



Flywheel:

The Open Road Beckons

May 2021, Vol. 2:3



The Lion Leaps Tonight: A Jag in drag on the hood of a Monarch at Port Colborne Cruise Night, 2019 Jim Martin

President Sean: Traditionally, April is the month the NBCC has its Brave Souls run followed in May with a Blossom Run. Like last year, everything is far from traditional. Depending on publishing dates, we may still be in a province-wide break, leaving many of us wondering what we can or cannot do.

As far as I'm concerned, we have the best therapy devices anyone could ask for at our fingertips. Note your odometer readings to start the year and get out there and enjoy your LBCs as much as you can. I also encourage you to take pics and post them in groups.io or on Facebook to inspire others. We look forward to the return of pop-up runs when circumstances allow.

Meanwhile, the NBCC will continue to host virtual meetings via Google Meet, and the executive will keep everyone up to date as more information becomes available.

In closing, if you have any suggestions or recommendations for the NBCC in terms of what you'd like to see from the club, please contact a member of the executive. We enjoy and value the input of our members. Cheers.

Editor Jim: As you get this, we hopefully are approaching the end of another lockdown. Yes, it's all getting very tiring, but to help move your head back into a happier place, we offer, for contrast, the plight of an enthusiast who was forcefully kept away from his MGB for five years.

Perhaps it was Covid ruminations, but a few weeks back the plight of **Terry Waite** crept into my head. You may recall he was the British envoy who was held captive thirty years ago in Lebanon. One of the mental exercises that helped to keep him strong during his imprisonment was imagining driving around in his MG. While we await any excuse to hop into our LBCs, think of Terry and realize things could always be worse. We tell his story in greater detail a little further on in this newsletter.

Mailbox:

Leslie Moulson: I took the test in the [April] *Flywheel* and it was determined that I have the reflexes of a 36-year-old. I am writing to ask when and where I might go to pick up all the remaining parts and pieces of this 36-year-old. My spouse is equally (if not more) interested in my acquiring them.

—A Devoted *Flywheel* Reader with Worn-out Parts

Ed: Dear Devoted, We are publishing your letter as a possible way of helping you to get in touch with those parts. Truthfully however, we doubt any 36-year-old wants a crazy lady from Virgil touching their parts. Good Luck.

Club Business:

A virtual executive meeting was held April 13 with Sean, Evans and Pete along with past executives, Garry, Al, Jim C., and your editor.

- Sean reported on the recent annual BCCI meeting where a topic of concern was whether the British Car Council insurance offered any protection against lawsuits resulting from transmission of Covid-19 as a result of club events. Not surprisingly, there is no specified coverage by our carrier, nor would any insurance provider likely be nuts enough to venture into such coverage. The takeaway...we just continue to be careful.
- It was noted that British Car Day at Bronte this September is still very much at sea as to whether the event will be possible this year. We still have all the usual concerns, and a “no-or-go” decision is expected no later than the end of May.
- We had a group discussion on how to hold virtual general membership meetings going forward when different club members have varying comfort levels with the technology and not all devices work as easily across the different platforms as others. Sean will keep trying while we hope for some comfortable outdoor meeting weather.
- There was agreement that club members will be more comfortable getting out to events as the vaccinations continue.
- Al noted that provincial parks have free entry for mid-week events...a possible opportunity for some spring and summer picnic runs.
- Club finances: Pete reports that (1) we are at 42% of budgeted income with 2 new members, 32 renewals and 11 yet to renew, (2) we are at 26% of budgeted expenses, and (3) that we are currently at a pace to have a healthy surplus at the end of the year.
- 20th anniversary crest. A final design should be chosen soon and forwarded to the club’s graphic artist friend in Toronto for final refinements.

- Garry suggested polling club members for new ideas for club activities during these unusual times.

Prince Phillip: As we all know, the prince passed away last month just two months shy of his 100th birthday. Here is a wonderful tribute to the prince's interest in things automotive. The following article comes to us courtesy of Hagerty's online magazine. We thank them.

