

# British Motor Club of Utah

November 2001

Volume 14 Number 4

## Happy Holidays!

As we've done for the past two years, we will not send out a December newsletter. Normally, there isn't a December event (this year is a little different—see the next article), so there's little need to send out a newsletter to communicate the details of an event. Plus, the club saves about \$50 in postage by not sending a newsletter in December.

So, from all of us who help keep the club newsletter going, and everyone who helps the club by planning, leading, and helping out at the events, we wish you Happy Holidays and a wonderful New Year!

## Winter Tech Session

Now that the driving season is coming to a close, it's time to get the car into the garage and do a bit of maintenance. And what better way to start than to get it tuned up and running right?

This Tech Session will focus on tuning up your car. There will be information on carbs, filters, plugs—all the usual tune up stuff.

Mike Bailey, owner of Bailey's Service, will be hosting this Tech Session on Saturday, December 1st at 10:00 am. Bailey's Service is located at 217 W 4800 S in Murray. The number of the garage is 743-2875.

Normally, we don't plan events in December because that month is busy enough as it is. However, December 1st was first available Saturday in the schedule.



## January Potluck

Our Potluck dinner and business meeting won't be in February as it usually is—the 2002 Winter Olympics and Special Olympics will take up most of February, so we thought it prudent to move our annual meeting to January.

Mark your calendars now for January 26 from 6:00 pm until about 10:00 pm. The location is St. Mark's Episcopal Church at 1st South and 2nd East.

We have held the Potluck at St. Paul's the past few years, but the hall we normally use at St. Paul's is closed for remodeling.

Mark and Karen Bradakis will be coordinating the food for the meeting, so plan on giving them a call to let them know what you'll be bringing.

Also, plan to help out with a donation at this year's Potluck. The room will cost us \$75, so we'll be asking for a small contribution from everyone to help cover the cost.

Because of the change from our ordinary schedule for the Potluck, this is just a "heads up"—look for detailed information in the January newsletter.

## Tips for the Brit-car mechanic

Since it's the time of year to put the car up and fix a few things that went wrong during the year, I've included a bunch of technical tips for all us part-time mechanics. Some tips are serious, so are not. I'll let you figure which is which. By the way, I'm not a professional mechanic, so follow this advice at your own risk.

Thanks to various car club newsletters for these bits.

**Generator or regulator?** For older Brit-cars that have a generator, here's a test for determining whether your charging problems stem from the generator or the regulator.

1. Disconnect both leads from the generator.
2. Jump the generator leads together with a piece of wire.
3. Connect a voltmeter to either terminal, and ground the other terminal.
4. Start the engine, run it up 1000 rpms slowly. If the voltmeter goes up to 20 volts or so, the generator is OK and it's the regulator.

**Is that yard-sale generator good?** Here's how to check a generator you bought at the yard sale for a measly 5 bucks:

1. Connect the Field terminal (the small one) to the generator's housing with a piece of wire.
2. Connect a jumper cable from a battery's pos post to the generator's Armature terminal (the large one).

3. Connect the other lead of the jumper cable to the negative post of the battery, then touch the other end of that cable to the generator's housing. If the generator turns like an electric motor, it's good.

**Simple tool, simple solution.** Besides the usual electrical tools such as a voltmeter, jumper wires, crimpers, etc., don't forget to include a pencil eraser. It works great to clean up electrical contacts, such as door jamb switches, relay and fuse block terminals, and horn button contacts.

**Remove that rusty bolt.** Sometimes it's easier to take your time to get the bolt off than to pay a machinist to drill and tap after you've broken it off. Here's some tips:

1. **Patience.** Take your time and you can usually get the bolt or stud out.
2. If the bolt head is rounded off (was it because you used an SAE Crescent wrench on that metric or Whitworth bolt/nut?), you can try vice grips. On smaller bolts, you might try cutting a slot across the bolt head and using a flat-blade screwdriver.
3. **Tap!** Sometimes some gentle tapping on the head of the bolt, or on the flats, can loosen a rusted bolt. Be sure to use plenty of penetrating oil (CRC-56, WD-40, or AeroKroil) to loosen it.
4. **Impact it.** Sometimes an impact driver (the tool that you hit with a hammer while it's engaged with the bolt/screw) will help remove that stubborn bolt or screw. It just combines the tapping idea with the normal turning process. Again, use penetrating oil for best results.
5. **Heat it up.** Make that bolt nut hot to expand it slightly. Just don't burn down the garage.
6. **Split it.** In an extreme case, use a hacksaw to split the nut, then pry the nut off. "Nut splitter" tools are available that accomplish the same task.
7. **Cut it.** If the bolt isn't threaded into

the part, but simply runs through the part, and all attempts to remove the bolt's nut, you can cut or grind off the head, then tap the bolt out.

