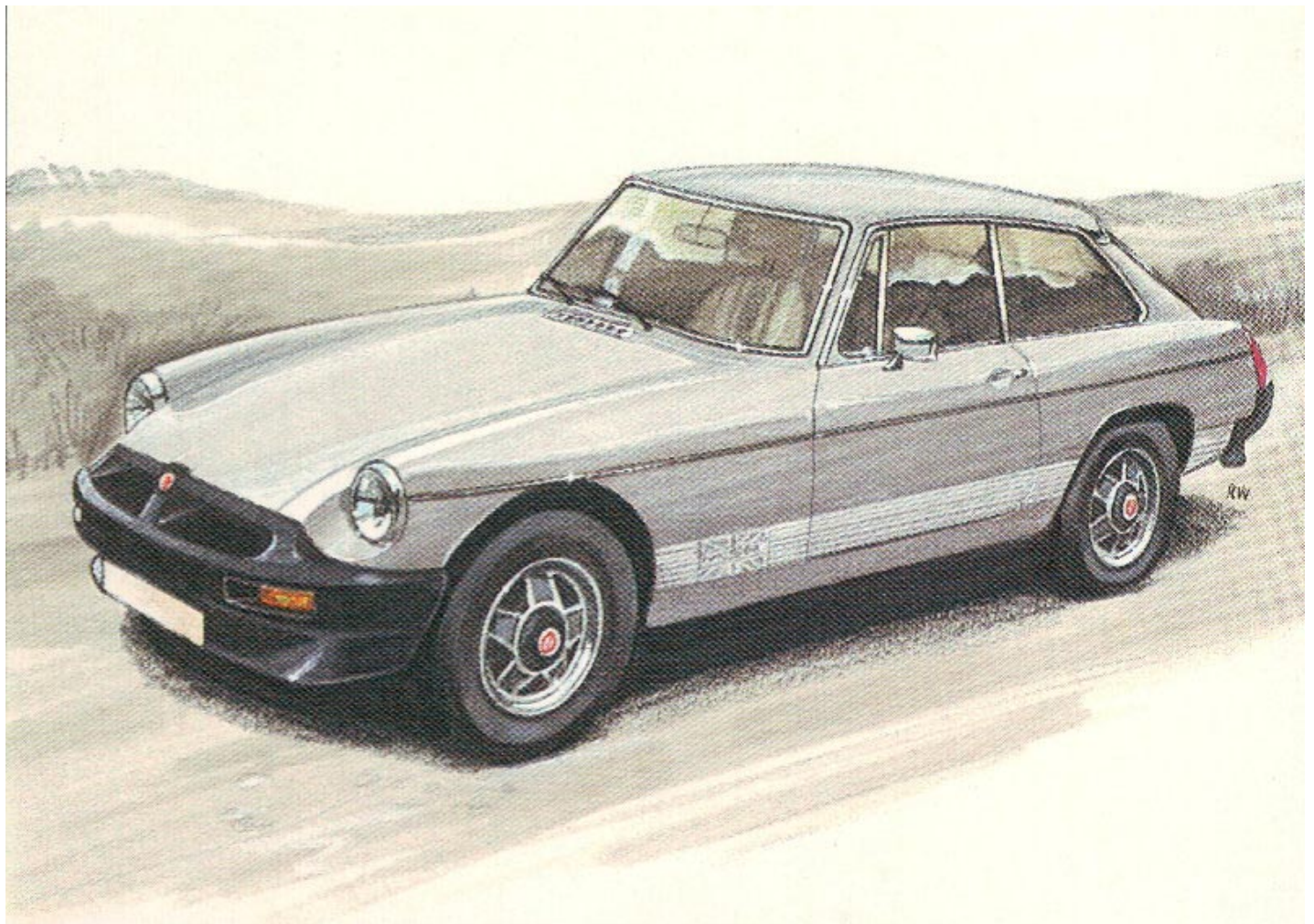




The Dashpot

Fall 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
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 Fall Edition of The Dashpot was fun to put together. I do like the task of assembling the various contributions from club members and from resources on the internet. So a big "Thank You" to the many folks who felt compelled to send along an article or a photo or an idea! Sometimes the things you find in a publication such as this will spark a needed project and sometimes they will give you a pleasant memory - whatever the case, do enjoy this issue. The Winter Edition, to be released in the mid-winter depths, will have a look back at the 2008 driving year. Take a moment and do some thinking back right now, and send me a note about your favourite event or meeting. Your comments could make it to the next issue and will certainly be very beneficial to the club executive who must start to cobble together the 2009 Events Calendar sometime in January. A little help goes a long way to making a successful and pleasant year of events.

