

Skip Harris  
rpMGroup  
1107 Angel Drive  
Alexander, AR 72002

My business is Restoration, Preparation, and Modification (ergo, RPM Group. By using lower case and making it one word, I was able to emphasize the MG part of my business) of mainly Bugeyes, MGBs, and Marinas. I have the largest inventory of Marina parts this side of the pond. I started this business in 1982 after coming to the realization that if I didn't do it, it would probably disappear forever. I began buying inventory at every opportunity. I occasionally do a Sunbeam or some such. I started the business as a sideline to my main career as a pilot. That period has ended, and I'm now into it full time.

I have had a life-long interest in these cars. It began when I was quite small. I remember the American Austin my dad drove. Though it had little resemblance to our cars, I resolved to buy an Austin for my first car. I found it in the rear of a shop in Atlanta in 1964: A 1960 Austin A55 Cambridge MkII. The poor thing was whipped on both ends from being pushed and pulled by ignorant savages. But the interior was still pristine. I drove it home--rods knocking with no first/reverse in the gearbox. I salvaged an MGA gearbox and the engine from a 1950 Metropolitan and drove that car back to school in January, 1965, in Arkansas. A blizzard had coated the entire Southeast US that month, but the Austin was most civilized and comfortable. I was still driving Brit cars (I traded the Austin away, but that's another story...) in 1969 when the owner of the parts store where I did all my business lured me into the business. I quit my job as a professional in the Arkansas Highway Department, and went to selling foreign car parts. In 1972, when Continental Cars Distributors decided to open a new dealership in Little Rock, I was in their face in an instant. I hired on as Parts Manager.

We all know the trauma cars endured from 1975 until the demise of BL. I left the business in mid-'75 because of the sad state of the entire automobile industry and went to flying for a living. I kept my hand in the business until 1982 when I started rpMGroup.

I have been driving a British car since 1964 every day of my life. I drive a Marina today, and I expect to be driving it when I leave this earth. I have over a half-million miles in the driver's seat of Marinas alone.

I have been married for 26 years to Carrie (who came to the BMTA gatherings in Dallas with me.) She has 2 kids by her previous marriage, and I have 2 by my previous marriage. We do not have any children by this union. (We may be slow, but we do learn...) Carrie is an artist who deals mainly in pastels. Her work is displayed in the Arkansas Supreme Court building. I think she is very talented. She likes to camp out in her 19-footer in some place that has good subjects for her paintings.

You could say I live my hobby. I'm fully immersed in the Brit Car business. It is an all-consuming passion for me. (Some might question my sanity...maybe I could qualify for disability.)

I am a member of the British Motoring Club of Arkansas, the British Saloon Car Club of Canada, and the Marina/Ital Drivers' Club of England.

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Jim Allen  
Southside British Cars  
Danville, Virginia

Southside British Cars was a new business in 2005 and is currently heading in the direction of becoming a restoration shop as opposed to being a general repair and service garage. Although, we do keep all service options open and do take any job associated with mechanicals and engine work, we tend to sell-up to restoration work. Our web-site will be tailored to generally reflect our restoration skill sets.

I am the Owner / General Manager of Southside British Cars, LLC located in Danville Virginia. My interest in the British car hobby began actively in 1989 when I acquired a 1961 Austin Healey Sprite Mk. II. I started to restore the car for the street but along the way joined up with the Sportscar Vintage Racing Assoc. and redirected my efforts to make the car a vintage racer. I competed for the first time in that car in 1991 and have raced with various Vintage venues for fifteen years. I then gave the Sprite to my son and daughter-in-law and moved up to an MGB/GT. I am still actively racing this car with the SVRA.

Before starting the garage business in Danville, Virginia I was a manufacturing engineer and production manager with a large electronics equipment firm for twenty one years. I retired from this company in 2004 and we moved from Pennsylvania to Virginia shortly after. I bought a Home Inspection business in Danville in 2004 and have been active in both the inspection business and the garage for the last three years.

The make up of Southside British Cars is me, our son Michael, my wife Gale and our friend Tony Dix. Mike builds the engines, Tony is the lead mechanic, I manage the operations and do what ever Mike and Tony want me to do. I keep parts and material ahead of the jobs and coordinate scheduling. Gale is the Secretary / Treasurer and generally the glue that holds it all together. We have seen the most revenue improvement this year and anticipate steady growth for next year.

Southside British Cars British is also the home for two race teams; Team Fifty One and Damn Women Drivers. These represent my and my daughter-in-law Julie's cars. She still drives the Sprite, and I have a MG Midget and the MGB/GT. We do build and service race cars as well. Being twenty minutes from Virginia International Raceway is good for that side of the business.

I am a charter member of the British Motors Trade Association and follow with great interest the progress and growth of the organization through the web-site and mailings. I want to be more actively involved with the BMTA and believe that I can contribute measurably to the organization as a Board Member.

