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March 2015

## It's All in the Mix

Welcome to the March issue of 2015. This month we learn about:

- Carbs of the non-dietary variety
- Two big opportunities to show off your baby
- LED retrofit light dos and don'ts, mostly the latter

### Upcoming Events

#### July 2015

The Austin Healey meeting for July will be held by Peter Foreman on **Sunday July 05** instead of July 06 at 75 Capulet Crescent. The meeting will be short, starting at 4:00 PM instead of the usual 7:30 PM. After the meeting we'll have a show of members' and visitors' cars.

Capulet Crescent is just north of Portage Avenue and west of Stradford Street. The street will be limited to traffic flow from the north to south. Please park your car on the west side of the crescent in angled parking positions. People bringing non-vintage British vehicles are asked to park on the north or south ends of the crescent to leave the west side for vintage cars.

#### September 2015

The 2015 "British Car Day" vintage car show will be held on September 18 at Bronte Provincial Park, just west of Toronto on the QEW. This will be the 32<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year of the show, and will be held rain or shine. The show is touted as the largest single-day car show for vintage British cars in Canada and is always held at the same location. The show tries to showcase the anniversary of at least one model, and this year it will be the 45<sup>th</sup> year of the Triumph Stag. The show organizers are trying to have 45 Stags on display.

The show is not just for Triumph cars; also in attendance will be the following brands:

MG, Austin, Wolsley, Riley, Hillman, Sunbeam, Jaguar, Rolls Royce, Bentley, Isetta, Rover, Anglia, Ford, McLaren, Austin Healey, Morgan, Reliant, Aston Martin, Daimler, Trojan, Land Rover and DeLorean.

#### Club 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book

Please fill out our Club's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary questionnaire sent out last April and return it to Jodi Bolger by email or Canada Post, they could use the business.

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#### AHCM

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## For Sale – Last Chance Soon Club 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary T-Shirts



The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary T-shirts are in one colour only, British Racing Green, with the artwork in light grey and the Club logo on the left sleeve in the same colour.

They are 100% combed cotton made in the USA by American Apparel, which means that they are high quality but their sizes are likely one size smaller than what you would regularly take; if you are a medium, then order a large.

Contact the executive for details about pricing, availability and payment methods.

## LED Retrofit Bulbs

[The following text was copied and adapted from [this blog](#). Blogs are public domain.]

Your recent Piston Slap on HID lights reminded me of a problem I had replacing tail lights on a 2009 Traverse. One of the OEM bulbs had burned out, so I replaced both brake/tail lights with LEDs.

The LEDs worked great and were brighter than the OEM bulbs, but the turn signals blinked rapidly, just like they did with the burned out bulb. I learned the rapid blinking—or hyper-flashing—occurs when a bulb is burned out **or** the system is drawing little to no current. The LEDs use a lot less power, so the system thinks the bulb is burned out.

A quick check online indicates my only option for the Traverse is to install a load resistor kit, which requires splicing the wires and adding a load resistor to each bulb. The process looks easy enough, but seeing how you are a lighting aficionado and a wizard when it comes to all things automotive, I thought I'd seek your advice on options.

Sajeev, on the blog, answered [again, this has been edited]:

We covered this before, but things have changed: most, but not all, LED retrofit bulbs (especially of the flashing variety) are unsafe and illegal. Most LED bulb retrofits for cars are unsafe, illegal junk from a variety of vendors making tall, yet bogus, claims. Odds are that's what you bought and installed on the Traverse. They might have appeared brighter to you, but they very likely didn't work safely.

Federal and international safety performance requirements for vehicle exterior lights are much more stringent and exacting than just lighting up in a particular color:

- The intensity for each function must be within the proper limits through a large range of vertical and horizontal angles
- The ratio between bright and dim intensity must be correct for combination brake/tail and park/turn lamps
- The lamp's effective lit area must be at least a certain size.

These requirements are in place to guarantee an immediately, unambiguously recognizable signal to observers, who are at any angle to your vehicle, day and night, in any weather. Whether these requirements are met can't be judged by peering at the operating lights; humans aren't equipped to accurately assess this level of light performance by eye.