President's Message

Well here we are again, cars stored away and sleeping soundly until next spring, at least for most of us, and the last club run of the season, the Fall Colour Run 2008, now just a memory.

For me, and I hope for all club members, it has been a great season starting off with our Spring Tune Up at the Jaguar dealership; the trip to Hudson British Car Show; Cheepo-Cheepo; Cruise Nights; The Ottawa Valley Jog; the Club Picnic; the Corn Roast; and finally, the Fall Colour Run. I would be remiss if I did not publicly thank all of you who devoted your time and effort into these events. Without member participation, we would be a far less successful club. Again, many thanks to all of you who organized or helped with events and to those of you who participated.

Just a quick mention of two other events from this past summer:

The first, the North American MGB Register Convention, "MG 2008", held in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania was attended by Mary Attwell, Paul Williams and me. Paul has written an excellent article on this event in The Canadian Driver and I need say no more.

The other is the British Invasion in Stowe, Vermont., which, as it has been so often in the past, was a great show. Beautiful weather, wonderful hosts and a very welcoming town of Stowe whose inhabitants closed the main street on Friday night for a Beatle Tribute Band. All very enjoyable! And to those of you who have not attended in the past, I urge you to go next summer.

Just a last note. I have been contacted by the Ottawa Triumph Club and the Ottawa Jaguar Club. Their members would like to see more inter-club events and your OMGC executives will try to work with them over the next few months to see what we can do (and when).

Terry Haines.



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE THIS FOR EXPLORING

SOME PICTURES OF, AND THOUGHTS ABOUT, ABINGDON

[pictures graciously provided by club member Derek Ross from his two visits to the site, first in 1997 and again in 1999]



This is the Administration Office of the MG Factory... not the actual building where the vehicles were built, but the building where all the records for the manufacturing and sale of the vehicles were kept.

[July 1997]

The sign on the wall reads:

“This building was the M.G Car Company’s Administration Block. The bay window on the first floor indicates the location of the office occupied initially by Cecil Kimber and subsequently by John Thornley”

[July 1997]



Here are a couple of pictures of the actual “Works” buildings, where the assembly line was located and the inventory rooms were housed.

[July 1997]

This is a picture of Kimber House in Abingdon.

It is now MG Car Club Headquarters.

[July 1997]



Now advance a couple of years from 1997 to 1999



The town of Abingdon is still around. And the vehicles on the roads indicate a trend towards more modern cars.

The Administration Building is still standing. Just a couple of years older.

The sign on the wall still reads as it did in 1997. With the addition of a plaque for “Larkhill House”, being the name given to the building during the times of Cecil Kimber



But the factory, or the “Works”, as it was known... is gone!



While I was in the very midst of putting this edition together, something told me to save this corner of the newsletter for a picture. Then, that very afternoon in early October, I got an e-mail from club member Norm Mouldey with an attached picture of Jordan Jones, standing beside his GT, down in Stowe at The British Invasion. Spot of good luck, eh! —————>



Some Words & Pictures From The Boot'n'Bonnet All British Car Club - All British Car Day August 17th in the Kingston City Park

This Year's Featured Vehicle:



A Great Collage Of Vehicles Attending The Show
submitted by Mike Daniels

Far be it from me to blow my own horn, but...TOOT, TOOT!

The Boot'n Bonnet Club All British Car Day was a great show again this year. The weather was gorgeous (except for one quick but heavy shower on the drive home). The show was well attended with 120+ vehicles including a small but faithful contingent of OMGC'ers. A steady flow of visitors enjoyed the great weather, the lovely setting, and of course the display of many fine British automobiles. The highlight of the day was when 3rd place for Best-in-Show was awarded to car #63, a white 1956 MGA. Hey wait a minute, that's my car! I couldn't have been more surprised.