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Jonathan A. Stein  
Reading, PA

For almost four years I've worked for Hagerty Insurance of Traverse City, MI. However, when I'm not traveling I work from a home office in Reading, PA. I have two titles: Director of Publications and Associate Publisher of Hagerty's Magazine. I'm responsible for most of the non-sales publications to come out of Hagerty, although my most important role is to manage all aspects of the company's magazine. In addition, I help underwriters value cars, assist in finding obscure parts and generally lend a hand where my extensive historical knowledge of automobiles can be useful

The first car of any kind I can remember was my father's 1957 TR3A. I was a car crazy teen, but loved sports cars most of all. In 1975, a few months before my 18th birthday, I saw a picture of an MGA coupe and fell in love and had to have one. In November of 1975 I found a 1959 coupe in the New York Times auto classifieds. For part of my senior project (combined with a poetry independent study) I restored it

I started my career as a copywriter for magazine promotion and insurance, but in 1984 I began freelancing as an automotive writer. In 1988 I joined Automobile Quarterly and within three years rose to Publishing Director, a position I held until the magazine was sold in 2000. I then joined Bentley Publishers as an acquisition editor and was responsible for editing many high-quality automotive books. In addition to these staff positions, I've written two books, co-wrote another, have edited another 8 or 10 and have written scores of automotive articles in more than a dozen publications. One of my most interesting projects has been serving as study leader for two Smithsonian Journeys trips to the car sights of northern Italy

In 1976 I graduated from the Princeton Day School. Four years later I received my BA in English Literature (with a writing minor) from Drew University. I'm married (25 years in September) and have a 17 year-old daughter. Since 1975 I've been totally immersed in the MGA world since 1975 and have been the world-wide registrar/special interest contact for the MGA coupe for more than 20 years. I currently have the 1962 MGA 1600 MK II coupe I bought in 1977 and a freshly restored 1959 Twin Cam coupe I've had since 1999. I'm fascinated in all aspect of automotive history (not confined to British cars), I enjoy travel, particularly to Europe, listen to blues music and love to sample local craft beer as I travel for business.

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Charlie Key  
British Cars of America LLC  
St. Louis, MO

We are a full service shop for restorations of British Cars and a service center for Land Rover and Jaguar. The business has existed for 13 years and represents most of the suppliers in the USA and Europe, also having connection in Australia, Canada and China, member of SEMA and charter member of the BMTA.

I became involved with British cars in 1962. I built and tuned British race cars then finally held half interest in a new series one XKE. This car was built to race, running at the home track, Mid America Raceways. In its second year we set a track record for fastest lap time. The car was campaigned at many Midwestern tracks and did very well. This racing gets in your blood and my interest has remained. Throughout the years I have built many cars always having a projet in my home shop. I now own 43 cars, some restored, some drivers, and the rest waiting.

My careers have been in the electronic environments having retired from International Business Machines as an engineer in the computer field working with site planning, mainframes, controllers, satellite uplinks and communications. My relaxation from my very intense business was to build British cars. Other hobbies are gunsmithing, shooting, power boating, fishing and more recently, golf.

I have a family of five. Being happily married for 33 years with family support I started this business. I am a member in most clubs and held many offices, when I retired from IBM people would bring cars to my home and ask me to work on them. This very soon got the city's interest and I was asked to move my hobby to a better location so the business was formed with four partners, all very legal and up and up operation, it was started that way and remains as a top business. We are members of many business organizations as well as the Better Business Bureau. Mechanics here are ASE and trained in the British car industry. My son, Adam is working his way into managing the business but that will be in the future, right now he is doing much of the body reconstructions, a very talented welder. This hobby/business is still my hobby and more a way of life.

To add a bit more information about what we do at BCA; besides the typical full restoration service; meaning we sew interiors, make tops and side curtains, do body restoration and custom work, paint work to concourse level, make parts in our machine shop, mill heads, port and polish, build engines to exact specs or race build, supercharging, and the list goes on. We are also Land Rover specialists with all the electronic equipment to properly diagnose and repair Rovers. The local Rover dealer sends work to us, because they only replace parts and do no rebuilding, good relationship. We are considered experts in the Rover V8 used in many cars for a long time. Our clientele come from all over the USA and Canada, we build off road Rovers and create new designs for heavy duty off road use. The other V8 applications have ranged from the common V8 MGB conversion to other obscure conversions of much smaller British Cars. Projects at this time; an MG TD V8 wheel standing car (street rod). Just completed was a Sprite built for the 50th

anniversary show in only seven Saturdays, driven to the show and back, this was a complete ground up build. Please visit our site at; [britishcarsofamerica.com](http://britishcarsofamerica.com).

I look forward to serving on the BMTA board. In the past five years I have promoted the British Car industry to the membership of SEMA. There are many things that the BMTA is doing well but it is yet a new organization and needs to grow in the right way.

