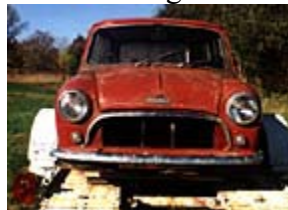

JANUARY EVENTS

Breakfast at Mahoney State Park, January 9th at 9:30 A.M.
Ice Cream with Her Majesty's Royal Nebraska Patrol at I Can't Believe It's Really Yogurt, 70th and Van Dorn in Lincoln Thursday, January 14th at 7:30 P.M.
Fish at the Union Bar Friday, January 29th, 1999 at 7:30 P.M.

THE LAZARUS MINI, PART IV

Son Dave attends school in London and as his schedule did not allow a trip home for Christmas a visit was in order. The significant other advised me that theater, museums, historical sites, dining and shopping would be the priorities. But I know fully well from experience that early A.M. starts do not happen in this family if there is any way they can be avoided. If I was up and out the door by 7:30 A.M. and back by 11:00 visits to motor bookstores, Mini parts centers, and new car dealers could be mine.

While there are many Mini parts suppliers in the UK, I decided to visit the Mini Spares Centre Ltd. because they are a British Motor Heritage Approved supplier and they have the nicest ad in the London area Yellow Pages. They are located north central just off the Tube at Arnos Grove. I got there a little before their 9:00 A.M. opening which worked to my advantage as it gave me plenty of time to view and appreciate their window and new body shell displays. I was let in promptly at 9:00 A.M., given one of their very comprehensive and well illustrated catalogs, and afforded a very comfortable chair to review their offerings. My interests centered on special tools, parts I was sure to need (and have difficulty obtaining), information, (references), and future purchases (things I would get Dave to bring later). I ended up getting boot script, the suspension cone compressor tool, rear suspension cones, a tie rod/ball joint remover, their detailed mechanical and body parts catalog, and original Mini Cooper Owners Manual, carb air cleaners, several original advertisement posters, miscellaneous bits and pieces, and a copy of Mini Magazine (might have been my best purchase). As I was later to find out the cone compressor tool created a lot of interest at the security inspection stations at Gatwick Airport. To get the Value Added Tax (VAT) refunded on the Mini parts (as these parts were leaving the UK) it was necessary to pack the parts in the carry-on luggage. This meant I would get a lot of attention at each inspection station. The final check prior to boarding the aircraft included a body search which I could have done without. Mini Magazine contains a lot of commercial



ads, news, technical articles, a Club Directory and Reader Classified Ads. I was amazed to see David Walker's address and telephone in Des Moines listed as I still needed it to follow up on a given lead. I thought the Centre's prices were very reasonable, the selection excellent and found many reasons for future contacts. I guess the world of Mini's is quite small as the Centre's Catalog listed both Mini Mania and Fortech GT-5 fiber panels for sale.

There are a lot of bookstores in the London Metro Area, but one, Motor Books, boasts of having over 9,000 titles in stock. Their main store is located in central London on St. Martin's Court. In their automobile section I was pleased to find nearly 30 Mini selections. I purchased several books from this grouping and their sale offerings. In the basement they had a very impressive number of workshop manuals and parts catalogues. If you have a need in this area, I am almost sure they will have it. They have road test collections, transport source books, and also specialize in railway, military, aviation, and maritime books. Discount and closeout bookstores were scattered throughout London. At one of these I purchased one Mini

book, several books on MGs, and some rather unique cut-out-to-shape Mini Cooper post cards.

Located not far from Motor Books was the model store, St Martin's Accessories Ltd. If die cast models are your bag then this is the place to go. They had several thousand models displayed ranging in price from a few dollars to the \$1360 for the large 1:8 scale Jaguars (XK-120s). I was most impressed by the number of race car offerings.

Not too far from St. Martin's is what must be the Nebraska Furniture Mart of toy stores, Hamleys Ltd. They have five or six floors of selections. But most important was the second floor where I found more than 30 different Mini Cooper models (two of which are now located in Iowa). One grouping (package) of three entitled the Italian Job Minis particularly caught my attention. I had not been aware that a major (?) movie of the late 1960's starring Michael Caine included a multitude of high speed Mini chases. I didn't buy the set of cars but, as you may have guessed, I now have the movie. On the significant others insistence we went to the Portobello street market. This set of flea market type stalls and dealers extends for nearly a mile. To my delight

there were many dealers in English car related items. Included were Dinky model toys, car badges, scale models, posters, and magazines. I brought a nice ceramic MG (8x8 hexagonal) plaque, a Mini puzzle in a canister, and several tin reproduction posters (MGA, MGB, Morgan +4, and Mini Cooper Rally). At Harrods (the massive, upscale, and pretentious department store where they charge you almost \$2 to use the toilet) they had a 1/2 scale Ferrari in their toy department for a mere \$75,000. They had many other scale models, but from my first encounter with the prices even this English auto crazed person was faint. The most exciting aspect of my visit to London (beyond visiting Dave) was a chance to see all the new foreign cars that no longer frequent American highways. The exotics, Alfa roadsters, Porsches, Morgans, TVRs, Lotus, and especially Rover Group cars. Dave decided to join me on one early A.M. venture to Keens Rover (to see the new MGF). I had not anticipated finding two new 1998 Mini Coopers in the center of their showroom floor. Wow! We touched! We took pictures. We sat in them. We crawled under them. We popped the bonnet. We

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WINTER WONDERLAND - OR ENJOYING THE PROJECT FOR THIS YEAR

I pity those poor folks who have no winter. We can always tell them at a car show. They are the ones whose cars always look the same from year to year. You overhear them speak of needing time to do one thing or another to refurbish or improve their car. But because they have no snow or salt to encourage their LBC renewal projects (not too terribly different from the urban renewal projects of a few years past, save for the fact that LBC renewal projects are more costly).

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snow goes away so the proper piece can be located the new bonnet will be punched with louvers, resprayed and attached to the A. Terry Worrick will soon install the single hoop roll bar, and Butch Mitcheltree will check out and prepare the overdrive transmission that I hope to install.

The new rear motor mount came about as the result of my playing a couple of mornings in Elmer Wessel's new garage. Elmer is the owner of Industrial Machine. They make engine stands, hot rod parts, Buffalo sporting goods (the basketball hoops, mounts and scoreboards that you see from the Devaney Sports center to Madison Square Garden.

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