

THE CLEAR HOOTER!

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB



Volume 34 Number 5, June, 2018

WWW.CENTRALCOASTBRITISHCARCLUB.COM



**Victor Van Tress's 1965 MGB owned for 48 years, see
Information about the car next page.**

Cover Story—The Underground Gran Prix

By Victor Van Tress

I was raised near Mulholland Drive. When I got my first car that is the first place I headed. Driving fast across Mulholland started as soon as there was a Mulholland Drive, around in 1924. Famous people, and people who became infamous, raced up there. Actors like Gary Cooper and John Caradine were reported to have flogged their Deussenbergs across "The Hill". Phil Hill, Max Balchowsky, Dan Gurney, Steve McQueen and others all found that the ridge route road atop the Santa Monica Mountains was a perfect playground for sports cars. As time went on and people started to build houses in the area, the playground became just another Los Angeles traffic jam. However, from the summer of 1970 to sometime in 1974 I was there most every night in my '65 MGB.

I always knew where Mulholland Drive was though I didn't find out just who Mulholland was for many years. From the age of 11, Mulholland Drive was where I would take whatever car I had taken out of my own driveway. It started with my Mothers car ('63 Chevy Impala). However once my brother and his friends started parking their cars at the house, things really got fun. '63 Studebaker GT Hawk 4'speed, '66 Corvair, Austin Healey A100, '58 Aston Martin DB4B. They all wound up going across the hill. Speed was not the goal at that time. I just wanted to drive.

Things got even better in time as Mom got a boy friend that owned a Chevrolet and an Import Dealership. 16 years old and I was driving all of the best. 70 1/2 Camaro, '70 Monte Carlo, Lotus S2 130, Jaguar E-Type, I was in heaven (but still not driving fast).

Then, August 1970 I got the MGB. I was, shall we say, somewhat underwhelmed after having driven all those other cars. I had been driving alot of trick stuff. But the "B" was mine and I still got to keep my first car. The "B" really had only one purpose and that was to drive the hill. I drove that thing everywhere without ever touching Ventura or Sunset Blvd.

Then I see cars parked at Bowmont Street & Mulholland and bunch of people milling about. All they talked about was cars and racing. I was in heaven. It turned out that the "Track" was well defined as going between Coldwater and ending at the residential area. The corners even had names like Carl's (where he went off) Pole Turns, Mini Esse's and The Pits. Sometimes they would take off en mass and head out to various areas where they could enjoy their cars and their skills. But I was an outsider and was too shy to break into the group. I'd follow them on different runs but stayed in the back with the MGB.

One night I'm coming up Coldwater in the MGB from the Valley side and I see these headlights behind me. I believed them to be a Mini Cooper and figured I should be able to get away from him having already chased a Mini Cooper S before. So we go wailing up Coldwater, full tilt racing line between the two Coldwater's, blast up the Pole Turns and arrive at The Pits in full view of everyone and going as fast as I could. Right about then, the Mini pulls out and passes me like I was standing still. But that was no Mini. It was a white Lotus Super 7 with some Cosworth BDA motor in it. Dang, I think to myself and backed out of the gas. But oh well what the hell, and with that I get back into the gas. Raced him all the way to the residential area and turned around and came back up behind him. There was no way I could catch that guy but he didn't disappear from me either.

When I pulled into the pit, I was greeted as a hero. I was now accepted. They figured that it was cool that I even tried to race a Lotus with a MGB. I didn't tell them that I didn't know it was a Lotus. From that time on I challenged all comers. Up on the hill it mattered less of what you had as to how well you drove the road and I knew the road very well. In fact little did I know I was making a name for myself because I was in an MGB. (Cont. on next page)

Continuation of Cover Article

A stone stock MGB was (is) a very capable car on mountain roads like Mulholland because it is so very stable. Up rating the springs and/or shocks would make the car less capable of staying on the ground. A Mulholland car needs to have suspension travel and predictable handling. This is where the MGB excelled.

Datsun 510's with BRE's Mulholland suspension kits were easy pray because they were bouncing off the ground half the time. And full-blown racecars were all over the place. So a car prepared for The Hill has big tires (for the period), sway bars (if it needed them) and better brakes. But the springs and engine were generally left alone.