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John H Twist, Ada, Michigan

University Motors Ltd was launched in August, 1973. The first day of full time business was Saturday, January 25th, 1975, originally in Grand Rapids, Michigan, but we made the move to the suburbs in May, 1994. Shortly after entering full time business, I restricted my clientele to MG owners only. When we moved to Ada we began accepting all "classic British sportscars," and now have a fair number of Healeys and TRs in the shop. We are a "full service shop" offering line service, bench service, and restoration. We have four full time mechanics, including myself; Lisa works our front counter to prepare estimates, complete billing, order parts, and organize the daily work; my wife, Caroline, answers the phone, keeps the books, pays the bills, and sends out the monthly statements. In addition, we have a college student who keeps our website and still has time to rebuild an occasional set of carbs, and we have a couple of high school boys who are working their way upwards from sweeping the floor to performing checkouts and some light mechanical work. This past Monday (Aug 4) we had 48 projects in the shop ranging from carburettor rebuilds to total restorations.

I became aware of MGs when my best friend received an MGA from his father in 1965; I purchased my first MG in 1968 and was immediately captivated by the British technical language in the workshop manual. After two years in the Army, a friend at college involved me in servicing another fellow's TD – so I was first paid and therefore entered the profession in May, 1971. By November, 1971, I resolved to focus my life with MG and found a job as a mechanic in England. I worked for the original University Motors in Hanwell, just west of London, for about a year, 1972-1973 and then moved to Grand Rapids. After several different jobs at several different dealerships and independents I hung out my shingle in Jan, 1975.

My first article appeared in "The Sacred Octagon" in 1969, but my technical writing really began in the original "MG Magazine" in October, 1979. After that I wrote for "Abingdon Classics" and "Sport and GT Market" and had several articles in "Enjoying MG" and "Safety Fast!" In 1982 I became the Technical Chairman of the AMGBA. With two local enthusiasts I helped to create the West Michigan "Old Speckled Hen" MG Car Club in 1990, now a very active club with about 200 members. The North American MGB Register was formed at University Motors in 1990; I was the founding chairman. In 1977 we held our first "University Motors Summer Party" drawing 12 cars. By the early '90's our events were the largest in the US, drawing as many as 550 MGs on the field. With that experience I was chosen to be the chairman of the first all-club event, MG International – Indy 96. In 1983 we held our first Technical Seminars in February. Over the course of the past 25 years we have graduated about 1500 "MGineers." From those classes I have produced a several hundred page technical book which we continue to sell today. I offer technical assistance by telephone every day for an hour. Last summer we began producing short videos on YouTube for MG owners – there are over 60 on-line now; the most popular with nearly 50,000 views. Our own website receives tens of thousands of hits each month.

Several times a year I travel with my wife to an MG events around the US as the featured guest, to give technical seminars, or to present my "rolling technical session." Over the past 25 years we've travelled to scores of shows from coast to coast working with enthusiasts to demonstrate the ease of maintenance and repair.

My contributions to the world of MGs have resulted in recognition from my peers. There have been full page articles in the local Grand Rapids Press, the Chicago Tribune, and the New York

Times. I have received club awards (New England MG T Register – The Register Cup, 1988; MG Drivers Club – Cecil Kimber Enthusiast Award, 1999; North American MGA Register – The Mac Spears Founders Award, 2001; North American MGB Register – The John Thornley MG Spirit Award, 2008).

The British Motor Trade Association was also launched at University Motors and I list myself as co-founder. I have been fortunate to have attended all but one of the yearly conferences.

In my spare time, I enjoy family history and have published several genealogies. I've published several small books: a biography of Sam Hill (as in "Who in the Sam Hill...?"); and the Combat History of the 50th Field Artillery Battalion in WWII. I occasionally write historical articles for my home town newspaper. Coin collecting is a hobby, two-cent pieces to be precise, and I am on the board of our local coin club. I serve as chairman of our local Boy Scout Troop and have attended summer camp for six or eight years.

Caroline and I have been married for 30 years -- we sport matching MG tattoos. We have two girls and two boys all two years apart from 16 through 22. I am a Vietnam Veteran and a high school graduate. We have been living in our home for over 20 years. I continue to drive my 1962 MGA 1600 Mark II Deluxe that I purchased in 1976 and totally restored (in five months!) in 1980 – I drove it today!

I would consider it an honor to be a board member of the BMTA. I bring with me MG hands-on technical expertise, business skills, writing ability, years of club involvement, event organization know-how, and a life-long dedication to the marque.

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Matt Meisner  
Engel Imports  
Kalamazoo, MI

My name is Matt Meisner and I am the sales manager at Engel Imports in Kalamazoo Michigan. I have been here for over 2 years. I manage a team of salespeople who sell British parts nationwide to wholesale customers. Along with sales I am also responsible for marketing and overseas purchasing.

My interest in British cars starting in the 70's when I went to work at a small workshop in Pontiac, Michigan – one of the few that worked on English cars in the Detroit metropolitan area. Even though we were called Pontiac Sports Cars, we did not work on Trans AMs!

My interest in all things British culminated in a move to the UK in 1991 and a very happy marriage to a very nice English girl. While in the UK, I worked for two of the larger Jaguar specialists. I spent the last six years in England at Unipart working directly with both Jaguar and Land Rover in the parts and parts marketing department.

In my spare time I enjoy working outdoors, woodcutting and gardening. I also have a keen interest in collecting and restoring vintage American Flyer trains.