

THE TUCSON BRITISH CAR



REGISTER

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Technical tips are for informational purposes only.

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On the Road



A weekday drive up Mt. Lemmon. An early start made for tolerable temperatures on the climb. The conditions at the top were great. See pics on next page.



View from the Windscreen

by Ben Cohen

So, what's going on in my garage ("The Mews") this past month...not too much. Lots of early AM driving, working with Bring-a-Trailer to sell Megan's 2012 "M"-spec 3-series coupe and thinking...great thoughts. This is the term my adopted Japanese brother uses when we do nothing...and it seems to fit.

This month's great thought is: we are halfway through 2021 and those of us who offered to fill in as club officers this year are pondering what the future of TBCR will be. We see many car clubs (and similar special interest groups) coming unraveled and disappearing into the ether. This is not just a result of the year+ of pandemic isolation but one that has been happening over the past 5 years. As we head into the last half of 2021, we need to plan our continued existence; possible reorganization to prevent current officers/directors from "management fatigue;" and encourage some of the younger members to assume positions to lead these changes. Many of the officers have been heavily involved with TBCR for many years in many ways. In my case I began as VP in 1997 and have served also as president and driving events coordinator. Next year will make it 25 years with few breaks...perhaps time for a transfusion of new blood?

I would like to see discussions regarding these issues during our summer events and weekly cars & coffee. Those who attend these events are the core members who are in Tucson most of the year. We need not only your input and ideas, but your commitment to keeping the club functional. Do members feel that these jobs are too much work? Are there ways that we can redefine what tasks are expected for each position?

From my *personal* perspective the two jobs that have the most "deadlines" are newsletter editor and driving events coordinator. We have a membership over 125 but have a "driver-ship" of about 40...tops! We also have a weekly coffee group of anywhere from 12 – 35 on our best day. Maybe more, if there's free food! Looking at these numbers I realize that for the majority of TBCR the newsletter is their number ONE item. Second is our continued ability to drive these aging cars, while we age with them. Food for thought.

Thanks in advance to all of you for thinking about what 2022 will look like and who will dedicate some of their hobby time to keep TBCR on the road and looking through that windscreen...

BEN

More On the Road



This was at the end of the road past the ski area. A formal hike didn't materialize, but there was some exploring before the return trip.

Calendar

TBCR Summer Drives

Watch for Ben's emails announcing summer drives.

Brit Café: TBCR's Tuesday Coffee 7am to 9am

TBCR has resumed in-person coffee at a new location: Starbucks at Swan and Ft Lowell.

Zoom Brit Café

The next best thing is on Zoom. Every Tuesday at 8am. Watch for the weekly email reminder or contact the Editor.

Tucson Classics Car Show

October 16, 2021 Registration is open: <http://www.RotaryTCCS.com>

TBCR will again participate in the annual Tucson Classics Car Show on October 16th from 10:00AM at the Gregory School. Pete Williams and Mike Morales will help you with any questions about the event. TBCR participation has grown over the years thanks to the hard work of George Hahn and Ben Cohen. Those who wish to enter the field as a group can do so. We will have more information on our grand entrance later. TBCR will provide a tent. We ask that you sign up individually but put TBCR as your affiliation. The entry class for our group is "J. British Made Cars".

Looking forward to filling up Row J at this annual event. If you have any questions, contact Pete or Mike. (emails on the left side of the page).

--Mike

Other Arizona British Car Events Noted

Triumphfest October 14-17 Flagstaff. This is an annual regional event held in CA, Nevada or AZ. It includes all Triumph cars. It is the same weekend as the Tucson Classics.

British Wheels on the Green November 7 Peoria. Organized by the Arizona MG Club. All Marques are invited and judged. TBCR organized a trip to this event in 2019.

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Summer Break

There will be no August *Register*. The monthly schedule will resume with the September edition. If you have an article, want ad or event, please submit by August 20th.



Welcome Our New Members

We have a new member this month, Mark Mers. He drives a Roman Bronze 2001 Jaguar XKR. Take time to welcome him to our events. We now have 142 members.

On the Road *continued from page 2*



An early June 19 drive over the Tucson Mountains and back was started from a new location: Starbucks on River Road just west of Stone. The Starbucks is new and has good parking. Ben charted a course that avoided a left-hand turn onto River and we were off!

Traffic was light, but some slow moving vehicles (not TBCR) slowed a couple of us down.