All that is many years ago and I can say that most all of those guys I met up there did in fact go SCCA and IMSA racing. I went on to win 2 SCCA national Championships in a Showroom Stock B category. I can tell you that we were all very surprised that racing at Riverside Raceway or Willow Springs was allot easier than up on The Hill as all the traffic was going the same direction, for the same reason, no cliffs and no coyote's and there were emergency people everywhere cheering you on. Probably the best thing was it took away any desire to street race, as when you stop and think about it one really can't race on the street, you can only be the dumbest one.

But I still have the same MGB. I made a promise to myself that I would never crash it and so I guess I can never sell it as I like to keep my promises. And no, the car is tight as a drum and fast as ever with 133,000 miles to date.

British Slang

New Member:

John Humen
Buellton, CA
1950 Jaguar MkV Saloon

Fender - *wing*

Glove compartment - *cubby box*

Car hood - *bonnet*

Muffler - *silencer*

Outlet - *power point*

BOOKS, BOOKS AND MORE BOOKS 122 OF THEM FOR SALE

The club has been given a collection of books that came from the Wellwood Auto Restoration Shop, consisting of service manuals and reference books and what we call coffee table books on a wide variety of autos, mainly British. This collection belonged to Dave Wellwood and he used them in his shop over the years as reference.

We are asking \$10 for each book. Half of all proceeds will be given back to the Wellwood family as a way of saying thank you for giving these books to the club.

Any books purchased can be mailed to you (at USPS book rate), or can be picked up at the club's monthly meeting. Please contact ccbcbbooks@gmail.com for a complete list



GENERAL MEETINGS:

Are held at 7:00 pm on the 1st Tuesday of each month unless it falls on a holiday at:

Carrows Restaurant

2401 E Harbor Blvd, Ventura, CA 93001

2018 GENERAL MEETING DATES:

June 5, July 3, Aug. 7, Sept. 4, Oct. 2, Nov. 6

Board meetings take place according to the needs of the club, usually before or after the club's General Meeting; but as often as is deemed necessary at the discretion of the Club President.

NEWSLETTER

THE CLEAR HOOTER is your Club Newsletter and it is published monthly. The deadline for submission of any camera ready or digital ads, stories, reports and information that you'd like to see in the next issue is the **23rd** of the month prior to publication.

Items may be sent to the editor at:
dtreid@gmail.com

For Sale ads are free to members.

Non-members pay \$25. Ads run 3 months, unless otherwise indicated by the seller. Any commercial ad or to open a commercial account please contact Allen Merriam,
alyn123@sbcglobal.net

Membership dues are \$40 to join and \$30 to renew yearly. Make sure we have your e-mail for newsletter deliveries. If you need to have one snail mailed to you please let the editor know, dtreid@gmail.com Extra \$5.00 for mailed newsletters, payable with your dues.

Your CCBCC Board Members For 2018

PRESIDENT

Mike Gustafson mikegus999@gmail.com

PRESIDENT CONSULT (non-voting)

Jim Hill jhill@oilguys.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Dave Reid mgtc48@hotmail.com

RECORDER Martin Keller

mhkflyer52@gmail.com

TREASURER Chris Vujea

CCBCCbooks2017@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

Pam Justin pjquilter1@hotmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Terry Schuller dtreid@gmail.com

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WEBMASTER

Patrick Redd (805) 746-5379

CLUB PHOTOGRAPHER (non-voting)

Dave Reid mgtc48@hotmail.com

REGALIA & RAFFLE (Non Board

member) Julie Root (805)676-1464)

THE CLEAR HOOTER! Is the newsletter of the Central Coast British Car Club, formerly The Central Coast Triumphs, founded in 1984 by Mrs. Lee Bloomquist and is a chapter of the VTR, Vintage Triumph Register

CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB
2674 E. Main St. #E 614,
Ventura, CA 93003

Central Coast British Car Club, Inc. is a NONPROFIT Mutual Benefit Corporation registered in the State of California

Photos from the Nethercutt Visit



Looked who showed up, surprise, Sue Wellwood

MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB GENERAL MEETING April 3, 2018



Meeting brought to order by Joel Justin, for Michael Gustafson at 7 pm at Carrows Restaurant, Ventura, CA.

