

***The Coventry Cat's Meow***  
***A JANE Message Board***



Friday, July 9, 2021

*From the Editor (Dave Moulton):*

Welcome once again to *The Coventry Cat's Meow*.

I assume you still know you are all invited to contribute!

Hopefully, you also know that it's very, very therapeutic for you. As I mentioned last issue, some of you seem to have become remarkably healthy as a result of your much-appreciated contributions. All I can say is, "Wow, you look great!" and "Thanks!"

Anyway, all you have to do is send us a "Meow" about anything. Yes, anything!

Remember, humor continues to be more relevant than relevance.

Just email your Meows to me ([d19@moultonlabs.com](mailto:d19@moultonlabs.com)) with something like "The Cat's Meow" or "Meow Mix" or "Hi, Dave" in the subject line. If you want, include some photos. **Please do not send** videos – too much memory is needed. **However, do send links** to videos – they work great and the videos really keep the younger members amused!

And relax! Your secrets will continue to remain safe (except possibly from red-light cameras, evil devices for which we take no responsibility).

Anyway, we continue to love hearing from all of you. It makes our day. Thanks!

*–The Cat from Coventry*

# FASTEST GROWING AUTOMOTIVE BRAND IN THE U.S. IN 2016†



This year, we're ready to start where we left off, because we're not ones to rest on our laurels. Our lineup of high-performance vehicles backed by Jaguar EliteCare Best-In-Class coverage\* has us poised to keep leaping ahead.

**JAGUAR NORWOOD**  
449 NEPONSET ST  
NORWOOD, MA 02062  
781-619-9000

[WWW.JAGUARNORWOOD.COM](http://WWW.JAGUARNORWOOD.COM)

— JAGUAR ELITECARE —  
**BEST IN CLASS  
COVERAGE**  
— 5 YEARS 50,000 MILES —

- 🛡️ New Vehicle Limited Warranty
- 🛠️ Complimentary Scheduled Maintenance
- 📞 24-Hour Roadside Assistance
- 📶 Jaguar InControl® Remote & Protect™

## THE ART OF PERFORMANCE

Vehicles Shown: 2017 Jaguar XE R-Sport, 2017 Jaguar XF R-Sport, 2017 Jaguar F-PACE First Edition. European license plates shown. \*Claim based on number of new Jaguar vehicles sold in the U.S. from January to December 2016 as compared to number of Jaguar vehicles sold during calendar year 2015 (+10%), and compared against reported U.S. sales figures by automobile manufacturers for the same time periods. †Class is cars sold by luxury automobile brands and claim is based on total package of warranty, maintenance and other coverage programs. For complete details regarding Jaguar EliteCare coverage, please visit [JAGUARUSA.COM](http://JAGUARUSA.COM), call 1.855.JAGUARUSA / 1.855.524.9279 or visit your local Jaguar Retailer. © 2017 Jaguar Land Rover North America, LLC

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*\*This may be one of the funniest bits of automotive journalism since the days of Stroker Ace. –Ed.*

## **Meow #1**

*Brian McMahon starts things right off with a bang in this issue, writing about two of the three things he loves most in this world, advertising and cars.*

*Here's "It's an Ad, Ad, Ad, Ad World."*

### ***The best car ads of all time \*\*\*as edited by Brian\*\*\****

By James Batchelor / Hagerty UK, 8 June 2021

If a car maker wants to advertise its shiny new car, more often than not it'll turn to the internet to create a viral video to get people talking. But things used to be so much simpler—and cleverer.

We've looked back through the archives to a time when print was king, and was *the* way a car manufacturer could stoke people into visiting its local showroom and putting their hands into their pockets. Here are 20 of the best, cleverest, and most memorable car adverts that appeared in print.

*Hagerty Editor's note: This article originally appeared on [Hagerty UK](#). Though the marques featured in these ads are known on both sides of the Atlantic, most of these vehicles didn't come stateside when new. There are a few familiar faces, however, and many models are now being imported by collectors into the United States. In the interests of balancing readability with authenticity, we've adapted phrasing and spelling to an American lexicon.*



## Jaguar: V12

**V. Fast.**

THE XJR-6. 6.0 LITRE V.12. MAXIMUM SPEED, 230 MPH. AVAILABLE ONLY TO DEREK WARWICK, EDDIE CHEEVER, JEAN-LOUIS SCHLESSER, AND GIAN-FRANCO BRANCATELLI.

**V. Cool.**

THE XJ-SC CABRIOLET, 3.6 LITRE 24 VALVE 5 SPEED MANUAL, OR 5.3 LITRE V.12 AUTOMATIC. AVAILABLE FROM £22,995.

**V.12.**

THE DEFINITIVE GRAND TOURER. THE XJ-S 5.3 LITRE V.12 AUTOMATIC, OR 3.6 LITRE MANUAL. AVAILABLE FROM £20,995.

The XJ-S range of sports and grand touring cars. Four choices. No alternative.

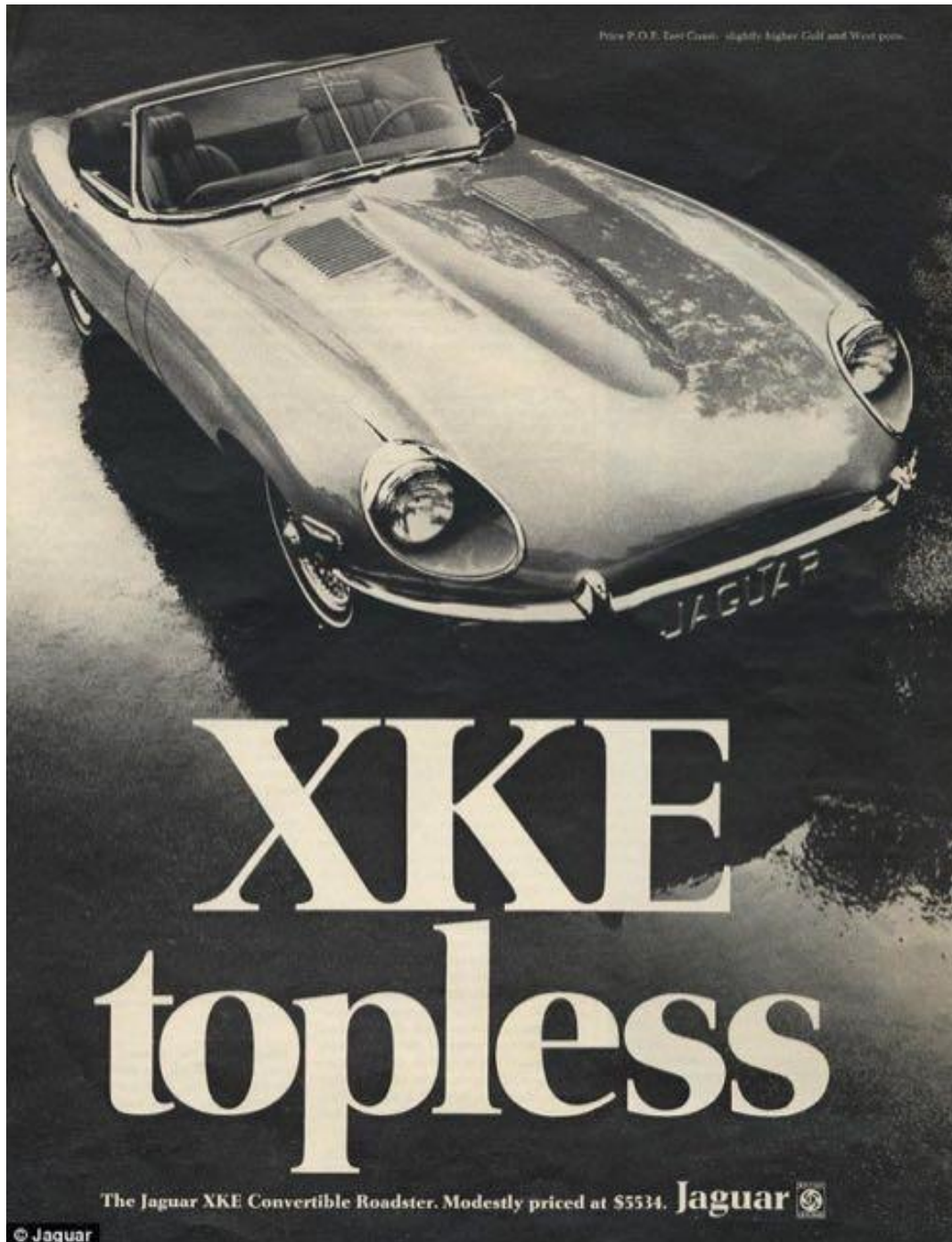
JAGUAR

Jaguar

Jaguar founder Williams Lyons knew motorsport success could sprinkle magic on the showroom floor. The Le Mans victories collected by the C-Type and D-Type were proudly shouted about in newspaper ads, and even on the trunks of various Jag models in the '50s. The British firm used the same tactic for this "V.memorable" 1986 ad featuring three V-12-powered models.

The XJR-6 (which nearly clinched that year's World Sports Car Championship Drivers' and Team championships) was powered by an enlarged 6.2-liter version of Jag's V-12, and Jaguar made it very clear it was the same engine available in the XJ-SC Cabriolet and the XJ-S Coupe. Why Jaguar didn't also feature the XJ12 saloon—thereby showing the venerable V-12's sheer breadth of use—is beyond us, though.

\*\*\* Nah, I'll still go with the Jaguar USA ad from the *Mad Men* era. Not subtle, but very effective \*\*\*





# Citroën 2CV



## **FASTER THAN A FERRARI.**

Travelling flat out at 71.5mph the Citroën 2CV will easily overtake the Ferrari Mondial travelling at 65mph.



## **AS MANY WHEELS AS A ROLLS ROYCE.**

The £55,240 Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit. How many wheels? Four. The £2,584 Citroën 2CV. How many wheels? Exactly the same.



## **MORE ROOM THAN A PORSCHE.**

With a possible 30cu. ft. boot space there's no need for one of those plastic luggage racks on our little run-about.



