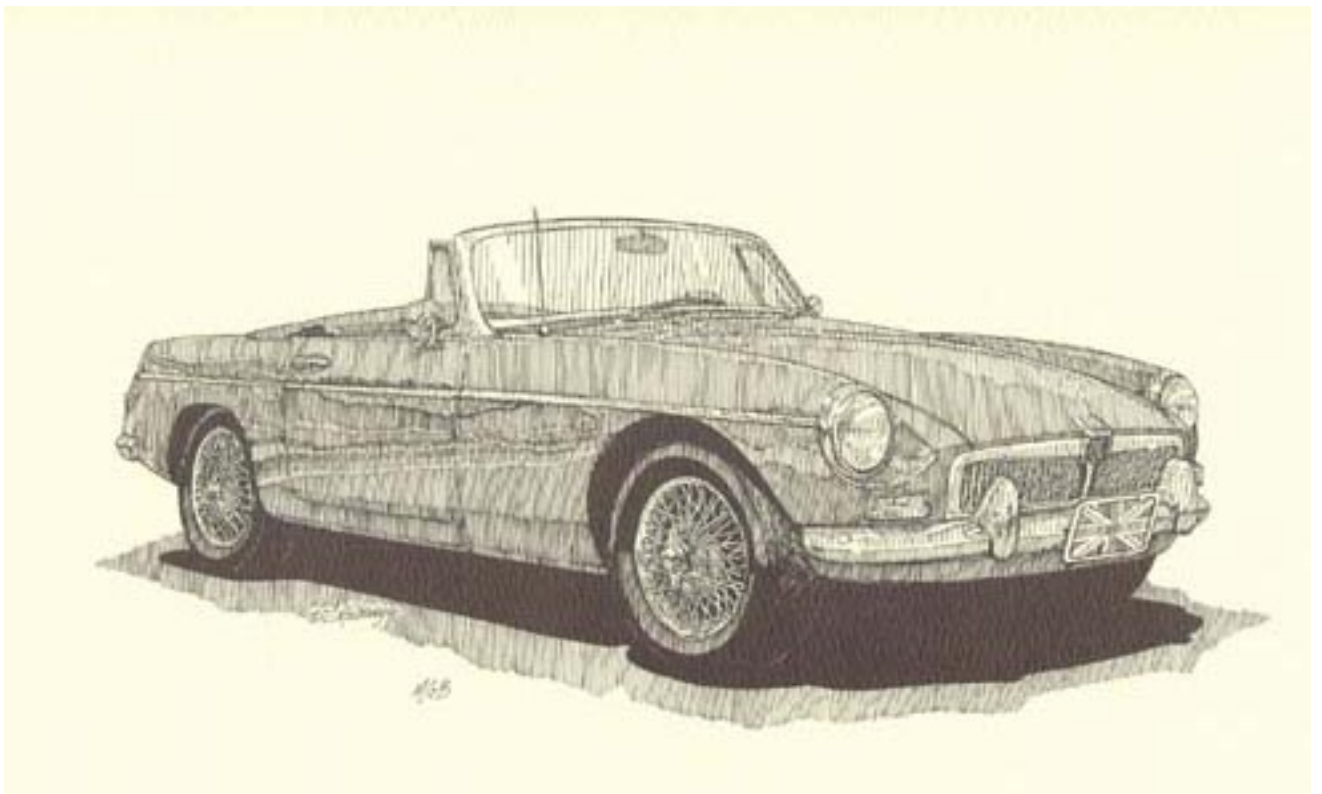




# The Dashpot

Winter 2008



# OTTAWA MG CLUB

***The Dashpot*** is the official publication of the Ottawa MG Club.  
Submissions for consideration should be sent to:  
fortinl@passport.ca

**Visit us on the web at [www.omgc.info](http://www.omgc.info)  
you will find web links to various suppliers, other clubs and  
organizations as well as technical help, membership forms,  
regalia and library offerings and other fun stuff**

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## From The Editor's Desk



This is my first edition of *The Dashpot* and I had a great learning experience putting it together. Just about every piece of every page is full of great stories and news. But there is no room left for an index... so I'll tell you that you can read the 2nd part (Part Deux) of Karl Leclerc & Patricia Duperre's Adventure to Western Canada starting on page 10; and you will find the folks who are now on the OMGC Executive listed on page 2; and the Dave Sankey Welding saga is on page 4; with a few words from our new club President on page 3; and Roger White's Jaguar Experience is on page 25; and there is a *Looking Back* article on page 22 and some *Looking Ahead* information on page 28. There was no room in this issue for the second installment of the Lucas Smoke Story - that will be in the next issue. And there was no room for another Ottawa MG Club Member Profile - that too will be in an upcoming edition. (continued on page 21—>)

## President's Message

Well here we are, Christmas and New Year's gone and deep into winter. I say deep into winter, which is where we should be, but as I write this, the temperature is +10C and the huge snow pile that is my front lawn is disappearing quickly. Maybe I will be able to take down the Christmas lights from the tree in the front yard after all.

As we start a new year it is perhaps a time to reflect on the past and I would like to thank Mark (and Heather) for all his work while holding the office of President. I only hope that I can make a similar contribution to the club. Many thanks also to all the club executive and members at large that organize and participate in the club activities.

The New Year looks promising already. Cheepo-Cheepo, under Bob Stark, is sold out; Len is organizing a spring run with the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club; Norm Peacey has already booked hotel accommodation in Pembroke for this summer's Ottawa Valley Jog; the new club activity calendar is in the final stages of preparation and the colour calendar should be ready for distribution in early April.

I would like to continue with the idea of holding summer club meetings at different locations and would welcome suggestions from members.

Finally, I wish to thank you all for the opportunity to act as President of the Club. I never cease to be amazed at how quickly one can move up in this organization.

Terry Haines.

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Editor's Note:

This recent photo is from a friend in Australia.

Note the tall green trees, the sunshine and the lack of snow!

This is a lovey example of an MG TC in that land 'Down Under'.

This vehicle belongs to John Hazrd.

# MGA RESTORATION

December 2007

By David Sankey

As most of you know I own several MG's and of course my Spitfire which I refer to my "MG (My Great) Spitfire". The spitfire was the first car that I have completely restored. Once I started the process I realized that I probably had gotten myself into an area where I had no expertise. The mechanical end of the restoration posed no problem as I have worked with machinery during my Naval career, which incidentally most of it was British! The sheet metal/body work is what presented the real challenge to me especially welding and figuring out how to fit everything.

Notice the high tech 2x4 support holding up the windshield frame. Neat EH! This is one of those things where I learned WHAT NOT TO DO. Support everything before cutting all the metal out.



With that said, I needed some new tools in order to complete the project. With a wad of money in hand I proceeded to buy an assortment of air powered grinders, clamps, mig welder, air compressor, metal shears, air powered along with an assortment of other small hand tools. I soon had enough tools to start the job. The restoration took me the better part of 3 years with working only in the warm months, as my previous garage was unheated. The restoration was quite a learning process where I had learned a lot of what not to do.