Get out early and avoid the traffic and the heat!

I don't know if all of you have ever met me, but I am probably the youngest member of the Tucson British Car Registry, at only 21. A little about me is that I have a love of cars and I probably had a love for me since I was young and I have always had a need to learn how things work so cars were the best outlet. While in the club, I have found I am the sole reason the median age of this club is now 50.

I know most members of the club are older and had multiple cars throughout their lives, I have only had a handful of cars, and even fewer collector cars. My car collection is not the largest compared to some of the other members, nor do I have the best shape of cars. I only own three Jaguars: a 1986 XJS, a 1987 XJS, and a 1997 XK8.

For a little backstory to where I came from. I am a native Tucsonan and am at the University of Arizona, majoring in Geoscience. I'm a runner, and one day, while running, I saw that there was a champagne colored XJS for sale on the side of the street. I first thought it was a piece of trash, really, but then I knew that this car was a V12 monster and needed love. So I picked up the car when I was 19 and just loved all the quirks of an old Jaguar, and navigating all the work people put into "making the car better". Then the COVID-19 pandemic started, and I found myself very...VERY bored with working on the 1986 XJS and getting small things fixed or undoing issues from previous shady mechanics, who probably promised a great job for a quarter of the price. Then one day I was curious and looked on Craigslist and then I found another black XJS for sale in Phoenix, which wasn't running but had a beautiful interior and 47k miles. Hindsight should have told me that you shouldn't buy two Jaguar project cars. But a week later I owned two Jaguars with v12 engines.



I got the non-running XJS running for a few quick days, with some new spark plugs, new injectors, some thrown wrenches, and very choice words. That was a win for around 2 days but then I soon realized, with thick smoke, oil shooting out from the exhaust, milk colored oil, and it over heating very quickly I had a

massive project ahead. Not only did I find out the engine had TWO head gasket failures, but NO ONE works on the cars or engines. So I took out the engine...no easy task thank you. I tried to get someone into working and restoring the engine, but two things killed that dream. First, machine shops were backed up with easier American project engines needing to be completed so they denied me flat out due to the time it would take them to see it and refurbish it. Secondly, money.... Some places would accept my engine but they estimated it would cost around \$15 to 20k. And I flatly denied that, because I am a college student and well...I don't have that much money to burn. So now I have a "somewhat" disassembled engine which took me months to disassemble due to mixed directions online, lack of knowledge, and being a visual learner I needed pictures to figure out what to do. So, I took a break from the engine for a few weeks... I hope no one has any grievances with me getting tired and a little sad that not many would work on my engine.

I needed a small break from the complex mess of British engineering and bought a 460 Ford engine. I wanted to test my skills of engine disassembly so with the help of videos and friends (who own multiple American cars and 460 Ford engines) I took the engine apart to the block in 5 days. Somewhere deep down inside me told me not to put this Ford engine in a XJS, so I traded the 460 engine for a 4.2 Liter inline six Jaguar engine from a 1976 XJ6. The engine was so easy to see and clean, but still the XJS still needed the V12, so I'm still working on the disassembly...slowly and passionately, but with a determination and persistence of a young man (I quote myself "too stupid to quit").

A few months ago, I was looking online and found a great deal on a 1997 XK8 with all the checkboxes marked. It had higher mileage, not too far to drive to get it (Santa Fe, NM), coupe, being mainly up-kept, and British Racing Green. So, I flew out and drove it home. Now all the car needs is a new paint job and some new suspension.



I now have three British cars and two engines in my yard. Quite a rare sight to see for a young 21 year old, but still, I crave to see the pinnacle of completion for each car.

My desire and dreams would be to see the V12 engine completely reassembled to perfection (with myself having confidence in the restoration, via my hands or some very good mechanic) and see that car run again, seeing that Jaguar 4.2 Liter engine go to a good home (to one of the members of the TBCR preferably), someday to get a Jaguar E-Type for a project car, and have a ride in an XJ220 (maybe even own one when I have grey hair!).