Andy Bounsall



Speaking of Etiquette

From the website of the Cap Cod British Car Club

(found and submitted by Dave Adams)

Once upon a time, when I was a young man, sports cars roamed the earth in their natural state, driven daily by people who thought of them as fun cars and real wheels. These were generally happy people - who wouldn't be happy on a nice day with the top down, open roads and the roar of the exhaust in one's ear? These people knew something others could only guess at, namely, that driving is fun and a good thing, and there is more to the journey than the destination. On a given day one would see not only MGs but also Sprites, Triumphs, Porsches, Alfas, cars by Jaguar, Morgan, Healey, Fiat, Datsun, and even the occasional Lotus, Elva, Cobra, and others - too many to remember.

The drivers of these cars knew they were involved in something very special, and they knew the other drivers of these cars also knew this. From these special feelings grew a brotherhood and, yes, even a sense of conspiracy, knowing we were different from the people in "sedans" (possibly leading directly to latter attempts of the 60s generation to form into communes, and the whole flower power generation etc.). This camaraderie was acknowledged by waving to one another - a practice which seems to have largely died out in the last 25 or 50 years.

In the ensuing years, the sports car "wave" has become under used, nay, unused and unappreciated. I have done some field research, and it seems no one will return a "wave" these days. I feel the "wave" should be reintroduced into the world. In the "Good Old Days," the "wave" was widely practiced, learned, and used by each new owner of a sports car. As with most things in the human world, as time went on the "wave" was refined and evolved into a highly ritualized salute between car owners. In its highest evolution, there were even articles written about appropriate waving between owners of differing makes of automobiles (quite likely in Road & Track magazine, among others). Since we are a club of sports car owners and users, it is up to us and others like us to step up and revive this grand tradition. So I propose to discuss the "wave," its use, and application.

First..., when driving a sports car, it is appropriate to "wave" at any oncoming sports car, or one that is stopped next to you at a stop sign or light. If the other driver can see you, give him or her a "wave". A sports car, for purposes of identification, is any car with its top down and less than 4 doors, or seats, or any other car you recognize as a sports car. All MGs are sports cars, all Ferraris, Maseratis, and Porsches are sports cars, not all Jags are sports cars. Corvettes are your call (the editors refused to add a note here). No Buick, Cadillac, DeSoto, or Lincoln is a sports car. Thunderbirds with 2 seats didn't use to be sports cars, but we need all of the help we can get these days. Vipers are definitely sports cars.

Second..., the "wave" is hierarchical - the obligation to initiate the "wave" starts with the lesser car and is returned by the greater car. It is understood that some cars are greater (more desirable) than others. Thus Sprites are to initiate the "wave" to MGs, MGs to Healeys, Healeys to Jags, Jags to Ferraris - you get the idea. Everyone initiates the "Wave" to Ferraris, Cobras, and Lotuses. Generally speaking, if you would trade cars with the other guy, then you should initiate the "wave." Younger cars initiate the "wave" to older cars, if you can tell the difference in ages. Everyone should initiate the "wave" to MGTCs; MGBs initiate to MGAs, etc.

Third..., the "wave" itself. Recognizing the hierarchy above, the "wave" between equals is a hand raised from the steering wheel (you are driving with both hands on the wheel?) with the palm facing the oncoming car and all fingers pressed together and extended fully (as opposed to the way some folks do it on the freeway). The hand only needs to be raised a few inches from the wheel. In the event one needs to extend the "wave" to someone up or down the social scale, the "wave" is more or less energetic or exaggerated. Thus, if a Sprite encounters a Cobra, the Sprite driver is expected to initiate the "wave" and may stand up on the driver's seat and wave both hands over his head energetically. The Cobra driver may properly raise a single index finger to acknowledge the Sprite. Although this may be an exaggeration, that's the idea. Thus, when driving your MG, and encountering another MG, "wave"-to it as equals; when encountering an Austin Healey "wave" with the hand a little higher and with a little more enthusias; raise your hand higher still and "wave" it side to side when you see an XKE, and so forth.

