

The Spanner

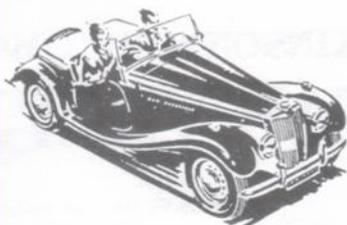


1867

Dedicated to British Motoring in BC



1965



November 2008



THE OLD ENGLISH CAR CLUB
EMAIL: oecspanner@gmail.com
POSTAL: 5211 10A AVENUE,
DELTA, BC V4M 1Y3
THE EDITOR: Steve Diggins:
oecspanner@gmail.com

THE BRANCHES:
SOUTH ISLAND: morrisonjp@shaw.ca
CENTRAL ISLAND: iralhompson@shaw.ca
COMOX VALLEY: yhiggs@telus.net
HIGH COUNTRY: havenhurst@shaw.ca
NORTHERN INTERIOR: diver@pgonline.com
VANCOUVER COAST: kenmiles@shaw.ca



FROM THE EDITOR

Here we are at the end of 2008 and what a great year it has been for the club and all our members.

Our AGM was hosted by the Central Island Branch who did a wonderful job and were great hosts. This was followed by the Brits Round BC Tour which was put on by Steve Hutchens. This very successful event connected all six of our branches throughout the province. The route was carefully planned to use the best roads through some magnificent scenery. We are very lucky to have members who know what it takes to do things right and are enthusiastic enough to put events together for our membership. Our thanks go to all those who put on events throughout the province Well done!

Meeting places - The Vancouver Coast Branch is always looking for places to hold meetings and it isn't easy to find a location that can accommodate thirty or so people and hopefully be interesting plus free. However, something came to mind after seeing an item on TV about the Royal Canadian Legion and how they were having a tough time due to dwindling membership. Every once in a while I visit a very interesting pub in Kitsilano called the Billy Bishop Pub and is part of the Legion hall there. I wondered if they would let us have a meeting there on a Tuesday night. I made some inquiries and was told we would be very welcome to have a meeting there. They would give us a portion of the pub called The Spitfire Room and there would be no charge. So we had our September meeting there with a very good turnout including new faces we hadn't seen before and made

good use of the bar.

The Billy Bishop is done up like a British pub with lots of interesting and historic items on the walls. So, in a way it is entertaining plus educational which is the way I think all our Legions should be. They are an important part of our communities and pay tribute to our great military heritage and most importantly the men and women of our country who have fought for our freedom and ideals. If you can find a way to include your local Legion in some way that would be a very good thing.

And for those of you who don't know Billy Bishop, he was the leading World War One British Empire fighter ace with seventy two confirmed victories. This was in a time when there were no parachutes, you sat on a tank of aviation fuel and your plane was made of wood, canvas and wire. Five of the top ten British Empire aces, all with over fifty kills, were Canadian and Billy Bishop was number one.

Three stud wheels - I am collecting parts to restore my two Austin Tens, one 1932, the other 1937. If you see any three stud wheels please let me know. All three stud wheels are prewar Austin and they might be an eighteen inch wire wheel or a sixteen inch pressed steel wheel. Other sizes exist as well. Of the approximately two thousand prewar Austins sold in this province not much is left so if you see any parts laying around please keep me in mind. Lucas free standing head lights are also needed. PH 604-294-6031

You have what in the barn?

(part 1)

The Vancouver Coast Branch had our

July meeting at the Buck-N-Ear Pub in Steveston. We had a very good turn out and, quite a few (more than twenty) came early for dinner. I was one of those and after eating tried to pay with a hundred dollar bill. The waitress said I would have to go to the bar and get change, which I did. I was wearing my club name tag with the words "Austin Nut" under my name. As I talked to the bar tender, a young woman, she notices the tag and asks if I own an Austin to which I say yes. She says I should talk to her father because he has a barn full of them. "Really?" I say and ask how many he has. She says he has about thirty in there plus a few others like a couple of Triumphs. What types of Austins are they? They are mostly Minis of every type you can imagine plus some older ones, A40 she thought. I gave her one of our club cards to give to her father so he could get in touch with the club.

You have what in the barn?

