



THE *Spanner*

DEDICATED TO BRITISH MOTORING IN BC

ROAD MAP

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*Kootenay Branch's Al Howie's '92 Jag
XJSC isn't afraid of a little snow!*

*Welcome to the Winter Edition of
The Spanner!*

ECAIP 2013





THE SPANNER: Editor, Les Foster,
101- 210 11th St. New Westminster, B.C.
V3M 4C9

oeccspanner@gmail.com

OECC MAIL: The Old English Car
Club of B.C. Secretary Pat Miles, 15410
Kildare Dr. Surrey B..C

OECC Email:

oeclink@yahoo.com

OECC WEBSITE:

www.oecc.ca

CENTRAL ISLAND BRANCH:

malcolmhargrave@shaw.ca

COMOX BRANCH:

comox.oecc@gmail.com

HIGH COUNTRY BRANCH:

sway@shaw.ca

KOOTENAY BRANCH:

cliff@westernwireless.ca

SOUTH ISLAND BRANCH:

susanchapp@shaw.ca

VANCOUVER COAST BRANCH:

g.parkinson@eastlink.ca

FROM THE EDITOR Welcome to the winter issue of The Spanner. Welcome to the future. Welcome, at least, to the present day- finally! After a lifetime of immersion in the technology of the past, I have made the great leap forward to the brave new world of Apple. This issue is my first creation on my new iMac. This has been quite a learning curve, especially considering I was barely evolved as a PC user as it was! The poster at the bottom of this page has been my mantra. I hope you like the new format and I invite your comments.

New technology notwithstanding, it's still the input of the members and their Branches that makes or breaks our newsletter. The Spanner can only be as good as what you put into it. The membership represents a huge, barely-tapped resource of knowledge and anecdotes- enough to populate the pages of this newsletter for a lifetime. Let's start mining it! Branches send me your reports; members send me your stories or technical items- please! Every contribution builds our Club; every effort will be repaid manyfold. Give and you shall receive greater enjoyment, knowledge and friendship. It's worth the small effort!

On that note, I would like congratulate all those who have done such a great job of contributing during my first year as Editor. Everyone who sent reports on behalf of their Branch and the Club and those who sent individual articles and photos all helped make The Spanner more interesting. They also directly contributed to welding our many parts into one body, the Old English Car Club of British Columbia. That's something to be proud of! Keep up the good work and let's make 2014 our Club's best year yet! 🇬🇧



FROM THE PRESIDENT -Candy Francis



Not only does our 25th Anniversary season draw to a close, but it also marks the end of my tenure as President of the OECC. I have tried to encourage all members to step up and get involved with their individual branches. Hopefully that will continue and will foster even more members to be involved. Really, how can you expect to get more out of anything than you are willing to put into it?

I have enjoyed my two years as President of the OECC and found that they have gone by very quickly. How time flies when you are having fun! I have met and worked with many dedicated individuals. We have had the new Kootenay Branch join our club because of the efforts of some of these dedicated people and a few new members. This past year has been an exciting one with lots of great events, including (without bragging- well, maybe a little) one of the best's AGM's ever, marking the 25th Anniversary of the OECC.

Next year the AGM will be hosted by the South Island Branch and will kick off the Semi-Annual Brits Around BC. I know Jim Gislason has put a lot of time & effort into organizing the 2014 Brits Around BC and it looks like a great route. These trips are always lots of fun and a great way to meet members in other branches.

Starting January, Ken Miles will assume the role as our new President. I am sure that Ken and the new Executive will do a fantastic job and I look forward to working with them. I am also looking forward to lots of great driving and seeing everyone again in the New Year.

I wish you & your families a Very Merry Christmas and a 2014 full of Bests and Lots of L's.

Best Health!
Best Driving!
Best Friends!
Best Food!
Lots of Love & Laughter!
Cheers!

Candy Francis 



BRITS AROUND B.C. 2014

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OECC website
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for complete
information on
this incredible
event!

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM THE 2013 OECC EXECUTIVE!



MGB 1975-80 IMPROVED STARTING AND RUNNING -Doug Unia

The MGB sold in North America after 1974 is equipped with a Stromberg 175CDST carburetor with automatic choke. The automatic choke was mandated by the US EPA because they didn't want drivers running the cars with the choke on, thus raising emission levels. Now, as even the last cars are more than 30 years old, this installation of carburetor and auto choke can cause poor running and starting.

The concentrically wound bi-metal spring loses tension so the choke never fully comes off. Also the emission devices, the bypass valve and temperature compensator, become ineffective so the engine does not run at peak efficiency.

SU
HS6



By replacing the Stromberg with an SU HS-6 or HIF6 carburetor, better running and starting can be restored. Both these carburetors have a manual choke and will bolt straight on to the manifold.

The Austin Marina, sold here till 1975, used the same 1798cc engine as the MGB. It was fitted with a single SU HS6 carburetor in Europe and an HIF6 carburetor for North America. It also used lower

compression pistons (8:1) as found in the later MGB.

Ideally the carburetor used will have the float chamber mounted to the left for the HS6 type and the breather inlet and fuel pipes to the left for the HIF6 type.

