



# *The Dashpot*

January 2004



## *Ottawa MG Club*

The Dashpot is the official publication of the Ottawa MG Club. Submissions for consideration should be sent to: [frizzuti@sympatico.ca](mailto:frizzuti@sympatico.ca).

[www.omgc.net](http://www.omgc.net)

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### *Welcome New Members*

Les White    Ottawa    1962 MGA  
Russell and Carla Hall    Chelsea    1980 MGB

### *From The Editor's Desk*

Welcome to the second edition of the Dashpot. I have received many positive comments about the reformatted newsletter. I hope everyone enjoyed reading the articles as much as I enjoyed putting it all together. It's mid November as I sit here writing this editorial, the weather outside is cold, the feeling of snow is in the air, this weekend I will be putting my B to sleep for the winter. As I reflect upon this past years driving season, I am satisfied at the many events I have attended. Many car shows, tech sessions, club meetings, they were all really terrific. I have met a lot of really nice people and also made some new friends. The executive of the club have a full calendar planned for 2004, with a few new events and many of the tried and true ones coming back. Hope to see all members participating in this years event calendar.

Happy New Year,  
Frank Rizzuti  
Editor, "The Dashpot"

## *President's Message*

by Len Fortin

Even though the weather in this part of the world has shifted into that season where MG driving and MG tinkering are pretty tough to accomplish, there are MG activities and events happening all around the world that I can read about. Activities and events recorded in publications such as the "MGB Driver" from the North American MGB Register, and such as "MGA!" from the North American MGA Register. These two magazines, amongst several others, help keep my MG throttle open all winter. They show pictures and tell stories of two things I enjoy very much - MGs, and the people who are involved with them. Although I can't physically be at these far away events, I can participate in them, "spiritually", through the words and pictures contributed to the publications. As you may know, my involvement with MGs started in 1983 with the purchase of a "B" that was chronologically 10 years old. I enjoyed driving it and fixing it and washing it and cleaning it. I liked to tinker with it. I liked to talk about it. And when a local opportunity arose to join other people who felt the same way as I did about their MG..., well, you didn't have to twist my arm to do so. The Ottawa MG Club was still pretty new when I filled out the membership form and handed in a membership fee in 1991 but I have had a wonderful time as part of the OMGC. Joining was the right thing to do for me. Helping with activities and events where I could. Publishing newsletters for a while. Attending meetings. Traveling to many places around Ontario, across Canada and indeed throughout North America, to join other MGers at other club events and participate in the NAMGAR and NAMGBR annual conventions. The cars and the people kept my MG throttle open. I'd like to think, in this presidential portfolio, that it's my "job" to continually encourage folks to catch the "Safety Fast" wave.

One of the items I have been encouraging over the last few years is the "British Car Council Inc Long Distance Awards". The BCCI is a group of Ontario based British Car clubs who are joined for mutual benefit. Information sharing, documentation dissemination, club event insurance coverage, and awards for driving your British Car. Many OMGCers over the last few years have received a BCCI LDA dash plaque for accomplishing the 3000 miles (5000 kms) in a driving season. It doesn't cost anything to sign-up. You just have to fill out a participation form at the start of the season and have it confirmed at the end of the season. Congratulations to those who have done so for the 2003 season - the awards will be presented early in the new year and I shall continue to encourage others to participate next season.

As we head towards the 2004 driving season, over the winter months, I'd like to include some special "easy to participate in" events at our regular monthly meetings. Stay tuned for details. I'm sure you'll like them.

During the next driving season in 2004, I'll like to continue to promote an awareness of our club - the cars and the people. Awareness through pictures and stories of our events to other MG clubs, MG organizations and the news media. Awareness through the promotion of products that can identify us as OMGCers - magnetic door signs, car flags and banners and regalia items of clothing. And if you have suggestions about how I might promote our club further, let's talk!

These themes of participation, involvement, encouragement and awareness are only some of the good attributes of the members of this Ottawa MG Club. At least on two occasions recently I received complements about the club and its members on the level of participation and involvement. Complements from members of other clubs where their members just don't "show their colours". So my "job" to continually promote the OMGC will be a relatively easy one. Of course, I can use all the help I can get with any and all of the things this club decides to undertake - so don't be shy if you have an idea or suggestion. Len.

## *Name That Car!*



Ever seen one of these? Didn't think so. It's a 1961 MGA (or it was, at one time!). Frank York of St. John's, Newfoundland is the man who couldn't leave well enough alone. But current owner Abe Whitten loves it.



The car has a 1958 BMW roof and doors with a fabricated front and rear end. Interior is custom and the engine is stock. Rear lights are from a Chevy II. Looks a bit like a TVR Tasmin or a Triumph Italia, don't you think?

## *MGB-1963*

(contributed by Berton G. Grapes, former MGB owner...forever a keeper of the Marque)

After working very hard for eight years to establish my medical practice, Margaret and I decided it was time to have a real holiday in the spring of 1963. Despite the fact that we would be leaving three small children at home (our son Rob was only 16 months old!), we decided upon a motor trip that would take us into several countries on the Continent and also let us explore England, perhaps to trace our roots there. Except for the few days that I spent in southern England in 1953 (courtesy of the Royal Canadian Navy), neither one of us had set our eyes upon that part of our world.

The planning began with the collection of road maps, hotel guides, car rental information, car insurance, international drivers' licensing - in other words, all the usual fact finding minutiae that would guarantee us an enjoyable, comfortable and safe driving vacation. As we sifted through all of the information we came to the conclusion that the most economical and convenient plan was to purchase a car in England and "gypsy" about, finding our accommodation as we went along.

But what car? It would have to be small and nimble to handle the European roads but with enough storage space to handle two small pieces of luggage. And of course, the price had to be right. For help, I consulted my mechanic in Galt (now Cambridge). "Newt" Copple, (who with his brother ran a small garage specializing in British cars), recommended the new 1963 MGB. As it turned out, it couldn't have been a better choice. We purchased the car from Newt, to be picked up upon our arrival in London and to be shipped to Canada after our Continental holiday.

Away we went, leaving our children in the capable hands of a fine Scottish grandmother who had a very firm notion of how children should be brought up!

