

# Flywheel

January 2026 Vol. 7 No 1

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

## **From the Driver's Seat...What year is it?**

It seems like yesterday that we feared the end of the world as the new millennium dawned. Y2K led to fears of widespread failure in banking, power grids and other critical infrastructure that were averted thanks to massive efforts by IT experts to fix and upgrade systems as the 1999 clock ticked down. I personally never believed it would happen.

And then there was the novel *Nineteen Eighty-four* about an imagined world characterized by misery, oppression and dehumanization. Penned by English writer George Orwell and published in 1949, it centres on dictatorship, mass surveillance and repressive control of people and behaviours. Much of the world is in perpetual war. Big Brother is a dictatorial leader. There are thought police, government surveillance, a Ministry of Truth, historical negationism and constant propaganda as well as violations of freedom of expression. I remember being astounded when I read this fictional story. It could never happen. Hmmm

And here we are. Two-thousand and twenty-six! Did you imagine it? I know I didn't. We are so fortunate to be living in a free country with hope for the future. The immediate future brings a countdown until we lift the covers on our LBCs and brave the weather in the first run of the year.

**Wishing you all a very happy and healthy New Year**

*Leslie*

## The President's Corner

Hello NBCC Members:

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season. January is named for the two-faced Roman god, Janus, who could look both forward and backward. The beginning of a new year is a great time to both reflect on the years past and the year to come. My personal journey to becoming a member goes back to seeing old MGBs and TR6s at car shows, and thinking that they were very fun little cars. Many years later, I was browsing Kijiji and spotted a little blue MG. It looked cute, and more importantly, was cheap. I am sure you all have been in similar situations. I dragged a friend out to look at it with me and after five minutes consideration, I decided I had to have it. A year later, that same friend took me to Bronte where we came across the NBCC booth. I said, "What the heck?" and signed up. I am eternally grateful that I did. I have met many friends, and one nemesis (you know who you are, Leslie) along the way.

Looking forward, I am excited for the summer driving season and getting to know members that I don't know as well as I would like to.

Best wishes for the new year,

**Tom Metcalf**

## We're Thinking of You...

Harriett Lehn, as you recover from December surgery on your leg. Hopefully, your bags will soon be packed for your trip west.

## Christmas Party – December 9



With President-elect Tom emceeing, 45 members enjoyed an amazing start to the Christmas season with delicious food, gifts and our enduring friendships.

### My Final Word...

*Lynda Moffett*

The NBCC Christmas party is always the highlight of our year.

As outgoing president, it was my privilege to recognize members of our club who have fully participated in and enhanced our club experience.





This year, we inaugurated a new award as a memorial recognition for Tom Haines, a long-time member and friend to us all. This award was presented to the owner of a British car built in the modern era – 2000 to the present day. For this first year, the Tom Haines Memorial Mileage Award went to **David White**. David drives a 2012 JCW Mini. His total mileage was 3951 km. Congratulations, Dave.



Our next award was the Kevin Pesant Memorial Mileage Award for cars built prior to 2000. This year, I was happy to present the award to **Evans McInerney**. Evans drives a 1968 MGB and had clocked 3918 miles this year. Well done, Evans.

NBCC's most highly regarded honour is the Chuck Baby award. Voted on by the members of the club, it is given in appreciation for hard work, enthusiasm and contributions to the club. It was my privilege to present the Chuck Baby Award for 2025 to **John and Harriet Lehn**. I know John and Harriet will continue to contribute to our club as John was elected vice-president for 2026 and Harriet has agreed to sit on the events committee. Congratulations to you both.





As president, I get to recognize individuals who have worked behind the scenes to make our club experience special. This year, I have chosen four very special people. The first 2025 President's Award goes to **Jim Martin**. Jim has supported our club for many years. He has been on the executive, and has been our go-to person for many tasks including creating great runs. Six years ago, Jim created our very own newsletter – *The Flywheel*. He has edited 62 issues of one of the best newsletters I've ever seen. His talent as a writer always shines in his interesting and thoughtful articles, not to mention his fabulous sense of humour.

Although Jim's health prevented him from being at the Christmas party, he was told of the award. I will be presenting it to him at a home visit later on in the month.



My next President's Awards went to the dynamic duo of **Vicki Mowers** and **Leslie Moulson**. These two women have, over the last three or more years, kept us on the "run". Their tireless efforts have made this club the most active one I know.

Whether we are on the road, enjoying a meal together or partying, they have set the organizational bar very high. They have supported one another as a "tag team" that always ensured that we were fully enjoying our LBCs and club. Thank you so very much and congratulations on a job well done. These women have agreed to continue to aid the incoming Events Committee. Leslie will also be taking over as the editor of *The Flywheel*. Leslie was told of her award and will receive it in the coming weeks.