Before I decided to actually tackle the MGA restoration I signed up to take the MGA Sheet metal Restoration Seminar at Eclectic Motorworks (Holland Michigan - Carl Heideman. Due to the Spitfire restoration, and what I had learned on my own, sheet metal work can be quite daunting especially looking at an A with all those curves.



The course ran for two days with only 6 students. Two of us were from Canada, two from Michigan, one from Georgia and one from Colorado. The course ran from 0800 to approx 1700 with lunch being provided on both days. Most of us had brought our welders so Carl could have a go at them to ensure we were setting them up properly. We also brought our frame extensions and front valance to work on.

Carl is quite amazing. He has more stats about the MGA than the NHL has on their teams. He has jigs and templates for just about any area of the A. I wonder if there is something in the Carl, Karl name that makes them so meticulous???

Below is a picture of my frame extension in one of the jigs. Mine turned out to be in pretty good alignment. Now some of the others looked like they hit a few brick walls and need gentle persuasion with a BFH (Big Friggin Hammer) to get back into shape.

my perrrrfectly aligned frame extension



Checking for correct curvature with a simple  
cardboard template  
PS. Should be the same on the other side.  
Which it was!

The first day started off with introductions and what we were hoping to get out of the course. An interesting note was that all of us had restored at least one car and were in the process of doing an A.



Lunch break with discussions about numerous MGA marvels.

The first round of lectures started off with what you can do with metal and led into welding and welding tips. After the lecture it was on to practical exercises. It was here that I learned that my welding was not as bad as I thought.

After Carl had played with my welder for some time he decided that this was the culprit of many a “not so nice looking” welds. I guess that is why the name on mine was "Farm Hand" as it produced welds that were suitable for farm machinery.

I switched over to using one of his shop welders, an HTP Mig 140, and my welds instantly improved. Needless to say there is a brand new welder in my garage now.



How did I do?  
(Actually, I did this while setting up my new welder for feed and heat.)

The day continued with lectures on other various topics from tools to panel fitting, making hammer forms and continuation of improving our welding skills with different exercises. We were all getting very confident in our newfound abilities. I now know that my welds will not come apart after the first whack with a hammer (not that it has happened to me before). Day one ended with us gathering at The Piper Restaurant for several hours of eating, discussions and sampling the local brew.



## How To Make A Hammer Form

1. Make a template of the piece you need, and cut it out (see below).
2. Cut metal larger than your template and make a sandwich. (No mustard required)



3. Pound the crap out of it.



I wonder who was sitting here?  
Clue: the hat gives it away.

4. Voila..... one for Moss Motors!!!



Day two was a continuation of day one with lectures and welding exercises along with grinding techniques. And demonstrations on shrinking and stretching metal using various techniques. This led into fitting panels on the A using homemade and aftermarket items.

The whole process of lining up panels on the A took a while. We had installed all the doors and fender then moved the body from the jig onto the frame.

The alignment process went very well especially if you have a pro showing you the steps and having a body that was repaired in a perfectly aligned jig. Carl also showed us many areas on the A that had problems built into them from the factory and how to correct them. Ever wonder why you had to force your fenders on and you have those kinks in them?





(wish mine looked like this, almost ready for paint)

The day ended with getting everything lined up and the A not looking any worse for wear from a bunch of amateurs. Carl made himself available for any burning questions that we had.

Some thoughts on welding that stick with me are: **you can't weld air** so make your panels fit; **you can't weld dirt** so make sure your panels are clean; **you can't weld what you can't see** so make yourself comfortable and always watch your heat.

Another point... acquire the proper tool for the proper job. It needn't be the most expensive but ensure it is of the best quality you can afford. I found this out with my welder.

The course in my opinion was a worthwhile endeavour. I'm glad I took the time to learn the tricks of the trade and some MGA specifics. There's nothing magical about any restoration work. You must have the right tools, knowledge, mindset, some hand skills and the passion to make something beautiful from nothing.

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## Ottawa MG Club Regalia

Long sleeve shirt	\$44	Socks	\$16	Your favourite item of clothing can be embroidered by special order.
Short sleeve shirt	\$40	Touque	\$16	
Hooded sweat shirt	\$40	Scarf	\$17	
Sweat shirt	\$36	Mitts	\$17	
Golf shirt	\$31	Hat	\$15	
T-Shirt	\$18			For all your regalia needs see Doug McClure
				miamcclure@hotmail.com
Sign (magnetic)	\$18	Crests	\$8	613-444-0446
Pins	\$10	Club Jacket	\$170	

## TO THE PACIFIC COAST IN AN MGA – PART DEUX

By Karl Leclerc

These are excerpts from the journal I kept as Patricia and I drove our 1962 MGA Mark II some 3500 miles to Whistler, British Columbia. The aim was to attend the North American MGA Register (NAMGAR) yearly Get-Together (in this case GT-32) which was to be held in the charming ski resort. The real purpose was to enjoy an extended vacation.

In the previous edition of The Dashpot, we traveled from Ottawa to the Saskatchewan prairies, driving through and visiting Sudbury, Wawa, Thunder Bay, Kenora, Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon. It took us eleven days to cross the Alberta border.

The never-ending “flatness” of the prairies has suddenly been interrupted by a big erosion escarpment: The Valley of the Dinosaurs, also known as The Badlands. We have now reached Drumheller, Alberta. Miniature, life-sized and oversized dinosaurs greet you everywhere you go. We pulled in at the Best Western Jurassic Inn at 3:00 pm.

Exhausted from the prairie heat wave, we decided to take it easy for the rest of the day. A couple of loads of laundry in the coin-operated machines will allow us to repack our clothes without the always expanding “not-so-clean” segregation plastic bags. A good meal and a few pints are also appreciated. Then, a funny encounter: we meet one of my work buddies from Ottawa, let’s call him Louis. He is also on vacation in the area, with a different girlfriend... Surprise!

### TUESDAY 10 JULY – DINO DAY

Visited the Royal Tyrell Museum of Paleontology, located right in the Valley. Very impressive. One of the best museums I have ever had the opportunity to visit. The recreation of a dry river bed at the very beginning of the display is out of this world. Life-sized dinosaurs, trees, trunks, sound effects and even a light mist take you back 60 million years.

Tony, our guide for the morning, took us to a dinosaur fossil dig site in the middle of the badlands. This optional tour, which I recommend highly, is better suited for a morning expedition, before the heat sets in. Bring a hat and bottled water. Wear comfy walking shoes: it’s a hike of a few kilometers. During the walk, we stayed at the front of the pack with the guide, and benefited from a lot of extra explanations. It became like a personal guided tour. We made it back to the museum main building as the sun was reaching its peak. After a lunch in the restaurant, we spent the better part of the day visiting the different displays and talking to some of the paleontologists who do their work right in front of your eyes. The interaction that they offer is well worth the price of admission. Judging by the hordes, it is also a great venue for kids.