Our overseas flight was delayed by heavy fog and we didn't take off from Toronto for England until morning with the result that we arrived over London after dark. As the aircraft started its long descent into Heathrow, the lights of London spreading from horizon to horizon, were magical. Margaret, who had not been very excited about the trip, was enchanted! We settled our luggage into the old Charing Cross hotel and went exploring Trafalgar Square and the surrounding sights and lights.

After a few days of doing the tourist thing in London it was time to pick up our MGB which was waiting for us at the Morris/Austin outlet in White City. While Margaret waited at the hotel I ventured forth via the tubes to acquire our purchase. And what a purchase she was!! Shiny black and glistening chrome, wire wheels and black leather upholstery, silver and black license plates and canvas top. WOW! I was all set to hop in the car and drive away but a very thorough gentleman in a blue and white smock took me slowly around the car, inside and out, explaining every feature and control. It was almost as though he was loath to give it to me! Lying on the driver's seat (left hand side!) were my International driver's license, Bill of Sale and the Insurance papers.

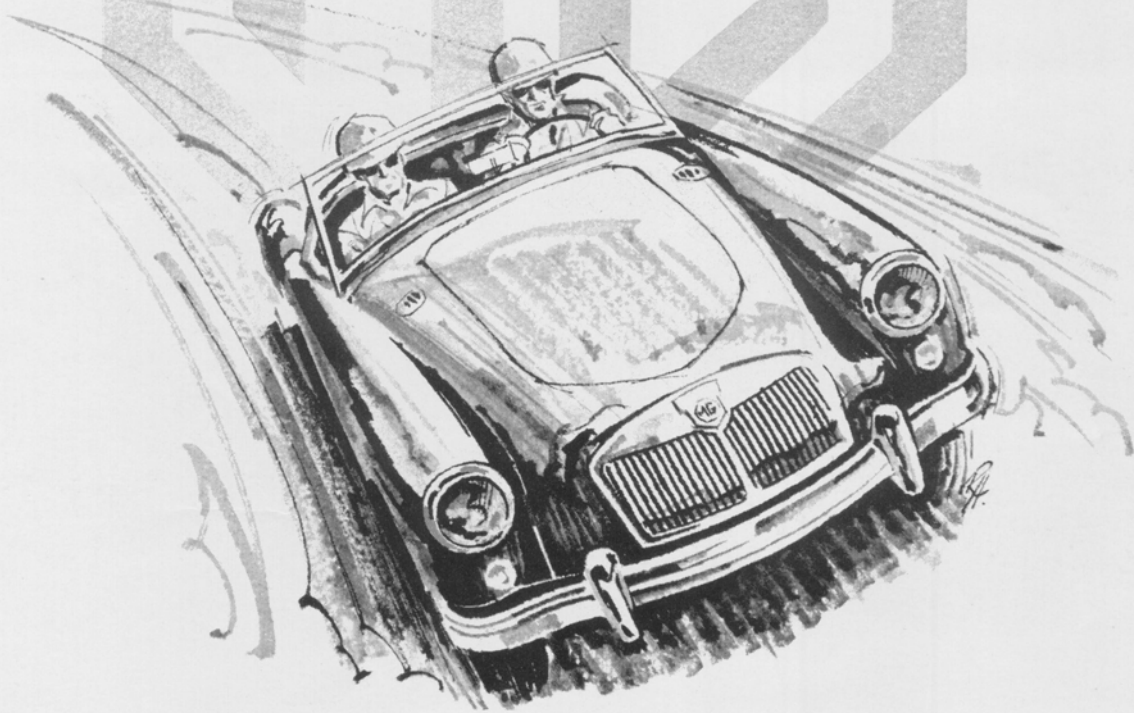
Now to get it back to Charing Cross and pick up Margaret, for we were heading out for Dover and the ferry to Calais. The car was an export model naturally and that made the driving in noon hour London a bit of a predicament with the steering wheel on the left. Fortunately the traffic was so dense and slow that I had copious time to refer to my

street map and prepare for the turns ahead. The drive to Dover was a delight. The beautiful little car was a dream to drive as we glided down A2 past farms and houses, stopping over in Canterbury of course and then on to Dover Castle where we took the first photo of our black beauty outside the castle's portcullis.

After a quiet night in a small motel/hotel (the "Dover Stage" –excellent dinner for 10/6) we drove to the ferry dock, drove the MGB onto the car deck of "Le Compeigne" and set out at 14:30 for the Continent. But the English Channel was smothered in a dense fog and the expected short trip dragged on until 1700, foghorns blowing from every direction; damp winds penetrating our clothing. We finally landed at Calais, drove bravely off the ferry and into the adventure of our lives! Into the rain and dusk we ventured grimly following our brand new road map of France, driving on the RIGHT side of the road, until we realized that we hadn't eaten since morning and that we were tired, hungry and thirsty. Margaret pointed out a Shell station ahead (at "Airainnes") with an attached restaurant so we hung a left and drove into the yard. Inside the restaurant we were treated to quiet stares from the locals, some smoking, some playing cards, as we made our way gingerly to an empty table. The waitress promptly placed a tired looking menu before us and hustled away. We ordered an "Omelet au fine herbs" and a bottle of rose. Never have we enjoyed an omelet so much – it was delicious. After a trip to the "dooble-vay say" or "lavabo", we headed out for Paris – it was pitch dark and raining heavily. It was then we noticed for the first time, that although our car was an export model, the very thorough English mechanics had not adjusted the headlight beams for right side driving and we were blinding the oncoming drivers! Fortunately they did not take too much umbrage at our bad manners and we made it into Paris (about a 175-mile drive) about midnight- to promptly lose our way in the suburbs. After much confusion and reference to our street map of Paris we finally got back on track and found the Hotel Montpensier where we had made reservations at the recommendation of friends who had stayed there in the past. At 8 dollars a night!!

(to be continued...)

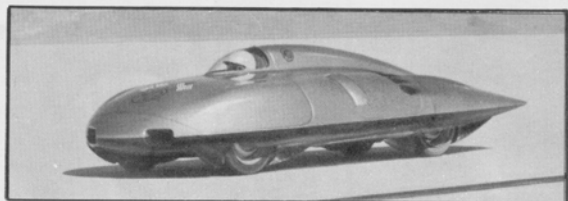




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# *Shop Safety*

by Les Bengtson

One of the most important aspects of any do it yourself project is safety. Whether it is a complete engine overhaul, changing a clutch or simply changing the oil and filter, lack of safe shop practices can result in either personal injury, a damaged vehicle or both.