## **THE £2,584 CITROËN 2CV.**

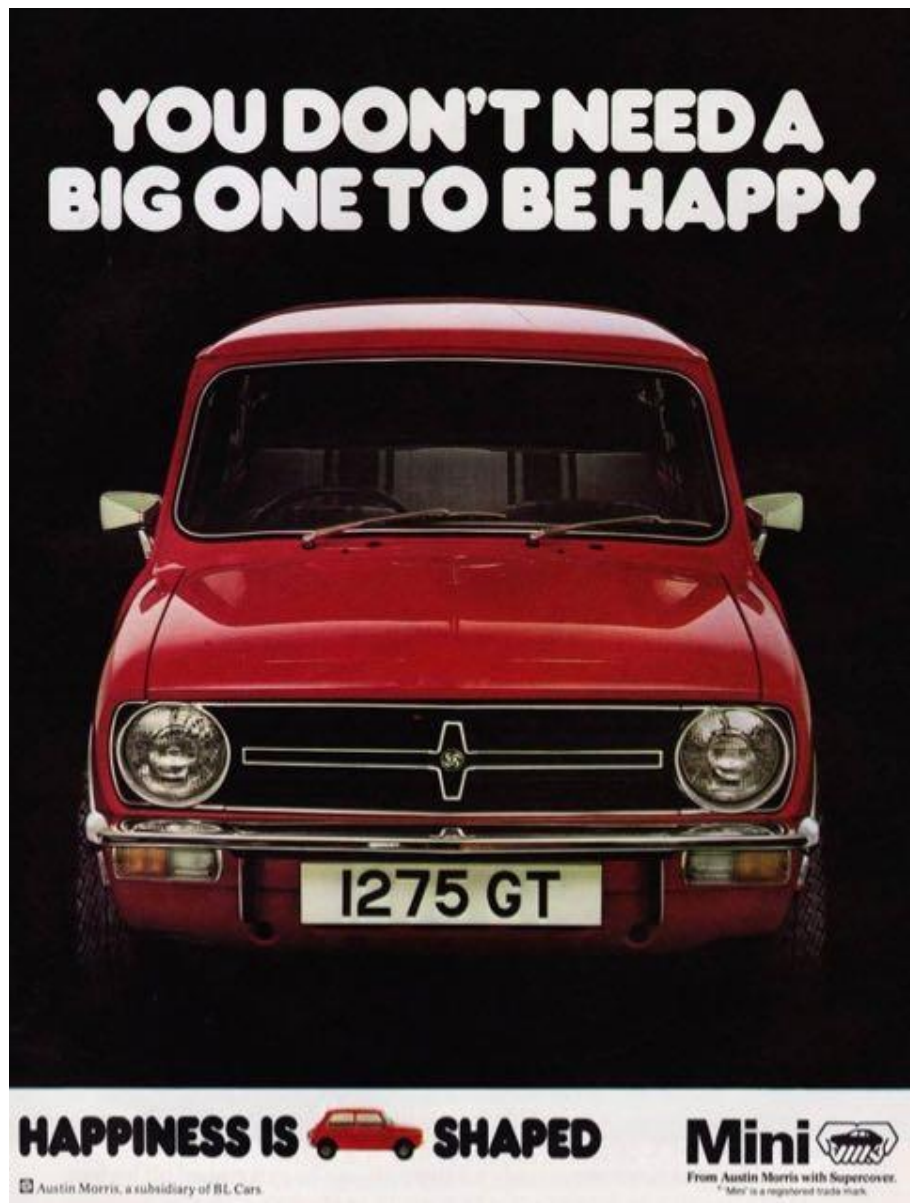
All you'll ever need in a car.

PRICE CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS AND INCLUDES CAR TAX, VAT AND FRONT SEAT BELTS. DELIVERY AND PLATES EXTRA. SEE YELLOW PAGES FOR NEAREST DEALER.  
CITROËN CARS LTD, MILL STREET, BLOUGHTON, LEICESTER, LE12 2NR.

Citroën

It wasn't just Peugeot that could turn out a good advert; sister firm Citroën was pretty adept at it too. By the mid-'80s, the 2CV was over 30 years old and looking decidedly ready for retirement when compared to other small cars like the [Austin Metro](#), Renault 5, and Ford Fiesta. But some **clever positioning secured the car's place not just in Citroën's range but in the public's mind too, with the car's value-for-money and tough character highlighted.** \*\*\* *Can you hose out the chicken poop from the rear floor of a Ferrari or a Rolls-Royce?* \*\*\* This 1984 ad is a true classic as it rammed home the car's basic credentials in a humorous way. At full-bore at 71.5 mph, of course the 2CV could overtake a Ferrari Mondial driving along at 65 mph. Just don't ask what happens when there's a rise in the road ...

**Mini: You don't need a big one to be happy**



Mini



The Mini went through phases of being distinctly unloved by BMC and British Leyland, but one of the few moments when the Mini was in the spotlight was in the mid-'70s. BL unleashed a series of adverts that really majored on the Mini's small size and cute character but delivered a big punch.

Stars like Eric Sykes were rolled out and some very clever marketing lines were created, such as "Nips in and out like Ronnie Biggs," "Better in jams than strawberries," and easily the most memorable, "You don't need a big one to be happy." The latter featured *Carry On* humor tied to some truth as the 1275GT was the sportiest Mini BL produced between 1969 and 1980, even if it was a poor [Mini Cooper](#) replacement.

## Ford Fiesta XR2i and RS Turbo: Madras or Vindaloo?

**How hot do you like your hatch?**

The XR2i has deservedly made a name for itself as the most potent Fiesta on the road.

Now it's about to be overtaken by a new Fiesta, the RS Turbo.

With the combined muscle of a Garrett T02 turbocharger unit and a 133 DIN PS engine, the RS Turbo scorches from zero to 60 mph in 7.7 seconds!

And you can push it (at any rate, on your own private road) to a top speed of 127 mph!

To put this in context, we can do no better than point you in the direction of Autocar & Motor. In the June 20th issue it reports: "The RS Turbo simply leaves the immediate opposition trailing in its wake."

In keeping with this hot-blooded performance, the styling is appropriately cool.

Note the unique alloy wheels and the low profile tyres, the body-coloured bumpers and rear spoiler, the distinctive dark green moulding inserts and the bonnet extractor vents.

Amongst other refinements, the Recaro seats, central locking, power front windows and sunroof come as standard. As do the leather-trimmed steering wheel and gear lever knob.


Bearing in mind that this is no ordinary Fiesta (not even an extraordinary XR2i), you may also feel inclined to take up the option of anti-lock brakes and electrically heated Quickclear windscreen.

In producing our hottest hatch, we have been privileged to call on the unrivalled expertise of Ford Special Vehicle Engineering, the people who made headlines with the legendary Sierra RS Cosworth.

Yet another reason, you may conclude, for calling on your Ford RS dealer without delay. For further details, phone the Ford Information Service free on 0800 01 01 12.

**The new Fiesta RS Turbo.**

\* Ford test figures.



Ford

The XR2i and RS Turbo might not have been the best fast Fords ever made, but that didn't stop The Blue Oval from trying to make them sound good. In 1990 it published an ad featuring the pair and posing a question to the reader: "How do you like your hot hatch?" It emphasized the fact that while some rival car makers only offered one sporty model, Ford customers could choose from two.

**The fact that the XR2i had a 1.6-liter CVH engine that sounded like it was run on poppadoms at full-throttle and the RS Turbo was more jalfrezi than vindaloo didn't matter: Here were two fast Fords and two spicy curries. A match made in heaven that only a Brit would understand.**

## BMW: Shaken not stirred

**SHAKEN.**

**NOT STIRRED.**

**RIVAL 4 CYLINDER TWO LITRE ENGINE AT 2500 RPM.**

**BMW 6 CYLINDER TWO LITRE ENGINE AT 2500 RPM.**

A Martini may be improved by being shaken. But driven custom air. So to smooth you was BMW most on using 6 cylinder engines even in their best five cars.

Most other car companies select on 4 or 6 cylinders. Despite the fact of previous which declare that engines with less than 6 cylinders can never be perfectly balanced. You can see on the left the results of such imperfection. And you can feel the difference yourself when you sit in the car.

In the 4 cylinder car you'll feel up to three times as many vibrations as in the BMW. But in the BMW you'll feel even fewer vibrations than if you were sitting in any other car.

Notice the comment of "Motor" that the 323 combines "housing for and 600 with smoothness unmatched in the class."

Such a result reflects not only BMW's competence in the design of engines. But also that an individual counterweight is fixed to each cylinder between others often have unbalancing weight problems.

The balance of BMW engines, happily, won't upset the balance in your bank.

For with the help of feedback, the six cylinder engine uses no more oil than many four cylinder engines of similar performance. In the larger run of engineering, air flow are also reflected in the way the car runs in water.

For example a 1981 six cylinder BMW 323i is now worth 25% more than a typical four cylinder car of similar vintage.

The six cylinder BMW range starts at £13,200 for the 323i and £13,200 for the 323i. In both cases, that's starting more than cars whose manufacturers have chosen to compromise on their engines.

And if they're prepared to compromise on the most important part of the car, where do you think these compromises will stop?

**THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE**

BMW is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability. BMW is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

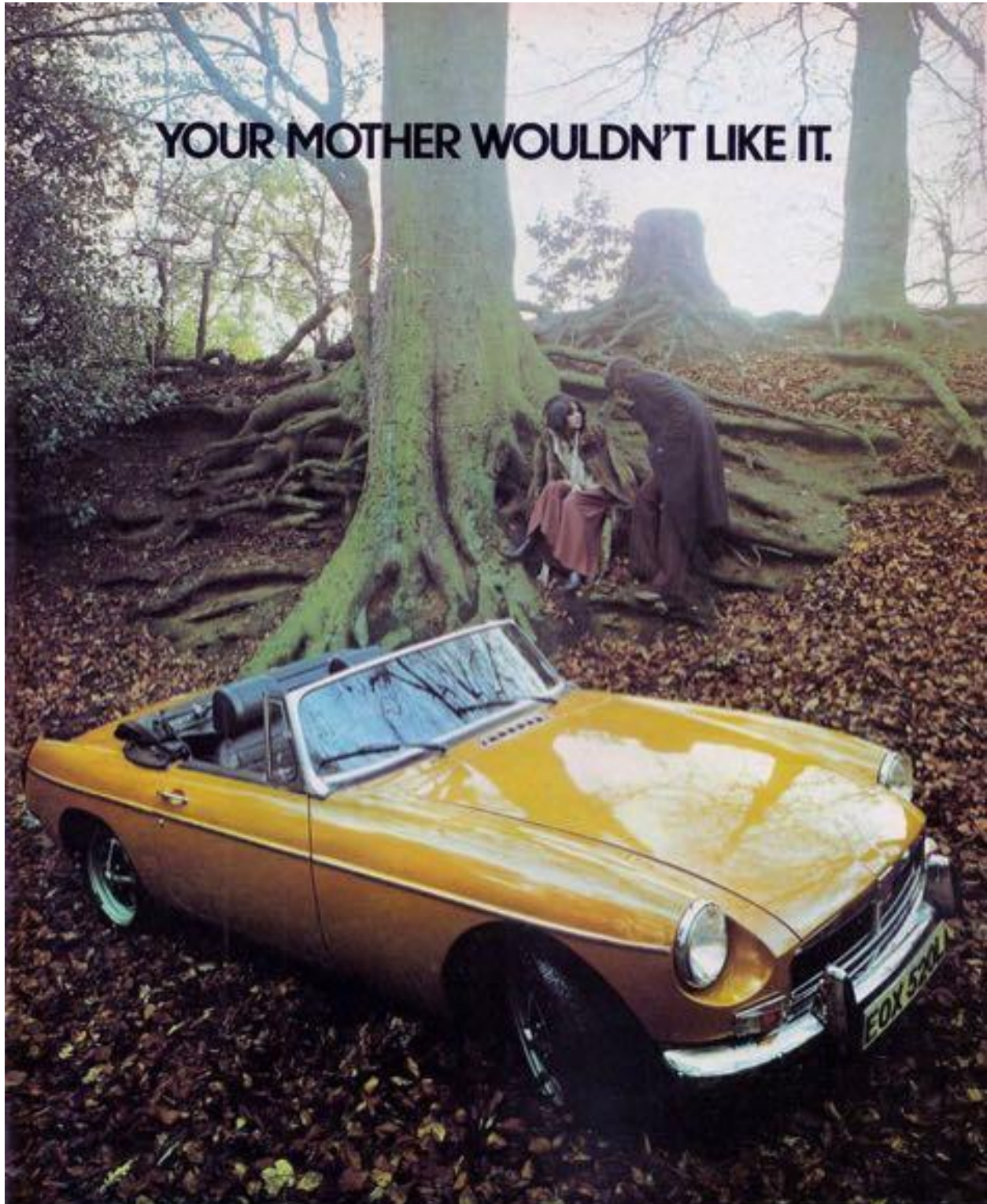
BMW

Hagerty readers and diehard BMW fans will know why the German firm favored six-cylinder configurations rather than four-cylinders in the 1980s, but did the man on the street? BMW reckoned the inherent smoothness that comes with a six-pot needed to be made clear to potential buyers, hence this ad.