Number of members present at start of meeting: 23

Board Members in Attendance:

President:	Michael Gustafson	<u>No</u>
Vice President:	Dave Reid	<u>No</u>
Treasure:	Chris Vujea	<u>Yes</u>
Recorder:	Martin Keller	<u>Yes</u>
Membership:	Pam & Joel Justin	<u>Yes</u>
Newsletter Editor:	Terry Schuller	<u>No</u>
Advertising:	Allen & Lynn Merriam	<u>Yes</u>
Webmaster:	Patrick Redd	<u>Yes</u>
Presidents Advisor:	Jim Hill	<u>No</u>

Notes:

Newsletter editor still in need of articles and photos for the newsletters. If you have a story that you would want to share with the club then please submit it to the editor of the newsletter

Topic 1: Volunteers for the car show are needed for July 15, 2018

The car show committee will be requesting your assistance to fill spots that will need to be maned the day of the car show. These positions are for a short time at the beginning and during the show. If you can help please contact Michael Gustafson or Joel Justin. A sign-up sheet will be passed around the next club meeting that will have the positions that are in need of volunteers.

Topic 2: Wine Tour 2018 Video Showing

Video of the Wine Tour was shown at the meeting showing the fun that the group had on the tour. Neal Subic did a good job of compiling the photos and making the video of the weekend.

Topic 3: 2018 Car Show Flyers

The flyers for the July 15, 2018 car show have been printed and will be handed out at Queen's English car show and display this April 22, 2018. Flyers have also been handed out to a number of vendors and other clubs and if you want some to hand out for the club contact Michael Gustafson or Joel Justin.

"JULIE TIME" presented by: Julie Root

Starbucks Gift Card=Frank Powel

Subway Gift Card=Alex Mercurio

Baja Fresh Gift Card=Glen Dewar

Wood Ranch Gift Card=Glen Dewar

Starbucks Gift Card=Ron Butler

Trader Joe's Gift Card=Bob Ives

April Birthday drawing:

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the following members. Ron Root, Frank Powel, Ron Butler, Bill Guzeman and Jim Heaton

Winner of the Carrow's Gift Card for April: **Ron Butler**

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm by Joel Justin for Michael Gustafson

MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB GENERAL MEETING May 1, 2018



Meeting brought to order by: Michael Gustafson CCBCC President at 7 pm at Carrows Restaurant, Ventura, CA.

Number of members present at start of meeting: 26

Board Members in Attendance:

President:	Michael Gustafson	<u>Yes</u>
Vice President:	Dave Reid	<u>Yes</u>
Treasure:	Chris Vujea	<u>Yes</u>
Recorder:	Martin Keller	<u>Yes</u>
Membership:	Pam & Joel Justin	<u>Yes</u>
Newsletter Editor:	Terry Schuller	<u>Yes</u>
Advertising:	Allen & Lynn Merriam	<u>Yes</u>
Webmaster:	Patrick Redd	<u>Yes</u>
Presidents Advisor:	Jim Hill	<u>No</u>

Notes:

The newsletter editor is still in need of articles for the clubs news letter so if you have an article that you wish to share with the club please contact Terry Schuller at dtreid@gmail.com so she can use it for the news letter. Terry is also interested in photos of your British Car and any stories you might have of it or an adventure you have had in your car.

Topic 1: Car Show Shirt Design

Patrick Reid and Michael Gustafson and Joel Justin are developing the design for the show shirt and have contacted the company that will be doing the design on the shirts for the show. If you wish to have a special shirt or need a new club shirt please let Michael or Pam Justin know so that it can be printed at the time the shirts are being made.

Topic 2: Viewing of Mike Taggart's Car Collection

Allen Merriam will be arranging for the club to visit this private collection as a club event that will also be a drive and lunch after the tour of the car collection which is located in Ojai. If you're interested in attending this type of event please let any of the board members know at any meeting or club event.

Topic 3: Sail / Flag's for the Car Show

Because of the Thomas Fire and the loss of our club presidents home in the fire the club will be replacing the two sail / flags for this year's car show. The board approved the purchase and Chris Vujea has stepped up to finding the proper company to supply the new banners for the club.

Topic 4: Wellwood Books

We still have a number of books from the Wellwood Auto Restoration collection so if you have or want a specific book that is on the list send an email to CCBCC.Books@gmail.com with your request and we will let you

"JULIE TIME" presented by: Julie Root

Snapper Jacks Gift Card=Carl Otten
California Pizza Kitchen Gift Card=Chris Vujea
Star Bucks Gift Card=Gerald Davies
Trader Joe's Gift Card=Brad Cardwell

Baja Fresh Gift Card=Michael Gustafson
Habit Gift Card=Bob Ives
Wood Ranch Gift Card=Terry Schuller

Birthday Gift Card Drawing for members at the meeting with a birthday in the month of May.

Pam Justin and Junie Cooper both have B-Days this month and were at the meeting making them eligible for this drawing. Happy Birthday to both members and any others in the club that were not at the meeting. Pam Justin was the winner of the B-Day Gift Card this month.



