BCW: a public service

by Scott Haenle

This year we will be celebrating the 22nd Annual British Car Week during the extended week of May 26th through June 3rd.

Even though the week has a beginning and ending date, the intention is that enthusiasts will use this opportunity to get their cars ready for all the upcoming events and continue driving their cars long after June 3rd.

These dates also provide a target for getting the cars out on the road in full force to show them off to people who otherwise rarely have a chance to see vehicles from days gone by doing what they do best. With every passing year, getting these cars out of the garage and onto the roads for display is becoming more important.

We live in a time when technology is rapidly escalating. Companies are competing aggressively for the latest and greatest in communication, entertainment and transportation. And people have become as involved with their electronic devices, they leave almost no time for more fulfilling things to do that don’t involve a computer or smart phone — such as a hobby involving classic cars.

Energy is a hot topic, too, and there’s been a lot of talk about putting an end to gasoline as a means for fueling transportation.

A recent article written by Richard Lestiniello of Hemmings Classic Car magazine recently caught my eye. He mentioned the economic impact of burning gasoline, and how it would not only be detrimental to the old car hobby far and wide, but also affect the economy, period.

A gasoline ban would affect all of the manufacturers that supply parts for restoration, performance and racing, impacting owners of hot rods, low-riders, sports cars, vintage trucks, classic motorcycles and off-road vehicles.

It would also affect all of the businesses that feed them the raw materials required to manufacture products, and the distribution chain, including shipping supplies and the trucks that deliver goods.

Real estate would be impacted as well, including companies that manage or sell the buildings and land required for manufacturing and warehousing all those parts, and all the retailers and garages in which the goods are delivered.

This list goes on and on, which makes us realize how important it is for all enthusiasts to pull together to ensure our hobby’s survival — mainly by doing what we can to keep the interest in historic vehicles going strong in future generations.

So, how do we do this? The majority of those reading this already know. It’s all of the people who aren’t reading this that we need to target, including the next generation of potential classic British car owners who may not realize there is a wide world of driving fun waiting for them. If they don’t get a chance to experience this through enthusiasts’ active participation in events such as British Car Week, they may never know.

The spirit of British Car Week as displayed by John Blagioni, a member of British Motorcars of New England. Enjoy and make the public more aware of British cars during BCW — and help save the hobby to boot.

Photo by Bruce Vidt

When I think back to when I got my initial taste of what it’s like to take a ride in a classic British car, I realize my world was never the same again. If it weren’t for the people who took the time to invite me unwillingly to take a ride in their old British car, I might not be sitting here writing this article.

That car from the outside had caught my eye for sure, but I didn’t realize how much of a joy it would be to own a British sports car until I was able to sit in the passenger seat and experience the sweet sound of the exhaust emanating from the tailpipe and feel the raw rumble of the engine waking out while running through the gears.

So put your smart phone away in a drawer somewhere and top off your gas tank. It’s time for some of that good, old-fashioned, seat-of-the-pants driving fun! And if you know someone new to the British car scene, take him or her along. See you on the road!

[Scott founded BCW in 1997. It has been promoted by British car clubs ever since for education and awareness. Find out more at www.britishcarweek.org]