As these carburetors were used on

the Marina, the parts choices are: damper spring (AUC1167 or yellow), jet (WZX1452 RH Black .100 for HIF carb, AUD9148 30 degree RH Black .100 for HS carb) and BAG needle for both types. Burlen Fuel Systems sells a complete SU HIF44 kit for 298 pounds. (cont. P.5)

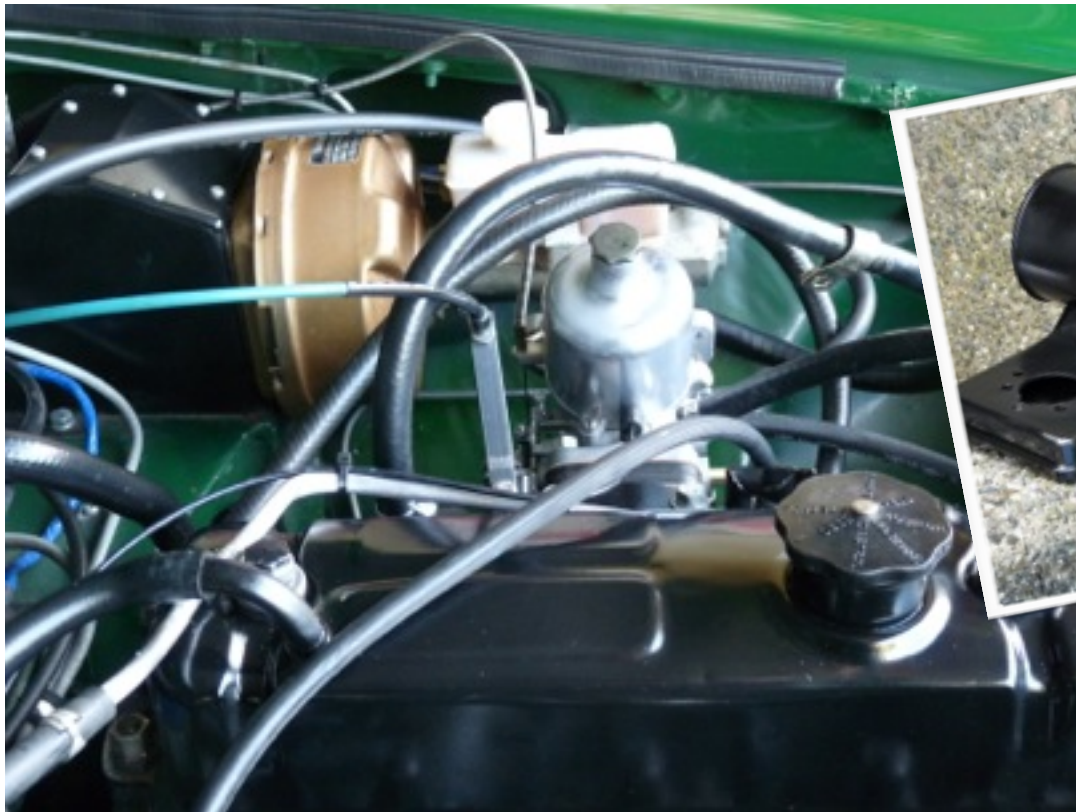


SU HIF



MGB 1975-80 IMPROVED STARTING AND RUNNING (cont.)


To install the HIF carb, the backing plate and insulator from the Stromberg is reused, but the backing plate is modified to clear the float chamber on the HIF carb. The throttle cable can be reused and I have found it useful to take the throttle quadrant from the Stromberg and use it with the SU for the cable connection. A piece of flat bar is used to reposition the cable mount. A choke cable must be added or reused if the Stromberg has had a manual choke added. It probably



HIF intake. The mounting holes on the HIF will need to be elongated to line up with the mounting hole on

will need to be shortened and can be connected using an AUC9094 choke cable clamp. Because there is no throttle return spring on the MGB accelerator, an additional return spring should be installed on the left

hand portion of the spindle. Lever AUE 235 and spring AUD 4273 work well. The existing air cleaner can be modified to clear the HIF carb and the intake can be opened up for the

the stock air cleaner. While it may be possible to use the existing air cleaner with the HS carb, it is easier to use a K&N filter (narrow type) or one of the other aftermarket models. 

REACHING OUT- DAVE PLEDGER ON MINI COOPER RALLY DASHES


The dashboard and switches in the original Mini present a unique problem during rallying. Namely, when one is strapped back tightly into the seat in a 5 point harness, the switches can't be reached. It's a bit embarrassing to struggle into one's helmet, Hans device, gloves and 5 point belts only to realize that you can't start the car, or reach any essential switches!

Race and rally Mini drivers found some unique solutions to this problem through the installation of long switches (I used a spark plug gapper taped to my switches for a time) but it is still virtually impossible to reach the dash. In rallying there is both a driver and a navigator but having a navigator is little help as he is also strapped tightly in and, additionally, his seat is set back as far as possible to allow the driver to see out the side window.