8. **Locking nuts.** Some bolts use two nuts to "jamb" or lock the nuts to prevent loosening. It's tempting to put a wrench on and turn both off the bolt or stud at once, thereby saving a bit of time. It's also a great way to increase your cuss-word vocabulary. Take your time, and use two wrenches to remove jammed nuts: put the torque on the other wrench in the process, not the bolt/stud.
9. **Use good tools.** That cheap set of rounded out sockets will only cause you grief. Give them to someone you don't like, and invest in some good ones for yourself.
10. **Use good fasteners.** Once you get that bolt/stud out, make sure it's in good shape: run a die down the threads, clean it up with a wire brush or wheel, run a tap through the nut or bolt hole, clean up that slightly rounded head. If in doubt, replace it with new, using a good grade (such as grade 8) bolt/nut rather than the cheap ones from the corner hardware store.
11. **Think of the future.** Almost every bolt or screw that goes on must someday come off. In most cases, you should lube it with a good anti-seize, engine assembly grease, or even Vaseline so it's easier to get off somewhere down the road.
12. **Torque it.** Don't just tighten it until you can't tighten it any more—find out the proper torque and make it that. This is especially true for bolts on engine parts.

**Tools.** Here's some tools that no shop can do without. Add them to your Christmas list!

**Pliers.** Used to round off bolt heads.

**Hammer.** Originally, an instrument of war; now used to find expensive parts not far the thing you wanted to hit.

## The Lucas Calendar

This calendar works about as well as its namesake, so use it with care. Club events have bold dates. The others you may find interesting. All events are subject to change.

**December 1.** Tech Session on tune-ups at Bailey's Service. See article in this newsletter.

**January 26, 2002.** Pot-luck dinner and business meeting. Karen Bradakis, 364-3251.

**February, 2002.** Because of the 2002 Winter Olympics, there will not be an event this month.

**Mechanic's knife.** Used to open boxes while the UPS guy watches; works especially well on boxes containing new leather seat kits and replacement convertible tops.

**Electric hand drill.** This tool is used to spin pop rivets in their holes until you die of old age. Can also be used to make neat swirly marks all around the place you wanted to drill a hole.

**Hacksaw.** A tool designed on the Ouija board principal: it transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you try to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

**Vice-grips.** Used to round off bolt heads, and to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

**Oxyacetylene torch.** Used to find flammable objects in and around your garage.

**Whitworth sockets.** A sadistic British plot to confuse mechanics, Whitworth tools are used when metric and SAE tools fail to fit a bolt or nut on your British car, regardless of how old the car is.

**Drill press.** A tool designed to suddenly snatch that length of flat bar stock out of your hands and smacking it into your chest.

**Wire wheel.** Used to clean small parts and throw them somewhere under your workbench. Also useful for removing warts, skin, and those pesky fingerprints from your hands and fingers.

**Hydraulic floor jack.** Used to measure the height of jackstands. Also used to find the weak spots in the floorboard of your car.

**Eight-foot long Doug fir 2x4.** Inexpensive, but readily available, tool for getting your car off of the hydraulic floor jack.

**Gasket scraper.** Tool used for scratching the paint in your car's engine bay; also used to scrape old gaskets off engine parts.

**E-Z out.** A tool designed to snap off in bolt holes and is impossible to drill out.

**Hydraulic engine hoist.** Used to test the strength of ground straps and mounting bolts you forgot to remove when trying to take the engine out of your car.

**Timing light.** No known use except to find oil leaks around the front of an engine.

**Craftsman 1/2" x 16" screwdriver.** A pry bar that's guaranteed forever.

**Battery electrolyte tester.** A handy tool for transferring sulfuric acid from a battery to your toolbox after helping you determine your battery is as dead as you thought it was.

**Aviation tin snips.** See Hacksaw, above.

**Trouble light.** A tool used to help mechanics get enough vitamin D (the sunshine vitamin) while under cars. Consumes light bulbs at a frightening rate. The two-part name is only partly correct: they're trouble, but seldom light.

**Phillips screwdriver.** Fancy name for a tool used to punch holes in the foil-type inner covers on anti-freeze jugs, Heet, and brake fluid. Also used to round out the heads on those funny cross-slotted screws.