I hope this club will be ok with having the youngest member ask more questions than needed, because I learned I loved asking questions. A major thing I would also like to do is to assist any of the members with their cars, and give some extra muscle if needed with their projects. So all of you are more than happy to contact me with questions, requests for assistance, or want to show off your car collections. I want to assist and listen to all of your talk because of one thing I have learned in my life, which is that we are all teachers and learners. Maybe someday we are more learners than teachers but all in all, as long as we improve .0001% each day, we will become stronger. ---John

E-Type with a Story By John Tolle

I drove my green FHC E Type to the June 15 coffee. Here's a short intro write up on its interesting history up to my current ownership. Like most people and cars, there's a lot more stories and information.....but, this might be suffice to for us "Post-Whitworth" British wrenchers and watchers.

Although I've attended a handful of TBCR coffees over the last few years, it's always been just as I was in town for short visits-and no 'real' cars. My Willow Green '69 Jaguar E Type FHC has a great fully documented history. I'm the second owner from new and know pretty much everything about it's history from day one. I purchased it from the original owner and close friend about 11 years ago. He and his wife (Jane), special ordered it and picked it up at the factory in Coventry, England.

It's original, non-restored, interior, exterior, and engine. It's also driven regularly and I've driven it cross country (USA) to enjoy and show at Santa Fe Concours, Hilton Head Concours, Concours of America, and others. Currently, it has approximately 59,000 original, documented miles.



Editors note: John sent me a very interesting detailed history of this car's delivery to a Navy aviator and his wife and their travels in Europe. I'll work on getting this printed in a future issue.

Jaguar Mark IX Garage Find Up-Date

By Jeff Simpson

It has been a year since we pulled an old Jaguar MK-9 out of a shed where it had been sitting for forty-seven years, so it seems that a one-year progress report is in order.

After removing years of accumulated dust, I could really inspect the car. It turned out to be rust free and over all in pretty good shape, all things considered. The chrome and glass where all there and in usable condition. The car was very complete and original. The engine looked good, clean, and "un-messed with". Tires needed to be replaced immediately. I had the wheels powder-coated before the new tires were installed.

Originally, I thought that the main problem with the car was that it had suffered a cracked bell housing, which in-turn caused the transmission and drive shaft to be ruined. This idea was supported by the fact the previous owner had bought a replacement transmission. I assumed that since it was clearly a transmission problem, the engine was likely to be solid and installing the spare transmission would be a major step toward getting it back on the road. As it turned out, several bad assumptions. The replacement transmission turned out to be a similar model, but not correct. Maybe why it was never installed? It ended up taking the transmission shop three different transmissions to get one good unit. I found that when the bell housing "let go" it not only ruined the transmission but also the torque converter and the drive shafts. So they also had to be replaced.

When trying to remove the original torque converter, I found that the engine could not be turned, so it would have to be pulled to address the problem. Removing the engine was quite a lot of work, surprisingly it is a tighter fit in the big sedan than in the roadster. I ended up dropping the engine out, actually raising the car off the engine.

On removing the head I found that a cracked cylinder wall had allowed coolant to seep into the cylinder over the years where it made a complete mess of the piston and cylinder wall, freezing the piston. Once I was able to get further into the engine, I found that it definitely had been "messed with". It had been "re-built" a short time before it had the bell housing disaster. The cylinders had been bored out to .040" over, (recommended limit being 030") and four ring pistons used, OEM where three ring by that time. The main bearings where .010" over. In addition to the mess in #6 cylinder, I found that the water pump and main outlet into the block where plugged solid with something. My guess is that shortly before the bell housing let go, some kind of stop-leak was added to the cooling system to address what they thought was a leaking head gasket (actually the cracked cylinder liner). Whatever it was turned into a hardened mess which completely blocked the cooling system. Without any circulation the engine would certainty have overheated. The photos show the water pump and blocked passage. What do you think happened to this engine? I would love to hear your ideas.

The block has had its initial cleaning and will now be cracked checked to make sure it is worth rebuilding. If so, it will be re-sleeved using "top-hat" or flanged liners. New three ring standard size pistons and rings will be used. The water pump, also frozen solid will need to be replaced. So, making progress, not as expected, but progress.



Brit Café and Cars & Coffee

Tuesday coffee is back! Ben found Starbucks at Swan and Ft Lowell to have parking and great AM shade. Don't let the summer heat keep you away!



Cars & Coffee, now meeting at the Lowes at Thornydale and Ina featured European cars in June. They even allowed British cars! The event was informal as always and well run.





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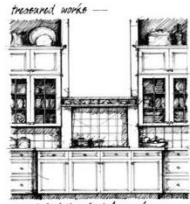


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