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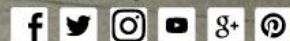


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CCBCC UPCOMING EVENTS



June 2' CCBCC drive/picnic to Bridlewood Estate Winery in Santa Ynez. The drive is a little over 60 miles each way and will take about an hour and 15 minutes on the US101 through Santa Barbara until we turn inland at the San Marcos Pass (HWY 154) heading to Santa Ynez.

Bring your picnic lunch to eat at tables that the winery has reserved for our club on their veranda. We will be parked together as our club on the winery's crush pad that is adjacent to a large public grassy area where we can set out lawn chairs, socialize and enjoy the day in a beautiful setting.

If you haven't been before, Bridlewood Estate Winery is a beautiful place in a beautiful setting to visit <http://www.bridlewoodestatewinery.com/>, and we hope you can make it on this trip.

Meet: in Ventura at the **Golden China Restaurant parking lot** at **9:30 AM**
Leave: **10:00 AM** so we arrive just after the winery opens at 11:00 AM

If you are planning to do a tasting, there is typically a tasting fee, however Wine Club Members get 4 free tastings each (and discounted purchases of wine and merchandise). Several of us are already members, so if you are a member of the Bridlewood wine club, please let us know.

If you have any questions about this event, and if you plan to attend, please let us know so we get your name on the attendee list, and so we can give the winery an approximate head count.

Contact Mike Gustafson at mikegus999@gmail.com, or Neal Subic at neal@nksubic.com.

June 30, Run to Peterson Museum with lunch at museum restaurant [Drago Ristorante](#)

Costs: Admission \$13-16 depending on age, view 3 floors of cars on your own, Vault Tour w/ docent at 1:30 is \$30, tickets are available to purchase online get yours before they are gone. Admission and tour tickets need to be purchased online <https://www.petersen.org/tickets/>
Parking \$13 paid at museum garage. The vault tour is of cars not on exhibit on the other 3 floors. If you did not sign up and want to go, buy those tickets online and let Dave Reid know: dtreid@gmail.com
The only limiting thing is how many tickets they sell for the vault tour at a particular time. We will caravan there and those instructions will be coming June 20th if you have signed up or let Dave know you are coming.

CCBCC ANNUAL BRITISH CAR SHOW: SUNDAY, JULY 15, 2018

The Channel Islands Harbor has been reserved. Mark your calendars for this great event. See info throughout the newsletter. Contact Mike Gustafson at mikegus999@gmail.com for more information or to sign up to help.

CCBCC MILLE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 - SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2018

Last year's Mille was such a success, we decided to do it again. This year we will be going a 5 day trip covering about 1,200 miles (a Millecinquecento actually). We will be staying at the Carmel Lodge in Carmel, The Majestic (formally The Ahwahnee) in Yosemite Valley, the Lake View Lodge in Lee Vining and The Inn at Death Valley (formally Furnace Creek Resort) in Death Valley. The trip is already full, but if you'd like to be put on a waiting list, contact Joel Justin at j_bar_j@hotmail.com.

TRIUMPHEST: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 - SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2018

Triumphest will be in Sacramento this year. It is hosted by the Triumph Travelers Sports Car Club in the Bay Area. For additional information or to register, see <http://www.triumphfest.org/>.

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Channel Islands Harbor Park, 3600 Harbor Blvd, Oxnard California**Registrant check-in 7:30 to 11 am – Show is from 9 am to 2:30 pm****REGISTRATION FEES: \$35.00 Per vehicle received before June 30th****\$45.00 per vehicle after June 30th and day of show****Pre-registration will close on June 30, 2018**

APPLICANT NAME _____ CLUB _____

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VEHICLE #1: MAKE _____ MODEL _____ YEAR _____ COLOR _____

VEHICLE #:2 MAKE _____ MODEL _____ YEAR _____ COLOR _____

Total Registration Fees \$ _____***A free Event T-Shirt is included with all vehicle registrations, for the first 125 applicants.******Day of show registrants are not guaranteed a T-Shirt*****T-shirt size:** XXL XL L M S (Circle One - all shirts are men's sizes)**PLEASE READ, SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM WITH YOUR REGISTRATION FEES:**

This release of liability specifically includes losses caused by negligence, whether active or passive, the CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB, or any of their agents, members, or the City of Oxnard, State of California. Entrant agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB, their directors, members, agents, and the City of Oxnard, State of California from any and all liability, losses, damages, injuries, and claims by any person arising out of the condition, location or operation of the entrant's vehicle on or about the premises of Show location in connection to the CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB All British Car Show to which the application relates.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____/_____/_____