Some books and repair manuals give a long list of do's and don'ts when explaining shop safety. The problem with such a list is that it is hard to remember, especially when in the middle of a project. In thinking about this subject, it seems to me that it can be reduced to three simple rules which are easy to remember:

First, don't drop anything, especially on yourself.

Second, don't breathe bad things.

Third, don't burn up yourself, your car or your work place.

From these three simple rules, all else becomes simply an extension. When you work under your car, use a set of jack stands and securely chock any wheels (both in front and in back of the wheels) that remain on the ground. You do not want to drop the car on you. Good jack stands are not expensive and will last years. Chocks may be purchased or made from scrap 4"X4" wood. Do not use concrete blocks, stacks of wood or even lengths of firewood in place of jack stands. They can break or split, dropping your car on you.

In a similar manner, if removing an engine and transmission (or even a water pump) remember that dropping them can cause severe injury. Keep your hands and feet out from under them. Also remember that heavy items, such as the cylinder head, can cause a back strain if lifted improperly, causing you to drop the item, thus breaking your foot. While this may seem to be an efficient way of doing things (you already have to go to the emergency room for the back strain), it would be better to avoid the trip in the first place.

When working on a car, there are a number of vapors which can cause you problems. Most know that running a car in a closed garage is not a good idea due to the build up of carbon monoxide. You can also get a concentration of toxic vapors from several other sources. Avoid gasoline as a cleaning agent, kerosene is both less likely to catch fire and is easier on the lungs. When using a carb cleaner, spray grease or oil or a cleaning agent, read the warnings on the can. If it says use in a well ventilated area, do so. You are issued only one set of lungs, so preserve them with the same care you lavish on your car.

Because everyone is so familiar with cars (they are a defining point in modern culture), we forget how really dangerous they are. We combine a highly inflammable, highly explosive fuel with a perfect detonator. Gasoline and an electrical spark, under improper conditions, can be as powerful an explosive force as dynamite. Two things can be done about this.

**First, the prevention.** There is no such thing as a small leak. A small leak simply means a smaller explosion. With gasoline, the most dangerous situation is a large build up of vapors. Suppose you have a "small leak" which allows a cup of gasoline to spill out. This turns to gasoline vapors, and being heavier than air, begins to drain out the bottom of the engine compartment. If, however, you start your car before the vapors have had a chance to drain out (dissipate), and you have an ignition source (spark from the starter or even a bad spark plug wire) you have a real chance of an explosion, followed by a fire. There is no such thing as a small leak, and any gas leak must be found, corrected and the vapors allowed to dissipate before attempting to start the car.

**The second thing is protection.** Even if you are aware of the possibility of fire, an

accident can always happen. You should have at least one good fire extinguisher immediately at hand when working on your car. More than one is better. The small type available at Home Depot and other hardware stores is only minimally acceptable. These are the small ones with the heads made out of plastic. A couple of these immediately to hand are better than nothing at all, but a larger, quality fire extinguisher is better. One with a rating of at least 10 BC is a good idea. Best place to buy one is from a company that specializes in fire extinguishers. Check for one close to you in the yellow pages. Fire extinguishers also need to be checked on an annual basis to make sure they are working properly. The flame retardant can compact in the bottom of the cylinder and refuse to spray out properly. Having the unit(s) professionally inspected on an annual basis is both easy and inexpensive. Especially compared to the cost of your car, your house or your life.

It is also a good idea to mount a fire extinguisher in your car. Once again, avoid the cheap, discount store variety. I had one mounted in my Bronco and it lost half of its pressure in six months of driving. Once again, go to a professional and get a good quality unit. Mount it where you can get at it easily. Both the right side of the passenger compartment foot well and the area behind the seat have been used. On rubber bumper cars, directly behind the driver on the package shelf will work. I have only had to use a fire extinguisher on an engine fire once. A fellow was driving by my house when he pulled over and lifted the hood to find the engine on fire. Fortunately, I was working on my Sprite and had a fire extinguisher immediately to hand. I have seen several cars burning along the road side over the years. I wonder if they might have been saved if only the operator had had the sense to keep a small fire extinguisher at hand.

One area, which does not fit into the above, is personal safety. When you work on a car, keep your hair (especially if long) out of the way of moving parts. Remember to protect your eyes. Safety glasses are very inexpensive and the side shields on them can prevent pieces of grit or liquids from getting into the eyes. Even if you normally wear glasses, wear safety glasses over them when grinding, sanding or wire brushing. Wear tight fitting clothing and avoid getting clothing caught in or on anything. It is possible to pull a heavy item off a work bench when it gets caught on clothing. It is also possible to get your hand pulled into a spinning fan or fan belt. Don't let it happen by planning first, then executing.

The last element of shop safety cannot be described, nor can guidelines be given. This is attitude or focus. When you go out to work on your car (or drive it), you need to be aware of what you are doing. You need to be aware that you are about to begin a dangerous operation and take the proper precautions.



## *Tool Identification Guide*

**HAMMER:** Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a divining rod to locate expensive parts not far from the object we are trying to hit.

**MECHANIC'S KNIFE:** Used to open and slice through the contents of cardboard cartons delivered to your front door; works particularly well on boxes containing tonneaus, soft tops, and leather upholstery kits.

**HAND ELECTRIC DRILL:** Normally used for spinning steel Pop rivets in their holes until you die of old age, but it also works great for drilling mounting holes in fenders just above the brake line that goes to the rear wheel.

**PLIERS:** An adjustable tool used to round off bolt heads.

**CRESCENT WRENCH:** See PLIERS

**HACKSAW:** One of a family of cutting tools built on the Ouija board principle. It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

**AVIATION METAL SNIPS:** See hacksaw.

**WISE-GRIPS:** Used to round off bolt heads. If nothing else is available, they can also be used to rapidly transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

**OXYACETYLENE TORCH:** Used almost entirely for lighting various flammable objects in your garage on fire. Also handy for igniting the grease inside a brake drum you're trying to get the bearing race out of.

**WHITWORTH SOCKETS:** Once used for working on older British cars and motorcycles, they are now used mainly for impersonating that 9/16 or 1/2 socket you've been searching for the last 15 minutes.

**DRILL PRESS:** A tall upright machine useful for suddenly \*\*\*\*\*ing flat metal bar stock out of your hands so that it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, splattering it against that freshly painted part you were drying.