(part 2)

Coming back on the ferry from ECAIP, as we were about to dock I went down to the car deck to get in the Cambridge. There were a few people standing around it having a look which isn't unusual but one younger guy was more interested than the rest and started asking a few questions. He then said that his family still had his grandmother's Austin which she bought new. It is sitting in the barn at their home close to Fort Langley. His grandmother had some type of job which had her living in parts of Africa and the far east., I think Kenya and Burma were mentioned. He said it was a 1953 and looked like a station wagon. I asked if it was a Countryman and he said that sounds familiar. I gave him a club card with an invitation to the club.



Participants in this years OECC of BC Annual General Meeting hosted by the Central Island Branch.

Since my last piece in the Spanner, our Central Island Branch (CIB) membership has grown to a record 106 members. I could not have believed that there were so many Old English car owners and enthusiasts in the Central Island area – but now we have proof. It's just great to have 15 or more cars on our runs, and a goodly crowd of 40 or more out to our monthly meetings.

The October 21st meeting will be our branch AGM. We will elect a new executive – including someone to replace me as Chairman - to guide the CIB through 2009 and beyond. One thing I'm sure of is that the fun that we enjoy in our branch will continue unabated. Speaking of fun – and that surely is one of the main reasons most of us join a club like ours – we have had plenty of it through the 2008 summer season. Even the Society AGM in June (which we hosted here in Nanaimo) was fun! The Mini-Monte challenged all of us who took part, and then the Society AGM itself, and the fine dinner that followed, were most enjoyable. Some of the folks that were present are

shown in the accompanying photo taken on the steps in the garden of the Nanaimo German Club, which was the excellent site of the Society AGM this year. Many thanks go to our members Doug Bainbridge and Martyn Green, for doing all the planning and arranging of the AGM function, and to Malcolm Hargrave for the Mini Monte rally.

Immediately following the AGM, no less than 28 folks (14 cars) from our CIB joined on the Brits 'Round BC 2008 tour. Most of us pretty much did the whole thing and had a grand time all the way. Even the delay caused by the rock-slide over Highway 16 at the foot of Mount Robson didn't deter our spirits. On the contrary, the delay allowed us to sample the fine hospitality of the village of McBride, which we would not have otherwise had the opportunity to do.

We had barely got back from BRBC when it was time for our annual CIB-hosted show, Brits on the Beach, in Ladysmith. This year the weather was great and we had about 175 old English cars, and 20 or so old English

motorcycles on show. In addition to looking at all the cars, visitors also enjoyed listening to live 60's and 70's music provided by the Sofa Kings band. One unique feature of our annual show is that it is FREE – so be sure to show up with your old English car next year folks!

Quite apart from the memorable BRBC adventure, we have also had some super shorter runs this season. In June we, in 16 cars, 'ran' up to Mount Washington and spent the better part of the day up there. As I have already mentioned, we were kept busy in July with BRBC and Brits on the Beach. Early in August, we had a good showing of 12 cars in the annual Ladysmith Parade – with two (yes that's TWO) London taxis, one leading and one in the rear. Later in the month, we went up to join our North Island brethren at their annual show in Filberg Park, Comox, and still later, did a lovely run through the Cowichan Valley. In September Malcolm Hargrave (he of Mini-Monte fame), and his good wife Janet, led us – in 15 or so cars – on a Rally 'Round the Lake (Lake Cowichan, that is); and then,

Branch News — Central Island Branch

later in the month, 7 of our cars took part in a very soggy Vancouver-Whistler All British Run (the accompanying photo shows the rather damp outlook that day).

One of the practices we have adopted this year is that of relying on volunteer "Wagonmasters" for each of our runs. The wagonmaster is the idea person who thinks up an event, and then plans, organizes and leads the run, and, when it's all over, provides an overview at our monthly meeting, plus a brief write-up for our newsletter, the Beano. It has been a most worthwhile and successful practice and one I am sure we will stick with. While on the subject of wagonmasters, I must take this opportunity to congratulate that Wagonmaster Extraordinaire, Steve Hutchens (yes, I know he is not of our branch, and therefore I should not really be writing about him here, in our CIB report, but I must) – he did a truly magnificent job of planning, organizing, and guiding our 30-car, 60-person old English 'wagon train' through 10 days of Brits Around BC 2008. What a guy! He can come up and wagonmaster one of our CIB runs anytime he wants!