The final President's Award went to **Pete Moffett**. Not only does he keep our finances in the black, he created our current website. As webmaster, he makes sure the site is functioning well and up-to-date. But it doesn't stop there. He is also the keeper of our membership roll and makes a great effort to remind all of us when our membership fees are due. He also is responsible for sending out all communications to the members so that no one misses the opportunity to participate in our activities. He makes sure that the awards we present each year are properly prepared. This year, he created the new Tom Haines Mileage Award. All of this makes for a huge job that Pete takes on willingly. Thank you, Pete for all you do and congratulations.



As I have said many times this year, it takes many willing hands to make this club work for everyone and I am so grateful to have been able to recognize some of those hands on your behalf. Congratulations to all our winners.

The lucky draw was won by **Kathy McLeod**.



Thank you to Rocco's staff for a delicious meal that was professionally and graciously served.

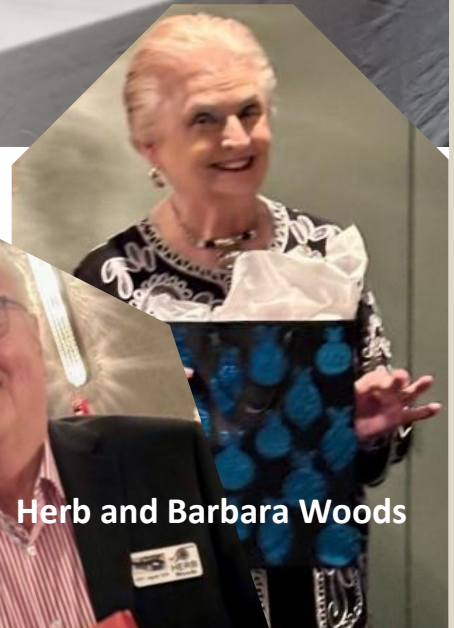




Lynn Baltijes



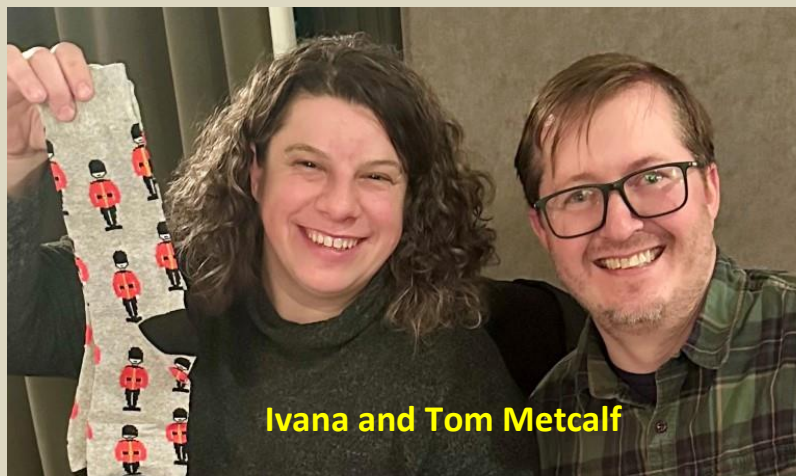
Herb and Barbara Woods



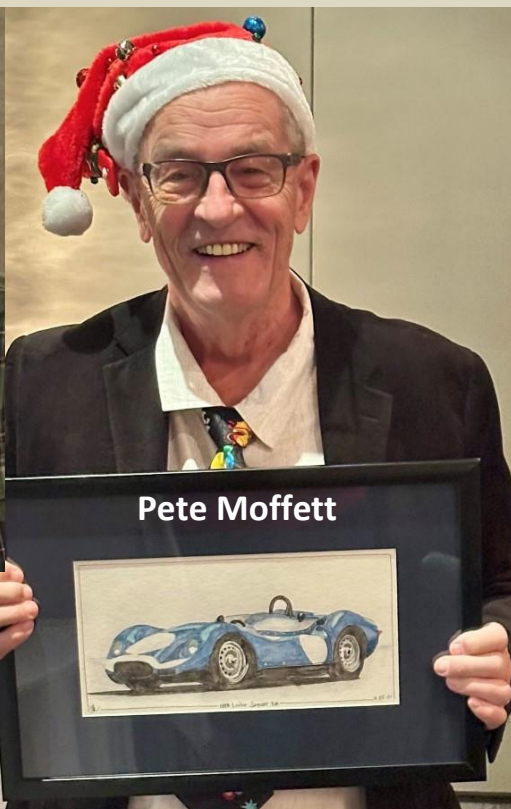
Cheryl and David White



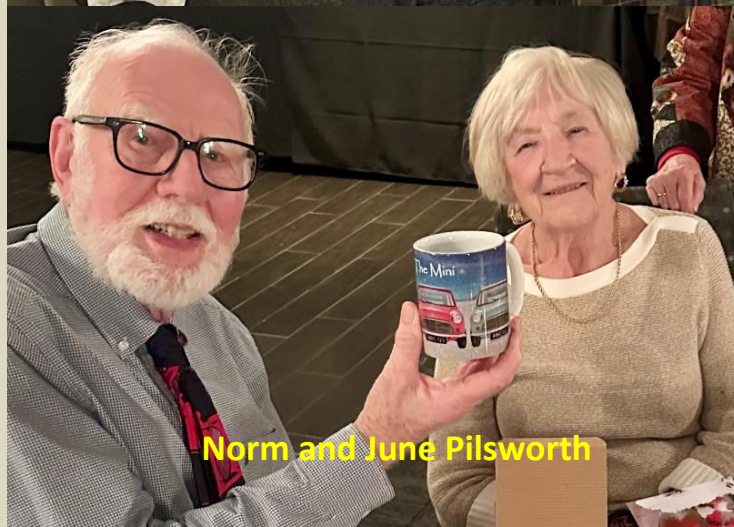




Ivana and Tom Metcalf



Pete Moffett



Norm and June Pilsworth



Ken and Jo Agnew



Kathy McLeod

## Events Committee/Club Calendar

This year's committee is chaired by **Lynda Moffett**, who has assigned sub-coordinators for different event areas.

- Club Runs – **Norm Pilsworth**
- Social/Parties – **Leslie Moulson** and **Vicki Mowers**
- Long-term Care Homes – **Harriet Lehn**
- Car Shows – **David Harrison**

Got an idea for an event? Our email addresses appear at the end of the newsletter. We are eager to hear from you.

The committee is meeting soon to begin planning another fun-filled driving season. Check the calendar and watch for Pete's e-blast for details of a January Meet, Go 'n Eat.

## On Your Marque, Get Set, Go...

### Gilbern Sports Cars (Components) Ltd. adapted by *John Lehn*

Gilbern Sports Cars (Components) Ltd. was founded in 1959 by **Giles Smith** (a butcher) and **Bernard Friese**, a German engineer with experience in commercial fibreglass automotive coachwork. Friese's