**The story goes that advertising magnate Robin Wright was told by a BMW engineer that if a glass of water was placed on top of a typical 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine—as used by Mercedes, for instance—the water would shake, whereas with a 2.0-liter six-cylinder BMW engine the water would stay still. Wright took the idea and visualized it—a glass (now a vodka Martini) on top of a Mercedes 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine alongside the same glass on top of a BMW six-pot. In so doing, he created one of the greatest car ads of all time. \*\*\* So why didn't Aston Martin (007's car brand) use this theme to promote their smooth V12 engines? \*\*\***



**MG: Your mother wouldn't like it**



**YOUR MOTHER WOULDN'T LIKE IT.**



From British Leyland  
Hours of the best selling cars in Britain

94.5 bhp. 109 mph. 0-50 in 8.0 seconds.\* £1393.06†

\*Including car tax and VAT. †Head, headlights, number plates, M&S belts and delivery charges extra. \*Source Motor

**MGB**

MG



By the early 1970s, [the MGB](#) had turned 10 years old and that '60s freshness was starting to look a little too familiar. British Leyland's accountants had also begun to make their presence known by 1973 as the B's shapely leather seats, smart chrome grille, and classic wire wheels were replaced with cheaper items, chipping away some of the car's charm.

MG's adverts took a different tone too. Gone was the respectable and upright "Safety Fast" slogan and in came something far more risqué. "Your mother wouldn't like it" appeared on a series of MGB ads and it became a bit of a catchphrase. BL returned to the questionably sexist approach a few years; to market the rubber-bumper B it used the line: "Some day you'll settle down with a nice, sensible girl, a nice, sensible house and a nice, sensible family saloon—some day."

### Daihatsu Hijet

**Picks up five times more women than a Lamborghini.**

Forget your Italian racers. This little babe-magnet is the Daihatsu Hijet MPV. Don't laugh. It packs in six comfortable seats, (or of them reclining). A five speed gear box. Two sun roofs for when things get hot. And even a 3 year/60,000 mile warranty guaranteed staying power. But what really makes the Hijet MPV so attractive? The £167,503 change from a Lamborghini course. Our price is just £8,497 on the road. For more information call us on 0800 521 700. **THE HIJET MPV.**

**NO-NONSENSE VEHICLES.**

**DAIHATSU**

Daihatsu

Making comparisons with Lamborghinis seems to be common practice in the world of automotive advertising. Perhaps the funniest—and certainly the most memorable—was Daihatsu’s 1996 ad for its new Hijet. We can only guess at what a headache the very unsexy and very Japanese mini MPV caused the ad agency, but the resulting ad was a modern classic.

The bold headline, the cheeky image, and the suggestive language relating to the reclining seats was distinctly British in flavor, and it could easily have been an ad from a couple of decades prior. **A great ad it might have been, but it didn’t translate to sales.** \*\*\* Unlike the Jaguar XKE ad \*\*\* The Hijet disappeared from dealerships shortly afterwards, and Daihatsu withdrew from the U.K. market some 15 years later.

## Land Rover Freelander



Land Rover

Much like Peugeot, Land Rover took a “picture paints a thousand words” approach with its ads in the late 1990s and early 2000s. It published a series of ads in mags and newspapers that relied on a strong image and no gushing ad copy at all. The adverts gave a sense that the products themselves were so well-known that they didn’t need to be sold to the viewer.

It’s hard to pick the best, because some of the ads for the Defender and Discovery border on the downright clever, but our favorite has to be one for the Freelander. It’s simply two hippos swimming and a Freelander that’s also showing off its breaststroke competence, but the message is clear—the Freelander is a true Land Rover and can easily ford every stream. The fact that the Freelander actually looks like a submerged hippo is also nicely self-deprecating.



## Rolls-Royce



The Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud—\$13,965

“At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise in this new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock”

*What makes Rolls-Royce the best car in the world? “There is really no magic about it—it is merely patient attention to detail,” says an eminent Rolls-Royce engineer.*

1. “At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise comes from the electric clock,” reports the Technical Editor of THE MOTOR. Three mufflers tune out sound frequencies—acoustically.
2. Every Rolls-Royce engine is run for seven hours at full throttle before installation, and each car is test-driven for hundreds of miles over varying road surfaces.
3. The Rolls-Royce is designed as an owner-driven car. It is eighteen inches shorter than the largest domestic cars.
4. The car has power steering, power brakes and automatic gear-shift. It is very easy to drive and to park. No chauffeur required.
5. The finished car spends a week in the final test-shop, being fine-tuned. Here it is subjected to 98 separate ordeals. For example, the engineers use a stethoscope to listen for axle-whine.
6. The Rolls-Royce is guaranteed for three

years. With a new network of dealers and parts-depots from Coast to Coast, service is no problem.

7. The Rolls-Royce radiator has never changed, except that when Sir Henry Royce died in 1933 the monogram RR was changed from red to black.
8. The coachwork is given five coats of primer paint, and hand rubbed between each coat, before nine coats of finishing paint go on.
9. By moving a switch on the steering column, you can adjust the shock-absorbers to suit road conditions.
10. A picnic table, veneered in French walnut, slides out from under the dash. Two more swing out behind the front seats.
11. You can get such optional extras as an Espresso coffee-making machine, a dictating machine, a bed, hot and cold water for washing, an electric razor or a telephone.

12. There are three separate systems of power brakes, two hydraulic and one mechanical. Damage to one system will not affect the others. The Rolls-Royce is a very safe car—and also a very lively car. It cruises serenely at eighty-five. Top speed is in excess of 100 m.p.h.

13. The Bentley is made by Rolls-Royce. Except for the radiance, they are identical motor cars, manufactured by the same engineers in the same works. People who feel diffident about driving a Rolls-Royce can buy a Bentley.

**PRICE.** The Rolls-Royce illustrated in this advertisement—f.a.b. principal ports of entry—costs \$13,965.

If you would like the rewarding experience of driving a Rolls-Royce or Bentley, write or telephone to one of the dealers listed on the opposite page.

Rolls-Royce Inc., 10 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y., Circle 5-1144.

Rolls-Royce



Throughout the first half of the 20th century, Rolls-Royce's adverts tended to follow a similar pattern—stuffy. They quite often featured a large image, normally an artwork, showing a Rolls-Royce model parked in front of a stately home, under the headline: "The best car in the world." That was until 1959 when a man called David Ogilvy ripped up that formula and created one of the greatest car ads of all time.

**Ogilvy, an advertising mogul and Rolls-Royce fan, turned the "best car in the world" statement into a question, and made the ad explain why. The imagery became more informal and quite often pictured a family instead of an awaiting chauffeur. Ogilvy coined probably one of the most famous lines in automotive advertising history and one that has stayed with the luxury car marque ever since: "At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise in this new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock." [I remember a New Yorker cartoon from the '50's that showed Rolls executives in a meeting where one of them says, "Gentlemen, we've got to do something about that damned clock!" -Ed.]**

## Volkswagen Beetle

**Lemon.**

This Volkswagen missed the boat. The choice only on the glove compartment is scratched and must be replaced. Chances are you wouldn't have noticed it, Inspector Earl Kipper and.

There are 3,289 cars at our Wolfsburg factory with only one job to inspect Volkswagens at each stage of production. 3,000 Volkswagens are produced daily. There are more inspectors than cars!

Every third inspector is tested (not checked, not a bit, every individual is tested. VWs have been rejected for surface scratches barely visible to the eye.

Final inspection is really something! 1,000 inspectors run each car off the line into the parking lot. (And the test stand, turn up 100 check points, get ahead of the automatic brake stand, and say "ho!" to one VW out of 10).

This prescription with detail means the VW lasts longer and requires less maintenance, by and large, than other cars. It also means a used VW depreciates less than any other car!

We stick the benzene you get the plugs.

**Think small.**

Our little car isn't so much of a novelty as you think.

A couple of dozen engine bits don't fit in your pocket.

The size of the gas motor doesn't matter when the gas goes.

Actually, even drivers get lost.

In fact, some people who drive our little

Never don't even risk 22 miles to the gallon to pump the gas.

Or using the petrol oil instead of the gas.

Or never reading gas gauges.

Or making our 4000 miles per a ton of fuel.

That's because once you get used to

some of our economies, you don't even think about them any more.

Instead when you approach into a small parking spot, Or when you start your engine. Or when you start your trip. Or when you start your trip.

Think it over!

Volkswagen

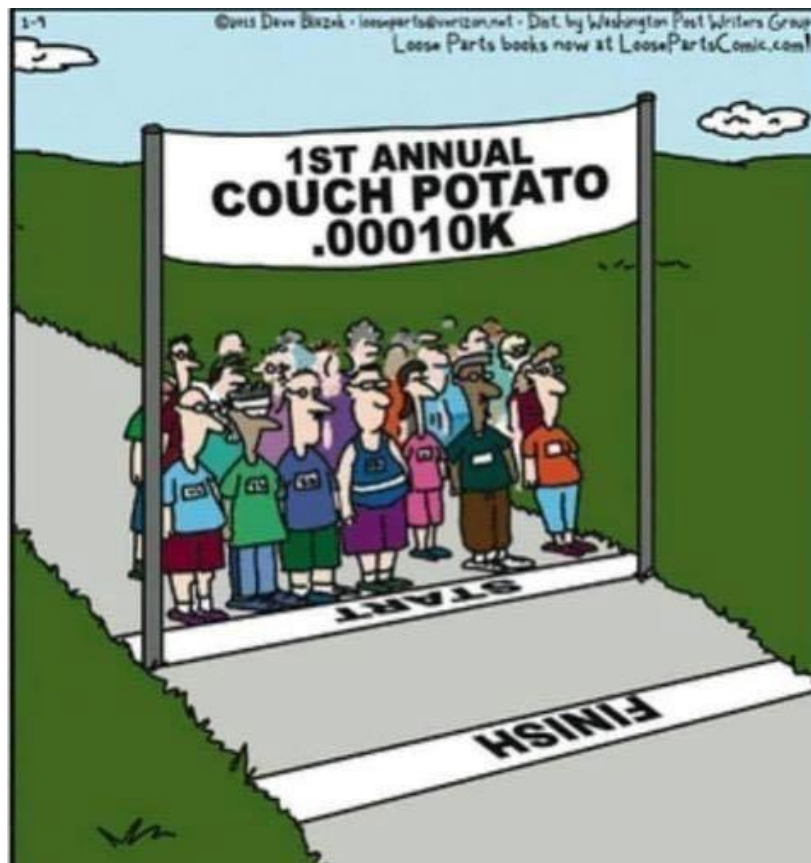
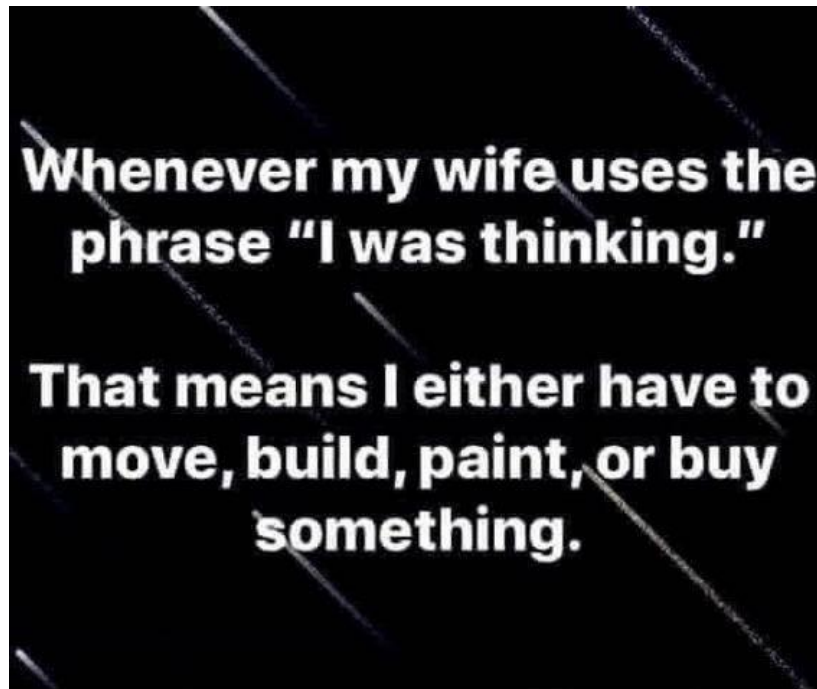
We've left arguably the best, but certainly the most famous car ad of all time, for last. Volkswagen's 1959 "Think Small" U.S. ad, which showed a tiny Beetle and three columns of copy, was more self-deprecating than salesy. Ad agency DDB didn't want to waste effort in advertising Volkswagens to Americans only interested in "Yank Tanks," so it concentrated its efforts on creating ads that showed Beetle ownership to be like a club, encouraging owners to effectively be brand ambassadors for VW.