I'd like to finish with a further comment on a matter I first wrote about in the March 2008 issue of the Spanner. In that issue, I mentioned the sad loss our Branch had suffered in February when our member, good friend, and extreme old English car enthusiast Nigel Muggerridge passed away. Soon after Nigel's death, our members agreed that we should spearhead a special project in memory of Nigel, and decided to follow up on a suggestion that a memorial park bench, with suitable inscription, be purchased from the Town of Ladysmith (where Nigel lived), and positioned in Transfer Beach Park, the site of our annual Brits on the Beach old English car show. This Memorial Park Bench project, which got started in April, was going to cost \$2,000. While I, for one, had thought that this sum would take us a year or more to collect, I'm happy to say that that full amount of money was raised by the end of August '08. We expect that the memorial bench will be in its place – roughly where Nigel used to park his 1927 Austin Seven Chummy every year for Brits on the Beach – within a couple of weeks. I would like, here, to thank all those OECC members from all branches, and others, who so kindly and generously donated money for the Nigel Muggerridge Park Bench.

That's all from the CIB this time. Regards to all...*Al Thompson, Chairman Central Island Branch*



Member's cars assembled for the British Empire Day parade in Ladysmith



Branch members relaxing in the shade at Brits on the Beach



A soggy day in Whistler (Blackcomb) Village!

Branch News — North Island Branch (Comox) - Submitted by Karen Whitworth



North Island Branch members welcome participants of the Brits Round BC Tour

Seventeen different British makers of fine vehicles were blessed with fantastic weather when they all assembled for the All British Meet at the Filberg Sunday August 17th. To show no personal preference I list them by alpha: Austin, BSA, Cortina, Healey, Humber, HRD, Jaguar, Jensen, Landrover, Lotus, MG, Morris, Router, Norton, Talbot, Triumph, and Vincent. The oldest cars were Walt Hessler's big wheeled 1936 Talbot, and Steve Harris's stately 1947 Humber. And the collection of beautifully prepared bikes added an exciting dimension to the Meet.

The Filberg weekend was one of the best car shows for the money that is offered on the West Coast. Because we recognized that the Comox Valley Branch is a distance and an extra cost to attend, every effort was made to make the experience of coming to Courtenay/Comox as fun and delicious as possible. The entrance fee of \$5.00 paid for you and your drivers, (you could bring as many cars as you wish), to enjoy a fun driving event at North Island College Saturday, enjoy a great BBQ at Frank's Saturday evening, and then park in the beautiful Filberg Gardens on the Sunday. The Filberg Tea Room was a delicious outing, the sea side gardens were glorious and care was taken to keep the cars from tree droppings which left

lots of room to lay on a picnic. Robert Kirk is a residing expert and every car that wished was judged, with ribbons and prizes given. Whether any prizes were won, all entrants drove home with a bottle of our wine!

One awesome thing about the wine: The wine label was designed in January, the car chosen for the label was Bill Sterne's Morgan, it just happened to be the People's choice award winner! Could not have



Branch News — North Island Branch (Comox)

worked out better!

The branch was very happy with everyone that came and was very grateful to Ian Cox for bringing up all his regalia which forced David, who just bought Geoff's beautiful XKE Coupe, to spend all his spare cash on Jag bits!

The Comox Branch was invited up to Campbell River by the Campbell River Car Club, on Wednesday the 27th of August. This has become an annual event. The drive along the ocean was beautiful with the tide up and the old highway letting all nine cars to travel in a train. The bonus on this run is the manager of the local Dairy Queen offers each driver a free supper! Needless to say this is a popular event!

Our annual fall run was September 14th. Using the old Highway all 16 cars were able to stick together as we ambled down to Qualicum and turned in at the Fish Tales Restaurant a very British cottage that sat us outside in sunshine where we all stuffed ourselves on salmon, oysters, halibut, etc. – it was hard to get back into our cars! To top off the day Terry and Pam Moughton who had driven their newly restored Austin Healey on the run, had us all back to their sea side home for desserts galore.

The Branch is very pleased to say that they now have a new meeting place that we feel will be ours for a long time. It is at the Elks Club on 6th Street in Courtenay. Our meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month, so if any OECC members are in the area please drop in we would love to see you. We plan some sort of informative talk each month.



A few of the cars at the All British Meet at Filberg



Brits Round BC Tour cars at rest



Steve Harris' Humber with coach built body was a feature at Filberg



Members on the way to Campbell River stop for tasty treats

**Bellevue All British Meet,
by Dennis Brammer**

It's been a long time since we travelled to the All British Field Meet in Bellevue; mainly because the beautiful and comfortable boat ride through the islands and down into Seattle was taken away from Victoria a few years ago. Anyway, since our house is being torn apart and renovated, Carol and I just wanted to get away, so off we set for the United States in the Daimler.