Make Checks Payable to: CCBCC**Mail To: CCBCC****2018 CCBCC CAR SHOW****2674 East Main Street #E614****Ventura, CA. 93003****PayPal Account Information:****centralcoastbritish@gmail.com****If paying by PayPal, please click ADD A NOTE
and include **ALL** of the above information*****For additional information, please contact:*****Car Show Chairman: MICHAEL GUSTAFSON mikegus999@gmail.com****Registrar: JOEL JUSTIN j_bar_j@hotmail.com****www.centralcoastbritishcarclub.com**

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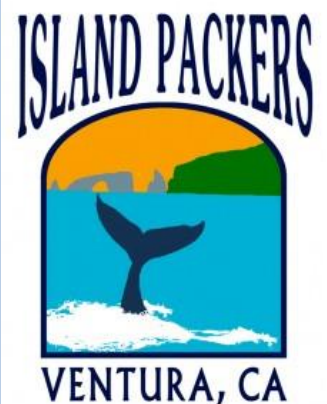


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This newsletter is long as I was unable to put one out for May and there will not be one for July.

The newsletter is a vital piece of communication to keep members informed of what is happening within our club and lists events that are happening that may be of interest to club members.

I would like to feature one member's British car on the cover of each newsletter. If you would like your ride displayed on the cover, please send me a high resolution picture of it in a nice place (not just the parking lot at work!!) to dtreid@gmail.com

I have photos through the next newsletter; but nothing beyond

ARTICLES NEEDED:

The newsletter is in need of articles on anything to do with the club or british cars. Please use Microsoft Word and save as a document. If possible use font Arial and do not do any formatting, just paragraphs of words.

Any pictures that you have please put them as attachments to my e-mail: dtreid@gmail.com

THE BRITISH ARE COMING - A CELEBRATION OF FINE BRITISH AUTOMOBILES TO OPEN MONTEREY CAR WEEK ON AUGUST 21, 2018

Monterey, California – *The Rule Britannia Concours of Elegance* – A Celebration of Fine British Automobiles® is the latest addition to the calendar for Monterey Car Week and will debut at the Laguna Seca Golf Ranch on Tuesday, August 21, 2018 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

An exclusive gala for British marques and their legion of admirers and enthusiasts, *Rule Britannia* is the first event on the Monterey Peninsula to focus on this important, but underserved community. In addition to almost 200 concours-level automobiles arrayed on the ninth and eighteenth fairways, there will also be a corral for club members to display their own vehicles.

This inaugural event will feature Jaguar as the honored marque and grant special recognition to the victor of the 1956 24 Hours of Le Mans, the iconic D-type from Ecurie Ecosse. Among the numerous attractions for attendees will be musical performances, cultural exhibits, seminars, and a wide array of gourmet foods.

According to William Hiland, the event's chairman, "An event for British automobiles is long overdue at Monterey and we hope to celebrate the best of Britain with a party that guests will return to year after year."

On display will be very rare and historically significant British automobiles, the cost to register your concours-level automobile is \$250. Registered cars will receive 2 admission tickets per car, 1 VIP swag bag with specialized gifts including an autographed copy of *Rule Britannia – When British Sports Cars Saved a Nation*, an award-winning volume, valued at \$90., from noted historian John Nikas and world-famous photographer Michael Furman. A special catered luncheon for 2 from one of Monterey's most celebrated chefs, a fine selection of sparkling wines, hors d'oeuvres, artisan cheeses, fine coffees and teas that can be enjoyed throughout the day.