## WEDNESDAY 11 JULY – HOODOOS DAY

Optional mileage this morning: that's mileage that does not get us closer to the West Coast, but so enjoyable. Drove the Dinosaur trail from one end to the other and also drove the Hoodoo Trail. Products of an erosion process that took millions of years, these towering features are now protected by the laws and regulations of national parks. The open MG is just the perfect car to enjoy the view offered by the parks.



After leaving the trails, 90 miles is the only required mileage to get to our destination for today. Yet, it will take us three full hours to reach Calgary. Did not know that Highway 9 was undergoing major repairs. Found out the hard way, driving through 45 miles of dirt and gravel roads with never-ending series of traffic control flag-men. All this stop and go, combined with the current prairie heat is making the engine run very hot.

Upon reaching our hotel in downtown Calgary, we decide that before joining the Stampede celebrations, it may be a good idea to install an additional electrical “pusher” fan in front of the radiator, if we can find one. Sure enough, we do. An hour later, the A is equipped for stop & go in high temperatures. The wiring is simplified by using the portion of the wiring harness designed for the optional fog lights, an option that our A does not sport. The fog lights switch, located in the middle of the dashboard, is identified by the letter “F” on the knob. “F” for “Fan”.

## THURSDAY 12 JULY – CALGARY STAMPEDE

Late night last night. Had dinner at Centini's. Great Restaurant. Met Matt and Judy. They were talking about Ottawa in French... made for an easy introduction. Then the waiter isolated the language of Moliere from the redneck speak and came right over. Turns out he's from Quebec City... food and service were great... kept eating and drinking until closing...

Getting up late in Calgary during the Stampede is not necessarily a bad thing. The whole city may be decorated “far west” style for the two week duration, and many citizens may wear cowboy outfits all day long, but Rodeo activities only start around 1:30 pm daily. After a light breakfast/lunch, we took the light rail transit for two stops from the hotel to the Stampede Park. Got there just in time for the day's opening ceremonies.

They don't call it “The Greatest Outdoors Show on Earth” without a reason. We were treated to a series of events: bronco riding, bull riding, bareback, steer wrestling, veal roping, each more spectacular than the other. Not being much of a cowboy, it took me a while to figure out the scoring system. The afternoon activities concluded with the most popular event: teams of three kids trying to hold on to a wild pony while one tries to mount it. Just hilarious.



The evening show kicks off at 8:00 pm with the most spectacular event of them all: the chuck-wagon races. Recreating the fast dismantling of a cowboy camp, the team loads a stove and tent poles in the back of the chuck in less than a second. The wagon then negotiates turns around a couple of barrels before trying to secure a position against the rail for a turn around the track. A little more than a minute later, you have a winner. Action packed for nine heats of four wagons.

As the sun sets, huge tractors pull the stage components right in front of the crowd seated in the Grand Stands. The cast included hundreds of performers. It sounded like the big names of country music were there but as I said: I am not much of a cowboy. The evening concludes with a spectacular display of fireworks. Overall, it was a wonderful day. Pat and I had a great time.

### **FRIDAY 13 JULY – VISITING CALGARY**

Pat will remember the stores for sure, but I remember the Tower. Want to do something cool? Pay the \$12 or so to take the elevator to the observation deck of the Calgary Tower. Stand on the glass floor and look down at the city between your feet. The emerging sight of the Rockies is already impressive and the overall view is fantastic.

### **SATURDAY 14 JULY – DRILLING FOR OIL**

Today's destination: Edmonton, 210 miles. One attraction on the way: The Canadian Petroleum Interpretive Centre in Devon. Named after the Devonian Reef which later transformed into one of the biggest reserve of fossil fuel in the world, a visit of the small town and its main attraction is probably the best way to find out about the history of the Canadian oil industry as well as modern oil exploration and drilling technology. We spent the better part of the afternoon going through the interior display. We then visited the derricks and different drilling rigs located outside. Very interesting but it is time to go if we want to reach Edmonton.

As we drive in the parkade for our hotel, the MGA engine starts making a high pitch squealing noise. Within a minute, the water temperature quickly rises and the radiator overflows, leaving a trail of liquid underneath the car. As I reach the hotel designated parking area, and before I have time to switch the ignition off, the engine dies by itself. The only good news is that we are planning to stay in Edmonton for a few days. This will leave time for possibly longer repairs. It is getting late, we are hungry and the engine is too hot to work on... better unload the luggage, check in and go for dinner.

### **SUNDAY 15 JULY – UNFORECASTED MAINTENANCE & SHOPPING**

Spent the morning working on the car. The new points that I put in the car just before departing for this trip have worn out in about 2000 miles. The plastic rubbing block is all gone, cheap parts I guess. That one is easy; I have plenty of spare points. The one spare part I hesitated about and decided not to bring was the water pump... and today is Sunday. Not a good day to look for parts. All garages and parts stores are closed. The yellow pages provide a good list and I also downloaded a list of shops that specialize in Little British Cars (LBCs...) across the country. A few of them look promising but we'll have to wait until tomorrow to find out. Might as well go shopping...

Took the bus to the West Edmonton Mall. Spent the afternoon in the biggest shopping centre in North America. Just to keep the competition going with Calgary, the City of Edmonton brands it as the "Greatest **Indoors** Show on Earth". Water park, wave pool, submarines, pirate ship, beach, fantasy hotel with theme rooms, this shopping centre has it all. Must have walked more than 5 kms in between stores alone. You could find anything you want in here... except an MGA water pump.



## **MONDAY 16 JULY – MORE MAINTENANCE & MORE SHOPPING**

Looking at my list of garages that specialize in LBCs across Canada, I find Hawkins Auto, located a dozen or so miles away. Early phone call. My conversation with Bruce Hawkins reveals that he is overbooked since it is the peak of the season and one of his mechanics is on vacation. He also knows a local jobber that rebuilds water pump with a 24 hour turnaround. He's going to give him a call to inquire. Turns out he has one already rebuilt waiting for a taker. After a little bit of convincing, Bruce also agrees to rent me the work bay normally used by his vacationing mechanic and access to the shop tools for a fair hourly rate. As the water pump has now frozen solid, a CAA flatbed is quickly put to work to deliver the MGA and its driver to the garage. Since the tow truck only has room for one passenger, the navigator reluctantly goes for more shopping.

The A is quickly delivered. Following introductions and a look at the A, Bruce lends me his old shop Volvo with a map to go pick up the replacement water pump. When I get back, he has already pushed the A in the work bay and has the coolant draining. That will save me a bit of time. He also started painting the water pump to the closest color to MG maroon he could find: some shade of fuchsia. Now a conversation piece, I have kept it that color. Four hours later, a rebuilt water pump spins quietly behind the re-installed radiator and the new ignition components prove to work properly. The A is ready to roll and the lighter wallet might even improve performance. Drove back to the hotel to share the good news with the navigator.