**“Think Small” arguably changed car advertising forever, and throughout the ’60s (and well into the 2000s), every Volkswagen ad followed the same style—but the most famous was “Lemon.” When readers of the magazine in which the ad appeared in turned the page, an explanation was given as to why this Beetle was a lemon—the chrome strip attached to the glove compartment lid had a blemish, apparently. The ad copy went on to describe that this “lemon” had been fixed by one of VW’s 3389 quality control inspectors, and finished with the now famous line: “We pluck the lemons, you get the plums.” The ad was so groundbreaking that the term “lemon” to describe a car that’s faulty or sub-standard is still used today.**

*Via Hagerty UK*

## **Meow #2**

And here are some early offerings of alleged wit and wisdom from our very own Andy Picariello:





**Whoever said  
"Out of sight, Out of  
mind"**

**never had a spider  
disappear in the  
bedroom.**



It turns out that when asked who your favorite child is, you're supposed to pick one of your own. I know that now.

My wife got stung by a bee on the forehead, she's at the ER now, her face all swollen and bruised, she almost died.

Luckily I was close enough to hit the bee with my shovel!

**REMEMBER HOW WHEN YOU WERE  
LITTLE YOU COULD JUST RIP OFF  
YOUR DIAPER AND RUN AROUND  
NAKED AND EVERYONE THOUGHT  
IT WAS SO CUTE AND FUNNY?**

**ANYWAY, I NEED BAIL MONEY.**



## **Meow #3**

*Unfortunately, some not-so-good news about Jaguar Land Rover, as reported in Jalopnik's column The Morning Shift:*

### ***Jag Feeling The Pain***

By Erik Shilling July 6, 2021

Jaguar is in the weird space now that Aston Martin was in about a year ago, in that it is an open question whether Jaguar's long-term future is secure. That will probably be decided by how well Jag switches to EVs and competes with the likes of Tesla, Porsche, and everyone else. In the short-term, there is a chip shortage to worry about, according to the Financial Times.

The company said on Tuesday that chip shortages would be worse than anticipated in the second quarter of its financial year, but that the situation would improve in the second half.

"We now expect chip supply shortages in the second quarter ended 30 September 2021 to be greater than in the first quarter, potentially resulting in wholesale volumes about 50 per cent lower than planned," the carmaker said in a statement on Tuesday.

Shares in Tata Motors, JLR's Indian parent company, fell 9 per cent after the announcement.

Wholesale volumes, excluding a Chinese joint venture, came to 84,442 units in the first quarter of the financial year, about 27 per cent lower than planned because of the semiconductor supply constraints and the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The company said that "this reduction had been broadly anticipated".

## Meow 4

Only Brian McMahon could find something this weird. During the E-Type's 60th Birthday year, yet! He writes: "So, you want some salsa on your scones?"

Only in San Francisco would one find a Jaguar E-type decorated like, well, like this



By [Daniel Strohl](#) / Hemmings on [Jun 18th, 2021](#)

When Clive Wilkinson and his buddy set out to drive through San Francisco in October 1971 in a 1969 Camaro convertible as part of a cross-continent trip, they probably expected to see all sorts of strange sights. Hippies, hippie buses, hippie vans, the whole gamut. But they assuredly did not expect to see a Jaguar E-type customized to look like it just barrel-rolled through a Spanish galleon docked in San Francisco Bay.

"I think we just kinda smiled at the guy and [took some pictures](#)," Clive said. "We thought, 'What a freaking mess to make of it.'"

The location's not too difficult to make out—the corner of [Sacramento Street and Van Ness Avenue](#), the latter San Francisco's longtime auto row—nor is it difficult to determine that the car's customizer started with a Series 1 [E-type](#) OTS built prior to 1967.

Clive, however, couldn't tell us much more about the car than what we can see in the two photos he took of it, so we're dead in the water when it comes to determining who customized this (not George Barris, though he did customize

XK-120s for Barry Goldwater and Clark Gable), where the car might be now, or how somebody derived inspiration from a mariachi sombrero for a British sports car.



*Something like this, basically.*

Curiously, we see a lot here that not only is of the times but also presages later trends. While Larry Watson pioneered the lace paint technique a few years prior to its appearance in a flowing stripe along the sides of this E-type, lace paint eventually became a staple of lowrider paint schemes. Van customizers soon began applying all sorts of ornate decorations like those seen here. And just a little later that same year, Hal Ashby released a movie featuring another E-type extensively customized by an eccentric San Franciscan.



*Photo by Clive Wilkinson.*



Given that Series 1 E-type OTS roadsters now regularly sell for six figures and that restoring them has put many a shop owners' children through college over the last few decades, it's highly unlikely this one has survived the last 50 years in this condition. But if anybody happens to know of an E-type that shed a set of big rear fender flares during its restoration process—or better yet, if you also spotted this E-type roaming San Francisco at the time—let us know so we can try to piece together the history on this car.

As for Clive, the road trip was a transformative moment for him, leading to his decision to emigrate from England to Canada.

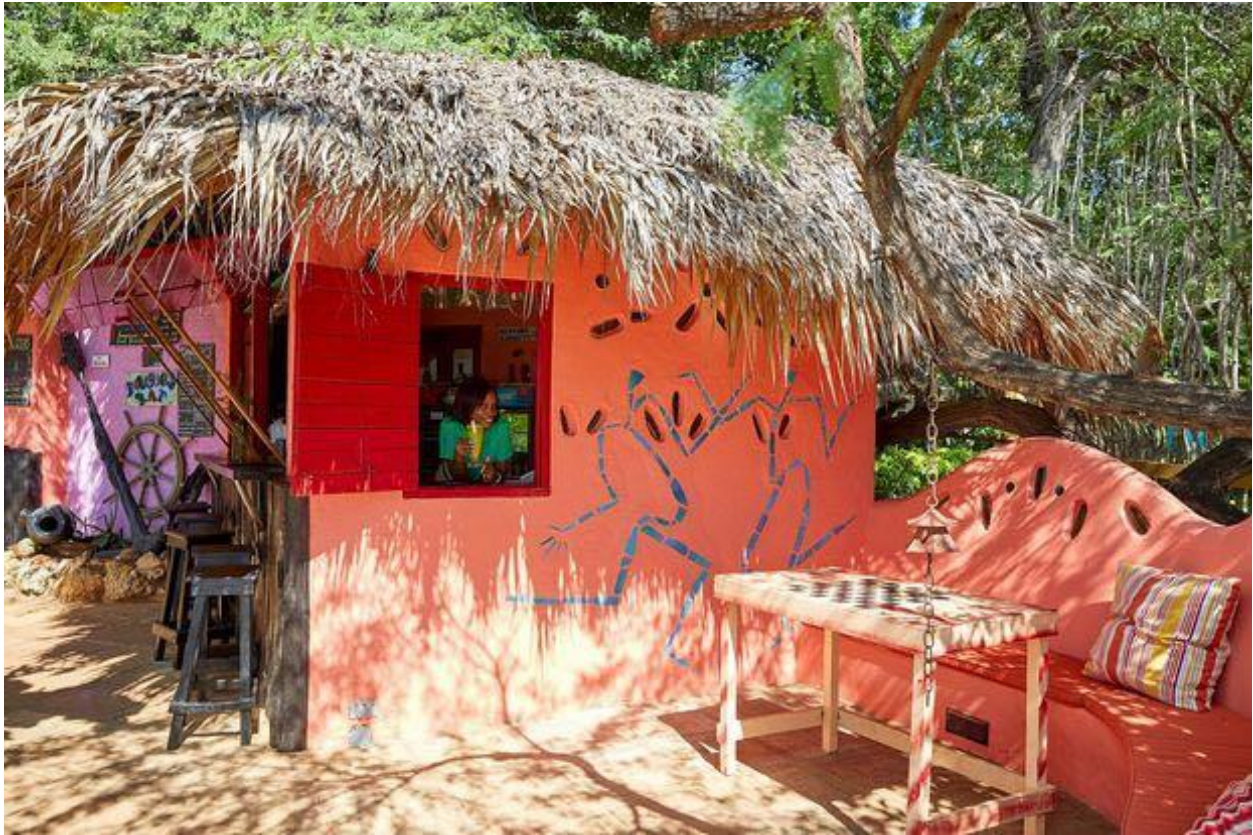
*We drove from Toronto right across Canada to Vancouver, down the West Coast, across to Vegas, then L.A and down into Mexico for a spell. Back into Arizona and across the southern states to New Orleans (had to get my long hair cut before we got to Texas) and back up though the eastern states to Canada. 12,000 miles in a month.*

Five years later he even bought his own E-type: a right-hand-drive 1962 Series I FHC. He did not restore it to look anything like the one he spotted on Van Ness, however.

## **Meow #5**

On a more civilized and worldly note from Brian, here's a piece on Jamaica and some of its residents and visitors: "Jamaica- 'Smoke 'em if you got 'em!'"

### ***In Jamaica, a '90s Hotel with Timeless Appeal***



X MARKS THE SPOT: Dougie's Bar at Jakes, a mainstay in Treasure Beach since the early '90s.