The route we took turned out to be delightful, and easy. First of all the Coho ferry – at the terminal by 5:00am (it's still dark at that time), then a crawl up the ramp (we only have about 4" of clearance), park, and to the lounge. Although the sun rose beautifully as we left the harbour, we were soon into a dense fog bank, and the constant blaring of the fog horn, and faint visions of the lookout on the bow, with his hand on the bell, did not engender sleep. I was able however to conjure up voices of the Pollards, Nick Northeast, the Stubbs, and other earlier intrepid venturers to Bellevue with whom we had previously shared passage, and to smile contentedly. We were accompanied for some time by playful Orcas, but the sea remained leaden.

In Port Angeles, Immigration seemed more interested in the car show than in seeing any I.D. so we were quickly on the road, recalling the horrid times we have had trying to get down into the U.S. via the Peace Arch. A leisurely hour, and sunshine again, saw us over the Hood Canal Bridge and on Bainbridge Island catching the regular Washington State ferry directly into Seattle (it's only about \$12.00 for car, driver, and passengers if you are a senior like me!) Overall travelling time, including ferry waits, was about 4 hours.

We found an excellent hotel in Bellevue which provided us with an exceptional breakfast, and even reimbursed us \$50 for our gas to travel down, and the next morning we caught up with a lone yellow Morgan which led us directly to the show which was only about five minutes from the hotel.

This year there were approximately 600 vehicles registered, most of which were convertibles, but there was a lot of fine machinery, with the usual paddock of cars for sale, stalls, and food services. The venue is still at the Community College: there is more shade now than there used to be because the trees are becoming more mature, and since the sun seemed reluctant to peek out, it was a pleasant temperature.

License plates varied from California, Oregon, Nebraska, Alaska, Idaho, Washington, and of course B.C. The display from Aston Martin



and Lotus was spectacular, whilst the array of 15 Tigers, all with their hoods open to show that they had cleared out all of the rats' nests, and had used a lot of chrome cleaner, caused much comment. I suppose seeing three Drophead Morgans together was a first for me, whilst I took special interest in the Jaguars, including a 1936 "barn find" complete with cockerels and straw, the Bentleys, and a 1936 unrestored Wolseley. In our class, that of Post 1960 Sports, GTs and Classics, we had quite an assortment of near orphans, including Deloreans, another SP 250, two racing cars, a London taxi, a Lotus Cortina, plus a handful of other mismatches who are lovingly cared for, but who do not seem able to find a home – actually the class, together with the Pre 1960 Class, often seems to provide a great deal of spectator interest since one is not walking through rows of vehicles which to the uninitiated, all appear to be rather alike – certainly one could not accuse the two "specialty" classes of that!

We had offers from visitors not only to buy the car, but also to buy our Union Jack chairs, but as far as the chairs were concerned we told the prospective purchasers that they could probably get their own for a fiver at Romford market! Because of recent back problems, I had left the hardtop on the car, which led to several people telling me that some of these cars, like the blue one at the show, also came as a convertible model! I was also asked why a German car was allowed in, or whether my car had the Rover V-8, or the Chrysler 300 hemi --such are delights of meeting up with spectators, and even other owners.

Awards at the end of the show are given on votes from all of the entrants, usually meaning that every car gets at least one vote! It also ensures that the whole thing is up to the Gods, or the colour of the hood ornament! The "distance award" was won by the Mini (new) from Nebraska, whilst the "oldest car award" was taken by a 1926 6.2 litre Bentley – a wonderful vehicle - it seems as if he always gets the award since we cannot do anything

else to our vehicles to allow us to compete. Carol and I decided to go a different route on the way back and roared up I-5 to Burlington where we stayed. The next morning we crossed from Anacortes to Friday Harbor, where we also stayed, catching the ferry over to Sidney the next day. It was pleasing to see lots of cars on the ferry; it would be a shame to have such a lovely and convenient route cancelled because of a lack of patronage. We eventually arrived back in Canada having only driven about 180 miles all together, but having had a lovely time. Once again the car seemed to be of more interest to Immigration than we were, and again we were not asked for I.D., however we were asked if any work was done to the car whilst we were away – what an

insult to a Daimler owner!