**WIRE BRUSH WHEEL:** Cleans rust off old bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprint whorls and hard-earned guitar string calluses in about the time it takes you to say, "Ouch...."

**HYDRAULIC FLOOR JACK:** A device used for raising a vehicle off of the ground. When RAISING - The first stopping point will ALWAYS be 1/2 inch below the top of the Jack Stand. When LOWERING - The stopping point of the Jack will ALWAYS be 1/2 inch above the height needed to remove the Jack.

**EIGHT-FOOT LONG DOUGLAS FIR 2X4:** Used as a long lever with crushable ends.

**TWEEZERS:** A tool for removing wood splinters caused by the above.

**PHONE:** Tool for calling your neighbor to see if he has another hydraulic floor jack.

**GASKET SCRAPER:** Theoretically useful as a sandwich tool for spreading mayonnaise or peanut butter. Used mainly for getting dog-doo off your boot.

**PUTTY KNIFE:** A shorter and wider version of a GASKET SCRAPER (above). Who the heck uses putty anymore anyway ?

**E-Z OUT BOLT AND STUD EXTRACTOR:** A tool that snaps off in bolt holes and is ten times harder than any known center punch or drill bit.

**TIMING LIGHT:** A stroboscopic instrument for illuminating the grease that has built up on a harmonic balancer.

**TWO-TON HYDRAULIC ENGINE HOIST:** A handy tool for testing the tensile strength of ground straps and fuel lines you may have forgotten to disconnect.

**1/2 x 16-INCH SCREWDRIVER:** A large motor mount prying tool that inexplicably has an accurately machined screwdriver tip on the end without the handle.

**PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER:** Normally used as a non-drifting drift to ALMOST align mo-

tor-mount holes. Can also be used, as the name implies, to round off Phillips screw heads.

**BATTERY ELECTROLYTE TESTER:** A handy tool for transferring sulfuric acid from a car battery to the inside of your toolbox after determining that your battery is dead as a doornail, just as you thought.

**TROUBLE LIGHT:** The mechanic's own tanning booth. Accurately called a "drop" light. It is a good source of vitamin D, "the sunshine vitamin," which is not otherwise found under automobiles at night. Health benefits aside, its main purpose is to consume 60-watt light bulbs at about the same rate that 105-mm howitzer shells might be used during, say, the first few hours of the Battle of the Bulge. More often dark than light, its name is somewhat misleading. Makes a tinkling sound and a whisp of smoke when splashed with radiator coolant.

**AIR COMPRESSOR:** A machine that takes energy produced in a coal-burning power plant 200 miles away and transforms it into compressed air that travels by hose to a Chicago Pneumatic impact wrench that grips rusty bolts last tightened 50 years ago by someone in Michigan or England and twists them off.

**PRY BAR:** A tool used to crumple the metal surrounding that clip or bracket you needed to remove in order to replace a 50 cent part.

**TUBING CUTTER:** A very accurate tool used to cut brake and fuel lines exactly 1/2 inch too short.

**6-FOOT STEEL TAPE:** A long slender steel ribbon with inch marks. Steel tapes ALWAYS break-away and bend downwards just before you reach the point to which you are measuring.

**BEAM-TYPE TORQUE WRENCH:** A long tool used for precisely tightening nuts and bolts. Chief characteristic of using = The handle will ALWAYS contact firewall or fender-well just BEFORE the required torque value is reached.

**CLICK-TYPE TORQUE WRENCH:** A long tool used for precisely tightening nuts and bolts. May also be used as a very accurate and expensive BREAKER BAR

**BREAKER BAR:** A long tool for loosening and tightening nuts and bolts. May substitute for TORQUE WRENCH. When used to tighten nuts and bolts, the rule of thumb is "Tighten until It Strips - Then Back It Off 1/4 Turn".

**FLASHLIGHT:** A GREAT holder for dead batteries.



## *Tech Tips*

**How do you find the cause of a constantly blowing fuse?** If, with everything switched off, the fuse blows as soon as the battery is reconnected, how do you start tracing the fault?

The simplest way to do this is to substitute an inspection lamp for the offending fuse. If the fuse holder is easily accessible, remove the fuse and clip the leads of the inspection lamp to the fuse connections in the fuse holder. If access is difficult, solder wires to each end of a blown fuse and refit the fuse. The inspection lamp can then be connected to the other ends of the wires.

Now reconnect the battery and, assuming the short circuit is still present, the inspection lamp will light. No damage will be done to the wiring as the current flow will be limited by the resistance of the bulb. You can now search away for the elusive fault. Once the fault has been cured the lamp will go out. The inspection lamp and modified fuse can be removed and a new fuse can safely be fitted. Problem solved!

**Cheap white vinegar dissolves rust.** Pour some into a coffee can and drop in those rusty bolts. Let it sit for a few days sloshing occasionally.

Also works as a gas tank cleaner. Filling it with vinegar and letting it sit for a few days will give you a tank cleaned down to bare metal with loose flakes that can be easily flushed out with a garden hose.

**During restorations,** often it is desirable to paint bolt and screw heads to help them match or disappear into the background. To do this, it is helpful to get a plastic container (such as a margarine tub), and drill appropriately sized holes in the bottom. Insert the fasteners and spray away. The plastic holds them upright and together in a small area, where they can stay while they dry. Of course, you can reuse the plastic holder many times.

**Valve cover gaskets have a nasty habit of leaking,** no matter how hard you try and line it up. An old racing trick is to glue the gasket to the valve cover with gasket cement. Let that set for several hours. Then smear the other face of the gasket with grease where it meets the cylinder head. Reinstall valve cover, no more leaks, from the valve cover that is ;).

**Trying to see if you are getting spark but don't have an assistant to crank the car?** Let jumper cables be your assistant. Remove the plug from the head. Push it back on the ignition wire. Clamp one of the cables to the threaded area of the plug and the other end to a good ground. The stiffness of the cables will hold the plug high enough above the engine to be seen from the driver's seat. **Caution:** before turning over engine make sure cable is clear of the fan blades.

**A good way to help stop losing brake fluid when disconnecting lines,** is to place a large sheet of plastic between the master cylinder and its cap. This will create a partial vacuum and helps stop fluid from leaking out.