## **TUESDAY 17 JULY – MOVIE DAY**

The Delta Hotel is attached to the Downtown Shopping Center. How convenient? Irish Pub, restaurants, theatre, its all there. Great place to break down. The hotel also has a guest laundry facility. Spent the morning doing laundry, resetting the luggage and repacking all the cargo into its space-saving locations. The navigator also took out the old clipper and gave a quick haircut to the driver. On long trips, a little bit of “driver maintenance” is also required...

The latest Harry Potter was playing at the local theatre, so I surprised Pat with a movie outing (she's a huge Potter fan). Had a few pints at the local pub and went back in to see Ratatouille (I'm an even bigger food fan).

## **WEDNESDAY 18 JULY – EDMONTON TO JASPER**

Leaving the Alberta prairies for the foothills. Welcomed change of scenery. The small town of Hinso is the gateway to the Rockies. Their rugged and jagged peaks are spectacular and provide numerous photo opportunities. The omnipresent wildlife complements the view but elk and goats remain hazardous to car traffic.

The Miette Hot Springs turn out to be a disappointment. Changing into a bathing suit and dipping in the steaming hot water while breathing the mountain air is great. However, with the facilities redesigned to accommodate the large number of visitors, it looks and feels more like a public pool.



Unfortunately, all the hotels in Jasper are pre-sold to Japanese tourism companies and we end up at the Fairmount Jasper Lodge, which does not really suit the budget for this trip. The grounds, the views, the service and the food are just fantastic. Unfortunately, the rooms suck. In lieu of air conditioning, you'll find a six inch electric fan in the closet. The floors are rotten but overlaid with cracking ceramic tiles. The mattress was past its life expectancy and the window screens have gaping holes in them. You can either ventilate to get rid of the 35 degree heat, or shut the windows to keep from being eaten alive by the mosquitoes that come out as soon as the sun sets, but not both. On a positive note, the sushi bar/restaurant was outstanding. Yet, we were happy to sleep there only one night.

## **THURSDAY 19 JULY - GLACIER DAY**

Pouring rain this morning. We pack the car as fast as we can to avoid getting wet... only to realize that the car won't start. An investigation under the hood reveals that the points have crapped out again. As the rain is dripping off the tip of my nose, I am having flashbacks of Mark Evenchick extolling the virtues of electronic ignitions to me just a few months ago. Learn the hard way. Good thing I carry more spares. Bad thing that they are with the tools, under all the luggage. Unpack the car and keep the luggage dry by hauling it all back in the room. In order to work out of the rain, I decide to pull the distributor out of the engine and bring it inside the room. This time, I won't use the Lucas brand name, I have another set of less expensive (or cheaper?) no-names. As I am taking the distributor apart on the coffee table, I can see the navigator drying her hair with the bath towels. She's been a good soldier, assisted in all the repairs while keeping a smile thru it all. This is inspiring.

An hour later, the distributor is back in the car, and the ignition has been timed "by ear". A series of quick dashes follow in order to keep everything dry as we re-load the tools and luggage. Sure enough, the rain stops as soon as we drive off. A few minutes later, the steep hill climbs cause a little pinging in the engine. Quick stop in a rest area. The timing is probably a tad too advanced. Two degrees back on the adjuster should do it. In fact, that adjustment is still on the car. (I will check how many degrees it actually is with a timing light and record it when I perform my spring tune up.)

The early start was a good idea and with the mechanical troubles behind us, we can now enjoy the road ahead. In our many travels, the drive between Jasper and Banff is probably the most scenic we have ever driven in an MG, in any vehicle for that matter. The Icefields Parkway meanders around the foothills of Alberta, overlooked by the Rockies and takes you from one glacier to the next. The Columbia Icefield Centre is a required stop. It is also the home base of the SnoCoach, these gigantic purpose-built buses that take tourists up the mountain and right onto the receding ice sheet of the Athabasca Glacier. The experience is well worth the price, be sure to wear warm clothes.



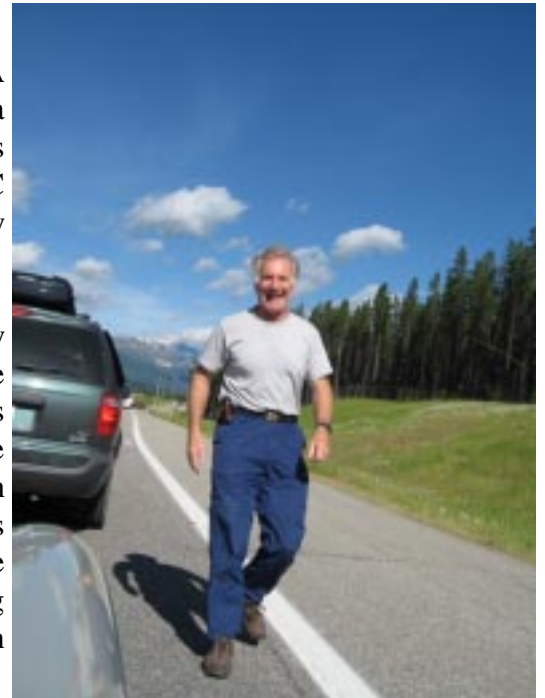
Made it to Banff by supper time and the Delta Banff Canadian Lodge is just fantastic for a very reasonable price. Underground access protected parking, super rooms, and fantastic food. Banff is also a great village to explore on foot. Time to stretch those legs.

## **FRIDAY 20 JULY – AN ENCOUNTER WITH ANOTHER CLUB MEMBER**

Today, we go on an exploration loop. The luggage is left at the hotel where we will return after the day's drive. The engine pinging on steep hill climbs has disappeared. I normally attribute it to my "bang-on" timing adjustment. The navigator, with a quirky smile, points out that there is also 200 pounds of luggage missing. That will become the basis of my series of "no junk in the trunk" jokes for the day.

Construction has brought traffic to a halt on Hwy 1. The A comes to a stop behind a green minivan bearing Alberta plates. The passenger of the minivan gets out and walks towards us. Surprise! It is Ivan Wood, a fellow OMGC member. He recognized the dove grey MGA. The delay allows a bit of time for chatting. Small world.

Very little movement after 10 minutes. Ivan gets on his way at the next exit and the navigator plots an alternate route using road 1A. Beautiful scenery. The slow speed limit is not indicative of the pavement quality but rather of the numerous encounters with wildlife that you can expect on route. Lake Louise is magnificent. The mountains overlooking the turquoise blue body of water, as well as the Fairmont, provide many picture opportunities. The walking trails around the lake also make for a relaxing day. Back in Banff for the night.



