

THE CLEAR HOOTER!

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL COAST BRITISH CAR CLUB



Volume 36 Number, September 2020

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Taxi Chronicles, Part 4 by John DeRoy

It is late 2015, a year into the Restoration Project from Hell on the 1989 Fairway (see prior installment). I receive an email from the widow of a deceased member asking for help in selling off their 1959 Beardmore. It has been sitting outdoors in their back yard, untouched and undriven for five years. *Eww* is my first thought – it must be dirty, cobweb-infested, and in need of a lot of work.

The vehicle is in an upscale part of Orange County, about seventy-five miles southeast from me. “I just need to get rid of it,” she explains. “My husband recently died, and I just need it gone from here. I only want \$500 for it.” My ears perk up. \$500? No way. She can’t be serious.

But she is. I do some math, decide that even if I do virtually nothing to the car, I could flip it and make a few bucks. Not a huge amount, but some. I had only intended to help her find a buyer, but now, selfishly, I want to know more before I promote it to the world.

With my tail between my legs from the Fairway resto fiasco well underway, I explain to my wife that this is a no-loose proposition that bears checking out. She rolls her eyes at me and reluctantly says okay. I next call Nick, my tried-and-trusty mechanic-now-friend, and ask him to take a ride with me to see the car. He reminds me of my Fairway woes and tells me I’m an idiot – but agrees to go. “\$500? Yeah, let’s go, but keep your hopes in check, John,” he says. “Lower your expectations.”

And so, the weekend after Thanksgiving, Nick and I leave for Orange County. Along the way, he reiterates that the odds of this being a diamond in the rough are between slim and none.

We get there and exchange some pleasantries with the woman, who is most kind. She is also quite pragmatic and dealing remarkably well for someone who had just lost her husband of several decades. Their house has a huge (six-car?) garage, perfect for a car collector, I start to imagine – followed quickly by an equally imagined, self-inflicted slap to the face to bring me back to my senses.

Nick and I walk to the car, which is under a barely-there canopy, exposed to the elements. Although I’d previously viewed photos of Beardmores, I’d never seen one in person. I marvel at the missing fourth door,

Continued on pg. 3

BUSINESS INFO



GENERAL MEETINGS:

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

BJ's Restaurant
461 W. Esplanade Dr.
Oxnard, CA 93030
Off ramp "Oxnard Blvd"

2020 General Meeting Dates:

No meeting Sept. 1

Oct. 6, Nov. 10,

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.

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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
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Taxi Chronicles, Part 4 by John DeRoy



the simplicity of the driver's compartment, the column-mounted shifter on the *left* side of the steering wheel. These features appeal to this wannabe collector with zero mechanical abilities or inclinations. Cosmetically, the car isn't in bad condition, I think -- certainly in need of a good wash and wax on the outside. The dust inside on the seats is thick, but the doors look surprisingly clean. The woodwork needs a bit of sanding and staining, and the headliner needs some attention too. But all-in-all, pretty good for a car that's been through five years of scorching sun, winds of varying strength, and a good deal of rain. The meter is pretty slick, too.

Meanwhile, Nick is busy inspecting the engine compartment. I join him at the nearside front. He is bent over, leaning in. He turns his head to me and says, "How much does she want?" "\$500," I respond. He turns back to the engine and looks some more. "\$500?" he asks, again turning his head to me. "Yep -- \$500." He turns back to the engine and then back to me. He has become Nick the Bobblehead.

"**Take the car, John,**" he says. "Pay her the money and take the car. *It's complete.*" "What does 'complete' mean?" I ask.

"It means it's all here -- the entire engine, the carburetor, everything. I expected it to be missing parts, but it's all intact. Sure, it needs some work, but for five hundred bucks, we'll flip this and make some money. I never would have believed it."

We go inside and speak with the woman and let her know we'll gladly pay full price, and that I'll return with the cash and a tow truck to haul it back to Nick's shop. We have found our diamond in the rough. A couple of weeks later at her house, I tender \$500 and watch as the tow truck driver loads the vehicle. I follow it back to Nick's shop, where with it still on the flatbed, Nick and the driver decide they want me in the taxi to steer it just a bit and stop it once it is gently eased off. "Don't use the brake pedal," Nick warns. "Just use the hand brake. I don't want the brakes to get locked up."

I get in, kicking up a cloud of dust in the process and taking my position as captain of this dry-docked ship. The taxi descends off the truck, I steer it into place, and then out of habit, depress the brake pedal to stop the car. I confess my sin to Nick. The tow truck leaves, and we try to push the car just a few inches. It won't budge. The brakes indeed have locked up. Nick looks at me and sarcastically says, "Nice going, John." He is mildly annoyed but takes it in stride. I am Stan Laurel to his Oliver Hardy.

Taxi Chronicles, Part 4 by John DeRoy



And then the work begins. Among other things, it needs new front and rear wheel cylinders, a full set of brake lines, clutch master and slave, a clutch line, brake master, dynamo fan belt, radiator cap, and a variety of seals. Nick, because of his years of experience and early training from Ford, is enjoying attending to the Ford Consul drivetrain. Over the course of a few months, he takes care of pretty much everything. I contribute by sourcing a sharp-looking set of side mirrors to replace the originals, which are in bad shape.