**Removing a steering wheel** or anything else that is splined can be made easier by first tightening the nut before trying to loosen the object. By tightening the object moves slightly on the splines, breaking any corrosion that has formed which makes it easier to remove.

**To maintain the best electrical connection at joints**, such as a wire plug and socket union, clean the plug and socket thoroughly (emery paper, fiberglass eraser, and tuner spray wash down), then fill the socket with some silicone grease and just plug it in. The grease will prevent corrosion from re-occurring at that connection

**The Vyback rear window** on convertible tops sometimes becomes badly creased due to incorrect stowage of the soft top assembly. These creases in most cases can be removed satisfactorily by simply filling a plastic bottle with hot water and rolling it across the creased area and at the same time supporting the opposite side of the window.

**Ever have to put rivets to tight places where the rivet gun won't fit?** Stack a few very small diameter nuts or washers on the shaft of the rivet before placing it in the gun. You effectively extend the tip of the gun. Just be ready to catch all the nuts or washers. Works great in any recessed channels.

**Problem:** Overspray from UV protectant (Armorall) not just getting on the tires but getting on car's paint

**Solution:** Office supply stores sell a thin squeeze bottle with a sponge top commonly used for moistening stamps and envelopes. It is called the Sterling Master Moistener.

**MGB BATTERY:** The twin six volts may be upgraded to the Group 26 battery which will fit right into the passenger box. MOVE the earth cable to that box!

**VOLTAGE STABILISER:** The voltage stabilizer powers two instruments at the most: Petrol gauge and Temperature gauge. Test this unit by inserting your 12v test light into the GREEN/BLUE temperature transmitter wire at the front of the engine. With the key ON and the test light earthed, the light will glow for about 20 seconds then begin winking ON OFF ON OFF like a slow turn signal. The stabilizer rarely fails but sometimes comes loose, which causes these instruments to read high. A failure of ALL the dash gauges is simply a dirty fuse (third down) in the fusebox.

**WINDSCREEN WIPER WHEELBOX THREADS:** If the gentle application of heat to the hex or oct nut on the wheelbox fails, then it is necessary to cut the nut off, allowing the hack saw blade to run parallel to the threads, slicing a crescent from the nut. Once the wheelboxes are out of the car (use a 3/16" socket to remove the nuts from the rear plates), then use a thread file or a new nut to "restore" the faulty threads.

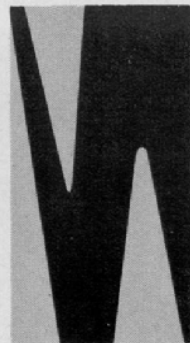
**WIRE WHEELS:** The splines must be lubricated, but use silver coloured anti-seize instead of nasty, gooey, black grease. Both will travel through the spoke holes, but the silver does not discolour the wheels. The knockoffs need only be tightened with several monster blows with the hammer. Watch old racing movies to see what the mechanics did in the pits -- just a couple of swings and off they went. The new Clark&Clark wire wheel wrench gets the spinners plenty tight without damaging the wings.





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## *MGB thrives in Targa Newfoundland*

by Paul Williams

Back in 1980, Oakville resident Terry daSilva's wife Wanda was in hospital expecting their daughter Catherine, when Terry informed her he was thinking of buying an MGB.

It seemed like a good time to bring the subject up, recalls Terry.

Wanda rightly thought that her husband should have other things on his mind. Like her. And Catherine.

"But it's the last one they have at the dealers," explained Terry. "MG is closing down and there won't be any more. I really think I have to buy it."

Wanda's protestations aside, the next time Terry visited, he arrived in a 1980 Old English White MGB bought from Budd's British in Mississauga. It's car number 510121, was built in March 1980, and he still owns it. Price? \$11,500 with overdrive.

"And the salesman was a real pain," says Terry. "I never went back there for service. I just followed the service manual."

When Terry took delivery, the car arrived with bolts missing from the engine mounts (the engine was just sitting in there, on the mounts). The bolts in the differential were also loose, as were those in the hinges for the hood (I guess they were just throwing them together at Abingdon by that time).

Terry added the bolts to secure the engine, and tightened everything up. Now, 23 years later, the 30,000-kilometre car is still pretty much as he bought it.

This is one of the most original B's you'll find. There's no rust or rot, it has original paint and interior, and the engine bay is absolutely original and clean. There are even build codes marked on the underside of the hood by workers at the factory (probably the guy that forgot to tighten the bolts!).



"I replaced the thermostat last year," says Terry. "It finally died on the 2002 Targa Newfoundland rally."

A rally? Yes, the B has entered a new phase of its life. After an average of about 1,200 gentle kilometres a year, it's starting to get out more.

"When I heard about the Targa Newfoundland," said Terry, "I thought this would be great for the MGB. I really wanted to drive it more and this seemed a great thing to do. I figured the car would be fine, or it would go out in a blaze of glory."

The internationally sanctioned Targa Newfoundland is a 2,200-kilometre event that extends over five days of competition. Terry and a friend competed in 2002, the first year for the rally, and the car was fine throughout. Wanda replaced the friend as navigator this year, as she and Terry signed up for the 2003 edition.

In the Targa Newfoundland there are two classes of competition: the Targa class features speeds up to 200 km/h, and the Touring class is capped at 130 km/h and is a time-speed-distance style of rally. The MGB was entered in the Touring class, which comprised 15 of the 60 entrants.

The scenery in Newfoundland is terrific, and the people really are friendly and helpful. But this is a real competition, with 2,000 volunteers working on the event. It's a massive organizational effort that involves the local police, town councils, corporations and the provincial government. The timed rally stages can be very challenging, especially in an older car. Some drivers have only experienced recreational Sunday runs with their local club, while others have years of competition experience.

"At first I didn't know what I was doing," said Wanda of navigating. "But then I got the hang of it, and things worked out pretty well, I think."

"I just go where Wanda says," added Terry. "Half the time I don't even know where we are; I just drive and follow her directions."

You do need a good team that can communicate well. What the daSilva's lacked in horsepower, they made up for with accuracy.

Sometimes you're running flat-out in the narrow confines of small villages and along remote country roads. Then you're flying down lanes and paths, and slamming on the brakes for a ninety-degree turn leading to a steep hill. Out of the corner of your eye you can see the crowds cheering as you make (hopefully) these turns.

At other times, it's open road and high speeds all the way, with time calculated to the second.