**Bernard, Cottrell and Giles with the prototype at Llandow Airfield  
May 1960**

own one-off car formed the basis for the first Gilbern. Their tiny workshop was in Church Village, Wales behind Smith's butcher shop. Peter Cottrell, a local race car driver, tested their car, thought the Gilbern had potential, and recommended building three more with the second unit going to Cottrell.

At first, to avoid the purchase tax of between 19% and 45%, the cars, as a kit, consisted of a body and chassis, with the owner sourcing the mechanicals. The result of this strategy was so bad that they decided that only complete car kits would be supplied with all new parts.

In May 1960, a favourable road test by Autosport resulted in the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders accepting the Gilbern as a member in 1965. The company displayed at the British International Motor Show at Earls Court.



In 1968, Gilbern was taken over by Ace Capital Holdings. Smith left the company and was replaced by Mike Leather and Maurice Collins. In 1970, Mecca Ltd. bought Gilbern and sold it to Collins. In 1972, Collins paid off Gilbern's substantial debts and sold it to Leather for £1. The cars were expensive and became more so with the 1973 Value Added Tax on kit cars. Production ceased not long after in 1973.

Approximately 200 GTs were built, a 2+2 two door coupe. This was Gilbern's first car, made from 1959 - 1967. The GT Mk1 started with either



The GT

a supercharged BMC A-series 948 cc 4-pot engine or a Coventry Climax 1098 cc 4-cylinder. In either case, the chassis was welded square steel tubing with front suspension from the Austin A35. Later versions were supplied with the B-series 1500 or 1600 MGA or 1800 MGB engine and a coil spring BMC rear axle. It was renamed the GT 1800 with the MGB engine.

Performance figures for the 1600 cc version from *The Motor* magazine found a top speed of 94 mph and 0-60 mph in 14 seconds. The test car cost £978 including £251 in taxes!



The Genie

One hundred and ninety-seven Genies were made between 1966 and 1969. It was larger, more upscale and initially had either a 2.5 (dropped in '68) or 3 litre Ford

Essex V-6 engine/gearbox with optional overdrive. Steering and back axle were still from the MGB. Complete cars ran approximately £2,000.