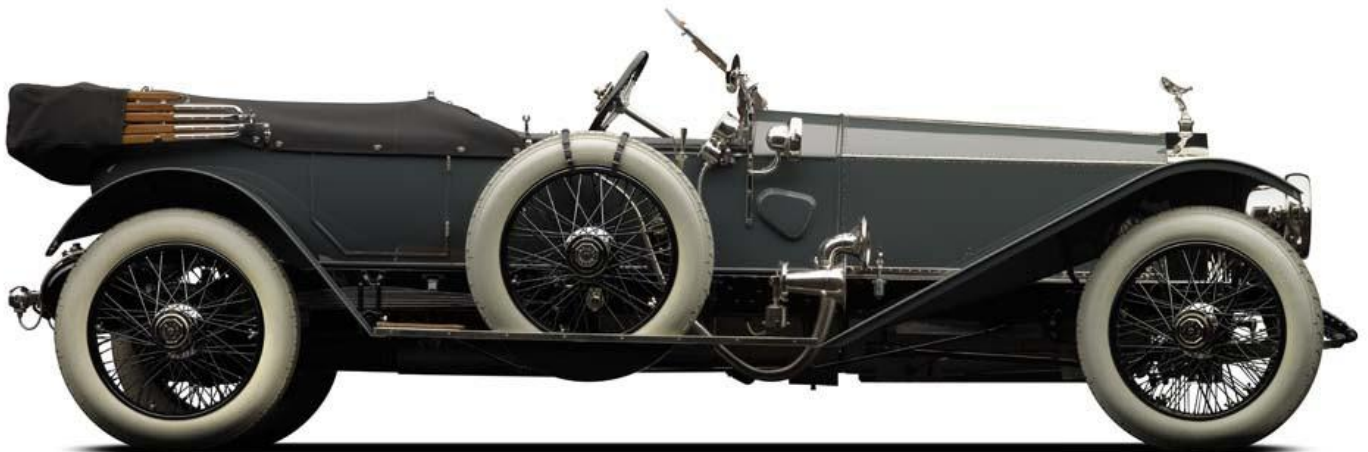
Please visit rulebritanniaconcours.com for details, updates and registration.

On display will be very rare and historically significant British automobiles, the cost to register your concours-level automobile is \$250. Registered cars will receive 2 admission tickets per car, 1 VIP swag bag with specialized gifts including an autographed copy of *Rule Britannia – When British Sports Cars Saved a Nation*, an award-winning volume, valued at \$90., from noted historian John Nikas and world-famous photographer Michael Furman. A special catered luncheon for 2 from one of Monterey's most celebrated chefs, a fine selection of sparkling wines, hors d'oeuvres, artisan cheeses, fine coffees and teas that can be enjoyed throughout the day.

For spectators seeking an upscale experience, a VIP package for \$175 per person will receive a complimentary swag bag with specialized gifts, reserved seating accommodations, a catered luncheon from one of Monterey's most celebrated chefs, a fine selection of sparkling wines, hors d'oeuvres, artisan cheeses, fine coffees and teas that can be enjoyed throughout the day. The first 100 guests to sign up will receive (one per couple) an autographed copy of *Rule Britannia – When British Sports Cars Saved a Nation*, an award-winning volume, valued at \$90., from noted historian John Nikas and world-famous photographer Michael Furman.

General admission tickets are \$75, which include admission and a program, along with a selection of wine tastings, hors d'oeuvres, artisan cheeses, fine coffees and teas that can be enjoyed throughout the day. Signature cocktails and an array of fine wines are available for purchase, as well as a wide variety of gourmet foods. Parking is free.

Please visit rulebritanniaconcours.com for details, updates and registration.



Photos from State Street National Car Show, Santa Barbara



There were 6 cars and 10 people from the club who showed up at the show. Michael Gustafson too a third prize in the British category.