**Blethering Place Collector Car Festival
by John Beresford**

Some 300 cars, trucks and motorcycles decorated Oak Bay Avenue on the 8th Annual Blethering Place Collector Car Festival on August 10. Organized by Ken Agate, the usual wide variety of vehicles were on view, including an impressive array of mostly English racing cars. Several OECC members took part, as shown in the photos. The Editor was delighted to receive the Mayor and Council's First Choice award for the Singer.



Austin Nippy of Ed Hendee



Dennis Brammer's Daimler SP250 flanked by a rare Austin Atlantic



Standard Tourer receiving some assistance



TR3s of Kelly James and Tom Rivers

Branch News — Vancouver Coast Branch—Report and Photos by Walter Reynolds

This Spanner Issue's report starts with the Brits 'Round BC lunch at Porteau Cove, which, for those who didn't go through the wonderful BC Government-employee-lack-of-service experience, was truly memorable, for all the wrong reasons. The thumbnail version goes like this: Can't put up the Branch banner or bunting in the Park; no room to park; all picnic tables taken; traffic jam; Executive decision – those who can't get in, go to Britannia Beach, but those who got in, join up at Britannia Beach after lunch. All that said, we had a good representation from the Branch to welcome BRBC participants. Some Branch members stayed for lunch whereas others (the Rollers and Bentley types) visited en-route to or returning from their Club lunch at Furry Creek Golf Course.

July 8, 2008: Regular monthly meeting, one week late due to July 1st holiday. The meeting was held at the Buck,N,Ear restaurant in Steveston.

July 13, 2008: Several members attended the annual Minter Gardens Classic Car Show. Always guaranteed to have lots of wonderful classics and what a setting!

July 20, 2008: Branch BBQ at HMCS Discovery in Stanley Park. What a great day, sunny and HOT. HMCS Discovery is a great place to have a picnic; lots of parking space, picnic tables and shade trees. A bonus at this site is the heli pad where cars were allowed to drive onto to have pictures taken. While the heli pad may not have been a specific bonus (what with all the Canada Goose droppings) the real bonus was the backdrop of downtown Vancouver, as can be seen in the photo (top of next page). When Linda and I left at 3:00 p.m., there were 20 British cars in the parking lot. Over the course of the day, there were approximately 25 OECC cars and 12 Triumph Register cars. Thanks to Steve Diggins for organizing this location (which may be used for the Branch AGM next year).

August 5, 2008: Regular monthly meeting at the Stewart Historical Farm, Surrey. This is probably the fifth year that the August meeting has been held here. Business is usually pushed through quicker than normal so that everyone can go on the traditional 'Show the British Cars on the White Rock Waterfront' drive. Sorry, no photos.

August 23, 2008: While not a 'Branch Event' as such, the 'London to Brighton Commemorative Run' committee did a dry run of the route and found all to be well. Only a few tweaks to make and all will be ready for November 2, 2008.

September 2, 2008: Regular monthly meeting held at the Billy Bishop's Pub at the Kits Point

Legion, Vancouver. There was a very good for this meeting held in the pub surrounded by Billy Bishop memorabilia. The pre-meeting dinner was also well attended. Thanks to Steve Hutchens for organizing the dinner location.

Next for us are:

September 20 & 21: Fort Rodd English Car Affair In The Park;

October 7: Branch regular monthly meeting, to be held at the Nu Brite Industries wheel and metal finishing plant in Surrey.

November 2, 2008: London to Brighton Commemorative Run starting from the Delta Town & Country Inn and ending at the Mission Springs Restaurant in Mission;

November 4, 2008: Branch regular monthly meeting, location TBA;

December 2, 2008: Branch Christmas Party at the Roma Hall, New Westminster.

Well, that's it for now from the Vancouver Coast Branch.



Banner & bunting around Walter Reynolds truck in parking lot at Brits around BC—Porteau Cove



London to Brighton Commemorative Run Group wetting their appetites following the Dry Run

Branch News — Vancouver Coast Branch—HMCS Discovery July Picnic



Reynolds' 1968 Rover P6 2000 at HMCS Discovery



John & Marni Pierson's Rolls Royce and Ric MacDonald's Morgan



Gerry Parkinson caught admiring Ken Morton's 1930 Austin 7 Ulster Sport; John Rennie at rear



Harbour Air Beaver landing at Coal Harbour; Conference Center expansion in the background



A mixture of OECC and Triumph Register Brit cars

Steve Blake's 1930 MG M-Type

The MG M-Type was the first mass-produced sports car built by MG. The car was first shown at the Olympia Motor Show in October 1928 and production ran from March 1929 until June of 1932. In total, 3235 were built including the standard body, Sportsman's Coupe, and the Double 12 Replica.