Between 1969 and 1973, 603 Invaders were built including 68 Estate versions. This was the final Gilbern production and while it was based on the Genie, it had a strengthened chassis and larger brakes. Front suspension came from



**The Invader**

the MGC. It sported a walnut veneer and electric windows. Automatic or manual gearboxes with overdrive were available. The Mark II was launched October '71 to include reclining seats. The Mark III was introduced in September '72 with Ford Cortina front suspension and a body restyle front and rear.

The higher tune Capri 3000GT engine was now standard. Track was increased by four inches and spats were added. Adjustable shocks were supplied all round. These were true 120 mph cruisers. By this time, Gilbern had close to 30 dealerships. The car was now available only as factory-built and cost £2,693.



**The T11**

The T11 was designed by Trevor Fiore. Three were produced, one for the 1971 Geneva Motor Show and the remaining two as restoration projects between 2009 and 2010.

It was a mid-engine car and was based on a reversed 1.5 litre Austin Maxi drivetrain.



**Tim Clarke** and his Gilbern  
Photo by **Pete Moffett**



**It is quite diminutive when compared to today's behemoths.**



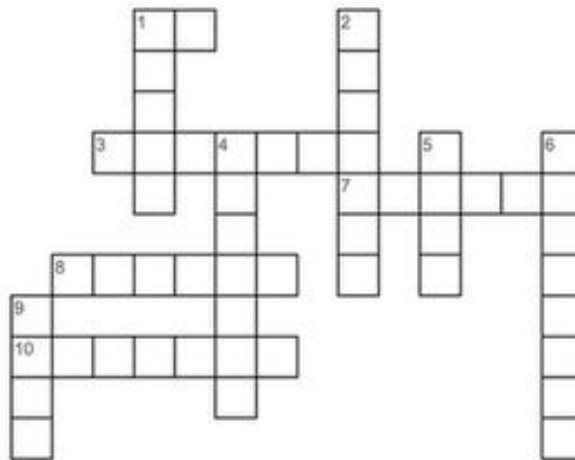


## Monthly Moan

You don't worry about a British Land Rover leaking oil. You worry when it stops leaking!

## Crossword Puzzle

### The Gilbern



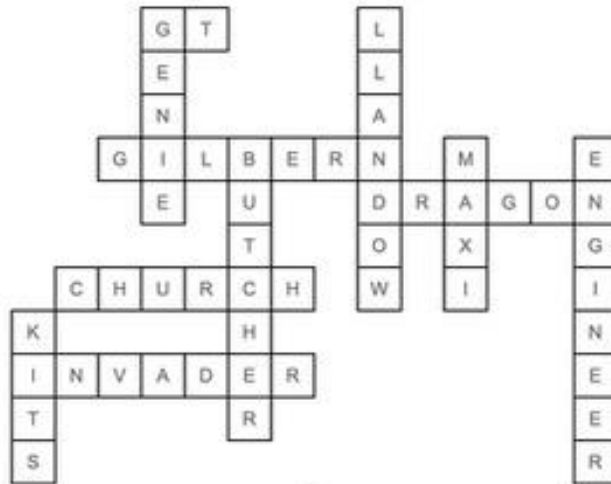
#### Across

- 1 The first Gilbern was named the 'GILBERN \_\_\_\_\_'.
- 3 The only full size car to have been built in Wales
- 7 Gilbern's logo is a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 Gilbern cars were first built in \_\_\_\_\_ Village
- 10 The final production Gilberts, the \_\_\_\_\_, was buuuuillt from 1969 through 1973.

#### Down

- 1 From 1966 through 1969 Gilbern marketed the GILBERN \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Initial Gilberts were developed and tested on \_\_\_\_\_ Airfield.
- 4 Gilbern's co-founder Giles Smith was a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 Gilbern's T-11 mid-engine prototype used a reversed Austin \_\_\_\_\_ 1.5 litre drivetrain.
- 6 Gilbern's co-founder Bernard Friese was an \_\_\_\_\_.
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## The Gilbern



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## And Finally

These two showed up at Grease Monkeys on October 24, and wanted to join the club. So, I signed them up at half price. Two for the price of one. They were made by a woman in Thorold by the name of **Sherry Allan** who I met at the Marshville Heritage Festival. She didn't have any British-themed "Time Out Dolls" but she said if I gave her a tee shirt and cap, she would make a boy and a girl for me. This is the result. But they need name.

**Pete Moffett**



Photos by Cheryl Martin

What do you say members? Let's name these mini-grease monkeys. Send your suggestions to the editor at [leslie.kennedy.moulson@gmail.com](mailto:leslie.kennedy.moulson@gmail.com)



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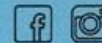
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**Note:** The *Flywheel* is usually submitted for proofreading several days prior to release date, so always watch your inbox for subsequent changes to published dates or details of events.