Fourth..., all sports cars are to be waved at. Even those from "other countries," including the German ones. Yes, the Japanese cars should be waved at.

Fifth..., since the habit has withered away and it is necessary to reintroduce it to the world at large, I suggest we temporarily rat-hole all of the distinctions as to what to do to what car and "wave" at all sports cars. At some time in the distant future the ritualization of hierarchical status will undoubtedly creep back into the practice. But for now, take the initiative and "wave" to everything with the top down. Democratize the process and expose someone to another of the joys of sports car ownership. Remember that not everyone has had the blessings that we have and forgive them if they don't know the rules. People driving Miatas, Z-mobiles, and Porsches haven't been properly introduced to what sports cars are all about; they thought they were buying a car, or transportation, or even status (may God help them!) when they should have been buying into a lifestyle.

A few picture selections from the J. Dugdale Paintings Collection for the Golden Jubilee of the UK MG Car Club



A Pictorial Story Of SN3216

A picture of SN3216 at some time before it underwent the operation

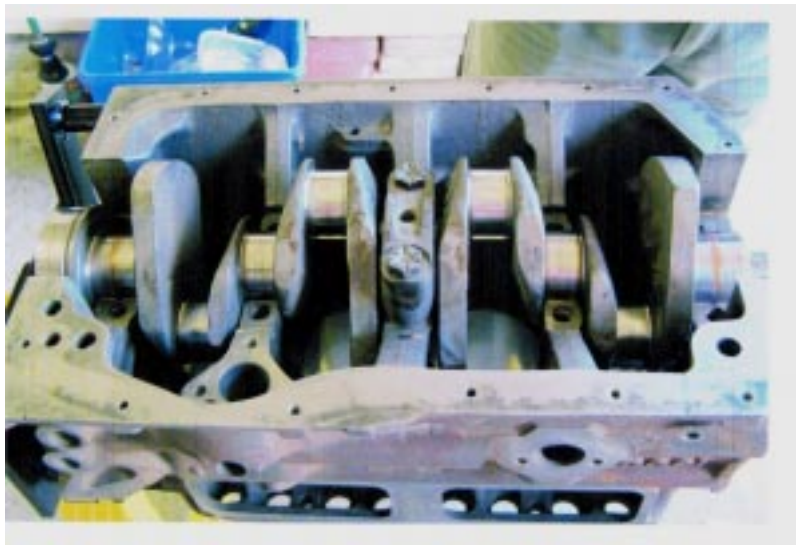
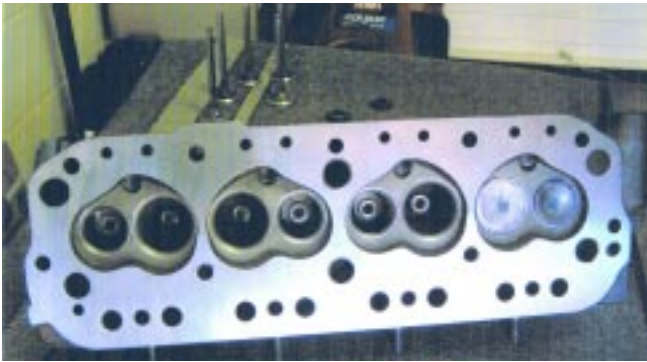


A picture of some of the people responsible for the operation.

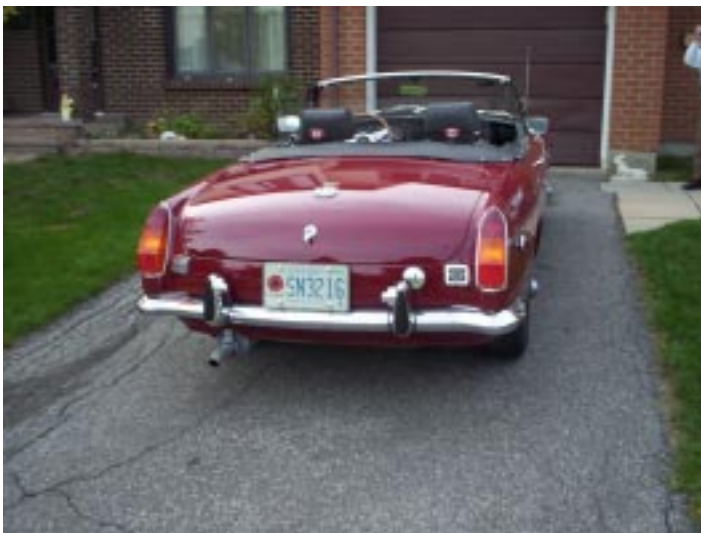
A picture of SN3216 after the operation.