When it's finally done, I pick up the car, and Nick shows me how the column-mounted shifter works. "It's a reverse three-on-the-tree," he says, showing me where reverse, first, second, and third are located. I commit this to memory but feel a certain amount of angst over driving a 1950's RHD standard. I've driven stick shifts before, but this one is clearly different. No matter – driving it turns out to be too fun for words. Because the body is aluminum over seasoned ash, the car is incredibly light, making steering a breeze despite the lack of power steering. It handles very well. Life is *good*. Let's bring this puppy home.

Home for me is at the end of a cul-de-sac atop a modest hill. I stop at the corner below our house, already at the start of the incline. I breathe deeply, take the car out of neutral and place it in first, and ease out the clutch. It's barely moving. I give it some more gas, and then some more gas. By now the engine is loud and smoke is starting to pour out from under the bonnet. My heart is racing. I take my foot off the gas, put it back in neutral, and let it roll back a bit, parking it on the street against the curb. I speed-dial Nick, and he asks about the smell that has accompanied the smoke.



Taxi Chronicles, Part 4 by John DeRoy



“Uh oh,” Nick says, “It sounds like you burned out the clutch.” He refers me to his buddy Craig who owns a transmission shop. A day and a tow later, Craig scratches his head when he sees it, but he accepts the vehicle. A couple of days later he confirms that it needs a new clutch. We procure the parts, and he fixes it up. He then shows me the gear positioning on the column, but based on Craig’s directions, I realize that Nick had it backwards. When I thought I’d put it in first going up the hill, it was actually in third. No wonder the clutch burned out, and why the car was slow to get going in first from a stop on flat ground.

Armed with this newfound knowledge about how to properly shift through each gear, I proceed to drive the car everywhere. After a couple of months, however, it’s time to prepare it for sale. My friend Jorge, who you met in the last installment, comes over to take pictures and write up an eBay ad. “Before you sell it, let me fix a few more things and clean up the interior and the exterior. It won’t take long, and it will make a big difference. Even though it’s in good running condition now, it still *looks* bad. It won’t take long to clean it up and make it look really good.”

He is right. Jorge is an auto alchemist. He buffs out the exterior to give the taxi an amazing shine. He patches a break in the front fiberglass fender. He adds a red pinstripe, and he prints and overlays a red Beardmore logo on the boot. He gets the taxi meter properly hooked up and working. I add a new set of vintage luggage to replace the original, weather-beaten ones.

But it doesn’t end there. Jorge has put in some time and elbow grease on the interior, making it pop. The vinyl looks brand new, the woodwork is cleaned up, and the headliner has been repaired.

I seriously consider keeping this now beautiful car. A real head-turner, and more fun to drive than anything else on the road.

But soon my amygdala calms and my higher brain comes back online. It is time for the taxi to find a new home, and I stick to my plan to flip it. Jorge posts the ad on eBay, and soon thereafter, we get a nibble. Dan Morrissey, a car collector from Nebraska, wants it. A deal is reached. Dan acquires a nifty car, and months later he would share that it gets more notice and thumbs-up than his other classics, which have included MGs, Jags, Austin-Healeys, and a Lotus.

And amazingly, I make a small profit. Not enough to retire on, but enough to count as a win and leave me feeling optimistic about future, for-profit taxi adventures – which are forthcoming in the next and final installment in this series.





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WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING DURING COVID

There are a number of us who have had more time because of Covid to do projects that we have been putting off for a long time. Let's share them here on this newsletter. Please send me yours and I will publish it in upcoming newsletters.
Thanks to Chris Vujea for the suggestion.

The Classic Motorsports Virtual Monterey Kickoff Cruise-in!

This cruise-in was held virtually over their webpage forum. All you had to do was get your car cleaned up and get a great picture of it with some kind of memorabilia from prior Monterey Car week activities. Dave entered his Jag and Joel entered his TR2. Joel won best Triumph. Dave's car was not selected. Here is a picture of Joel's car



UPDATE ON CCBCC CAR EVENTS



Due to the ongoing COVID-19 issues and concerns, Here's an update on the clubs and other activities over the next two months:

August 28, Camarillo cruise night on Ventura Blvd. See pg. 12

September 23, Camarillo cruise night on Ventura Blvd. see pg. 12

September 19 War Birds, Wings and Wheels has been **postponed** until **Sept. 19** **Now Cancelled**

September 20, Montecito Motor Classic, **cancelled** until September 2021

September 20, Westlake Exotic and classic car show, 11-5, postponed from April 26, see pg. 20-21

September 20, British car Show, El Segundo

Sept 22-28 CCBCC's 3rd Mille.

September 27, Queen's English postponed from April.