Most LED retrofit bulbs on the market for vehicle lights, when measured objectively, badly fail most or all of the requirements. Some of them are brighter than stock at certain angles, but that's not even close to adequate. Moreover, the

light output of an LED drops as its temperature rises, which happens quickly when the LED is lit up. LEDs need effective heat sinking, and the vast majority of vehicle LED retrofit bulbs on the market don't have it. This means the retrofitted lamp's output, even if it starts out adequate with a cold bulb, quickly drops below the minimum requirement with extended use of the lamp (such as when sitting with your foot on the brake in traffic). The poor objective performance of most LED retrofits means the lamp's output goes from inadequate to very inadequate...

...Then we get to the issue that prompted you to ask for help: because LEDs don't draw the amount of current the vehicle's turn signal circuit was designed for, they are detected as faulty bulbs. Another safety requirement is that a faulty turn signal bulb must substantially change the flash rate, so the driver will know to fix it.

Old vehicles with a standard two- or three-prong plug-in turn signal flasher can have a "heavy-duty" flasher installed, meant for trailer towing. These flash at the correct rate without regard to the current load, but most vehicles made in the last two decades don't use those standard flashers. You might be able to buy a trailer-tow turn signal module for your vehicle, or have its body computer re-flashed for trailer-tow mode to cancel the bulb outage indication. Or, you can hack your way around the problem by installing load resistors.

If you do, you've eliminated the low-power benefit of LEDs and you're cutting wires and adding potential failure points, especially if you use off-brand parts not built or tested to automotive levels of reliability. Minimize your odds of a failure by using reputable brand parts, and forget those crunch-type/Scotchlok wire taps; use Posi-Taps instead.

Don't wear a permanent frown about this wet-blanket reality check, though. The world's first legitimate LED bulbs for retrofitting incandescent vehicle exterior lights came to market last year

from Philips. Their Vision LED line focuses on maximum lifespan, and their X-Treme Vision LED line focuses on maximum output. They're easily available and not very expensive.

The Philips items have a lot of engineering and development work behind them, and are much more likely to work correctly than anything else on the market right now. However, even with these you're not necessarily home free; they aren't a "go" for just any lamp that happens to take a bulb type included in their product line.

Every vehicle light, no matter how simple it might look, is optically engineered to collect, focus, and distribute light from one particular kind of light source. Changing to a different kind of light source is like putting on somebody else's eyeglasses; it's an optical mismatch. Because the light distribution of even today's most highly engineered LED retrofit bulbs isn't the same as the incandescent bulbs they're designed to replace, the only way to know if the retrofit works OK is to test it objectively.

The blog goes on to discuss:

- The Philips website, which lists the applications that have tested acceptably for their various LED retrofit bulbs
- LED performance based on vehicle age
- What's in the pipeline and coming to market

The author provided a final note about the headlamp LED bulb conversions now flooding the market. They are not a legitimate, safe, effective, or legal product. Just as with HID kits, they are a fraudulent scam. They're incapable of producing even a fraction of the amount of light produced by the filament bulb they supposedly replace, let alone producing it in the right pattern for the lamp's optics to work. This, too, might eventually change. The same company that makes the world's only legitimate brake light LED retrofit bulbs also has a first-generation fog lamp LED retrofit bulb that works surprisingly well in certain specific fog lamps.

## Carbs: Not Just for Dinner

*Ted Moorby*

On Wednesday March 18, a cool but clear evening, John Webb and Bob Zimmerman hosted a tech session on carburetors at the Mazda dealership on Waverley where John works. The event was well attended; by my count there were 28 AHCM and TDC members anxious to learn more about how to keep their LBCs running smoothly.



A big turnout for carbs

Bob started off by explaining the principle on which SU, Stromberg and Weber carburetors operate. They both went on to explain and demonstrate what to look for when inspecting these carbs, and how to repair them.

Some of the more important points covered were:

- throttle shafts
- needles and jets
- float bowl needles and seats
- dash pots and springs on SUs
- diaphragms on Strombergs

**Note:** If you know about an event that we should know about, please send as many details as you can to the Newsletter Editor (John) so that we can include them in our Event Calendar as information becomes available.



John and Bob talk tech and show what's up

They sort of lost me when they started talking about Webers. After about an hour we finished up with a beer, discussion and socializing. Thanks again to John and Bob for hosting this event; we look forward to the next one.

[As an aside, those new funny yellow licence plates allowed three owners of LBCs to enjoy an outing in their cars.]



John explains some of the finer details

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