Perhaps you can't see a real difference, looking at these pictures. It's what's inside that counts. Well, take a look at the next few pictures to get the "inside" story.







Trish & Dave Go To Cape Cod - British Legends Weekend, with the Cape Cod* British Car Club

*

The **codpiece** emerged (no pun intended!) in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries from the dilemma of how to cover a man's genitals when the jackets or doublets became shorter. The height of its popularity was during the early sixteenth century when it became an elaborate yet functional part of men's costume.



Then



Now

THE GERM OF AN IDEA...

Not long after acquiring her second MGB – one that functioned, unlike the GT that has been parked in the workshop for a year or so, waiting for me to find time to revitalize it – Trish was browsing British Car stuff, and came across:

“The British Legends Weekend”

organized and hosted by the Cape Cod British Car Club, commencing 26 September.

Scheduling conflicts prevented us from joining the Ottawa MG club's party going to Stowe, and we knew that Cape Cod was that much further, with the weather at this time of year having at least had a chance of being settled, with fall colours in abundance – “Why not?” we said. We had travelled the area previously, so had some idea of where we were going.

...we had reckoned without the advent of two tropical storms, heading from the opposite direction....

PREPPING THE CAR (now christened “Polly” – don't blame me...)

As a recent addition to the family it was necessary to get to know “Polly” and her idiosyncrasies. I started off by asking Ottawa MG club member Ivan Wood if he thought Polly would get us there and back. “I would think so”, said Ivan. (I've often found that this kind of in-depth dialogue with a subject-matter expert can build confidence and remove any doubts from one's mind). Right then - armed with this vote of confidence, it was up and away!

New seatbelts, a homemade windblocker (not quite the same as yours Dalton, but you started the process), a radio, courtesy of the family, luggage rack, various bits of bling, grease kingpins etc, replace thermostat, oil change, bolt the exhaust back on again, then – bolt the exhaust back on again – a tune up, a clean and polish courtesy of son Jonathan and we were pretty much ready to go -

or not...

Walking around the car in the week prior to our departure, I noticed a wet spot on the garage floor adjacent to a rear wheel. Yup, seals on the wheel cylinder had gone. Managed to locate some in Toronto, which arrived by express post two days before we left. By that time, I had removed equivalent parts from the GT, because on dismantling Polly's parts, it was apparent that the shoes were soaked with brake fluid, so I swapped out the dry shoes, drum, and cylinder (I know you're not supposed to do that, but time was disappearing fast). At least I was also able to replace the seals. Polly was ready to rally!

THE TRIP DOWN...

We had given ourselves 3 days to get there, so that we could enjoy the drive, and have time to deal with any eventualities. Actually, nothing serious occurred, except that we had developed a disconcerting clunk by the time we arrived. More on this later.

Our plan had been to stay off the busy roads. We crossed at Ogdensburg, through Tupper Lake to Blue Mountain Lake. Fabulous day, fabulous drive. At Blue Mountain Lake we turned onto #28, and headed to Bennington. Something strange happened here, as we finished up in Utica, a decrepit mill town about 100 miles west from where we expected to be.

Who knew that #28 South also goes East and West? (note – one of those satellite direction thingies is on the Christmas list...)

We did eventually find a motel in an area where there seemed to be a reasonable chance that in the morning we would find Polly complete with wheels, and not on a pile of bricks, and so it proved.