Truly, the only real solution is to build proper rally dashboards which bring all the essential switches and controls about 6 inches closer to one's fingers. They are really just steel boxes. These dashes are commercially available but are north of 500 dollars!

Unlike racing, rallying is more about improvisation and persistence than having large amounts of disposable income. Along that train of thought, I set about designing some dashes on my own, made out of 18 gauge steel. Cardboard mock ups ensured that I could read all the gauges as well as reach all the buttons and switches.

I used texture paint to get the original spackle paint effect and then sprayed matte black to minimize any

glare off the dash. Waterproof switches were necessary as the inside of the car can get pretty wet and the last thing one needs is a short in the middle of a rally stage – or a transit for that matter. I also reorganized all the switches so that the navigator can reach the camera and the trip computer and the driver can reach the wipers, washers, start button, horn and fire extinguisher- a pull cable I have never had the 'opportunity' to use, thankfully. 



Sheet metal cut and bent to shape



Holes drilled for gauges, rally computer and camera



Driver's side box, with face attached- effectively moving everything toward the driver



NAV Panel



Installed and finished- wipers, washers, start button, air fuel ratio meter, speedo-



meter and horn all easily visible or accessible. The fire extinguisher cable is just visible to the lower right. The large red 'button' is an over-rev and/or overheat warning light



Completed installation- navigator's side. A little known fact- it is from this side of the car that ALL errors stem!

OECC CENTRAL ISLAND BRANCH REPORT

-Malcolm Hargrave,
CIB Chair

The Central Island Branch continues to grow and now has 125 memberships with 230 individual members. Our dues haven't increased for next year and we are still offering our Early-Bird Draw for a free membership if dues are paid before January 1st.

Our AGM was held on October 17th and some changes were made to the Executive Team. For 2014 the Executive will be:

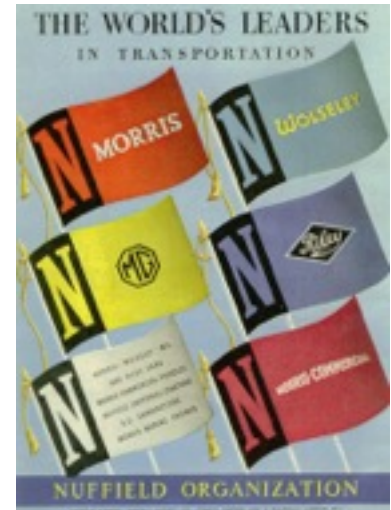
- Chair- Cathy Gislason (Previously Malcolm Hargrave)
- Immediate Past Chair- Malcolm Hargrave (Previously Norm Hall)
- Vice Chair- Graeme Cook
- Treasurer- Al Ramsay
- Secretary- Bob Thompson (Previously Darla Millard)
- Membership Roster- Melba Nelson
- Events Coordinator- Paul Mansel (Previously Howard Lockhart/Adele Hedges)
- Presentation Coordinator- Doug Unia
- Regalia Coordinator- Judy Unia
- Webmaster- Paul Tilroe (Previously Cathy Gislason)
- BEANO Editor- Jim Gislason



September's Multi-Country Flag Run to Arrowsmith

Our next big event, the Annual Christmas Party, will be held on Saturday, December 14th at the

Coast Bastion Hotel, followed by the 5th Annual Polar Bear Walk scheduled for Sunday, January 5th at Buttertubs Marsh. 



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OECC KOOTENAY BRANCH REPORT

-Cliff Blakey

Here it is December and it seems like summer just ended! To begin, just a quick catch-up from our August article in the Spanner. I

our group got to meet some of the Nelson people for the first time. We put together a spur-of-the-moment mini-cruise on the 25th from Cranbrook, up to Kimberley, through Marysville to a stop at Bear's Eatery for a wonderful dinner. The owner treated us royally! We had fourteen participants, most with their cars. It was another outstanding success



members gave a talk and practical demonstration of working on SU carbs. For many members it was their first time to see the inner workings of one. It was a very educational night for everyone and we are looking forward to our next Tech Talk. Reg De Young finally put his TR6 away in November for the winter. He was thinking of driving it all winter except I think the idea of shovelling the snow off the seat every time he would drive it probably made the decision final and most likely the icicles developing everywhere helped in this, too! We had our first AGM in November, which really brought out the direction our Branch will be heading. Numerous mentions were made to have many more

had mentioned there were two more events for the month. The first, on the 18th of August, was the Nelson



Round About in which we had nineteen British enthusiasts show up with sixteen cars. Two cars had ailments, one of which was mine, but it was still a fantastic event and

and and we made a unanimous decision to do more like this! Our last scheduled show of the year was at the Cranbrook Lordco's parking lot on the 31st, which was the first general car show for the local Lordco store. We had a good representation of what English cars are all about and it was well attended and received. We scheduled a Saturday coffee meet in September and had Howard Lockhart from the Nanaimo Branch join us. He was introduced to everyone that attended. On November 1st, we put together a Tech Talk night at the garage of one of our members, and another of our



cruises and also to include the people of the West Kootenays in our Branch whenever we can. Both these items will be ongoing ventures in 2014. 