## **SATURDAY 21 JULY – ACROSS THE ROCKIES THRU ROGER'S PASS**

Roger's Pass is the most scenic option for a route across the first mountain range. It is also the hardest to negotiate. The 4000 ft climb is tough on the engine but well worth the view offered along the way. Unfortunately, a semi-trailer has hit a car in a head-on collision a few miles up the road, seriously injuring the occupants of the smaller vehicle. The rescue efforts and removal of the cargo from the road surface will cause a two hour delay. There are no alternate routes. Once you are committed to a given pass, you pretty much have to follow. We reach Salmon Arm in time for dinner. Surprisingly, the engine has burnt very little, if any oil today.





## **SUNDAY 22 JULY – DOWN AND UP TO WHISTLER**

The last two mountain ranges are on the menu today. The A has to negotiate two 4000 ft climbs, as well as an equivalent drop in-between, to make it across the Rockies. We opted for the small mountain road 99 going by Lillooet. Just spectacular. You better believe it when the road signs say “No Trucks”, “No Trailers” and “No RVs”. “70 km/h” may be the posted speed limit but with the winding road, the sheer drops, the single lane bridges, the mountain torrents and the peaks towering thousands of feet above your head, you are more likely to average 40 km/h, most of it in second gear. This was a glorious drive.

By mid-afternoon, having now driven 3467 miles from Ottawa, we finally reach our main destination: The Delta Hotel in Whistler, BC, home of NAMGAR for GT # 32. Our Ontario license plates do not go unnoticed and a small crowd is quickly assembled in front of the hotel. The members of the event organizing committee come out to greet us. The telling of “war stories” has begun and we are not even checked-in yet...

The suite offers all the conveniences and a spectacular view. Particularly appreciated are the small laundry and the kitchen. After doing groceries, a few loads of laundry, supper and a few beers, a feeling of accomplishment invades us and we turn in early.

## **23 – 27 JULY (MONDAY TO FRIDAY) – NAMGAR GT#32**

NAMGAR GTs follow a well established and pleasing format. Most participants arrive on the first or “registration” day, a day normally scheduled with settling-in in mind and very little on the agenda. Given the length of our trip, we had to build in some spare time and ended up arriving the day before which promises a really easy day. The morning is spent washing and detailing the car at the wash station set up by the hotel staff in their garage. All the products are available as well as hoses, buckets, towels, the works... We have not seen the A this clean in a month, what a transformation. The afternoon was dedicated to exploring the village of



Whistler. A pedestrian village, it is similar to Mont Tremblant, but about twenty times the size. The big summer activity in this ski resort is mountain biking and we must be right in the middle of a national competition as the square is buzzing with merchants and TV crews. The navigator stumbles across the latest Harry Potter novel that just came out. Did I mention she was a big Potter fan? Time to get back to the hotel for the GT Orientation Session. There are always free food and drinks and old friends to catch up with...

The second day of the event is the car show. The show field this year is the perfectly manicured lawns around the Whistler Golf Course Club House. This is also where we had our second encounter with a fellow club member on this trip. Our president, Terry Haines, was in the area, heard about the event and came to say hello and to check it out.



The cars are marshaled to their assigned spots by volunteers from the host car club. MGAs are grouped by categories: 1500s, 1600s, Mark IIs, Twin Cams, Deluxe and the Premiers. This last category is reserved for the previous winners of the other categories. In other words, once you take first place in your category, you can't go back and compete again for the next five years. This year, 86 members showed up with their MGAs. 21 members came to the event with other types of MGs (Bs, TFs, TDs, TCs, etc) and 41 other club members showed up in a British car of another brand (Jags, Healys, etc).

The third day of the event is the Tech Day or the Driving Day, you get to pick. An all day series of technical sessions are laid out in different locations around the hotel. Subjects vary from gearbox rebuilding to engine oils. Speakers are very knowledgeable and definite experts in their fields. For those who prefer other venues, activities like a car rally, driving tours, a funkhana and even a golf tournament are also available. It is also a good day to do some shopping with the different MGA vendors that have set up their booths.

The fourth day of the event is Mountain Day and the Evening Banquet. The club has organized tickets at reduced prices for club members to go explore the mountain. The navigator and I took the skier's gondola to the top of the mountain, at some 6000 ft of altitude. Need I say it again?: What a View! The future participants and spectators to the 2010 Winter Olympics are in for a treat. The mountain air does its thing and we feel pretty relaxed by the time we show up for the evening banquet, the only "formal" event of the week. Patricia and I are surprised by the announcement



that we took first place for the MarkIIs and will be taking home the silver plate. I guess we'll be out of the competition for the next five years. Another good excuse to celebrate.

Friday is the last and a very short day as far as NAMGAR is concerned. The GT wraps up with a photo session and a farewell breakfast. Luggage carts are hauled to MGAs and suspensions drop a few inches under the extra loads. Farewells are exchanged and large quantities of pavement get consumed again. In our case, we decided to drive to Vancouver and spend the next week there instead of using the time to drive back to Ottawa. We plan on shipping the MGA. The Sea to Sky Hwy (Route 99) provides the last scenic drive of this trip. Coming down the mountain, we reach the west coast and enter Vancouver via Stanley Park.

## **27 JULY TO 1 AUG – VANCOUVER**

Reached the Delta hotel early mid-day on Friday. The room is ready. Checked in for 5 days. Unloaded the car and got it ready for transport. Rang Mackie Transport. They won't be able to tell us when they are going to pick up the car before Monday. On Monday, they tell us that they won't be able to pick up while we are in Vancouver. They did not guarantee it in the contract either. They insisted on a 14 day window for the pick up and now, they will use it. We had planned for this turn of events and activate the alternate pick up point. Lou, a friend that we met thru NAMGAR, manages secure parking areas and will store the MG until the transport company can pick it up.

The next issue that needs addressing is luggage. In the MGA, we cannot use big bulky suitcases and rather opt for numerous smaller bags. This “MG Gypsies” approach to packing does not agree with air travel all that much. A cheap set of suitcases on wheel is therefore purchased for the return trip. As you can suspect, the navigator could not resist the temptation of the local shopping and Robson Street is quite a happening place to spend a day for that purpose. Truth be told, I don’t mind watching her trying new outfits and the newly acquired suitcases will provide some extra room. Since we have already bought our plane tickets at a considerably reduced rate during a seat sale, the major logistical arrangements are taken care of. We now have time to relax and enjoy the city.

Stanley Park is a must destination in Vancouver and just happens to be within fair walking distance of the hotel. All this restaurant food has gotten to the waistline and after spending a few thousand miles in the car, navigator and driver agree that a bit of walking is just what the doctor would order. The stroll took us around the harbor and in front of the most expensive and spectacular real estate available in the city. In the west end, a 500 sq.ft. condo will set you back a minimum of \$1 million. Can’t afford it? How about a twenty year old 60 footer tied alongside the marina dock and advertised for \$850000? There is nothing like a price tag to end the dream and snap you back to reality. All of a sudden, it makes Ottawa sound so affordable.



Upon reaching Stanley Park, we feel like entering an oasis of serenity. I highly recommend the guided tours on horse drawn carriage. It allowed us to see more of the park. Our tour guide added a lot of information and value to the tour. Given the rising temperature, the shaded carriage also made the experience more enjoyable and was well worth the money.