<https://www.hagerty.com/media/people/prince-philip-the-driver-and-rider-pilot-and-mischief-maker/>

Projects:

Bruce Bowman's Jensen GT



“It all started with a call from our NBCC president, Sean, about a car he had seen on EBay.

I drove to the location to look over this orphan, a 50-year-old car in need of lots of love.

I knew it was a rare car, but I did not understand how rare. This car is a hidden treasure at #392 of about 508 hand-built GTs.

Little did I know at the time I bought this winter project, just how hand built it was. Parts were sourced from most all British car makers, with little to no info on anything as to who supplied what. This turned out to be very time consuming, even for simple things like brake parts.

The car sold in 1972 for more than a Corvette but was built to a high standard. To appeal to the high-end sports car buyer, it came with deep pile carpets, burled wood dash, factory air conditioning, power windows, etc.

When I looked at the car, I was in need of a Covid winter project and had not found anything thing that piqued my interest. So without the proper amount of soul searching, I became the Orphan's care-giver.

Five months later, the work goes on. Most of the mechanical work is done, including all new AC compressor/hoses, brakes, all front end bushings, clutch parts as needed, and the list goes on and on.

It now sports a new burgundy paint, applied by me. I did not like this car in white. I can now start to replace the trim: the car seems to have more bright work than a '55 Buick Roadmaster.





Photos by Jim Martin

The headliner is replaced, the seats are out for new fabric, and I'm still looking for carpet. But soon it will all come together.

This project is fun all the same, even with all my small setbacks. I don't know if it will see the light of day this summer or not. I have had, and still have some things to do, during the Covid days.

At 79 years of age, I do ask myself why I need 5 LBCs in my life. My good wife, Joy, has the answer—to keep her in my life, and her sanity, as I am not under foot for at least 4 hours a day.

I'm looking forward to enjoying time with you all soon.

—Bruce (and the lady who puts up with me, Joy).”

John Foster's "Lotus" 17: Here is another car project that we teased you with in the April issue. **John Foster** of Hampstead, North Carolina, is building his own sports car in the outline of a Lotus 17.



Photos by John Foster

First, a note about John: John and your editor have been friends since the mid-'80s when Cheryl and I started taking our GT down to Watkins Glen every September for the vintage car races. John and his wife, Joanne, were part of a

merry crew of Americans and Canadians who would get together faithfully every year to take in the races, eat, drink and hang out. It was always our favourite weekend of the year. We hope we can get back to the track this September.

John is not scared to take on big projects and decided it was time to build himself another sports car. The build started with the acquisition of a fibreglass Lotus 17 shell. A low mileage 2006 Mazda MX5 purchased at an insurance auction netted an engine and six-speed transmission for the project. However the Mazda's sub frames and wheel track were too wide for the body. John considered designing his own chassis, which in his words would have been a ton of work. Then the light bulb came on. He determined an MGB tub and suspension would yield the properly narrow track to fit within the skinny Lotus bodywork. He would cut the top off the tub and shorten the wheelbase by nine inches. Once the parts are married, he will go to work adding the necessary tubing, stiffening, and body mounts to strengthen the MG Shell.



As this is written, John is well into the mock-up stage. He plans to replace the MG leaf springs with trailing arms, coil springs and a Panhard bar. We'll check back periodically to see how this project is coming along.

A note to purists: John is calling this an L17. He emphasises he is not trying to build a replica

Lotus, but his own home-built sports car that just happens to be in the form of a vintage racer.

Watts Up at Jag: According to Jaguar Land Rover CEO Thierry Bolloré, the company plans to phase out internal combustion engines over the next decade and offer only an all-electric line up by 2030. Part of that strategy will be considering the use of hydrogen fuel cells to meet future demand.

One wonders (me anyway) if the auto makers aren't rushing to total electric propulsion too quickly to the exclusion of other complimentary solutions. Building the infrastructure, boosting the

range, and building customer confidence present a huge challenge to going full electric. It will be interesting to see what the industry also can do in the next ten years to develop clean, zero-carbon fuels for our internal combustion engines.