The following day we put ourselves back on track (75-80mph on the highway, breaking our own rules, as well as the speed limit)

Our route took in North Adams, a small town that has the weirdest art gallery I've ever been in. North Adams might best be described as a Democrat town, not quite communist, definitely socialist, and is the sort of place where faded hippies like to hang out. Trish had a hankering to visit an art gallery there – Mass Moca – and the gallery amplifies my view of the place. I shall not say any more about it, you should go see for yourselves (unless you are a manic depressive or similar...)

From there we drove determinedly onward towards the looming grey cloud, and spent the night in a motel at South Deerfield, putting the hood up, which was a good thing as it rained seriously all night and all the following day, and most of the day after that, and most of the day after (you get the picture...)

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN WE GOT THERE...

Friday

Arriving on the Cape, we proceeded to get short tempered with each other, which comes as a result of dense rain, dense traffic, dense fogging up of the windshield, too many look-alike bridges and too many confusing traffic signs, lots of rotaries (roundabouts to the English, traffic circles to Canadians).

I think the locals must have been expecting an invasion, and had deliberately reversed all the road signs.

We arrived at our destination at around 4.30, and booked in. Couple of guys chatting on the veranda nonchalantly informed us that everything was cancelled because of Hurricane Ike. That wouldn't actually have surprised us, but we went off to the meet and greet anyway.

Contrary to what the guys upstairs told us, everything was in full swing, and the organizing committee were busy arranging alternative activities.

A planned boat cruise had been cancelled by the operator. I suspect there was so much water he wouldn't have known which way up to float.

The main attraction, an all Brit car show on Sunday, was cancelled by the Authorities, no doubt because they couldn't find the site, it being under water.

Oh well, we partied away anyway, and I was able to explain to some of the membership the background behind the beer "Old Speckled Hen"



Old Speckled Hen fuel additive



1927 MG 'Old Speckled Hen'

of which there was a serious amount available for free, the brewer being one of the event's sponsors. I knew of the MG connection, but what I didn't know, and what a Codder told me, was that the "Speckled Hen" reference arose as a result of the workshop run-around getting itself sprayed with whatever colour was on hand as it passed by the paint shop.

Saturday

It was raining of course, but a tour of the back lanes seemed in order, with a visit to “Toad Hall”, a hotel with a sort of motor museum attached. “Sort of” because there were about 50 cars, from ancient to modern, mostly (all) British, and all painted red.



The hotel owner also liked cats – he had about 200 – and Old Malts – he had a huge room full.

Unfortunately, the cats appeared to use the room where the malts were stored as a toilet, and the stink was atrocious, so his collection is likely safe.

We left there, and headed off to an interesting little town with a harbour, beach and a Pizzeria that had been booked for lunch. Jugs of draft Bass were consumed as well as Pizza. Lo and behold, it stopped raining for a short time, and Trish, myself and a couple of others were able to take a walk on the beach.



We then made our way back to the hotel – getting lost on the way of course – and believe it or not, on road #28! (It's a plot folks – all roads in America are #28...)

Evening festivities were much the same as the night before, except Trish and I got T-shirts for being there, which was splendid. Everybody else had to wait. I helped out with the Speckled Hen of course.

Sunday

Started with a casual breakfast courtesy of Paul's wife. This would have of course been the day of the show. Anyway, at this point it had stopped raining, and the plan was to go visit Heritage Museums & Gardens in Sandwich. First stop was at a car park just off the beach at Falmouth.

I couldn't see the sea, but I knew it was there. Over the dunes, and there it was. Needless to say, in true British style, I rolled up my trousers, and strode in – and strode quickly out again, as it was bloody cold...

On to the museum and Gardens. Excellent collection of Vehicles, and you'll have to take yourselves there if you want to know more. The gardens are full of mature Rhododendrons, so Trish and I would like to go back in June to see them in all their glory. There was also a full size carousel, and needless to say we had to have a ride on that, me once, Trish twice.



NOW HERE'S A STRANGE THING...

In the picture gallery nearby, there were a number of pictures of little girls all dressed in their crinolines etc. On further inspection, it turns out that some of the little girls are little boys, dressed in girl's clothes. Apparently, this was the custom of the time. Really? Who knew? All of the guys we met seemed quite normal, in spite of having a history of cross-dressing. We shall delve further into this when we go next year.