5 of the 6 cars lined up ready to take off



An Alvis from L.A. Won first place in the British category



Neal, & Maggie Subic with their son



The CCBCC cars lined up on State street

Interesting phone photos from the show





35

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(May 10-June 8, 2018): \$20

Day-of Registration: \$25

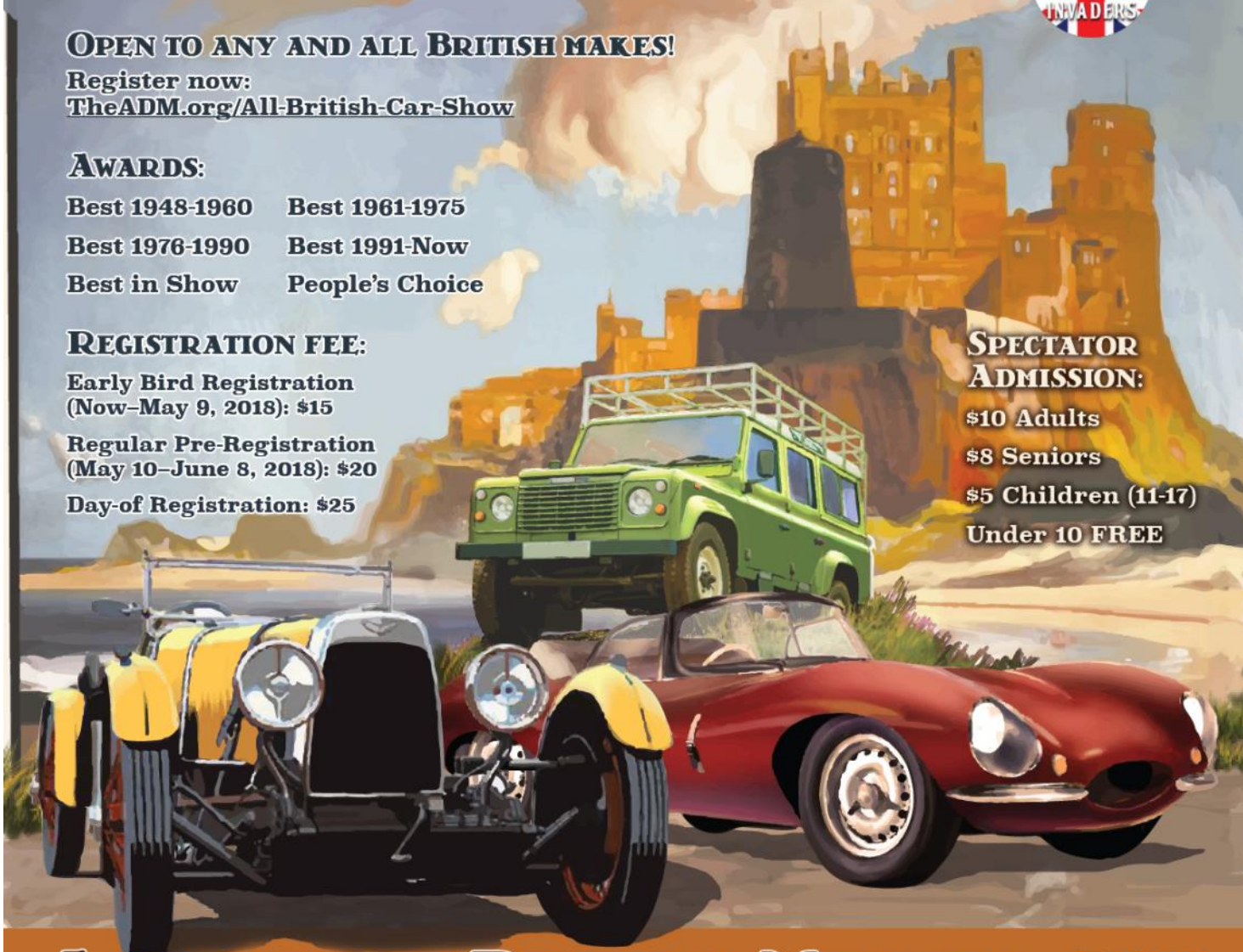
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THIS IS WHO WE ARE



David Williams R & D Shop Supervisor ASE Master Technician <i>Moss employee since 2005</i>	David Aidnik Chief Engineer <i>Moss employee since 2013</i>	Mike Vickers Product Quality Assurance Supervisor <i>Moss employee since 1986</i>
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05AT22T

Al Lago Wine Tasting and Movie Night

by Joel Justin

It was a day of unexpected (in a good way) surprises. Since Pam and I live 3 minutes from Al Lago, we didn't meet the group for the drive, but rather spent the time readying the house for the post-wine tasting activities. Mike Gustafson volunteered lead the drive, meeting the group at K-Mart in Santa Paula. The drive took the group along South Mountain Road to Balcom Canyon Road before hitting the 118. Then thru Somis on Las Posas to Upland and finally to Santa Rosa Road and Al Lago.

Pam and I, along with John and Jean Cook (Mille SAG Wagon drivers for those of you who went) got there a little ahead of the group to unload the "kitty litter" boxes (i.e. cardboard) to put under all our drippy British cars. Fortunately, our newly acquired Triumph 2000 has plenty of boot space. We did encounter one small problem though. Their driveway is quite steep. I didn't think much about it so I headed up in 2nd gear. We got about half way up and couldn't make it. So I backed down (fortunately it was a straight driveway) and tried again in 1st gear. Still no go. I



wasn't sure what to try next, when John suggested they get out. I dropped them off and took another run. Piece of cake. I'm not sure John thought his idea was so great because after about 5 minutes, they were only about halfway up the driveway huffing and puffing. At least they got their workout!