Gastown and Chinatown are other popular venues in Vancouver but I enjoyed the simplicity and tranquility of North Vancouver. In order to get there the easy way, I recommend the SeaBus. Part of the city bus system and for the price of a bus ticket, SeaBuses depart every 15 minutes and will take you across Burrard Inlet to North Vancouver. Enjoy the market. The boardwalk also offers a nice view of the Vancouver skyline. Click click.

## **1 AUG – FLY BACK HOME**

The flight home is uneventful. After spending a little over a month on the road, it will feel good to be home, to sleep in our own bed and to eat some home-cooked meals. As I unpack my luggage, I turn on the GPS to make sure it survived the baggage handling. Some statistics from the GPS trip computer:

3655 miles driven in total	
82 hours spent in the car (with the GPS turned on...)	
77 hours as the car was running	5 hours with the car stopped (mmm...)
63 mph maximum speed	48 mph average speed

Would I do it again? In a heartbeat!

This ranks as one of the best MG vacation so far. Now, if I could only get my car back...

## **5 AUG**

E-mail from Lou: the MGA has been picked up and loaded inside the enclosed car transport. Good news indeed.

## **13 AUG**

Phone call from Mackie Transport: the good news is that the car will be delivered on 15 Aug in the afternoon; bad news: the driver reports that the windshield has cracked during transport. They offer to fix it before delivery. Being a bit suspicious, I turn the offer down and request that they deliver the car as is. We can settle the issue of the damage after delivery.

## **15 AUG**

I get home as the truck driver is lowering the ramp in the back of the van. Different driver, they switched in Toronto. He explains to me that, by mistake, in order to load another car on top, the first driver lowered the hydraulic ramp and second floor onto our MGA that was loaded underneath. The windshield assembly was crushed onto the top of the car. Not only is the glass broken, the whole chrome frame assembly (made from unobtainium...) has been twisted and broke under the pressure. It was pushed into the sheet metal of the cowl and the top of the dashboard. It also bent the steering wheel and cracked its center hub. Contrary to the contract and to Mackie's publicity, the car was not covered with a protective cover. Rather, it is covered with exhaust soot (that probably came from the hauler's diesel engine or from the other cars that were previously loaded and unloaded from the van), and with what looks to be hydraulic fluid. I turned down the offer from the driver to drive it out of the van and proceeded to take about 50 pictures of the damage. It also took me 1 hour to fill out the vehicle delivery condition form. I then drove the car into my garage and took a day to do an estimate of the damage. A few tears got away from the navigator on this one.

## **16 AUG UNTIL 08 DEC – GETTING THE CAR REPAIRED**

Mackie Transport turned down my offer to settle directly for \$6000 for the damages and processed my credit card for the whole amount of the transport contract. I referred the matter to my insurer, Tony Lant, from the Silver Wheel plan. They quickly dispatched an appraiser. Over the next couple of days, I learned that they estimate the damage at between \$8500 and \$9000, depending on the final price of obtaining used chrome parts and getting them re-chromed. They won't pay me directly to do the work. The cheque will be issued to the certified repair facility of my choice minus a \$100 deductible.

I selected A.S.E. Motorsports in Osgoode to do the repair. Al Stigter, the owner and a fine gentleman, drove from Osgoode to Orleans in order to verify the insurance company's estimate before agreeing to take on the job. Al is more into MOPAR muscle cars than little British sports cars but I won't hold that against him. A recommendation by Robin Fredette and a visit to Al's body and paint shop is all it took to convince me of the craftsmanship at work within these walls. Following delivery to Osgoode, the A was disassembled. New parts had to be ordered from numerous and top quality suppliers. The sheet metal was pounded and finessed back into shape and expertly painted.

I went to inspect the work at each critical step and was greeted with courtesy by owner and staff every time. Al brought the car back to its original splendor. After painting it once, he did not like a barely perceptible difference in shade that appeared on the bonnet when the car was exposed to daylight. He proceeded to sand it back down and started over. He went out of his way and fixed a few paint chips on the panels he was not being paid to repaint. Even the paint job under the dashboard, where nobody but me would dare check, looks fantastic. The only extraordinary long delay came from the re-chroming process. Luckily, Al had a few connections to reduce the 4-5 month waiting lists to a couple of months or so. In any case, the season was done for this MG and I would have to beg to Pat to borrow her MGB.



### CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Silver Wheel insurance plan works well and I am happy I called them before the trip and paid the extra \$100 for extended vacation coverage.  
 Al Stigter at A.S.E. Motorsports will get my future body and paint jobs.  
 Electronic ignitions deserve further consideration and I will test one in the MGA this spring.  
 I probably won't leave the car with a transport company in the future.  
 I definitely won't let Mackie Transport touch any of my cars in the future.  
 It's not about reaching destination; it's about the journey...  
 Patricia and I had a great time and we will be doing more long distance MG vacations.

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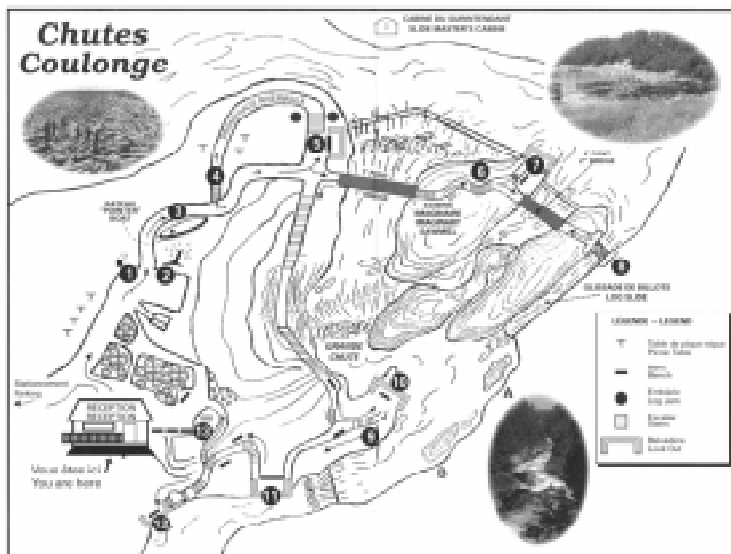
$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{A FALL COLOUR RUN 2007 EQUATION} \\
 \left( \left( \frac{\text{total miles driven}}{\text{number of participants}} \right) \times \sqrt{\frac{\text{number of buns consumed}}{\text{total buckets of beans, chili \& salad}}} \right) \\
 \hline
 \left\{ \frac{\text{total dollars collected from silent auction items}}{\text{number of contributions to the silent auction}} \right\} \\
 = 1 \text{ Especially Memorable Fall Colour Run}
 \end{array}$$



## The Ottawa Valley Jog - 2007

You can be sure the folks in this Ottawa MG Club never let a little bit of an obstacle get in our way. The original plan for the OVJ 2007 was to experience a great two-day run on some marvelous Ontario roads with an overnight stay at the Best Western in Pembroke. But after the sign-up sheets were completed and the plan was almost set to go into high gear, the staff at the Best Western messed up the reservations and we were going to have to settle for a one-day jaunt. Well, organizer Norm Peacey just kept right on MGing and put together a wonderful one day run and visit to The Coulonge Falls / Chutes Coulonge.