OECC HIGH COUNTRY/ THOMPSON VALLEY REPORT

-Darrell Price

It is now mid-November and here in the Interior most of us have put away our old English cars for another year. Time now to make those adjustments and repairs and install those shiny new parts. We were blessed this year with some great driving weather and have enjoyed numerous events both near and far.

In April we made our annual visit to the Vintage Car Club's restoration of the Austin ambulance. This



adventure of theirs is nearly complete now. We witnessed the installation of the bell that as a Club we donated to the KVCCC.

Events that we participated in included one of our cars, the Bradwells' TR6, enjoying some spirited driving in the Spring Thaw Classic Tour as well as a number of us enjoying a day amongst the vehicles of the Vintage Car Club at their national event held at the Tranquille property in Kamloops. Several of us also travelled down to the All British Field Meet at VanDusen Gardens where the Way's E-Type was on display.



Pinantan Lake Store Show

In June we held our annual Spring Tune-Up at the Watsons' home where some of our more mechanically talented members assisted in some fettling with our motors. Later in June saw another of our annual events, the fabulous Walker barbecue, graciously hosted by the Walkers' at their beautiful home at Pinantan Lake. Prior to the barbecue we had a full afternoon's driving followed by an informal display of our cars at the Pinantan Lake Store, part of a fundraiser for their volunteer fire department. It was good to see one of our

newer members out in their 1961 Nash Metropolitan as well as the first on-the-road appearance of the Walkers' restored and impressive 1965 E-Type convertible. The barbecue itself was very well attended and gave a good opportunity to meet fellow members, along with some fine dining!

In July three of our cars made the journey from Kamloops down to the AGM in Nanaimo along with the Brits on the Beach show in Ladysmith. These events involved some superb driving opportunities as

well as chance to meet many other British car enthusiasts and fellow club members. Three cars may have gone down but four returned. The Prices added John Chapman's Stag to their garage alongside their TR6. At the end of July, a couple of our cars went on the Chicken Run, a multi club event including a drive to Mitchell's chicken farm at Yankee Flats. As well as the chicken farm the Mitchell's do some splendid custom car work, featuring Mercury cars from the 50's.

In August the Chandlers' kindly invited us out to their home at Lac



Le Jeune to see the ongoing restoration of their 1963 Austin Healey BJ7. One had to admire their tenacity as this is (cont. P.10)

OECC HIGH COUNTRY/THOMPSON VALLEY REPORT (cont.)

no small challenge!

August also saw a new event for our club, participating in the Haney Heritage Park's "Heritage Days" in Salmon Arm. The event was recommended to us by some of our newer members in Salmon Arm and was a most enjoyable day out, one I am sure we will participate in again.

Later in August, several of our members took in a weekend in Penticton at the All Triumph Drive In. The last day of August brought us the annual Jarvis Mystery Tour where we enjoyed some great motoring in the North Okanagan, driving some rural backroads and visiting several farm shops and sampling their wares. Several of our cars also shown at the A&W "Cruisin' for a Cause" MS events around town.

September was the Run to the Sun event hosted by Sun Peaks Resort. Events started on the Friday with a drive down to Merritt to welcome some of the British car's traveling up from the lower mainland. Especially pleasing was meeting-up with some fellow OECC members from the coast. Friday night was a boisterous pub night, Saturday started early, wet and grey. Despite the weather, there was a good showing of cars parked throughout the village at Sun Peaks, including a large number of Jaguars from Vancouver Island. Later in the day, the weather cleared up and all turned out well. Sunday brought more driving events and a stop at Kamloops' new winery, Harper's



Heritage Days at Salmon Arm



Harper's Trail Winery

Trail, where we enjoyed an educational tour and samplings of some very good Kamloops wine.



Armstrong Run

Our final driving event of the year was a run to Armstrong and back with a lunch stop to break up what was some very passionate driving from the four TR6's and one E-Type- our sports cars doing what they do best!

And so that is another great driving year behind us! We are blessed with

some great roads and superb weather here in the Southern Interior,- the camaraderie of our club here making it all the more enjoyable. Our club has grown again this year, especially gaining some new members from the North Okanagan. We are now arranging for some social events to get us through the winter ahead. Meanwhile, I have some 20W50 to change!🇬🇧

OECC SOUTH ISLAND BRANCH REPORT

-John Beresford

English Car Affair in the Park 2013
Drive & Dinner
Saturday, September 7



This year, our Chairperson, Susan Chapple, organized the Saturday afternoon drive, and by all accounts it was a great success. Susan had arranged for great weather and the chosen route offered some lesser travelled roads that were unfamiliar to even long-time residents of Victoria.

As usual, participants were about equally divided between visitors and South Island Branch members. Cars were quite diverse, from a prewar Morris 8 to fairly new Jaguars.