This MG M-type numbered 973 was completed on February 13, 1930. It was delivered to auto dealer Caffyns Ltd. in Brighton, England who sold it to Mr. Gerald Eggerton Williams of Sussex on May 10, 1930. Two notable events for MG during 1930 were the first year of the MG Car Club and having the MG M-types win the team competition at the Brooklands 12/12 race.

Our car also had some early hillclimb and trials successes in the hands of an early racer, Mr. A. Bassant. The car changed owners several times as it moved along the south coast of England from Brighton to Bournemouth. It was restored over four years in Abingdon, close to the old MG factory and advertised for sale in the June 1999 issue of Classic and Sport Car magazine. Craig and Ann Hall of Spokane, Washington purchased it in 2000 and then sold it to us in June 2006.

Our car was originally red with black fenders and sporting the standard M body. When it was restored, the old worn standard body was replaced with the Brooklands 12/12 Replica body. The major difference is the cut-away doors necessary to conform to International Road Racing Regulations.

Why a fabric body?

MG built the MG M-types with fabric bodies to keep the cost down and to keep the weight as light as possible. Bentley and Lagonda did the same thing on their racing cars of the 1920's. The body is made of an ash frame covered with plywood. Carbodies Limited built them for MG at a cost of £6 each. In the last year of production, MG offered a metal body for an additional £10. Only 170 metal bodies were built.

M-Type Specifications:

Cost (1930)	£185
Power	27 bhp
Length	10 feet 3 inches
Gearbox	3-speed non-synchromesh
Width	4 feet 2 inches
Performance	65 miles per hour
Weight	1000 pounds
Fuel economy	40 miles per gallon
Engine	847 cc (overhead cam)



The Vancouver All British Field Meet—Some of the cars entered by OECC members provided by Walter Reynolds





Rob Follow's beautiful MK6 Bentley with club cars in the background!

Brits Round BC Tour

The Vancouver Coast Branch welcomed the Brits Round BC tour to Britannia Beach for their picnic lunch. The initial idea was to do this at Porteau Cove, however, this proved to be too busy and crowded, so everyone convened at Britannia Beach. The weather was beautiful and a good number of Vancouver/Coast members turned out to welcome the tour. After this lunch stop the tour was off to Whistler, Pemberton then up over the Coast Mountains to the 1860's gold rush town of Lillooett.



Ken Morton's 1930 Austin 7 which was clocked travelling at over 110 k on the Upper Levels Highway



When the Saints Go Marching In - by Les Foster

(recently the author became the owner of a 1950 Standard Vanguard pickup utility)

For many, many years I have kept the faith of all things Thames. I have been almost unwavering in my devotion.

Almost. There was that casual fling with Alfreda the Austin. I was lured by her flashy 50s chromium and her tarty two-tone paint. I overlooked her tawdry flaws, her bondo-laden flanks and sagging suspension because she was fun.

Pinned to her headliner was proof of her redemption, a medal of St. Christopher, Patron Saint of Travelers. Surely it was a sign of righteousness, talisman against breakdown and protector from the wrath of Girling and Lucas.

But it was not to be. In my enthusiastic myopia I had mistaken St. Jude for Christopher. St. Jude, Patron Saint of Lost Causes, was riding shotgun in the A-55!

After it was over I returned to the Ford faith with renewed zeal. I was a born-again, baptized in thermosyphon and ready to cast off my sinful ways. The Unholy Trinity of mechanical brakes, transverse springs and side-valves was the path for me. I plunged in and became a fisher of men. I ministered to the needy Thames owners of the world. I righted wrongs and I spread the word.

And then it happened again. Oh, God, I am so weak! Why do I always fall for the voluptuous curves and the toothy smiles? Cannot I deny myself? Cannot I be satisfied with the honest labour of a real truck? Have I no standards?

I have strayed once more. She's so modern, so fast, so comfortable. She promises everything. Once again I see as in a glass, darkly. When will my scales fall away? For I see not her gaping holes, nor her failed brakes nor her missing parts. St. Jude is with me, guiding my hand in another lost cause!