The antithesis of a gated resort, Jakes has always drawn locals to its relaxed restaurants and bars, while the accommodations—increasingly luxurious—still capture the singular experience of being in Jamaica

*By Alison Humes, June 16, 2021*

## **THEN**

In the early 1990s, Sally Henzell opened Jakes, a restaurant in the middle of the fishing village Treasure Beach on Jamaica's southwest coast. Soon there was a tiny thatched bar, a few cabins and a pretty pool. She kept adding rooms, always chic, funky, awash in color ("poems in cement," she calls them). Named after Ms. Henzell's family parrot, Jakes catered to locals, backpackers and artists seeking tranquility. Ms. Henzell, who was born in Jamaica to British parents and married filmmaker Perry Henzell, had been coming to Treasure Beach since childhood, when her father built a family cottage there (eventually that too became part of the hotel). The art director for her husband's film "The Harder They Come," starring Jimmy Cliff, Ms. Henzell infused Jakes with a bohemian, multicultural vibe, more '60s than '90s in spirit. It was always the antithesis of a gated resort. Guests could watch fishermen taking out their boats, and walk down the road to find a beer in a village shop or study an intense game of dominoes.

## NOW

These days, Ms. Henzell's son, Jason Henzell, runs the place. He has added extravagant villas and a budget hostel (in 2014, to honor those original backpackers), as well as another restaurant, Jack Sprat, a hit with locals and visitors. Everyone gathers for grilled fish, jerk chicken, lobster pizza or coconut curry octopus, lots of music and conversation. Ms. Henzell's first rooms are still there, as is the little bar next to the pool, and the original restaurant up front. The main activities haven't changed much—guests snorkel on the reef, head up the Black River to fish or birdwatch in the mangroves and then make a stop at Floyd's Pelican Bar, which floats a mile off shore. Newer offerings fit right in: outdoor farm-to-table dinners, tours of local farms, pickup games of basketball or soccer in the sports park. The pandemic shut down the park—and the hotel—last year but now guests and locals alike are back, watching cricket and downing Red Stripes.

## CREATIVE JUICES

*Jamaica's beauty has long inspired artists—professional and amateur—to hunker down for a while. Here's where a few notables found inspiring hidey-holes.*



Ian Fleming, author of the James Bond novels, at his villa in Jamaica, Goldeneye, in year 1964.



*\*\*\* H-m-m-m ... That Blower Bentley in **From Russia with Love** is getting a little long in the tooth ...*



*Is there some other British sports car maker we can turn to? Who'll supply us with a tricked-out coupe that includes a passenger ejector seat?*



*"You're joking!" \*\*\**

Ian Fleming came to Jamaica while working in naval intelligence in the 1940s



*Here's the "Wavy Navy" (RNVR) Commander during WWII*

and then built Goldeneye, where he wrote his James Bond novels between 1952 and 1964. Now called the "Fleming Villa," his former cottage is within one of the island's most fashionable resorts ([goldeneye.com](http://goldeneye.com)).

Sir Winston Churchill first went to the Jamaica Inn in 1953, where he enjoyed painting. He preferred the White Suite ([jamaicainn.com](http://jamaicainn.com)).

At posh Round Hill resort, Oscar Hammerstein, the original owner of Villa 12, wrote "The Sound of Music" in 1959 ([roundhill.com/villa12](http://roundhill.com/villa12)).

In 1976, Alex Haley settled into Sally Henzell's family cottage on Treasure Beach to finish writing "Roots: The Saga of an American Family." Treasure Cot, as it's called, is one of the 12 cottages and villas now on offer at Jakes ([jakeshotel.com](http://jakeshotel.com)).

## ISLAND TIME

*A few key dates in Jamaica's tourism history*



Photo: Getty Images

In 1931, Charles Lindbergh landed the first Pan Am Clipper, the amphibious Sikorsky S-40, in Jamaica, en route from Miami to Barranquilla, Colombia. The 'Caribbean Clipper,' a similar model, is shown here in Miami in 1937.

### **1891**

Jamaica, a British colony at the time, stages an international exhibition in Kingston to promote tourism.

### **1931**

Charles Lindbergh lands the first Pan Am Clipper in Kingston Harbor (a similar model shown here in Miami in 1937).

### **1953**

Marilyn Monroe and Arthur Miller honeymoon in Montego Bay.

### **1962**

Jamaica gains independence from England.

### **1972**

*The film "The Harder They Come" introduces reggae to America.*

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHAbj1pIT4g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHAbj1pIT4g)

### **June 2020**

Jamaica becomes one of the first Caribbean countries to reopen during the Covid-19 pandemic.



## **Meow #6**

Andy Picariello has these photos to share:

### **1. This is one clever ad**



### **2. There is no such thing as bad publicity**



**3. Reality keeps outdoing itself...**



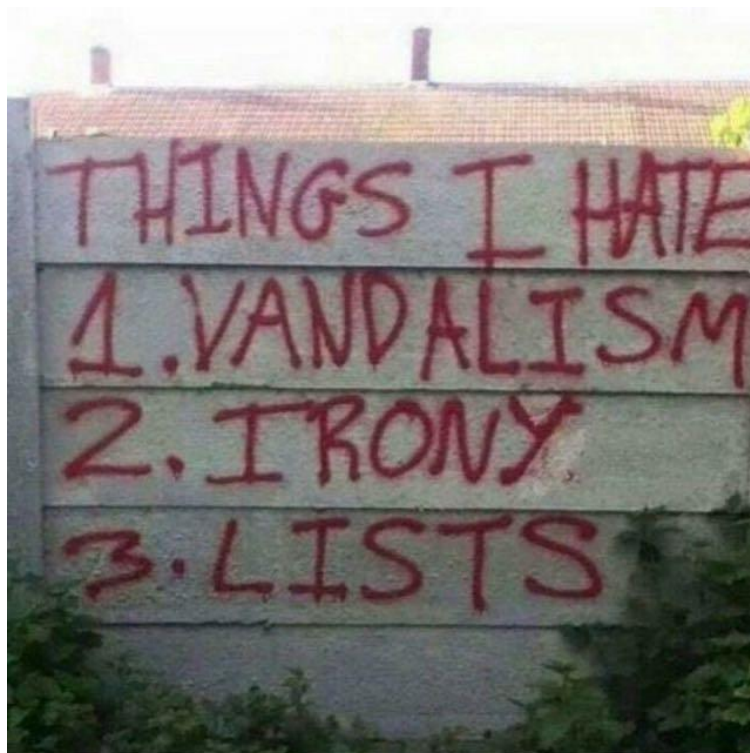
**4. They weren't joking when they said those muffins were big**



5. I'd heed the warning



6. Things I hate





7. Push



8. What part of private don't you understand?



**9. So, is this a drill?**





## Meow #7

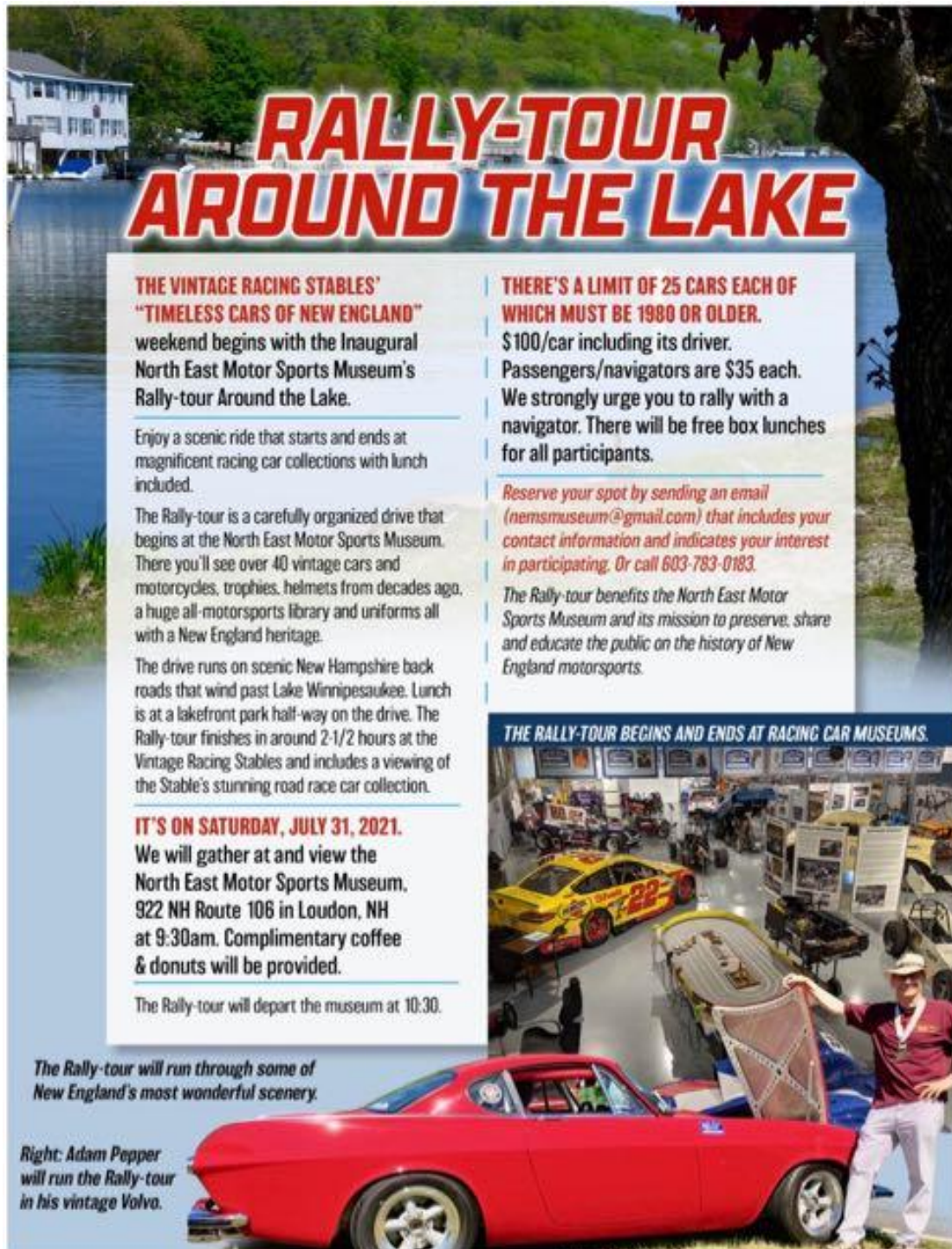
Frank Grimaldi sent me this email:

Dave,

I attach the flyer and entry for the NEMSM Rally Tour on July 31.

Hope a few JANE members will be interested and we can do the tour in a convoy so if, or when we get lost, we will be in good company !

Frank



# RALLY-TOUR AROUND THE LAKE

**THE VINTAGE RACING STABLES' "TIMELESS CARS OF NEW ENGLAND"** weekend begins with the Inaugural North East Motor Sports Museum's Rally-tour Around the Lake.

Enjoy a scenic ride that starts and ends at magnificent racing car collections with lunch included.

The Rally-tour is a carefully organized drive that begins at the North East Motor Sports Museum. There you'll see over 40 vintage cars and motorcycles, trophies, helmets from decades ago, a huge all-motorsports library and uniforms all with a New England heritage.

The drive runs on scenic New Hampshire back roads that wind past Lake Winnepesaukee. Lunch is at a lakefront park half-way on the drive. The Rally-tour finishes in around 2-1/2 hours at the Vintage Racing Stables and includes a viewing of the Stable's stunning road race car collection.

**IT'S ON SATURDAY, JULY 31, 2021.** We will gather at and view the North East Motor Sports Museum, 922 NH Route 106 in Loudon, NH at 9:30am. Complimentary coffee & donuts will be provided.

The Rally-tour will depart the museum at 10:30.