**Hose cutter.** Used to cut hoses 1" too short.

**Pry bar.** Used to crush \$200 air pumps while tightening a \$5 fan belt.

**All the way to the rim.** Can't get the headlight rim off so you can replace the headlight? Here's a tool that works well, especially on MGBs: a paint can opener. Insert the tool and hook it on the bottom of the rim, then push down on the top of the rim with the palm of your hand while pulling at the bottom with the tool. The rim should pop off the retaining clip.

**Fuel pump problems?** If the electric fuel pump on your Brit-car makes the right noise, but still doesn't seem to deliver fuel, check for an air leak. Remove the fuel hose at the carb's float chamber and put the end of the hose into a clear jar partially filled with gasoline (No smoking or sparks, please!). Turn on the ignition. If you see a stream of air bubbles, there's an air leak somewhere between the pump and the carb.

**Starter left you stranded?** Sometimes a badly worn ring gear on your flywheel can cause the starter gear to stick on the ring gear. To coax it free, put the car in 4th gear and gently rock it backwards. If it does get it free and you get the car started, replace the ring gear once you get the car back into the garage (easier said than done!).

**Oil for shocks.** Shock absorbers, that is. And they do need oil from time to time. To check the oil level, remove the filler plug (sometimes, for the rear shocks, you must remove a plastic plug from inside the car to see the filler plug) and make sure the oil level is up to the bottom of the plug-hole threads. If it isn't, fill it up with Armstrong shock oil available from your Brit-car parts supplier. If you can't find shock oil, use 20 or 30 weight motorcycle fork oil. A small pump-type oil can with a flexible spout works well to add the oil. Check the oil level once a year; if the shock is leaking oil, replace the shock seals or the entire shock.

**Cotter pins.** In some instances, such as the nut on the front spindles, a cotter pin is used to secure the nut to prevent it from backing off. Here's some tips for using cotter pins on castellated nuts:

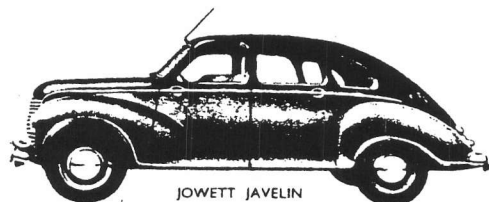
1. Use the correct size of cotter pin. The pin should fit through the hole in the bolt snugly, with little side play. The

most popular sizes of cotter pins are 1/16", 3/32", and 1/8" in diameter.

2. For most uses, the cotter pin should be brass or cadmium plated for corrosion resistance; cotter pins used inside the engine can be plain steel.
3. The head (eye) of the cotter pin should be parallel to the length of the bolt; use a hammer to tap the eye into the slot of the nut.
4. Bend the top prong of the cotter pin up and over the top of the bolt. It should not extend past the far diameter of the bolt (cut the prong if necessary).
5. Bend the bottom prong of the cotter pin down to the base of the nut; cut it to the right size, if necessary, so that it doesn't extend past the base of the nut nor rest against the surface of the washer under the nut.
6. Tapping with a hammer is the easiest way of bending the pin; however, don't make the bend sharp as this weakens the pin. A slight-radiused bend is stronger.
7. In some cases, you must bend the prongs around the outside of the nut. In this case, bend the prongs up against the closest flats on the nut, but do not let the prongs extend beyond the widest "points" on the nut.

## Autojumble

For Sale, many MG Midget (or Sprite) parts. Most are from a '73 Midget: doors, front fenders (wings), top with bows (bonnet), rear axle, head rests, wheels, etc. If you are looking for a part, give me a call. I need to reduce the collection. Bill Van Moorhem, 801-582-9223.





## Exchequer report

Beginning Balance	\$1943.37
members contrib.	+518.00
interest income	+5.11
Bal. with income	2466.48

Newsletter expense	
August	-53.45
September	-55.74
October	-56.68
Total expenses	165.87

Ending balance \$2300.61



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This Newsletter is published by the British Motor Club of Utah, Ltd., a non-profit corporation of British automobile owners. The group holds monthly events such as drives, picnics, technical sessions, and more. We welcome owners (or potential owners) of British cars, in any condition, to the group. Membership is free, but we ask for a donation at events to support the Newsletter and other activities. If you would like to join the group, send your name, address, and a list of British cars owned to **Bruce Schilling**, 917 East Mill Creek Way, Salt Lake City, Utah 84106, or to Bruce's email address shown above.

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