How will I triumph in the end? How will my roster entry stop looking like a Bucket List?

There is but one answer: I will form my own Church of English Cars! Join me, the Right Reverend Leslie. Send me your donations! Be generous! Help save the little trucks!

St. Christopher or St. Jude - when those saints go marching in I just want to be in the vanguard!



My First Car by Wayne Watkins (a reprint from Western Classics magazine, 1993)

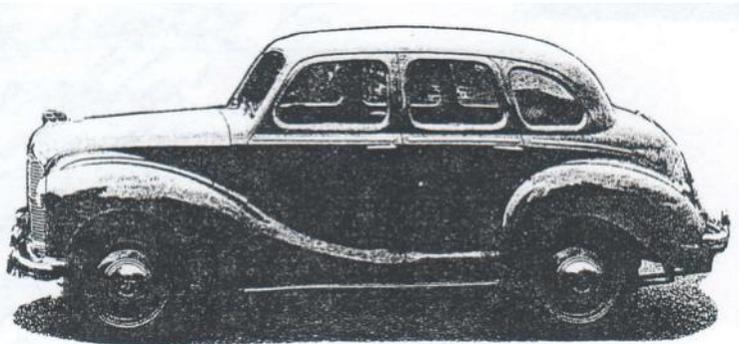
I honestly believe that the memories of my first car are better than the actual car. It was a 1949 Austin A-40. It had a crackly radio and cracked leather seats, but they were real leather. It had a sunroof that at least two skinny friends could squeeze through to lead the cheers after Burnaby South won the high school track meet. It also had stirrups on both sides of the back seat. Being prior to seat belts I assumed they were installed for passengers during flamboyant driving. However, some of my more worldly friends suggested an alternative use. It was relatively easy to work on mainly because nothing ever went wrong with it. The exception was the axles. They tended to snap under the full load of five teenagers pulling out or Harvey's Hamburger Fangio-style. One of the great things about the old Austin was the price. It cost fifty hard earned dollars (my Dad got it for me 'wholesale') while the insurance (remember the "pink

slip") cost \$150. The old green Austin took us cruising down Granville Street, up Mount Seymour and a daring trip to Bellingham. Naturally this was after the driving lessons from my patient Dad who doesn't know that Austin and I ventured out a little past the back lane for pre-sixteenth birthday driving experiences. I spent hours polishing Austin. I added specially imported mudflaps with the flying A insignia, the wide whitewalls of the day (the ones you slide in between the tire and the rim after you break the bead) and a special

chrome tip exhaust extension that added extra horsepower. It actually moved along quite well especially on an August afternoon with the sunroof open heading back from watching the best race of the second season at Westwood.

One day the following spring, I spotted another Austin. This one was an A-70 "with Healey engine, you know!" NO contest, I had to have it. It was... well, this is a story about my first car, not my second car. The last time I saw Austin it was being driven away with a happy new sixteen-year-old owner heading out to the Fraser Valley.

I wonder if there is a Western Classics reader somewhere in Abbotsford who is thinking about writing a story about his first car, a '49 A-40 that he bought for the bargain price of \$100 in 1960.



The Hollow Tree in Stanley Park

The Hollow Tree has been the sight for family portraits which also proudly displayed their mode of transportation since horse and buggy days in the eighteen hundreds. It was so popular to be photographed in this large natural wonder caused by a big lightning strike that by 1916 Stanley Park leased the rights to an 'official park photographer'. A small log cabin was built next to the tree and used for decades by the photographer. Through the ages tens of thousands of photographs were taken in the location. When sent to the 'old country' these pictures would im-

press the viewers with the grand natural beauty of our area. Unfortunately, the Hollow Tree is about to fall. It is propped up and fenced off waiting for the final decision as to what to do with it. It is the end of a long era for what might be the most photographed feature in western Canada. It has documented our families and our choice of transportation. The photograph on the left taken in the 1920's shows that even open top buses could fit into the tree. The photo to the right was taken in 1951 and is a family photo showing me at age one sitting on my father's knee with our new Morris Oxford. S.D.



Photo from "Frank Gowen's Vancouver: 1914-1931" by Fred Thirkell & Bob Scullion



**If it's British and it's steel and it has four wheels,
we probably made the steel.**

THE STEEL COMPANY OF WALES LIMITED

Suppliers of sheet steel to Britain's car-makers

