courtesy PVIK & Yahoo Images

Other spring activities

BBMC is looking forward once again to meeting up with the Adirondack Triumph Association at the Man of Kent pub at the conclusion of the Dust-off drives, as well

as the first of the 2016 *Hemmings Motor News* Cruise-ins. Don't forget that May 28th through June 5th is British Car Week. Drive your British car every day and everywhere!

TIGERS EAST

ALPINE EAST

Dedicated to the preservation, restoration and enjoyment of all Rootes Group vehicles

Kulpsville, Pennsylvania

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Sunbeams at Amelia Island

by Bill Bulpitt

AMELIA ISLAND, Fla. — It was a good day for Sunbeams, particularly Tigers, at Amelia Island on March 13th.

As soon as I arrived on the Concours d'Elegance show field I spotted the dark blue Harrington Le Mans Tiger that once belonged to Bill Van Velkinburg and was shown around 1990 at Pebble Beach in Monterey, Calif. I think Tiger Tom and some of the other TE/AE members helped prep the car for the show. The car has since been through a couple of auctions and now belongs to Jim Weddle of St.

Louis, Mo. It has not been "re-restored" but remains in excellent shape and generated a lot of interest among the spectators. I hope Jim and his car join us in September for the United.

Also on the show field was the unveiling of the restored Tiger Mark II that was just completed by the employee team at Hagerty Insurance. They created quite a stir with the unveiling of the car in a "Tiger's Cage." They did an outstanding job, and the car is sure to be a show winner. They intend to be at the United and will enter the show and have it TAC'd. The car is located at the Hagerty headquarters in Traverse City, Mich.

Last but not least was a Sunbeam Imp that appeared at the "Cars & Coffee" event the day before the Concours.

Coming events

May 15 — Atlanta British Motorcar Day, Roswell, Ga., 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be a designated Rootes parking section. Charity donation will be \$20 advanced and \$25 at event. Info: Bill Bulpitt, bill.bulpitt@aecom.com.

June 2-5—SAOCA Invasion XVI, 2075 North Michigan Ave., Greensburg, Ind., <http://www.sunbeamalpine.org/index.php?categoryid=1>.

June 26 — Brits by the Bay 2016, Westminster, Md., 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Info: www.tracldt.org or bitsbythebay@gmail.com.

July 10 — 16th Annual British Invade Gettysburg, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., <http://www.lancomgclub.com/big.htm>.

Clockwise, from top right: Harrington Le Mans Tiger, now owned by Jim Weddle; the Hagerty MkII in its 'Cage'; the Imp at Cars & Coffee.

Photos by Bill Bulpitt



More BCW (Continued from page 1)

Graphic courtesy www.britishcarweek.org

help create new interest among potential owners for the next generation. How about some fresh, new, British car-related clothing with eye-catching images? There certainly is no shortage of T-shirts with vintage motorcycle or American muscle car images posted on them. We should never be hard-pressed to find the same for classic British cars.

But most important for now in the spirit of British Car Week is for owners to spread the word by maintaining, showing off and enjoying these vehicles as their manufacturers intended. Join a club, buy some parts, subscribe to publications catering to British cars or vintage motorsports, and have fun with your car. Those who watch you pass by on the roads will know by the look on your face that you are having the time of your life.

And when you get back home, as you give your British car a fresh coat of polish, tidy up the engine bay, spruce up the dusty interior, or try out the new gadget you purchased from one of the many British car part suppliers that are only a phone call or finger-click away, you'll be doing your part to help support a very fulfilling hobby.

So grab your goggles and driving gloves, and top off your dashpots — it's time to have some genuine classic British car, seat-of-your-pants driving fun!

For more information about British Car Week, visit www.britishcarweek.org. See you on the road!

[Scott initiated British Car Week 19 years ago after reading a Peter Egan column in Road & Track bemoaning the fact that cars that once were commonplace — including British sports cars — are now "seldom seen." British Car Week caught on and many British car clubs now have major events scheduled to celebrate it. You'll read about many of them in this issue.]