The Santa Paula Cruise nights are **cancelled** for the entire season

How I Spent My COVID Staycation



The Heart Guys

While the rest of us were doing jigsaw puzzles and tinkering around the house, these guys were recovering from open heart surgery. But after 8 weeks of R&R, they are back on the road. Better than ever!

Thanks to all the family and friends who sent their good wishes and came by to visit....and special thanks to the long-suffering wives who had to play nurse, cook, physical therapist, psychologist and events planner during all of this!



Jim Hill...April 21, 2000 at UCLA Medical Center



Lemons and lemons
and lemons, oh my!

When life gives you
lemons.....



Martin Keller...March 13, 2020 at Community Memorial Hospital

How I Spent My COVID Staycation



Dave and I have been pondering the building of a greenhouse. We talked lots, drew up plans many times and then Covid. So I now have a greenhouse. I am growing fall tomatoes, lettuce, carrots and many herbs and veges for my 2 pet bunnies.



Dave decided to do an oil change on the jaguar in preparation for the Mille. He put the front up on ramps and had 2 jacks under the front of the car. The ramps bent and the car came down. It moved itself into the back of the Morris Minor and bent the front bumper. Scraped some paint. The bumper brackets had to be hammered out and the paint touched up and the bumper put back in place. See pics below.



Bent ramp (upside down to show damage)



Damaged paint by the bumper

Now Dave is trying to figure out why the fuel gauge does not work. There are wires everywhere!

CCBCC Run to PT. Magu Rock, "The Long Way"



On Saturday August 1, 2020 CCBCC had a drive and Safe Social Gathering at the Pleasant Valley / Santa Rosa Rd park-and-ride in Camarillo, where the drive started. We met as a group at 9 am to 9:30 am. We stood around the parking area admiring our favorite little British cars and talking to the members who attended while staying socially apart and wearing our face masks while we all talked and enjoyed looking at all the cars.

We had a total of fifteen cars in attendance and 27 people for the drive and departed the park-and-ride at 9:45 am.

Even the cars were socially distancing as were the occupants who attended. Our route took us southwest out of Camarillo and towards the coast and then south up into the hills of the Santa Monica Mountains before getting to the coast and on to the twisty back roads to the Westlake area where we turned once again to the west for a short distance and then northwest back into the Santa Monica Mountains. It also gave us time to regroup before heading to the coast over at the top of Decker Road which is really just a one lane road that is narrow and twisty and just what our cars were designed for and eventually out towards the Pacific Coast Highway.

We then turned north at PCH and headed to Mugu Rock where we stopped for one last social gathering and to capture some photos for the newsletter.

Once we reached Mugu Rock on the PCH we pulled over for our final stop before we said good bye to everyone and departed back to our home or other projects for the day. It sure was nice to get out and enjoy the roads and the company of the like minded folks who attended the drive and social gathering.

Thanks to all who attended and took the time to converse at the starting point and at Mugu Rock on the PCH. I think everyone had a good time getting out of the house and seeing friends and their cars.

Martin Keller CCBCC Recorder
Coordinator of the "August 1, 2020
Drive and Safe Social Gathering"



If you look at this photo you can see the LA County Sheriff's Helicopter flying along the PCH checking out our caravan of shiny British cars until he had to turn away due to the NAS Point Mugu Airspace. It was quite odd to see the helicopter flying close enough that we could wave to the pilot and copilot and see them very very clearly from our cars.

All photos in this article by Pam Justin

CCBCC Run to PT. Magu Rock, the Long Way



Cruise Night, Camarillo Aug. 28



This past month Joel put out a blast that he would be at this event at 5pm. 7 others joined in and we parked on the street in front of the parking lot. All the other cars, mostly muscle cars were parked in the west parking lot. Sept 23 is the dates of the last cruise for the year. Those on the Mille will miss the last one.

I ran across
some very old
ads, not always
related to cars;
but interesting

Harley Davidson mobile
Booking cage, 1920



How I Spent My COVID Staycation



Michael and Sandra Gustafson have been building a wonderful deck, access stairs and a pergala with a swing. What a great view they have from there.



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BIRTHDAY DRIVE BY, PICS BY PAM JUSTIN





With almost everyone having extra time during this virus crisis, now is the time to get some stuff done that has been put off for so long. How about an article for the newsletter??? I know you have something to say about your car, a trip with your car, an outing, a technical article. I am sure you must have a picture of your drive that you would like to see on the cover of the newsletter.

I am attempting to put out a newsletter every month, there may be times I miss a month due to being away.

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 NO more pictures and story for the front page of the newsletter. Let's see some of your favorite pics of your British car. Also I am out of baby pictures for the guess who this is feature. There must be some of you working from home and have no where to go, take some time and find a great picture of yourself as a kid, maybe even with a car in the picture.

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, size 12 and do not do any formatting, just paragraphs of words.

I want to thank all the contributors to this newsletter, without them this would be a very short newsletter.

NO NEWSLETTER FOR OCTOBER

Please save me all your Staycation articles and photos. Please submit them by Sept. 17th for inclusion in the November newsletter. Any articles are welcome. Any photos or stories from the Mille will be included in the November issue.

Thanks

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