The route took the cars around Central Saanich, then down West Saanich Road to Prospect Lake Road and onto Burnside. Using Atkins Road, the group ventured into Langford and then down Veterans' Memorial Parkway to Lattoria. From there they made their way along Metchosin Road, to Esquimalt Lagoon. To conclude the run, the rallyists travelled through View Royal, along the Gorge and over to Blanshard to arrive at the Comfort Inn, site of the evening's dinner. There was a target time and mileage

to meet and the winner was the team of Merv and Susan Campbell. Those that were booked into the Comfort Inn had time to relax before the evening festivities which began with a social hour at 6:00pm. ECAIP 2013 Chairman Graham How welcomed the assembled group and Susan Chapple presented the prize to the winner of the afternoon run. Then it was time for dinner and Greg

Shew and the team from the kitchen provided another fine meal. At its



conclusion, a table full of door prizes awaited. Valerie Barrie had amassed such an array of prizes that everyone came away with something. Thanks must go to Valerie and our many generous supporters, both businesses and individuals (including South Island

Branch members) for their generosity.

The formal part of the evening ended with Graham thanking the staff at the Comfort Inn. Those who had an early morning start began to depart, no doubt somewhat envious of those who had booked into the hotel for the night.

Fort Rodd Hill Car Show
Sunday, September 8

An early morning mist greeted the registration and field volunteers early on Sunday morning at Fort Rodd Hill. It soon burned off and the weather turned out to be perfect for the 19th annual English Car Affair in the Park.

An addition to the facilities at Fort Rodd in 2013 was the addition of five 'oTENTik' tents, along the north side of the field. At first it was thought this might cause problems with the field layout, but together with the repositioned stage and a more compressed circle of vehicles,

the field arrangement was one of the best ever. The PA system was more effective and ample space was available to display the featured marque vehicles in the centre.

Speaking of which, a wide variety of Morris cars and light commercials were to be seen. While Minors predominated, prewar Eights were there and from the

more recent era, a Farina-style Morris Oxford.

In the outer circle, a great diversity of marques were to be seen, including an "Aero Special" (the shiniest car on the field), an HRG and a beautiful boat-tailed Rolls Royce. The Win-a-Ride (cont. P.12)

OECC SOUTH ISLAND BRANCH REPORT (cont.)

cars offered chance for people to enjoy a trip in a rare car, too, with a Daimler Dart, V-8 engined Triumph GT-6 and rhd Lotus Elan (the modern one) lined up, waiting.

Wayne Watkins did his usual stellar job behind the microphone and readily managed to find multiple teams to participate in the 'Italian Job' competition.

The awards ceremony saw Colwood Mayor Carol Hamilton choose Michael Pettie's Jaguar XK140 (this is a popular car among Colwood's Mayors, having also been chosen in 2008). SIB Chair, Susan Chapple's choice was the '62 Triumph TR 3B of Don & Eileen Colpitts. The ECAIP Organizing Committee's Featured Marque winner was Dominic and Margaret Daly's '49 Morris Minor convertible, all the way from Vancouver, Washington. The weekend stay at the Galiano Oceanfront Inn & Spa for early registration was won by Paul Mansell. Following the major awards, further door prizes were drawn and before long it was 3:00pm and the official end of the show. Many participants seemed in no hurry to leave which is always a good sign!

Many thanks go out to many people who contributed to the very successful 2013 ECAIP weekend. Graham How and the ECAIP Organizing Committee were busy from early in the year. Our generous sponsors helped to make the event memorable and of course thanks to all who displayed vehicles (including bicycles!) on the field on Sunday.

[Battle of Britain Sunday Sunday, September 15](#)

On fairly short notice, the BC Aviation Museum (BCAM) approached the club with the idea of

providing a few pre-war cars to take part in a Battle of Britain commemoration on Sunday, September 15.

On this day in 1940, the German airforce launched its largest and most concentrated attack against



London in the hope of drawing out the RAF into a battle of annihilation. Around 1,500 aircraft took part in air battles which lasted until dusk that Sunday. The action was the climax of the Battle of Britain.

To mark this day, BCAM invited a group of re-enactors, the Victoria-Esquamalt Military Re-enactors Association, to set up a display related to a Battle of Britain airfield. Among the re-enactors were pilots, ground crew and even an air raid warden, complete with all their gear. Two civilian cars, the Pullan's Morris 8 and the Beresfords' Singer Bantam, completed the scene quite nicely, along with a 1939 Plymouth done up in military livery.

Rather poor weather and possibly a lack of promotion seemed to limit the number of visitors, but the participants all had a good time.

[Fall Classic Rally Sunday, November 27](#)

For the third year running, the Fraser/River team of Glen and Loretta and Tom and Cheryl organized another challenging but enjoyable Fall Classic Rally. Much

thought had gone into the route and the accompanying quiz, to provide both an interesting drive and to add an English flavour to what needed to be identified along the way, all in the competition for the Faryon Cup.

The weather cooperated fully too,



with brilliant sunshine and not too cool a temperature. Adding to the interest of both participants and spectators, a number of competitors took the organizers' suggestion that extra points would be awarded for Halloween costumes. (cont. P.13)

OECC SOUTH ISLAND BRANCH REPORT (cont.)