It was a very warm Sunday morning on August 12<sup>th</sup> when we gathered at the Antrim Truck Stop. This trucker's rest stop has great breakfasts and a great cup of coffee and there are clean washrooms; so already the disappointment of not having a two-day jaunt is furthest from my mind. And Norm set up a twisty, turny wonderfully pleasant route for all to enjoy the day. A bit of a run by the river in the cool shadow of the trees, through a few quaint towns in Quebec, close by the lakes where friends of mine used to own summer cottages, and on to "Les Chutes".



It is quite a 'tumultuous' place... all that water gushing and rushing over the rocks... and the spray of the splash was a cool refreshing treat when it drifted your way. There were a number of information stations and lookout points along the walkway but my favourite was the spot overlooking the log slide. Incredible view. And it was just as incredible to try and imagine workers at this location, more than 100 years ago, running a logging operation. The falls were a major obstacle in their pursuit of fame and fortune. Well, they weren't going to let this get in their way, and to overcome it the slide was constructed.

Disappointments can be overturned into successes. This OVJ is just one example.

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From the Editor's desk continues here as there was not enough space on page 2...

But there is some news about the North American MGB Register Convention coming to Canada... see page 24. And if you need some information about OMGC Regala items take a peek at page 9. And our Sponsors are listed on page 27.

Thanks to all the contributors - I couldn't have done it without you!

Len Fortin

## Keeping The B

By Roger White

We all love our MGs. Heck, aside from the odd glitch now and then, what's not to love? But who amongst us has not had his or her head turned from time to time by the saucy coachwork or booming exhaust of another classic marque entirely?

There are several OMGC members who have other makes in their summer stables, and if you've got the dosh and the space, why not? My own wish list for the aircraft hanger-sized dream garage could include at least one classic car for literally every letter of the alphabet, from "A" for Austin (Healey 100) to "Z" (Datsun 240). Under the "T" alone, there'd be half a dozen different Triumphs. Well, perhaps not the Mayflower.

But the only car I'd ever really sell the B for, or so I thought until this past summer, would be a Jaguar Mark II saloon. Yes, yes, I know: so "iconic", the model has become a cliché in classic car circles. Favored by London gangsters, used by UK police to chase them, fastest production saloon of its generation, garage queen extraordinaire, somewhat OTT, blah blah – but, you have to admit, it's a great package.

As a car mad kid, I got to ride in a series of them owned by a much richer pal's lawyer father. A member of various Toronto area clubs, this parent was always heading off to rallies and Mosport events, and he often took his son and me along, bless him. Such is how these love affairs start.

As a young adult, I drove a 2.4 version briefly in Scotland some 30 years ago, and all I really remembered was having to twirl the steering wheel about 100 times to make the turns during a five-minute drive.

In any event, aside from the rides as a lad and the one brief drive, I'd only drooled over them at car shows and hadn't really put one through its paces.

But Nancy and I were booked for a trip to Eire this past summer to tour the countryside with relatives. Glancing through one of the UK car magazines I persist in buying, I spied a car-hire advertisement. There are lots of companies in the UK that will let you hire a classic vehicle; this particular ad featured a Jag "S" type saloon available. A few e-mail and Visa number exchanges later, we had added an extra week to the trip for the two of us to tour Scotland in this 1966 classic Jag, picking it up in Edinburgh and delivering it and ourselves unscathed (hopefully!) in Glasgow a week later.



Not an MGB!  
Fuel alcoholic "S" Type at rest somewhere in Scotland

After a fun trip around Eire in fine weather with the relatives, early June found us in Edinburgh, still lucky with the weather, watching out of the hotel window as the Jag pulled up on the forecourt, only an hour late.

Now as many of you will know, an “S” type is not a Mark II. By the mid-sixties the company was offering a somewhat bewildering range of saloons, all eventually replaced by the XJ6. The “S” bodywork is similar to a Mark II, particularly the front end, but the boot is longer, the roofline higher and fuller at the back, and overall the look of the car is not quite as well balanced in my opinion. Arguably, with independent rear suspension, the “S” is better handling than a Mark II. This model we were to use was a 3.8 litre version, manual with overdrive, and from 20 feet away was a beauty in a sort of metallic mid green. It wasn’t a Mark II, but close enough in my book.

As the hiring firm chap took me through the controls and such, I felt a touch dubious. The interior was ropey, with distressed leather seats, threadbare carpeting in places, and much of the walnut veneer was peeling below the windshield. The car had been resprayed, but badly, with no regard to fixing the rust in the bottoms of the doors and generally the paint was bubbling all over the place. The engine compartment was hardly pristine and for the 650 pounds sterling it cost to hire the thing, I wasn’t entirely confident, despite the assurances of the firm’s representative, that the car would last the journey and that we were getting our money’s worth. (As many of you will know, going anywhere in the UK is frighteningly expensive for Canadians; hiring a car, drinking a pint, having a meal – you just have to develop amnesia about the exchange rate).

But, in for a penny, in for a pound as they say. Armed with the rep’s 24/7 “mobile” phone number just in case, we managed to find our way out of Edinburgh’s busy city centre across the Forth Bridge, after only an hour of getting wrong-footed on one-way streets, and eventually up the “A” roads towards Elgin, our first night’s destination, some 180 miles away.

I’ll cut to the chase – we had a wonderful trip, still lucky with weather, taking in great scenery and attractions, charming loch-side inns and B and Bs booked as part of the hire package, delicious haggis, fine malt whiskey, relatively light traffic on A and B roads chosen for the purpose, and made it back to Glasgow safe and sound. We waved at many other classics on the road, including convoys of Rolls-Royce Silver Ghosts touring Scotland on the centenary of that imposing car. There were lots of Bs around, several other Jags, a convention of Minis at one hotel, and all in all, the trip was a treat.

And the S type? When I was able to relax a bit away from Edinburgh and we were finally purring along the A 9 heading north in overdrive top, I was thinking “okay, that’s it, I’ll be having one of these.” Just the smell of the old Connolly leather, mingling with musty Wilton carpeting, a whiff of varnish, and a hint of motor oil gave an olfactory experience that can’t be beaten. And as the week progressed, my confidence in the car grew. It started on the button, hot or cold. We covered over 900 miles, no problem. Well, the tachometer quit working on the second day, but by then changing gear by engine note was second nature and otherwise mechanically the car was well up to the job.