That was pretty much the end of things – some sad goodbyes, exchange of email addresses, and promises to return next year, which we will. It may be by horse and cart though, the way things are shaping up in the world today.

Supper at the British Beer Co. and I thought I had entered beer heaven, as the placemats advertised Fullers ESB !! My favourite!!



GOT THAT WRONG, THEN...

Sat back, relaxed, and asked for a pint. “We don't carry that anymore” said a surly and disinterested waitress, who wasn't about enter into discussions about advertising an unavailable product. She gets the award for being the worst waitress we encountered on the trip. The award for the best goes to a guy at an Italian restaurant in Utica, who took the time to sit down and go over the route with us when we were lost.

Monday

Monday morning, we had breakfast as recommended at Betsy's Diner, and headed for Bennington, which we had meant to hit on the way down. A pretty town, it's the base of Hemmings. We arrived too late in the day to visit their museum, and thought we would miss the opportunity as we wanted to leave early the following day and the museum didn't open until 10.00 a.m. A very pleasant lady at the front desk offered to have someone show us round sometime after 8.00, and another couple from Mississippi (or was it Missouri?) with the same time constraint joined us. Aren't people nice



HOMEWARD BOUND, AND THE AFTERMATH...

Weather was quite nice for the trip home over the Green Mountains, but the clunking from underneath got louder, and it was getting difficult to find gears. It's an MG though, ok, so Polly wasn't going to let us down right? And she didn't.

OH DEAR...

A couple of days after arriving home, Polly was up on the hoist, so that I could get her ready for the Fall Colour Run. That's when I discovered the cause of the knocking.. There were two:

The speedo drive cable had detached from the gearbox and was hitting the sub-frame, and,
The rear engine support cross member was fractured more than 80% across.

– see picture of old and new.



It was so near done that the engine and transmission were 10 – 15% off centre. How it survived the journey I don't know. Fortunately, I was able to remove the one from the GT I mentioned earlier, which was so covered in gunk, grit and grease that once cleaned it looked like new. It wasn't the easiest job in the world, but by the day of the Colour Run, we were back on the road – and gear changes have never been so good!

Remember, Cape Codders, how we crawled under the car to find the clunk, and it was generally agreed that the cause was the steering box end of one of the tie rods? Well you weren't wrong, and I still have that to fix.

CONCLUSION...

Well you guys and gals in Cape Cod, Thanks for everything. We had a blast. In fact if anyone is sitting in a property about to be foreclosed, maybe we can do a deal. A 12-hour drive isn't that far.

..and to members of the Ottawa MG Club – what about Stowe, and then on to Cape Cod next year?



OMGC - OVJ OTTAWA VALLEY JOG - August 9 & 10, 2008

The Saturday morning run along some wonderful driving roads with a lunch stop along the way made us forget all about the threatening skies overhead. And I won't even mention the route instruction mix-up that left some of us in the middle of nowhere... well, not exactly nowhere... we were just outside of Dacre. In fact, you know it was a bit of a blessing, as once we figured out where we were, we arrived at the Best Western in Renfrew before the main bunch of participants. Nothing wrong about being first at the bar... you get the best service! Just made it in time too as the rain did come down pretty solid for quite a while. Both Norm Peacey and Len Fortin had some MGB engine issues to deal with. Mine turned out to be stuck choke and a clogged #2 spark plug. Norm's was some sort of bad electrical connection. Ah, always room for a technical session. Thanks to Norm for the organization of this OVJ. Looking forward to the 2009 OVJ in Pembroke in mid-August.

FALL COLOUR RUN 2008

At
the
starting
spot...

a
panorama
of
MGs
at
the
Four
Corners
in
Manotick



Somewhere
along
the
way...

a
close
up
and
personal
look
from
Don
Buchan's
MGTD

The All British Car Day

July 12, 2008

A news driving story was published in The Ottawa Citizen on Friday, June 20, 2008. Here is a small excerpt:

Weather will rule at Britannia, for a wave of English cars
You don't need an upper-class motor car to attend Ottawa's All British Car Day
The Ottawa Citizen
Published: Friday, June 20, 2008

If you wake up on July 12 and it looks like rain, don't blame Ottawa's annual All British Car Day (ABCD). "It's not our fault," says Don LeBlanc, organizer and president of the Ottawa Valley Triumph Club. "Last year's torrential afternoon downpour was completely coincidental." And the previous year's? "Another coincidence," he says with Churchillian certainty. "Nothing to do with us!"