Caterham Sold: Caterham Cars, one of the few remaining all-British car brands has been sold to VT Holdings of Japan. However, it appears it will be in sympathetic hands. VT Holdings has been Caterham's Japanese distributor since 2009, and sells about 120 cars annually in that part of the world. CEO Kazuho Takahashi has a passion for racing, and vows to protect and develop the Seven to meet any future legislative demands. Caterham has been around almost 50 years after purchasing the Lotus 7 rights from founder Colin Chapman.



Photo: Caterham Cars

Terry Waite “Freedom is an MGB”: Terry Waite liked to wind his six-foot-six frame into his '71 MGB and take a drive. In the late '80s, after his latest drive, he set the hand brake. Why not? He only planned to be gone for about a week. However it would be five years before he was to see the car again.



By 1987 Terry Waite was a well-known humanitarian and an experienced Middle East hostage negotiator. In January of that year, as an envoy for the Church of England, he travelled to war-torn Lebanon to secure the release of four Western hostages. In spite of promises of safe passage by their jihadist captors, he was betrayed and taken hostage himself. For almost all of the

following five years, Terry was chained to a radiator in an underground cell, denied contact with others, was not allowed any reading or writing materials, nor access to any news of the outside world. Lesser people might have gone mad, but Terry kept his mind active, mentally writing books. In his later words “You do develop powers of memory.”

Another mind exercise he liked to employ was calling on memories of past drives in his MG and imagining new ones.

Terry was finally released in November 1991. Sometime in the flurry of questions following his joyous release he was heard wondering if his MG’s hand brake had frozen during those long years.

That was the cue for Bryan Howells, director of the British MG Car Club. He wrote Terry, asking for permission to put his car back in working order. Through the club magazine *MG Enthusiast*, calls went out to advertisers for donations of parts and labour. Topside, the car was freshened and polished. It would not undergo a full restoration; it was to remain as Terry remembered it. However, the brakes, suspension, steering and fuel system had fallen victim to extensive corrosion. And yes, the hand brake was seized.

Terry was presented with the keys to his refurbished, sparkling Midnight Blue roadster in a ceremony at the London Transport Museum. He happily drove it out into the sunshine. The slogan "Freedom is an MGB" was enthusiastically endorsed by Terry, and the proceeds of that promotion went to his youth charity, Y Care International.

Sadly the added demands on Terry's time as a speaker, author and humanitarian left him with virtually no time to enjoy his MG as he once had. So this unique part of the Terry Waite story has moved on to other owners. It remains however as a tribute to a strong man and a reminder that a car mouldering away with a frozen hand brake can still lift one's spirits and transport them to happier places.

Cars for Sale: Whether you want to drive fast in a slow car, or slow in a fast car, one of each is up for sale

Jamie Pakeman tells us a fellow Jag enthusiast has his 2011 XFR up for sale. Details on this 510 horsepower beauty can be found by clicking on the links below.

- <https://www.kijiji.ca/v-cars-trucks/hamilton/jaguar-xfr-2011-supercharged/1560303166>
- https://www.autotrader.ca/a/jaguar/xfr/hamilton/ontario/19_11850542_/?showcpo=ShowCpo&nce=no&orup=4_4_4&pc=L8B%20H1&sprx=100

(The XFR went fast. As of publication date, it had already been snapped up.)



Second, this 1954 Austin Somerset drophead coupe lies at the other end of the horsepower scale, but what it lacks in grunt, it makes up for with panache. It was owned and restored by the

late Harold Leece of the Niagara Chapter of the British Saloon Car Club and is well known to many of our club members. Darrell McDonald (fussyoldfart@gmail.com) is your contact to learn more about this car, or click the link below.



Janet Guthrie: The 110th running of the Indianapolis 500 will be on May 30th. Join the **History Guy** as he takes a look at this pioneering racer, the first woman ever to run at the Brickyard.

<https://youtu.be/-2K8FHduaLw>

Finally:



Photo: Phil-are-go

Shirley Temple-of-Doom:

“Wadda ya mean another lockdown? I just got my #S%&* car out of storage!”

Thanks for reading. Contributions gratefully accepted. Jim

NBCC Flywheel

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