*The Rally-tour will run through some of New England's most wonderful scenery.*

*Right: Adam Pepper will run the Rally-tour in his vintage Volvo.*

**THERE'S A LIMIT OF 25 CARS EACH OF WHICH MUST BE 1980 OR OLDER.** \$100/car including its driver. Passengers/navigators are \$35 each. We strongly urge you to rally with a navigator. There will be free box lunches for all participants.

*Reserve your spot by sending an email ([nemsmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:nemsmuseum@gmail.com)) that includes your contact information and indicates your interest in participating. Or call 603-783-0183.*

*The Rally-tour benefits the North East Motor Sports Museum and its mission to preserve, share and educate the public on the history of New England motorsports.*

**THE RALLY-TOUR BEGINS AND ENDS AT RACING CAR MUSEUMS.**

**Entry Application**  
**North East Motorsports Museum's Inaugural Rally-tour Along  
the Lake**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Year and make of your car \_\_\_\_\_

Interesting fact about you or your car \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Prior rally experience \_\_\_\_\_

---

***\$100/ car including driver. \$35 each passenger. We strongly urge you to run the rally with a navigator. We have a few navigators available.***

Meet 9:30 am July 31 at the North East Motor Sports Museum for a museum tour, coffee and donuts. Rally-tour begins at 10:30. Box lunches including soft drinks will be provided. Rally-tour concludes at Nick Grewal's Vintage Racing Stables farm and vintage race car collection after a scenic ride through New Hampshire's lakes region. The Rally-tour drive time is about 2-1/2 hours.

Send your application along with your check or credit card information to North East Motor Sports Museum, 922 Rt 106, Loudon, NH 03307.

## **Meow #8**

Frank also is ~~reduced to~~ selling T-shirts to ~~recoup costs~~ commemorate his retirement from racing. He writes:

People have expressed interest in buying a **Grimaldi Farewell Tour "21"** tee shirt and I hope you will include this message in Meow.

Buying a shirt Individually costs more so I will collect orders and process a single bulk order to save you money. I will be happy to provide a shirt at my cost including shipping to you of \$30.

I attach Shirt Sizing information below as well as a photo of the graphics.

The shirt will have the maroon background as shown.

If interested, please supply the following to **Frank Grimaldi, 60 Susan Drive  
Tewksbury MA 01876**

- shirt size,
- your mailing address
- check made out to me in amount of \$30.00

I plan to submit the bulk order within 4 weeks following this note in MEOW so please order promptly. I will inform you of the approximate delivery date once I place that order .

Sincerely

Frank Grimaldi





***Grimaldi***  
Since 1972

**BEAVERUN MOTORSPORTS COMPLEX**  
**BRYAR MOTORSPORTS PARK**  
**CIRCUIT MONT TREMBLANT**  
**LIME ROCK PARK**  
**MID-OHIO SPORTS CAR COURSE**  
**NEW HAMPSHIRE MOTOR SPEEDWAY**  
**NJMP LIGHTNING CIRCUIT**  
**NJMP THUNDERBOLT CIRCUIT**  
**PITTSBURGH VINTAGE GRAND PRIX**  
**POCONO INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY**  
**ROAD ATLANTA**  
**THOMPSON MOTOR SPEEDWAY**  
**VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY**  
**WATKINS GLEN INTERNATIONAL**

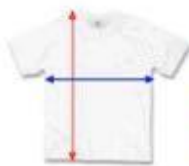
Hanes Tagless T-shirt - Sizing Line-Up<sup>SM</sup> - Standard Sizes

garment fit



	S	M	L	XL
name:	Elizabeth	Matt	Chris	Mark
height:	5'3"	5'10.5"	6'0"	6'3"
weight:	133 lbs	155 lbs	185 lbs	215 lbs
chest:	34"	36.5"	38.5"	43"
waist:	27"	32"	34"	39"

garment measurements (inches)



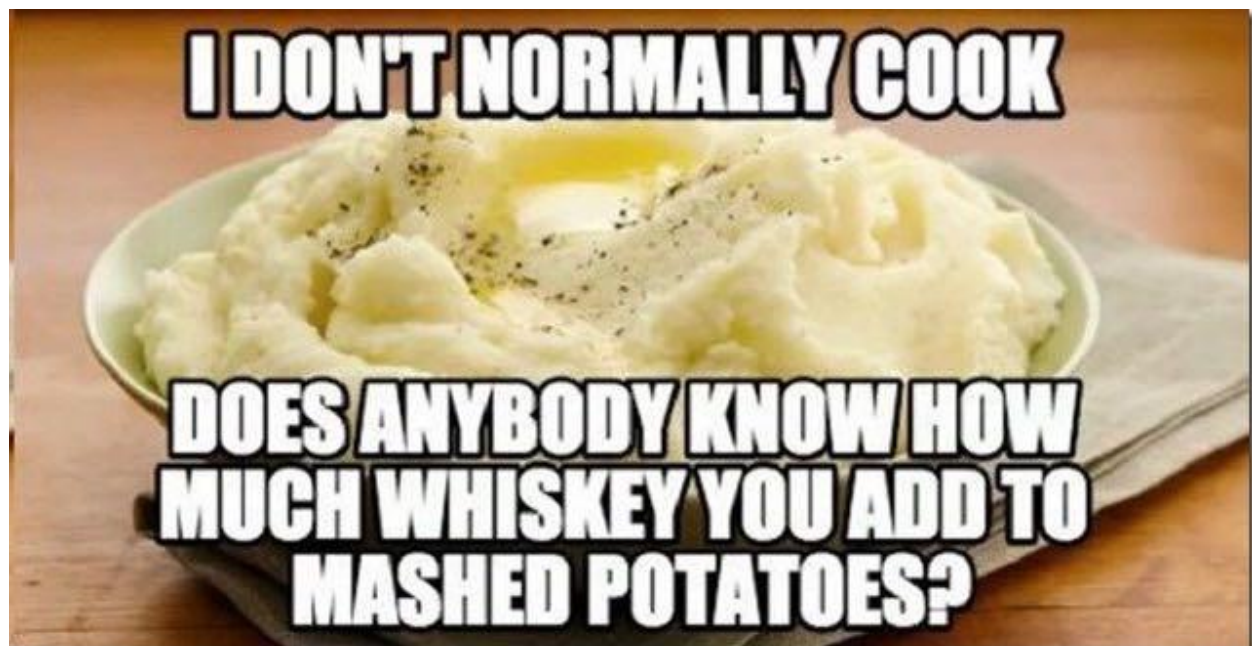
	YXS (2-4)	YS (6-8)	YM (10-12)	YL (14-16)	YXL (18-20)	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL	4XL
length	18	20.5	23	25	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35
width	13.5	15.5	17	18	20	18	20	22	24	26	28	30

length  
(shoulder seam at collar to bottom hem)

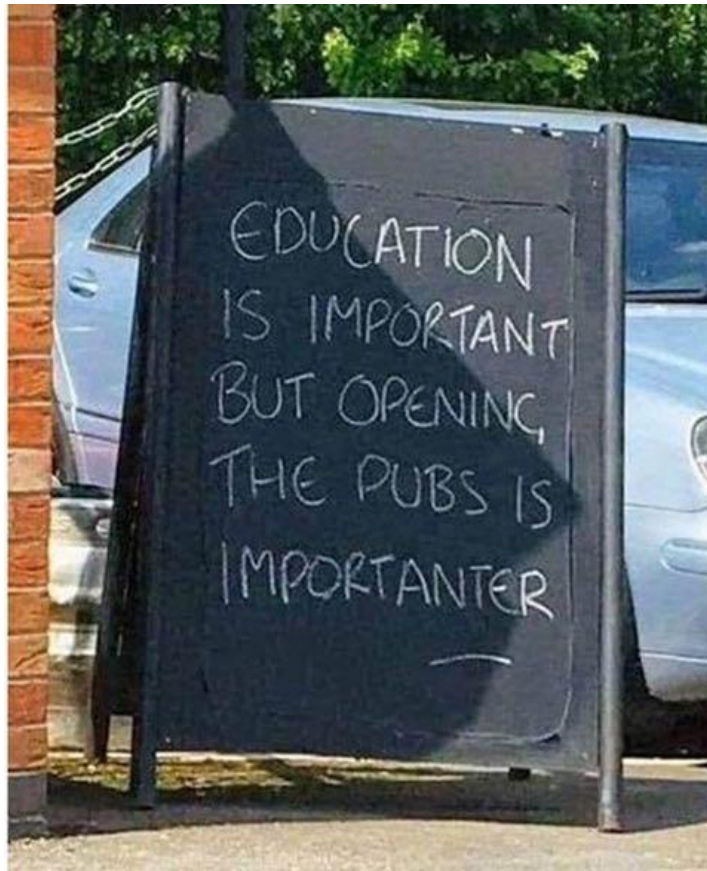
width  
(side to side at 1" below sleeves)

**Meow #9**

*Meanwhile, Andy just never gives up!*







**Ill never forget the  
look on the cashiers  
face, when she  
scanned the packet of  
bird seed,  
And I asked her how  
long does it take for  
the birds to grow once  
I plant them.**



## **Meow #10**

*Meanwhile, Chuck Centore sent in some trivia for us to marvel at, saying, "Bet you didn't know . . ." He was right. I didn't. –Ed.*

'A SHOT OF WHISKEY' - In the old west a .45 cartridge for a six-gun cost 12 cents, so did a glass of whiskey. If a cowhand was low on cash, he would often give the bartender a cartridge in exchange for a drink. This became known as a "shot" of whiskey.

BUYING THE FARM - This is synonymous with dying. During WW1 soldiers were given life insurance policies worth \$5,000. This was about the price of an average farm so if you died you "bought the farm" for your survivors.

IRON-CLAD CONTRACT - This came about from the ironclad ships of the Civil War. It meant something so strong it could not be broken.

RIFF RAFF - The Mississippi River was the main way of traveling from north to south. Riverboats carried passengers and freight but they were expensive so most people used rafts. Everything had the right of way over rafts, which were considered cheap. The steering oar on the rafts was called a "riff" and this transposed into riff-raft, meaning low class.

COBWEB - The Old English word for "spider" was "cob".

SHIP STATEROOMS - Traveling by steamboat was considered the height of comfort. Passenger cabins on the boats were not numbered. Instead they were named after states. To this day cabins on ships are called staterooms.

SLEEP TIGHT - Early beds were made with a wooden frame. Ropes were tied across the frame in a crisscross pattern. A straw mattress was then put on top of the ropes. Over time the ropes stretched, causing the bed to sag. The owner would then tighten the ropes to get a better night's sleep.

SHOWBOAT - These were floating theaters built on a barge that was pushed by a steamboat. These played small towns along the Mississippi River. Unlike the boat shown in the movie "Showboat", these did not have an engine. They were gaudy and attention grabbing which is why we say someone who is being the life of the party is "showboating".

OVER A BARREL - In the days before CPR, a drowning victim would be placed face down over a barrel and the barrel would be rolled back and forth in an effort to empty the lungs of water. It was rarely effective. If you are over a barrel, you are in deep trouble.

BARGE IN - Heavy freight was moved along the Mississippi in large barges pushed by steamboats. These were hard to control and would sometimes swing into piers or other boats. People would say they "barged in".

HOGWASH - Steamboats carried both people and animals. Since pigs smelled so bad they would be washed before being put on board. The mud and other filth that was washed off were considered useless "hog wash".