Well, things went along just fine, they did...

the cars, the people, the food, the sponsors, the prizes and the weather. Look here...



Easy Registration Process



Lots Of Great Parking Spots For Your Car

Fun Demonstrations To Watch





Gangs Of Room For All British Makes And Models Of Vehicles



Sponsors and Prizes and Draws and Vendors



This year's
effort was a
success.

More than 160
cars.

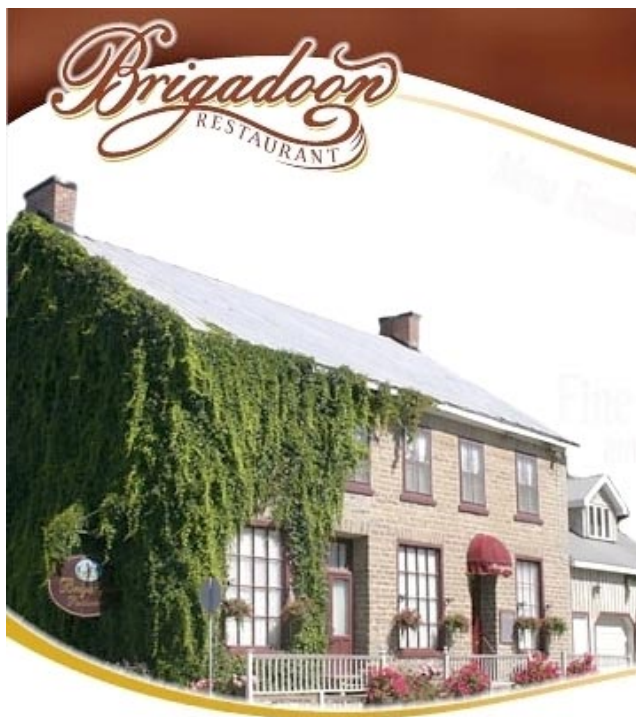
Thanks to all the
sponsors and
volunteers.



A Show Field Where You Could Wander To Your Heart's Content

And It Didn't Rain!

Thanks To Several Folks Who Helped Through The Summer With Events



Thanks to Cheryl and the staff of The Brigadoon for a great July meeting. The “Closest Answer Wins A prize” contest was won by Don Buchan.

“Closest Answer Wins A Prize”

Question: From August ‘71 to October ‘80 there were 186,542 North American spec MGBs sold in Canada, the USA and Japan. How many of this total were equipped with overdrive?

Answer: about 17% (32,604) [Don guessed 31,842]



Thanks to Tony & Bev Edge for hosting The Corn Roast Run in August. While the cars were on display on the side of the road outside their home, we all enjoyed lots of salads and buns and drinks and, of course, corn in the yard.

Thanks to Ivan & Katie Wood for hosting the OMGC Summer Picnic in early July [Lunch After The Locks] in their back yard. It was a wonderful spot to gather together and enjoy each others company after a run about the Rideau River area.

KINGSTON
OTTAWA
MILITARY
TRADE
BOATING
TOURIST
7
1826
1832
47
24
200
LIEUTENANT
SMITHS FALLS
UNESCO
NORTH AMERICA

Here is the word puzzle to complete by visiting one or more of the Rideau Canal Locks.

The Rideau Canal is an amazing waterway connecting several lakes and rivers from _____ to _____. The Rideau Canal and Locks have a _____ history and did become an important _____ route, but today they are a wonderful source of _____ pleasure and _____ attractions. The Rideau Canal system was built over a span of about _____ years, from _____ to _____; has _____ locks and _____ lock- stations and covers more than _____ kilometers. Construction took place under the very watchful eyes of _____ Colonel John By. The Rideau Canal Museum is located in _____. The Rideau Canal is a _____ World Heritage Site and is the oldest continuously operating waterway in _____.

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