Soon everyone arrived. Mike and Sandra in their TR6, Rand and Vicky in their TR250, Craig and Kathy in their TR6, Ron in his TR3, Bob and Heidi in their MG TF, Ron and Julie in their TR6, Jack and Pam in their MGB, Joe in his TR6, Gary and Junie in their (now fuel injected) MGB, and Jason and Marilyn in their TR250. And of course Neal and Maggie in their Triumph Accord and Martin and Chris in their Triumph Kia.

As I said before, the driveway was quite steep, so we instructed people to wait until the car ahead was at least halfway up before starting the ascent. With everyone backing in to their parking space and cardboard in place, we entered the home of Blair and Simone (side note: Blair's last name is Allan and Simone's is Lagomarsino – yes, that Lagomarsino. That's where the name Al Lago comes from). And what a home it is. It sits atop a ridge with a front yard view of the Santa Rosa Valley and a backyard view of the Arroyo Santa Rosa. They have 100 Avocado trees along with a vegetable garden and a little over 2 acres of vineyard. And the house – maybe I should call it a mansion – is gorgeous. Done in an Italian style, it's all beautiful stonework.



When Pam and I met them a couple of weeks ago to discuss logistics, we elected to do the tasting indoors. Even though the outdoor setting is beautiful, it gets direct sun in the afternoon and can get quite warm. Of course, the day was overcast, but that was OK. We were set up on two long tables in the entryway and Simone had already poured out first flight of three wines for us.

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More pictures from Al Lago Winery and Movie night at the Justins



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But before we could drink, she had to tell us about the food she prepared. Almonds with rosemary and sea salt, Mozzetta Italian olives, bread with dipping oil, and meatballs with fresh (tomatoes picked from their garden that morning) pasta sauce.

We tasted 9 wines in all (3 flights of 3 wines each). And as we began each flight, Blair told us about the wines as well as answered the plethora of questions we all had for him. Between the 2nd and 3rd flights, he took us out to the vineyard where he described their growing and picking process. What amazed me the most was that all their wine comes from grapes in their vineyard at their home and with only 2 acres, they are able to produce 340 cases of wine! They have 6 (or was it 8) varietals – Pinot Noir, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Sangiovese, and I don't remember if there were others.

Needless to say, the wine was outstanding, the food even better and our hosts incredible. I think 5 or 6 people joined their wine club and almost everyone went home with several bottles of wine.

As we were gathering outside Al Lago talking about our experience there and waiting for our wine purchases to be gathered, my phone started vibrating. I looked and saw that my doorbell had been ringing and I realized it was just after 6pm which is the time I told those who wanted to skip the wine tasting but were going to join us at the house for socializing, dinner and the movie to meet us. I couldn't find Pam, so I grabbed John and Jean and asked Ron to *please* bring her back with him.

We got to the house to find Terry and Dave, Jim and Joyce, and Jeff and Cheryl waiting for us. Shortly afterwards, everyone from Al Lago showed up along with Glen, and Randy and Dolores arriving shortly afterwards. Everyone got their chairs set up for the movie, then since we had a couple of hours to kill, began eating, drinking and socializing. It stayed overcast, and the temps dropped to the low 60's, but everyone heeded the "bring warm jackets and blankets" warning and I don't think anyone got cold.

By about 8:15 it was dark enough and with everyone seated and bundled up, and with a bag of warm popcorn, we started the movie. Well, actually, we started the pre-movie shorts clips – you can't have a movie without something to get you in the right mood, right?

I scoured the internet and found a couple of classic "CAR"toons – Goofy's Motor Mania and Donald Duck's Tire Trouble. Of course we had the requisite candy and popcorn teasers before the Regal Cinemas Roller Coaster launched us into our feature film, The Devil's Hairpin. It was a movie filmed in 1957 about a retired race car driver who thought he was 10 feet tall (basically full of himself) who was taunted to come out or retirement to race the current champion. His fiancée didn't want him to but he didn't listen, so she left him. But like all movies back then, everything ended "Happily Ever After". What made this movie unique was that all the racing scenes were filmed at the old Paramount Ranch race track. Recall we had an outing there a few years ago. In fact, all the race cars were the real cars and drivers that raced there between 1956 and 1958. The movie ended right at 10pm and everyone packed up and said their good-byes and headed home.

We had quite the turnout – 26 for wine tasting, 32 for dinner and 26 who stayed for the movie. Based on feedback from everyone, it sounds like the event was a winner. While we probably won't be able to do the wine tasting again, we'll certainly plan another movie night, maybe in the late summer or fall when it tends to be a little warmer and gets darker a bit earlier.



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