To be frank, I would not have believed you could do this in a stock 1980 B. We know that by the mid-to-late '70s, the horsepower in B's was way down, and the suspension correspondingly went way up, compromising what handling MGB's had.

But there were Terry and Wanda, making their times, just hurling that car around the tight stages, with no modifications at all.

What was his secret? How did he prepare the car?

"I changed the diff' oil," said Terry, "and the engine oil, of course. A new set of plugs and that's about it. We towed it here on a dolly. That made the diff' very hot and then the trailer jack-knifed so we turned the car around, and towed it by the front wheels. That added about 2,000 kilometres to the odometer."

Some secret.

As the rally progressed, the stages became harder for the B to make, and the daSilva's started losing precious seconds. But the car ran flawlessly, and never overheated. Somehow it had enough grunt to haul the B up steep inclines, make the corners, stop without fuss, and finish unscathed.

It just shows what you can do with these cars. They're not fragile at all; probably tougher than most of their owners.

In the Targa Newfoundland, the MGB competed against new vehicles like Porsche 911s, Mazda Miatas, new Mini Coopers and an array of expensive classics like the Porsche 356 and E-Type Jaguar. At all times it was thoroughly reliable and often competitive. It certainly never let the daSilvas down (unlike a Mercedes-Benz of the same vintage).

What a blast!



If you'd like to know more about the Targa Newfoundland, check [targanewfoundland.com](http://targanewfoundland.com). Next year's event is scheduled for September 18-26, 2004.

## *How to Rally in a.....*

**Austin Healey 3000:** At the start, make sure that you have been given a "Special Rally Route". Say the TR4 is not a true sports car.

**Citroen:** Wear a dark trench coat and smoke Algerian cigarettes in a holder. Say "Sacre bleu", and "Mon dieu, why do zay not up ze average ici?" Call your navigator "Francois". Walk up to controls making little hydraulic noises to yourself. Know how to pronounce "Citroen".

**Corvair:** Be familiar with such expressions as "4-speed stick" , "simulated wire wheel covers"\*, and "heel and toe bracket". Carry three fan belts over each shoulder. Know where Monza is, and how to spell "Spyder". Say the Ford Falcon is not a true compact. (\*Optional at extra cost).

**Ferrari 250GT:** Scream into corners gesticulating madly with both hands. Call your navigator "II passagiere", and ask him, "Ayy Luigi, vats-a-matta, you crazee?" Tell everyone that you finished the Canadian Winter Rally. Say, " Ayee pizan, dat-a-da-real-a-fazazz", and "Mama mia, am-a start opp in-a f if t again!"

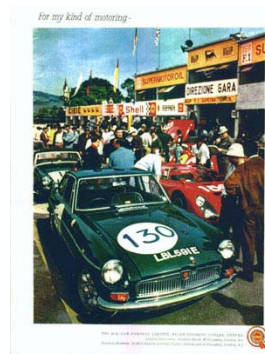
**Ford Falcon:** Run with straight pipes and at least 3 degree rake. Know how to pronounce "Ljungfeldt". Be familiar with expressions such as, "simulated wood-rimmed steering wheel"\*, "total performance", (memorize this) "King of the Mountains", King of the World", "King". Carry suitcases full of shock absorbers. Never rally with less than 9 driving lights. Streamline the car with racing stripes. When asked, be familiar with such things as "Weber carburettors", "fibreglass", and "Mini-Cooper". (\*Optional at extra cost).

**Jaguar XKE:** Shift slowly. Know how to use the throttle to play "Rule Britannia" on the exhaust pipes. At night, turn off the headlights and fly by the instruments. Avoid rough roads. Call the rally organizers "stupid clots". Fill the windscreen washers with Gin and Tonic. Say, "Every troo spohts cah has thrree windscreen wipahs".

**MG B:** Wear a rubber skin diving suit and carry skis on the boot. Say the TR4 is a useless piece of shit.

**MG TF:** Wear baggy, tweedy pants, and an "old school" cravat. Have long, straight hair and smoke a pipe. Say, "No true sports car has roll-up windows". Carry an inner tube patching kit.

**Mini-Cooper "S":** Make sure everyone knows who you are even without your car on. Be diabolical. Suck everyone into turns at 80 mph. Know how to come out of such turns. Avoid large potholes. Avoid large dogs. Wear a turtle-neck sweater and grin incessantly (except when being passed on a straight road). Talk Irish. Say, "Look ma, --- no springs", and "Mini go bra!"



**Porsche:** Look like a count. Wear black boots and an "Iron Kreuz". Shift gears rapidly and constantly, even when not in the car. Say, "Iee Porsche iss ze essence of efreesing vas a motorcar ist" , and "Vhy ze rhally instructions alviss in Enklishist?"

**Renault R8:** Be daring. Wear a blue beret and wraparound sunglasses. Say, "Zut", and "Alors!", and "Chacon a son Renault!". Hang the tail well out on all corners. Mince up to everyone in sight and whisper into their face, "Disc brakes!"

**Saab:** Flip the car at the slightest opportunity, especially when passing controls. Know what "Saab" stands for. Look like Eric Carlsson. Say, "Ring-a-ding-ding-ding" , and "Vell, ay vas yoost korning round de korner ven ay see dis ant eater.....

**TR 4:** Turn up your nose at "sporty compacts". Arrive at every control half an hour early, drifting in sideways and showering the control car with gravel. Say, "Ruddy good sport!", and "Ripping good fun", and "I say, you chaps wouldn't have any bitter lemon would you?"

**Triumph Spitfire:** Turn 24 foot circles around the control car, rolling the windows up and down furiously. Act sassy.

**Valiant:** Wear a black driving suit with luminescent stripes. Try to sell Valiants. Look important. Drive at 100 mph plus. Tell every checkpoint it is at least 7 1/2 feet out of position, and that their watch is 2 seconds slow. Never rally with less than 3 Haldas. Streamline the car with racing stripes. Scribe cracks in the windshield and hammer dents into the roof. Look tough.

**Volvo P1800S:** Be friendly. Pull over for everyone. Have Irish coffee and buns with every control, whether on or off route. Say your car is "just darling". Always carry at least 250 Ibs. of maps. Never give up.