Pink Panther/Inspector Clouseau outfits were chosen by three people while a chauffeur driving Captain Hook, a witch, an unidentifiable



Bay Road. Streets bearing the car model names Gloria and Majestic were to be noted and then the second checkpoint was encountered where the car's licence expiry date was to be provided. At the third stop on Mayfair Drive a picnic table count was required. Then it was a case of recognizing

The drive concluded at the Royal Scot Hotel on Quebec Street, where ample parking was available and a very suitable space was reserved in the restaurant.

While refreshments were ordered (and delivered very rapidly, indeed) the organizers tabulated the results. Third place went to Robin and Sue

Patterson in their MGB, second place to Geoff and Nicky Cramb (Jaguar Mk II) and first to Nick and Anne Northeast in their '34 Bentley. The pair of clowns in an MG turned out to be Susan Chapple and Daphne Lee and they deservedly won the Halloween costume prize.

Many thanks go the Frasers and Rivers for another great day out;

forest creature, a motor medic and helper, and a pair of clowns rounded out the field.

The first of 18 cars left Island View Beach just after 2:00pm, with route directions that included "Twenty Questions", the first of which had to be answered just around the corner.


There, the Motor Medic and assistant required competitors to state the air pressure in the right front tire of their car. Points were awarded (or deducted) according to how close they were to the reading on the official OECC air pressure gauge.

From there, the route progressed down the Saanich Peninsula via Lochside Drive, past an automotive tool which needed identification (in actuality a 1/2" Whitworth wheel brace) and eventually to Cordova



famous English characters or English automotive names along the route, which included Prince Andrew, Bedford, Humber and King George, among others. The token Canadian name was the originator of the square drive screw, Robertson.



it was obvious that a lot of effort had been made in planning and checking the route and devising the "Twenty Questions". Not even a last minute change of start location upset the afternoon's program and lots of people along the way enjoyed the sight of the old English cars, some even containing rather odd looking occupants! 

OECC VANCOUVER COAST BRANCH REPORT

-Dave Pledger with Les Foster & Alan Miles

We were lucky to have one of the best summers in recent memory here on the lower Mainland. Warm and sometimes even hot, it made Vancouver seem an even more beautiful place to live!

The summer and autumn were busy with several events beginning with the annual Stewart Farm Picnic. A great turnout was seen with Morgans, MG's, Minis and TR's and more in attendance as well as kids and dogs. It was an enjoyable time



and allowed everyone to catch up with each other and enjoy some relaxation. The picnic ended with a drive through Ocean Park and then along the waterfront in White Rock.

Later in the month, the club headed up to Squamish. Starting at Ambleside, members headed north along the scenic Sea to Ski Highway. Twenty five cars were in attendance. There was a great lunch to be had at the Howe Sound Brew Pub before carrying on to the West Coast Railway Heritage Park. Run by the Western Canada Railway Association. The railway

museum celebrated its 19th year in existence. It houses the second



largest collection of rolling railway stock in Canada and is home to the famous Royal Hudson steam locomotive. Fun was had exploring the many

displays and some members embarked on a train ride, of the miniature variety.

The English Car Affair in the Park was attended by only a handful of VCB members this year. Alan & Mary-Lou Miles entered their gorgeous Sunbeam

Rapier and Cliff Jones

showed his rare and pristine Cortina Estate. Les & Calla Foster came by to inspect on their way home from the Portland ABFM and Steve Diggins made the trip but did not enter his car. While we were represented, and we know ferry fares are very high, we can only say that ECAIP is an event that is worth every penny so try to make it next year, VCB members!

The Run To The Sun was put on by Tourism Sun Peaks. The September 20th-22nd event was the third year they've done the show. Six cars

went from our Branch: Bill Grant and Suzanne in Bill's 1960 Morris Minor, Gerry and Anita in their '67 MGB GT, Mary Lou and Alan Miles in their '69 MGB GT, Bart and Audrey in their 2001 Jaguar XJ8, Bernie and Pat Miles in their 2003 Jaguar XJ8 and John and Lorna Hoare in their new TR8 convertible. Bill Grant took home the People's Choice Award with his Minor, eclipsing some rather more exotic machines! There were about 80 cars there of different nationalities, mostly



American and British but a few Japanese and German as well.

The monthly meeting in September was held at Jelly Bean Autocrafters. This company has been around a long time and they do some truly stellar work. One of their unique services is metal spraying. Particularly useful for older cars that were made with very thin steel, or those that are heavily corroded, the process involves liquefying metal and spraying it just like paint. It was, as always, a very worthwhile venue.

John Clarke was kind enough to open his workshop to everyone for our monthly meeting in early October. John is a long-time British car enthusiast and has a number of unique vehicles including MGA's, B's, an E type and a Mark IX Jaguar. Others, including an A-40 Devon are rumoured to be secreted (cont. P.15)

OECC VANCOUVER COAST BRANCH REPORT (cont.)



on the property, as well. Interestingly, it seems his favourite car is the MGA that is not perfect, but rather has been his loyal daily driver for many years. John is a unique character and a great fellow. In addition to a fantastic slide show which included some great shots of the Batmobile from the Batman movie (designed by his friend, Andy Smith), John gave us a demonstration of his scale remote control backhoe. It was delightful, with working lights and miniature hydraulics controlling the bucket and the backhoe as well! It all added up to a great evening with an interesting and multi-faceted host.