But.....a lot of the time it was a pig to drive. This model had unassisted steering, and for a supposedly “compact” car of its generation, it was a real handful at slow speeds negotiating roundabouts, parking spots and little streets in the quaint little towns.

And the “petrol” it consumed? Equipped with twin fuel tanks, you can switch back and forth between

them, which was fun up to a point, seeing which tank had how many more thimblefuls left than the other did. Many times, we were driving on fumes, according to the gauge. I hustled the car along the curving roads at first, reveling in the straight-six growl in every gear. But by the end of the trip, I was changing gear up to overdrive top as soon as I could, at walking pace if possible. Getting initial mileage of what appeared to be one mile per litre will do that to you, especially at UK prices for gas.

It was something of a relief to end the trip in Glasgow and return the old girl to the hire firm, undamaged and speed trap ticket-free. The representative wasn't happy about the busted tachometer, but that failure wasn't down to me. We managed to fly out of Glasgow on time, our luck still holding as terrorists attacked the same airport a week later, and the whole of the UK was basically flooded by monsoons starting the day after we got back to Ottawa.

One of my first actions back home was to take the B for a spin. Fresh with new tires and an alignment just before we left, I hadn't had time for a long drive in it before the trip. What a revelation! The B was so light and nimble, quick and cheery, I couldn't stop grinning. And I'd forgotten how parsimonious it was on gas!

No, we had a great trip and in many ways, the Jag was an impressive car, stylish and powerful, charismatic and comfortable, all that stuff. I'm glad we did it. But after nearly 50 years of hankering, I think I've finally got Jaguar saloons out of my system. I'll stick with the MG, thank you very much.



Long boot good for whiskey & haggis shopping  
Shiny paint covered the rusting doors.

Oh, what's that? A Porsche, you say? Hmmm.....

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### **Some Important News For MGers About A Future NAMGBR Convention**

OMGC President, Terry Haines, has recently been in contact with the MG Car Club of Toronto (MGCCT). The MGCCT are organizing MG 2010 in Belleville, Ontario and are seeking help from other clubs. Club member Norm Peacey has volunteered to be the OMGC contact.

I'm sure you will agree, the MG 2010 event, organized by the MGCCT, is wonderful news!! It will be like an "old home week" for a number of OMGC folks who participated in the very first NAMGBR event in Peterborough, Ontario - many years ago - and unfortunately it hasn't been back to Canada since. There always has been some talk in the OMGC about doing some sort of international event but it just never happened. The members of the OMGC, with Norm as the contact, really have an opportunity here to get onboard and help the MGCCT and enjoy a wonderful MG get-together!

Talk to Norm Peacey about getting on the helpers list for this one!

Belleville 2010!!



*Looking Back...*

## Going, Going, Gone

A Story Published In The Road & Track Magazine  
November 1981



Following the sad demise of MG, an auction was held recently at the old factory at Abingdon-on-Thames at which a wide variety of items were sold, thereby adding \$200,000 to British Leyland's coffers.

Obviously, the most sought-after items were anything with the MG insignia on them. For instance, octagonal clocks went for about \$500. MG flags that flew over the factory brought \$300 each, polished brass engine plaques for the K model sedan that had been stored for 40 years fetched \$100 and a sign from the men's room warning graffiti artists that they would be severely disciplined made \$60. Altogether, it was a sad day at Abingdon.

Perhaps the saddest part of the whole MG saga is that the Member of Parliament for Abingdon was Airey Neave. Some readers may recall that Neave was killed when a terrorist bomb exploded in his car as he was leaving the garage at the House of Commons. Neave was much admired by everyone from all walks of life and all political persuasions, and he was a politician more from a sense of obligation than from personal ambition. He was also a strong supporter of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. A war hero, Neave was the first officer to escape from the notorious Colditz prison camp and make it home. Colditz was a fortress where allied officers who were known to be hard-core escapers were held. Among its occupants was Tony Rolt, who was to go on to win Le Mans. Rolt was planning to escape by means of a glider, which he was building in an attic at Colditz. Fortunately, the war ended before he could take to the air.

Although Airey Neave's successor made valiant efforts to save MG, he was unsuccessful, but, if Neave had lived, his powerful influence might have resulted in a different situation at Abingdon.

On a happier note, the MG name is being kept alive by a new and vastly improved MG Magazine. This publication, which is of extremely high quality, is aimed at the owners of the estimated 250,000 MGs that are still on the road. It will appear quarterly and it will contain club news, historical stories and a forum for owners and dealers to advertise used cars, service, parts and accessories. The Managing Editor is John Dugdale, who started life as a journalist and then went on to become Product Publicity Manager for Jaguar Rover Triumph of Leonia, New Jersey.

Subscription costs are \$12 for MG club members, \$14 for non-members and \$20 by airmail to overseas subscribers. The address is: MG Magazine 2 Spencer Place, Scarsdale, N.Y. 10583

[The above article and picture is from Road & Track Magazine November 1981]

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### **The Hugo Leech Memorial Award**

This trophy was crafted by a couple of very fine, skilled gentlemen of the Ottawa MG Club; Mark Evenchick and Dave Gregory. It was introduced in 1998 and is awarded annually at the discretion of the President of the club as a way to remember Hugo Leech, one of the founding members and a wonderful MG enthusiast.

Congratulations to club member Bob Stark, the winner of the Hugo Leech Award for 2007.

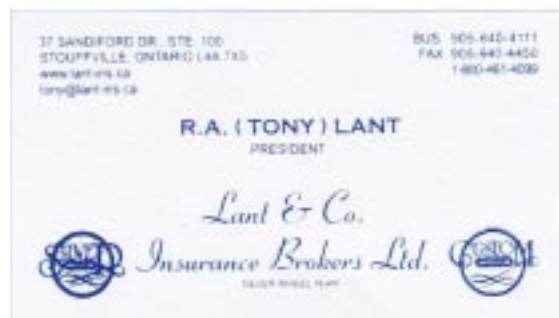


Bob at his 9 to 5 job in Kemptville



Bob relaxing at home

**Thank You To Our Sponsors**  
Please Support Them







## Here are a couple of MG advertisements from many years ago



## Looking Ahead...

## Ottawa MG Club Events Coming Soon

<b>January 17 (Thursday)</b>	<b>7 pm</b>	<b>Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>Louis’ Steakhouse</b>
<b>January 24 (Thursday)</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Vendor Site Visit</b>	<b>STEBRO Performance Sytems</b>
<b>February 8,9,10 (weekend)</b>		<b>OMGC Ski Trip</b>	<b>Gray Rocks</b>
<b>February 21 (Thursday)</b>	<b>7pm</b>	<b>Monthly Meeting</b>	<b>Louis’ Steakhouse</b>
<b>February 23 (Saturday)</b>	<b>1pm</b>	<b>Technical Session</b>	<b>MGA Windshield Replacement</b>
<b>March 1 (Saturday)</b>	<b>1pm</b>	<b>Darts Match</b>	<b>Greenfield’s Pub</b>