**Volvo 122S:** Wear your safety harness even when not in the car. Distribute illustrated folders of the 1964 Shell 4000 rally. Snap your fingers and say, "L' acceleration comme ca!" Say your navigator is a product of superb Swedish engineering. Outrun other compacts and make them cough.

**V W 1200:** Be fanatic. Be dependable. Run flat out all the time (3600 rpm). Chew voraciously on chunks of "knackwurst and kase" . Call your navigator, "Ein dummkopf". Call the exhaust pipes "Huspuffrohren". When asked, be unfamiliar with such things as "economy car", "oversteer", and "wind sensitivity". Slide sideways around corners yelling, "Wolfsburg uber alles!" Say the Porsche is an expensive VW . Say the Ford Falcon is not a true fastback.

**V W 1500:** Be fluent with such expressions as "twin carburettors", "twin trunks", and "S". Challenge people to find the engine. Know how to find the engine.

**Ramber American:**  
Nobody rallies in a Rambler American.

## *Remembering Randy Hull*

On Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup> the MG world lost a dedicated enthusiast. Randy Hull from Fort Wayne, Indiana was killed while doing something he loved - driving his 1979 Limited Edition MGB home from an MG event. He was an active member of the Hoosier MG Club. I first met Randy and his wife, Becky in 1997 while attending John Twist's Summer Party in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I was sitting in the parking lot and they strolled by and commented about the colour of my B. Can you imagine they thought that Tundra Green was a unique/strange colour! Our friendship started that day and they have since become great friends of mine. Along with other Indiana friends, Dan and LouAnn Griswold, the five amigos have been attending car shows together - Grand Rapids, Cleveland, Minnesota, St. Louis. In the summer of 2002 the Indiana gang traveled north and we met in Kingston staying at a friend's B&B. We had a wonderful time exploring the Kingston area in our B's - scenic Highway 2, Gananoque, Wolfe Island, and cruising the Thousand Islands.

Randy was a nice guy, great friend, and loved by all who met him. I was a guest in the Hull's home this past summer and saw what a great dad he was to Caitlin and Chelsea. He loved his MGB and at his funeral the pastor made reference to Becky being his first wife/love, but his second wife/love was his MGB! The pastor encouraged the young people to find a passion in life and go for it, Randy lived life that way. We all teased Randy about constantly cleaning his car. He was always designing gadgets for the car - the latest, water bottle holders. He had recently taken an interest in valve cover racing and entered his first competition at MG2003 in St. Louis, where "The Fabulous Trashwagon" was unveiled and we cheered him on from the sidelines. He was quiet, he was kind, he had a great sense of humor, he loved life, and I will miss him dearly.

Mary Attwell



*Les Voyageurs d'MG present*

*Le Spree à la Gaspésie*

*July 9<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004*

Les Voyageurs invite you to join us next summer on an MG tour of the Gaspé Peninsula, and the north shore of the St. Lawrence east of Québec City. We plan to travel an average of about 150 miles per day over 10 days, so the pace will be relaxed enough to stop and see some of the sights, and meet some of the wonderful people in this beautiful region of Canada.

We will supply a detailed route book so that participants can travel in small groups and stop where they want to enjoy the scenery, or antiques, or whatever else attracts them, without having to worry about halting a large group whose members may not have the same interests. Of course, we'll meet each night to do what MGers do best ... eat, drink and exaggerate!

The type of accommodations that we book will depend on the size of our group, and availability, but we hope to use auberges and small hotels where possible. We will try to secure average room rate of about \$100.00 per night.

In order to sort out the accommodations, we'll have to get an idea of the size of our group before the end of January, and confirm bookings by the end of February.

Interested? Contact Les Voyageurs.

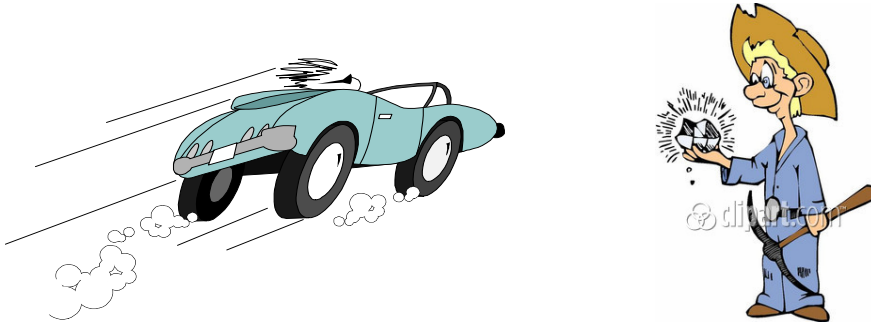
Mark and Heather Evenchick [mheven@sympatico.ca](mailto:mheven@sympatico.ca)

Mary Attwell [mary2friends@yahoo.com](mailto:mary2friends@yahoo.com)



<http://www.infogaspesie.com/>

## *Cheepo Cheepo 04* *"LFTR"*



### Look For The Rocks

**When:** June 5, 2004  
**Where:** Best Western Sword Motor Inn, Bancroft Ontario  
**How Much:** \$169.92 per couple  
\$125.80 single

All taxes and gratuity are included in the above.

If you have not registered for Cheepo Cheepo and still wish to do so, contact Bob Stark at 258-4636 ( if this is long distance from your area try 567-3000 wait for a dial tone then dial 258-4636) or via Email at "robber@sympatico.ca" and I will contact you for the required information.

I have a limited number of spaces left in our reservation block of twenty couples . All additional reservations beyond our original twenty will be on a space available request. All bookings must be received no later than April 1st.

The planned departure time is 9:30 AM from the Tim Hortons in Kanata with a picnic stop on the shores of Calabogie Lake and arrival in Bancroft at approximately 4:00 PM.

Looking forward to a spring drive and enjoyable weekend.

*Safety*  *Fast*

## *Annual General Meeting*

The November club meeting at Louis' Steak House doubled as our Annual General Meeting during which (between pizza, Rickard's Red, lasagne and Snoopy fever) our Executive for the upcoming year was named.

Len Fortin takes over as President (welcome, Len!), as Jordan Jones steps down after two years in that position. The entire club thanks Jordan for his tireless efforts and great ideas in promoting the club. He leaves it in great shape, and with great prospects for the future (stepping down will perhaps give Jordan time to restore even more MGs, then establish the first MG dealership in North America since British Leyland threw in the towel. Go, Jordan!).