CURFEW - The word "curfew" comes from the French phrase "couvre-feu", which means "cover the fire". It was used to describe the time of blowing out all lamps and candles. It was later adopted into Middle English as "curfeu" which later became the modern "curfew".



In the early American colonies homes had no real fireplaces so a fire was built in the center of the room. In order to make sure a fire did not get out of control during the night it was required that, by an agreed upon time, all fires would be covered with a clay pot called a "curfew".

BARRELS OF OIL - When the first oil wells were drilled, there was no provision for storing the liquid so they used water barrels. That is why, to this day, we speak of barrels of oil rather than gallons.

HOT OFF THE PRESS - As the paper goes through the rotary printing press, friction causes it to heat up. Therefore, if you grab the paper right off the press, it's hot. The expression means to get immediate information.

*There, don't you feel smarter now? I do!*

### **Also Betcha Didn't Know ...**

The liquid inside young coconuts can be used as a substitute for Blood plasma.  
No piece of paper can be folded in half more than seven (7) times. (Oh, go ahead.. I'll wait...)

Donkeys kill more people annually than plane crashes or shark attacks. **(So, watch your A..)**

You burn more calories sleeping than you do watching television

Oak trees do not produce acorns until they are fifty (50) years of age, or older.

The first product to have a bar code was Wrigley's gum.

The King of Hearts is the only king WITHOUT A MUSTACHE

American Airlines saved \$40,000 in 1987 by eliminating one (1) olive from each salad served in first-class.

Venus is the only planet that rotates clockwise. (Since Venus is normally associated with women, what does this tell you?) (Could it be those women are going in the 'right' direction...?)

Apples, not caffeine, are more efficient at waking you up in the morning.

Most dust particles in your house are made from DEAD SKIN!

The first owner of the Marlboro Company died of lung cancer. So did the first 'Marlboro Man'.

Walt Disney was afraid OF MICE!

PEARLS DISSOLVE IN VINEGAR!

The ten most valuable brand names on earth are:

Apple, Coca Cola, Google, IBM, Microsoft, GE, McDonald's, Samsung, Intel, and Toyota,  
in that order.

A duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why.

Dentists have recommended that a toothbrush be kept at least six (6) feet away from a toilet to avoid airborne particles resulting from the flush.

Turtles can breathe through their butts.

Some politicians speak that way.

Remember, knowledge is everything, so pass it on.....

*Now go move your toothbrush!*

## Meow #11

### Our JANE Events Updated

Take a look at our calendar. Events in **BOLD** have been confirmed.

### Our Event Calendar for 2021 As It Stands Today We'll try to keep you up-to-date!

BYOP/B means "bring your own picnic/beverages" (we may switch to box lunches)  
SD/M means the event will require "social distancing and masks," per guidelines at the time  
Ltd. means "limited" entries, per guidelines at the time (this remains possible)

Event	Weekday, date	Possible Features?
<b>British Car Day at Larz</b>	<b>Sunday, July 11th</b>	<b>BYOP/B, SD/M</b>
<b>Myopia Picnic</b>	<b>Sunday, July 25th</b>	<b>BYOP/B, SD/M, Ltd.</b>
<b>JANE Concours</b>	<b>Saturday, August 21</b>	<b>Wayside Inn</b>
August, Possible Tour/picnic?	Saturday or Sunday tbd	BYOP/B, SD/M, Ltd.
September, Slalom	(Saturday tbd)	<u>SD/M, Ltd.</u>
September, Zoom or dinner mtg?	Wednesday, 9/29/21	Live speaker set
September, British Invasion? not JANE	Fri-Sun Sept. 10-12	Overnight, see website
October, Possible Foliage Tour/picnic	Sunday tbd	BYOP/B, SD/M, Ltd.
October, Zoom or dinner mtg?	Wednesday, 10/27/21	Zoom: Guest Speaker?
November, Thanksgiving at Wayside	Wednesday, 11/17/21?	SD/M, Ltd. banquet
December AGM Holiday Party at Wayside?	Sunday, 12/5/21?	SD/M, Ltd. banquet

On **Sunday, July 11th**, Larz Anderson Museum will host **British Car Day**. Hey, that's us!

Then, on **Sunday, July 25th**, we will participate in the *Jaguar Cup Polo Match* at Myopia. Registration is open, through Constant Contact.

On **Saturday, August 21st**, we will have our **Concours** at The Wayside Inn. A 40x100' Tent will be used to accommodate the first registered 17 Champion Jaguars. For complete information and registration forms, please click on the 2021 Concours after logging on the <http://jagne.org/jane/index.cfm> website.

It is actually happening! Praise the Lord and Pass The Malt!



## **Meow #12**

*Garrett Bourque, of Jefferson, ME (just north of Damariscotta Lake), was a member of JANE almost twenty years ago. He has now rejoined the club. Bless him! Let's all welcome him back.*

*Just so you know, Garrett also has a 1967 Jaguar 420 for sale. He says:*

"The car is as follows. It's a 1967 Jaguar 420 automatic sedan. The car has chrome wire wheels, a black exterior and a red interior. Asking price \$6800. This car is a survivor running functional car, located in Rockland Maine. This 420 was first acquired by its owner in Seattle, WA in 1992. Upon retirement, the car was moved to Maine in 2011. This 420 has always been black and was repainted once in 1992. The original red leather interior is well preserved and the car has been garaged. A brake rebuild, a servo and master cylinder replacement are documented in the car's papers. A driver's manual, shop manual and folder of other service records are included. The car was fitted with a huge in-trunk air conditioner. It is no longer fitted but parts of the system are included. Overall the car is in good "survivor" condition.

Contact Garrett Bourque 98 Bunker Hill Road Jefferson, Maine 04348. email is [gbbourque@gmail.com](mailto:gbbourque@gmail.com) and my cell is [207 215 8049](tel:2072158049).



## Meow #13

From British Motorcars of New England (BMCNE):



The logo for the 'Rallye Cape Cod' event. It features a red background with a white border. At the top left is the Cape Cod British Car Club logo. In the center, there is a white box with the number '01' and a yellow box with '2021'. Below this, the text 'RALLYE CAPE COD' is written in large, white, bold letters. At the bottom, there are logos for 'SUNRISE' and 'Jewelcraft' along with the website 'www.capecodbritishcarsclub.org'.

**Saturday, July 24. 7:30am-1:00pm**

**Rallye Cape Cod**  
Sandwich, Massachusetts

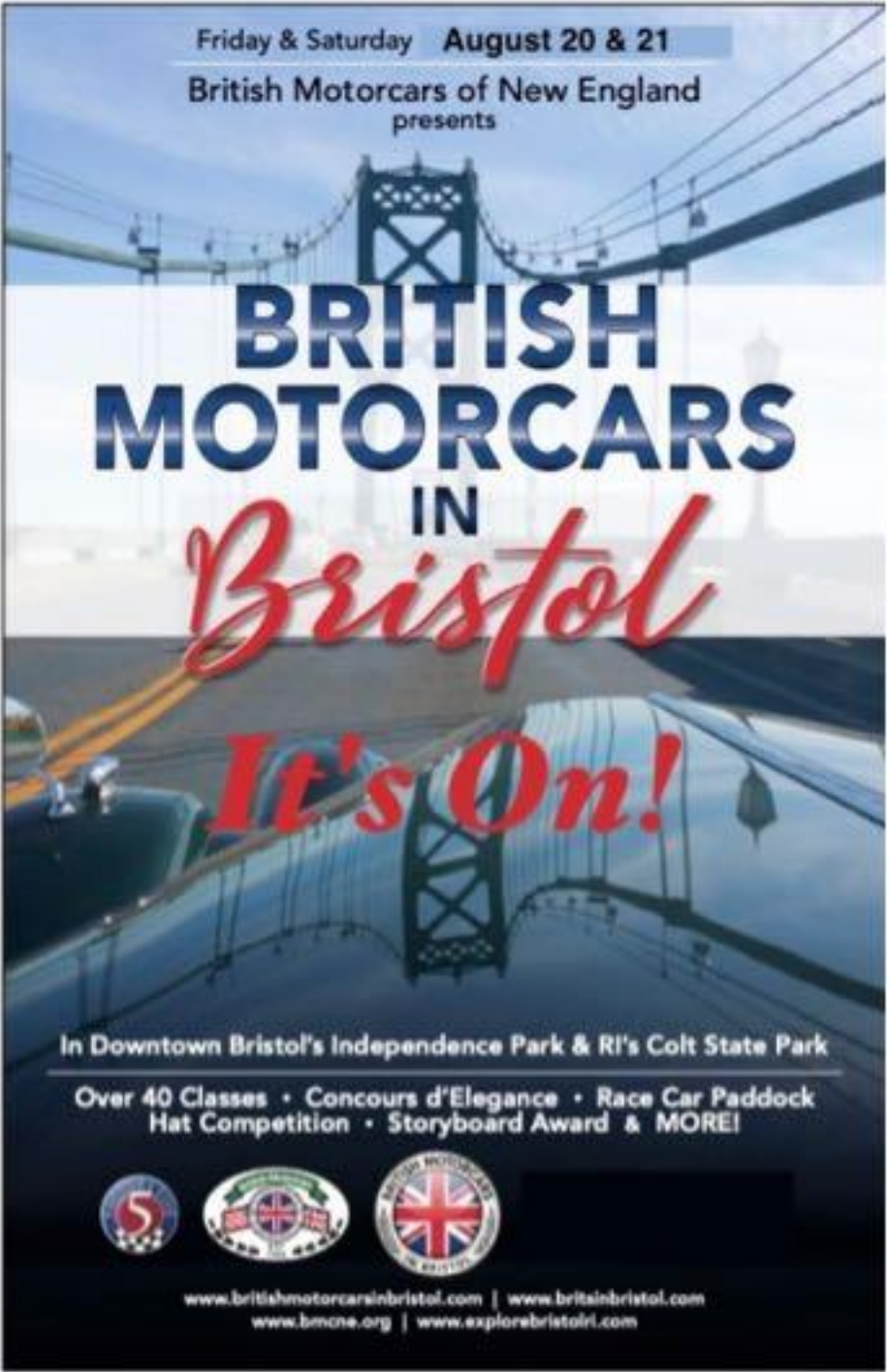
Our friends at the Cape Cod British Car Club will be holding a fundraising rallye for the Independence House on July 24th (rain date is July 25)

The Rallye Cape Cod will be a fun tour with some different twists and turns, car markings, games, and awards. Since the event will also be a fundraiser for the Independence House of Cape Cod, we will have sponsors and there will be a registration fee so that we can help this very deserving organization.

[Rallye Cape Cod](#)




Friday & Saturday **August 20 & 21**  
British Motorcars of New England  
presents



**BRITISH  
MOTORCARS**  
IN  
*Bristol*  
*It's On!*

In Downtown Bristol's Independence Park & RI's Colt State Park

Over 40 Classes • Concours d'Elegance • Race Car Paddock  
Hat Competition • Storyboard Award & MORE!