Later in October, the club headed out to the Dickens Sweet shop in Chilliwack. Following a great drive along primarily rural roads, and with a stop at Granny and Grumpas antique shop in Abbotsford which is chock full of memorabilia, the group continued on to Dickens Sweets and



Tea Shop for lunch and, of course, a lovely cup of tea.

The Vancouver Coast Branch Annual General Meeting was held in December. The Branch Executive was determined for the coming year. Gerry Parkinson will remain Chair, John McDonald Vice Chair, and John Chapman Secretary. Many thanks to Colin Crabbe for his four years of work as Treasurer. He decided to step down and Bernie Miles will take his place.

The AGM was followed by an interesting presentation on auto upholstery by expert Steve Diggins.



New member, Randy Sandhu, also spoke briefly. Randy teaches an automobile restoration course at BCIT.

The Branch marked the London to Brighton Run again this November. First held in 1896, it celebrated the raising of the speed limit from 4 to 14 miles per hour, a far cry from the capabilities of modern vehicles! Our Commemorative Run for 2013 featured a lovely drive through the Reifel bird sanctuary and ended at the Fox and Fiddle Pub in Langley. The sunny skies helped contribute to a very good turnout of 52 British cars registered and 83 people in attendance for lunch !!! Steve

Hutchens, Bart Shaw, Richard Taylor and Walter Reynolds organized the event. Special thanks goes to Alan and Maureen Inglis for their hard and excellent work at the Registration table! All proceeds from the event went to the Delta Food Bank.

December saw 36 members attend our Christmas dinner held at the Eaglequest Golf Club in Surrey. We enjoyed a wonderful catered prime rib dinner and enough decadent deserts to seriously challenge our collective will power (most of us surrendered without a fight)! Pleasant conversation was lubricated (responsibly, of course) by a well-stocked bar with various viscosities available. Gerry Parkinson welcomed new member, Christine Green (Hoy) and outlined some of our exciting upcoming



venues for 2014. Silver-tongued devil, Steve Hutchens, paraded his travelling regalia show for those last minute Christmas presents. It was an excellent windup to an excellent year for the Vancouver Coast Branch. We have had a good number of new members join us during the year and from an uncertain start at the beginning of 2013, it seems that our Branch has found its legs again and is ready to run in 2014! 🇬🇧

KAMLOOPS' AUSTIN A125 SHEERLINE AMBULANCE -Stephen Way



This is the story of restoring a piece of B.C. and automotive history.

This story begins in England at the Thomas Startin Junior Ltd. factory in Birmingham where custom bodied ambulances were built for domestic and export use. Sheerline limousine chassis were shipped to this factory where the wood and aluminium bodies were constructed. The limousine chassis had a longer wheelbase than the regular Sheerline chassis and were more suitable for the ambulance and hearses built at this factory.

This Austin ambulance was a special order from England. Bryce Drake, a salesman at Wilson Motors, Kamloops had been successful in convincing the Kamloops City to purchase one for their use. The ambulance arrived in Vancouver via Fred Deeley Motors and was shown on their stand at the Austin of England 1952 Automobile Exhibition in the Seaforth Armouries, Burrard Street, Vancouver. Only three Austin Sheerline Ambulances were exported to Canada.

In early October 1952, Bryce Drake

drove it to Kamloops. When he got to the dealership he sounded the bell but as Canadian ambulances needed sirens, the ambulance was set aside until it could be fitted with a siren.

On November 29 1952 Bryce Drake and Constable Abe Willms were returning from Chase on Highway 1



Presentation to Kamloops Fire Department, 1952

to Kamloops when their car left the road, turning over in the ditch. Bryce Drake was fatally injured. Mr. Drake was the first person to ride in the Austin ambulance when he delivered it to Kamloops and then its first fatality when it was brought into service. He left a wife and a 5 week old baby daughter.

This was the first "purpose built ambulance" owned by the City of Kamloops and it served the community until some time in the mid 1960's when it was replaced with more modern equipment and its status deteriorated rapidly.

It was purchased from the Kamloops Fire Department by Ian Newby. The story goes that on his way back to Vancouver, Mr Newby encountered an accident near Princeton and the ambulance was again called into service by the local RCMP and with Mr Newby's army training,

transported the injured to the nearest hospital.

It was stored at Boundary Bay Airport, Delta, until the RCAF station was closed. It then moved to a reserve fire hall in Coquitlam. While in Coquitlam it was used several times at the Westwood Race track as the emergency ambulance while the regular ambulance was in for service or repair.

In 1976 or 1977, while in for a service, the ambulance was left outside a West Vancouver service station and was stolen. The West Vancouver Police were amazed someone would steal an old ambulance with a red stripe and City of Kamloops across the side. Nevertheless, it was not found for many years until Mr. Newby received a phone call from a Mr. Clark who had a B.C. transfer paper with Mr. Newby's name badly forged on it.