In addition, the club welcomes Dave Moore as Technical Director, and Rob Grapes as Member at Large. Other positions carry over, with thanks to the incumbents from all members.

## *Hugo Leech Award*

Many club members recall the late Hugo Leech, one of the founders of the OMGC, and a great MG enthusiast. This year, the OMGC Hugo Leech Memorial Award was presented to a very deserving Frank Rizzuti. The award was presented to recognize Frank's enthusiasm for MGs, his considerable efforts as an OMGC member and director, and the fact that he's a really nice guy, always quick to help and to welcome new members. Congratulations, Frank!

## *Ottawa MG Club Event Calendar*

January 15	Club Meeting	Louis' Restaurant	7pm	Len Fortin	258-9655
January 28	Tech Session	Location TBA Tires and Wheels	6pm	Robert Grapes	839-6500
February 19	Club Meeting	Swan Pub	7pm	Len Fortin	258-9655
February 25	Tech Session	Location TBA Body and Paint	6pm	Robert Grapes	839-6500

The March meeting is scheduled to be held at the RCAF Mess. This is a jacket and tie event. They will have the menu by the end of January and the procedure will be the same as last time, which is for individuals to phone the mess, select their meal and provide credit card details. We would like to know how many people are planning to attend, give me a call, Ivan Wood 998-9753 or at home 692-2404.

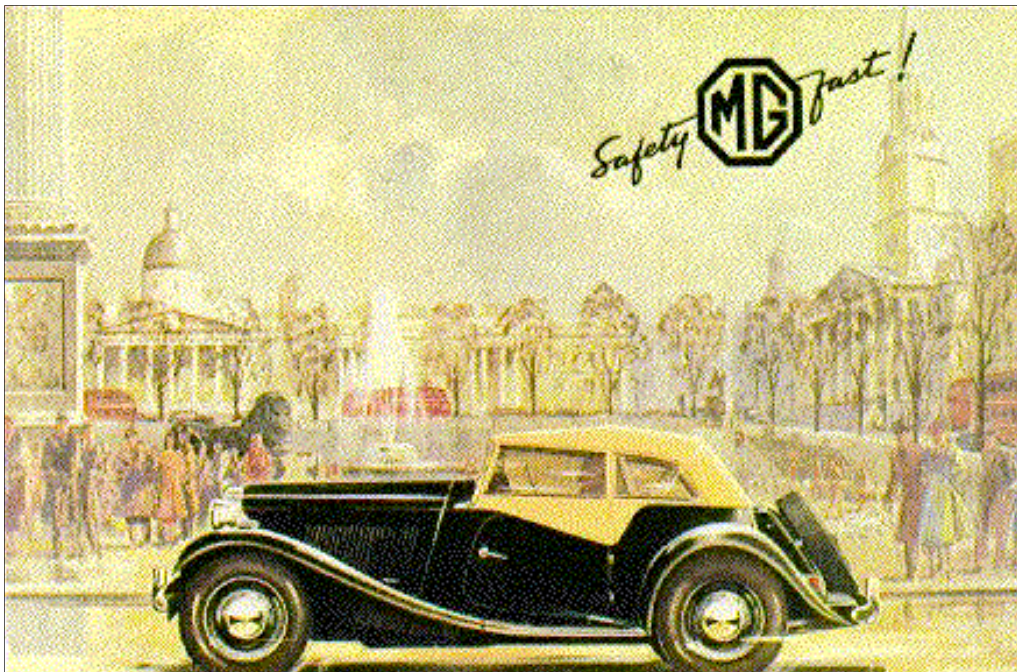
**Please refer to the club website for any updates or changes.**

[www.omgc.net](http://www.omgc.net)

## *MG Club Regalia*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Price</b>
Long sleeve shirt	\$44
Short sleeve shirt	\$40
Hooded sweat shirt (heavy weight)	\$40
Sweat shirt (heavy weight)	\$36
Golf shirt	\$31
T shirt	\$18
Sign (magnetic)	\$18
Socks	\$16
Touque	\$16
Hat	\$15
Pins	\$10
Crests	\$8
Club jackets (available in a variety of colors and sizes)	\$170

Your favourite item of clothing can be embroidered by special order.  
For all your regalia needs see Doug McClure, [miatamcclure@hotmail.com](mailto:miatamcclure@hotmail.com) or 824-0168.



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OTTAWA MG CLUB  
2003 / 2004 MEMBERSHIP & RENEWAL FORM  
Membership Number\_\_\_\_\_

Please bring this membership form along with payment to the next meeting  
(\$35 New Members, \$30 Renewals, cheques payable to The Ottawa MG Club)  
Or mail to: Mike Daniels, 57 Tiffany Place, Kanata, Ontario, K2K 1W5.

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Postal Code:\_\_\_\_\_ Fax:\_\_\_\_\_

MG Model:\_\_\_\_\_ Year:\_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail:\_\_\_\_\_

To help the club meet your MG needs, kindly complete the survey below:

Which of the following events would you be interested in attending?

- 1) Social/Fun Events      \_\_\_\_\_ Club Meetings  
                                     \_\_\_\_\_ Inter-Club Events (Croquet, Darts, etc)  
                                     \_\_\_\_\_ Get-Togethers (Christmas, Beach, etc)  
                                     \_\_\_\_\_ Car Shows
- 2) Driving Events        \_\_\_\_\_ Short One Day Run  
                                     \_\_\_\_\_ Longer Two Day Run  
                                     \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Competitive Fun Rally  
                                     \_\_\_\_\_ Competitive Rally
- 3) Technical Events      \_\_\_\_\_ Speakers at Meetings, Videos, etc  
                                     \_\_\_\_\_ Hands On Technical Seminars  
                                     \_\_\_\_\_ Garage Tours

Would you like to be called / e-mailed about events?    Yes        No

Comments:

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## *MG on The Net*

### *Web Links*

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<http://www.macgregorukcarparts.com/index.html>  
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#### **Clubs:**

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<http://www.mgcars.org.uk/mgcouncil/>  
<http://www.mgdriversclub.com>  
<http://www.mgcarclubdc.com/index.html>

#### **Technical & Funstuff**

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<http://www.mgbexperience.com>  
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<http://www.canplates.com/index.html>  
<http://www.ncf.carleton.ca/~ab603/page1.htm> (local car show listings)  
<http://www.britishpathe.com/index.cfm>  
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