[www.britishmotorcarsinbristol.com](http://www.britishmotorcarsinbristol.com) | [www.britisinbristol.com](http://www.britisinbristol.com)  
[www.bmcne.org](http://www.bmcne.org) | [www.explorebristolri.com](http://www.explorebristolri.com)

British Motorcars of New England presents  
British Motorcars in Bristol, RI  
Friday August 20 and Saturday August 21



## **Meow #14**

*Andy Picariello wants to talk about "lexophilia":*

**A "lexophile" is one who has a love for words, such as "You can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish", and "To write with a broken pencil is pointless". An annual competition is held by the New York Times to see who can create the best.**

***And the winners are:***

- I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.
- England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
- Haunted French pancakes give me the crepes.
- This girl today said she recognized me from the Vegetarians Club, but I'd swear I've never met herbivore.
- I know a guy who's addicted to drinking brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.
- I got some batteries that were given out free of charge.
- A dentist and a manicurist married. They fought tooth and nail.
- A will is a dead giveaway.
- Police were summoned to a daycare center where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.
- Did you hear about the fellow whose entire left side was cut off? He's all right now.
- A bicycle can't stand alone; it's just two tired.
- A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.
- The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine last week is now fully recovered.
- He had a photographic memory, but it was never fully developed.
- When she saw her first strands of gray hair, she thought she'd dye.
- Acupuncture is a job well done. That's the point of it.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.
- Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?
- When you get a bladder infection, urine trouble.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.

## ***Meow #15***

*Kevin Murphy still has some wheels for sale:*

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## Meow #16

*In this Meow, Brian brings us another chapter of "The Death Eaters."*

*"Is this JANE's next Slalom champ?" he asks.*

### ***The Death Eaters, Chapter 2: Reliant Regal***



By [Sam Smith](#) / Hagerty, 01 July 2021, photos by Andrew Trahan

Welcome to a series we call **The Death Eaters**. With the help of the **Lane Motor Museum** and Kentucky's wonderful **NCM Motorsports Park**, Hagerty is exploring the stories and real-world behavior of legendary cars with infamous handling. The stuff of lore, both common and obscure, from turbo Porsches to Reliant three-wheelers. This is the second in a series; the first, on the Tatra T87, can be found [here](#). Enjoy! —Hagerty Ed.

The car is the size of a dog crate. Imagine the sort of box in which a person might sequester a German Shepherd, or maybe a drunk Oompa-Loompa. In spite of this, the interior feels roomy. This is probably because the whole thing is British, and the British are good at making much from little. Midcentury prosperity from war-battered London. Everlasting pop music from a scruffy part of Liverpool. A [reasonable little economy car](#) from four rubber cones and ten-inch wheels.





**The Reliant Regal, however, is not a reasonable little economy car. It is more like a reasonable little form of indigestion, or maybe just a reasonable way to suggest that we all return to living in caves, where no one goes any faster than a human can run and you certainly don't find yourself upside-down on the way to the store because you hit a pothole in a corner while changing the radio.** Wait; that's unfair. The Regal I drove didn't have a radio. That would be fancy. A Regal is clarified unfancy, its features so entertainingly basic as to demand exclamation points: *Three wheels! Made of fiberglass and angle iron! One extremely overworked front kingpin!*

Strange machine. But I liked it! Really! I had a great time! I had the thing on two wheels in the first hundred yards, entirely by accident, and it was only moderately terrifying! I also—and this is not in any way an exaggeration—never want to drive it again!



To know the Regal, you must first know the Reliant Robin. The Regal came before the Robin, though the Robin is the greater landmark. Both machines are fiberglass-bodied three-wheelers with a reputation for falling over. Jeremy Clarkson famously crashed a Robin on *Top Gear* [www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQh56geU0X8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQh56geU0X8) and compared it to driving around in one of the Queen's corgis. Princess Anne had one. The British called the car "Plastic Pig." Driving a Reliant was oddly freeing, Clarkson said, because "if something goes wrong, you will be killed immediately." \*\*\* *Clarkson continues: "There'll be no lingering and agonising spell in hospital. No priest with his last rites. One minute you'll be bouncing up and down wearing a childlike grin and the next you'll be meat."* \*\*\*

The Robin was built in two periods, from 1973 to 1981 and 1989 to 2001. Contemporary journalism noted that the car was both moderately unstable and capable of more than 70 mph. Thousands of Robins were sold. English folk generally regard them as lovable cultural flotsam, indefensible but harmless, the way Americans view White Castle hamburgers or Ryan Seacrest.

As for the Reliant Regal, well, it's basically a Robin but less ... good.

Regals were built from 1953 to 1973. If a Robin did a passable impression of a small car, the Regal did a passable impression of a stone-age Robin, or perhaps a Ford Anglia sulking in a corner because someone stole one of its front wheels. The Robin wore a rear anti-roll bar, which helped keep the car grounded in corners; the Regal did without. The interior of a Robin recalled your average 1970s car; the Regal's was untrimmed fiberglass, visible fibers, like an old wheelbarrow. The Robin's chassis was slightly more evolved than that of the

Regal, offering greater stability, but the newer Reliant was still associated with the kind of crash unique to “delta” three-wheelers, where the vehicle trips over its front tire in sudden maneuvers. Heavy crosswinds were said to air-freight either machine directly to the nearest ditch, no waiting.

Naturally, as the Regal aged, Reliant engineers gave it more power. The last and strongest Regals were dubbed 3/30—the first number for wheel count, and the second for quoted ponies. This was our test car, a 1971.



“It loses traction, so the motor goes *grrr*, like you’re slipping on ice,” Jeff Lane told me. “That means a rear wheel is either up in the air or really light. Get a little steer out of it, let off the gas, it usually comes back down.” Lane is the founder of Nashville’s nonprofit Lane Motor Museum. The Lane owned our test car. Jeff attended our test for moral support.

“You can flip it over,” he said, affably. “But I think you’d really have to hammer it.”

I believed him. Later—and this is no reflection on Jeff, both a skilled driver and a kind human—there were doubts.

**The Englishman who designed the Robin once called the Regal a “big, ugly thing.” In person, the car plays as agreeable doofus, like a Golden Retriever that found your stash of pot cookies. (Third dog reference, I know. The car makes you think of small animals.) The shift lever is maybe four inches tall, its lollipop knob jutting up at your left hip. Selecting any of the Regal’s four forward gears is like arranging dollhouse furniture. Turn the wheel while the car is stopped, the whole machine will rock back and forth on its single front spring, dipping fenders**



around that upright. The hoarse, 875-cc four behind the dash (originally a 700-cc unit) is best described as ... present.



The other tests in this series have orbited something like science—careful advance up a ladder of risky maneuvers. The Reliant, however, allowed for just two modes: slow and tentative motion, or more speed. The latter brought a kind of neanderthal physics call-and-response where the car shouted its feelings in stone-age language. Sample discussion, during a 20-mph feel-out lap of our autocross pad:

**Vehicle operator:** [begins driving, cautious]

**Car [yelling]:** HI HELLO DO YOU NEED WHEEL IN AIR

**VO:** Oh! Uh ... no? I'm good, thanks

**C:** ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS WHEEL THING

**VO:** Yes, really, just act as if we're popping out to the store

**C:** HERE WHAT IF I JUST PUT THIS WHEEL IN THE AIR RIGHT HERE IN CASE YOU NEED IT

**VO:** I just want to pretend to exit a neighborhood and turn this corner like a normal person, please calm down, you just can't go murdering people like this



**C:** IS IT NORMAL TO PUT A WHEEL IN THE AIR

**VO:** Not entirely, no, but here we are

**C:** IS HERE A PLACE WHERE YOU NEED FLYING WHEEL

**VO:** No seriously, really, I mean this, I think I'm good

**C:** GOOD FOR ... AIR ... WHEEL?

**VO:** [wearily] For the love of God please oh my stop



**When all you have is a three-wheeled panic hammer, every road is a nail.** Before I hit our cone course and began testing, I had rolled over to a deserted section of the asphalt pad. A slow and wary series of circles followed, to feel things out. At a smidge faster than a jog, the Reliant lurched into unsteady lean, flying the inside rear tire. I relaxed my right big toe and the car dropped in sickening fashion, slamming into a bump stop with a bang. The bodywork wobbled for a moment as the dampers performed something not entirely unlike work. Being an experienced professional who is not at all fazed by this sort of thing, I forced a nervous laugh and then took a moment to recover from extreme personal clenching.





Our pad layout, mostly second-gear corners, suddenly seemed entirely too fast. The plan for graduated handling tests went out the window, replaced by an improvised process I logged in my notes as:

1. *Poke Regal, gently, and observe response*
2. *Attempt to combine abject rollover anxiety with motion faster than walking*
3. *Don't let the car smell fear.*

**That last bit took some doing. The virtually numb steering was finger-light even when parked. Wheel input would immediately kick the car into some 15 degrees of body roll, compressing the outside rear spring; any further steering or throttle would generally prompt the inside wheel to chase the sun. Two-tire driving was possible but spastic and unstable, the edge of a knife. As the Reliant was right-hand-drive, my weight sat on the right side of the car. Left turns gave a quicker rise on take-off, then less room for error on the way down.**

Halfway through testing, sore from—let's just call it “personal tension”—I crawled underneath to peep at the front axle. In addition to an intriguing view of the car's frame (polite term: raw), the front-suspension geometry was food for thought. Lane ambled over, stuck his head in the window affably. “You want a passenger? It's a little more stable with a—” I didn't let him finish. “Yes?”



**The weight of a second person changed much; take-offs and landings became slower and easier to manage.** I parked for a second and spent a minute thinking about how motorcycles work. Then I chewed on the Reliant's single-sided swing arm and moderate kingpin inclination. Back on the pad, I began to add a whisper of left-foot brake in corners. First a brush on the pedal on entry, then constant pressure all the way through.

The process required thought and a microscopically delicate touch—plus steady paranoia that too much pedal might trip the car into a roll—but it worked. The Regal's kangaroo leaps tamed a bit, and the car went faster with less panic. With a bit of practice, I could hold the inside rear just short of a hover, the open differential letting the unloaded tire spin up under throttle but not actually lift off.

Granted, literally balancing a machine on the edge of disaster is an insane way to navigate traffic. But also note that one could say the same about a 900-pound fiberglass three-wheeler.



Like a lot of microcars, the Regal seems an irrational answer to a rational question. Those who like driving the thing quickly probably also like brushing their teeth with granulated sugar. The car's characteristics as motor vehicle exist in stark contrast to many of the stated goals of the species. That said, **its behavior also serves as a strangely logical form of early warning system—unlike a lot of ill-handling cars, the Reliant actively discourages you from asking too much of it. Which means you don't end up asking very much at all. The safety of low expectations.** Car people often talk about how older vehicles can be more satisfying than new ones. Skill and risk in trade for emotion and feedback, all that stuff. And while those notions have their place, the whole point of this series of tests is to investigate whether we are better off absent cars that trade in abject fear.

In this case, probably.

Maybe.

Ask me again when the clenching stops.

### **1971 Reliant Regal 3/30**

**Production:** 1953–1973

**Engine:** 875-cc I-4, 30 hp, 34 lb-ft

**Transmission:** four-speed manual

**Drive:** Rear

**Weight:** 900 pounds (est.)

**Known For:** Three wheels and falling over, plus that time where its sister model and Jeremy Clarkson [staged a crash on Top Gear](#).

*The Coventry Cat's Meow*

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July 9, 2021



***The Reality:*** Only slightly less absurd than they say. But at least it's slow.

***Lesson:*** There's a reason we don't all drive trikes.

**Meow #17**

*And a final shot from Andy:*

















Well, that's just good advice...









*And on that happy thought, so long until next time, assuming there is one!*

Yr hmbl dtr




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*To Probably Be Continued Sometime In The Next Few Weeks*

*– The Cat from Coventry*

*The Magic Word for this issue is "risk management"*