The next sighting of the ambulance was after the few years it spent



As found at the O'Keefe Ranch

rusting away at the O'Keefe Ranch outside Vernon. The ambulance hulk was rescued from a barn at the O'Keefe Ranch about 15 years ago with hopes that the Kamloops firefighters might restore it to its original glory. The ambulance subsequently passed (cont. P. 17)



Austin Exhibition at Seaforth Armoury,
Vancouver, in 1952

KAMLOOPS' AUSTIN A125 SHEERLINE AMBULANCE (cont.)

through a couple of more ownerships before being donated to the Kamloops Chapter of the Vintage Car Club of Canada. The odometer read only 30,104 miles but the wooden frame and particularly the interior were in poor condition. The walnut plywood dash panels were delaminated.

The plan was to separate the project into three pieces- the frame, the engine/transmission and the patient compartment. The wooden skeleton would be removed from the frame and placed on a large "dolly" made from part of an old truck frame. The front fenders, grill, etc. would be removed and the firewall/floor pan of the cab would be mounted on another dolly made from another part of the old truck frame. The engine/transmission would be removed from the frame and the separated frame could then be refurbished with all its components. Help from England proved elusive but a number of these ambulances were exported to Australia and New Zealand and a number of KVCCC members were going to take in the Targa New Zealand, so their trip turned out to be very successful with almost everything on the parts list



Full scope of the project is realized!

being acquired at reasonable or no cost from the very helpful auto enthusiasts in New Zealand. Luggage and boxes on the return trip were stuffed with car parts! Air New Zealand were not too happy flying back with this collection of "treasures" including a shop manual. A new set of pistons were obtained from Australia.

In 2008 the OECC donated a period correct bell to the project, inscribed as a gift.



Geoff Ackhurst presents OECC bell 2008

Work continued by a dedicated group of Thursday evening volunteers over the following 6 years, first breaking out the concrete flooring in the passenger compartment. New floor panels were fabricated. All the welding was completed and the firewall/floor pan assembly primed and attached to the reconstructed wooden frame. Then came a long process of getting the large wood framed doors to fit correctly, restoring the walnut dashboard, new wiring, etc. Once the chassis had

been finished and all parts were mechanically sound, including new brake lines being installed, the



Restored dash & steering wheel

patient compartment was re-attached to the frame and the woodwork repair continued.

By December 2011, 49 different KVCCC members had been involved at one time or another in the restoration totalling, a counted 4,356 man hours. In 2012 the project was completed.

The ambulance is now stored and displayed in the fire hall of the former Tranquille Sanatorium facility, in Kamloops. It is planned to be driven and shown in various Kamloops events where it will again be part of the automotive history of the City of Kamloops. 

(Thanks to the KVCCC for photos & information- see photos & more at www.kamloops.vccc.com)



Nearing completion-mounting the OECC Bell

GET-AWAY LORRY?! -Steve Diggins

In this issue, Steve celebrates the Austin K-Series Loadstar trucks. As a follow-up to his item on Land Rovers and The Great Train Robbery in the August Spanner, he presents the rest of the story- Austin style! Once the Rovers made the initial get-away with their precious cargo it was apparently transferred to the more prosaic Austin K-Series Loadstar. Obviously the robbers did not consider speed to be of the essence! The "Lawless Loadstar" article is from the Austin Counties Club. The Austin Exhibition photos are from Steve via our Club website. See all the Austin Exhibition photos at www.oecc.ca/photo_gallery.htm British trucks were not uncommon around B.C. in the 1950's. When I was a kid on Sea Island in Richmond, the neighbours down the street owned a fleet of big British trucks including an Austin K moving van. -Les Foster,

Lawless Loadstar...

Amongst Britain's most memorable events of the 1960s, for all the wrong reasons, was the now somewhat romanticised Great Train Robbery, which took place at Bridego Bridge, Buckinghamshire on 8th August 1963.

'Maker's Dozen' stalwart, Richard Arblaster has written to remind members of a little-remembered Austin connection...

What has the Great Train Robbery got to do with our excellent and law-abiding club?

Not much, you might think. However the August/September issue of 'Rail' magazine, within a larger article about the event, carries an interesting little addendum (*below*) stating that the ill-gotten gains were carted off in an Austin Loadstar lorry.

Did you know?

The Austin Loadstar lorry used to carry away the loot had been bought by the gang at an Army surplus sale, together with two Land Rovers. They believed that a group of 'soldiers on an exercise' would be unlikely to be stopped by the police. The lorry now belongs to the Cae Dai Trust Museum in Denbigh, North Wales, and funds are being raised for its restoration. It occasionally attends vintage vehicle rallies.

Its reputed resting place is in Denbigh, North Wales - I wonder if readers local to the area can comment further?

Richard M. Arblaster (2751), East Sussex



Above - The aftermath of the robbery

Below - The Loadstar at the Cae Dai Trust. Have any local members seen it on their travels? - Ed.



"Watkins-Winram, second to none!" went the radio jingle in the '50's.



Austin K flatdeck Shell Oil of Canada Ltd.