



The Dashpot

Winter 2011



OTTAWA MG CLUB

The Dashpot is the official publication of the Ottawa MG Club.
Submissions for consideration should be sent to: newsletter@omgc.info

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



We want your MGA...
to be registered with NAMGAR!

Yearly membership is \$37.50 North America or \$52.50 International.
The application form is available on-line at www.namgar.com or
from: NAMGAR Registrar, 7522 SE 152nd Ave., Portland, OR
97236-4861

Members receive *MGA* Magazine, the bimonthly
magazine devoted exclusively to the enjoyment,
care, and preservation of the MGA, Magnette and
Variants; and an annual Get-Together in various
locations in U.S.A. and Canada.

2010-11

I moved this small “We want your MGA” ad from it’s regular newsletter place on page 3 to this spot on page 2 so I could fit in some important information about a new book called “**Triumph & Tragedy**” on page 3 (go ahead.... take a quick look). Of course it’s not news to us MGers that when you drive a Triumph.... it often is, so to speak, a tragedy. Mind you, as a club, I think we’ve really kept up with the best of them in our Roadside Restoration situations - or the worst of them, depending on your point of view. Safety Fast!

Cecil Kimber died on 4th February, 1945 in a stalled overloaded train which slipped backwards out of the King's Cross tunnel. It was hit by a following express and he was one of two passengers killed instantly. A grievous loss to his family and the wider MG Family.

President's Message

2010 turned out to be a very busy year for the OMGC since it was our 20th Anniversary year, and the 80th of the first MG Car Club in the UK. Adding to our normal full list of Club events, were the nine-day *Gaps and Notches* tour of New England, the *North American MGB Register* convention held this time in Belleville, and our contribution to the international *MG80* celebrations, which included a group of OMGers spending a grand weekend touring Prince Edward County, and a special Ottawa event ending at the British High Commissioner's Residence for afternoon tea.

As we look out at the snow, we can start to think about the forthcoming 2011 driving season, and start planning our calendar of events, which is currently being worked on. For me, the reason why the Ottawa MG Club is the most successful British car club in the region, is because of the active involvement by a large percentage of the membership, who help organise our diverse list of events. Please don't feel shy if you have any good ideas for an event; just contact myself or any member of the Executive, who will help you get it on the road.

Looking forward to seeing you and your MG as soon as the snow melts.

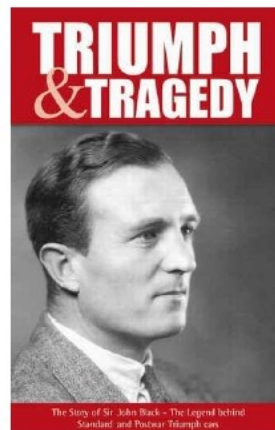


Triumph & Tragedy

Many British car enthusiasts will recognize the name of Sir John Black, former CEO of The Standard Motor Company in Coventry and the man who rescued the Triumph name from oblivion in 1945. Sir John's younger son, Nicholas Black, has written a fascinating book about his father. The book was launched late last year at the British Classic Car Show in England and is being marketed by the Standard Motor Club in the UK and it is with the SMC that you will have to place your order. The book retails for GBP 15.00 with P&P an extra GBP5.00 on top for North America. Might be a teeny bit more for Oz and NZ. Roughly this total of GBP20.00 translates into around Cdn\$32.00 on current exchange rates [11-01-23].

To order your copy, go to <http://www.standardmotorclub.org.uk/johnblack/index.htm>

Source: British Saloon Car Club - The Oily Rag-2011 January



Forest Park Optimist Club

**presents
The 6th Annual
Zone 10**

Trivia Night from the Edge of the Forest

**7:00 pm April 26th, 2011
Knight's of Columbus Hall
5 Forget St. Embrun
(Downstairs)
All proceeds to the
Optimist
Childhood Cancer Program**

**Registration – \$60 per team
Or \$10 per person (singles welcome)
Teams consist of 6 people
Maximum registration 20 teams
Cash Bar – Munchies
Prizes – Door Prizes – 50/50**

**Come and test your knowledge of insignificant and obscure trivial facts
while enjoying the fun and fellowship of the Forest Park Optimist Club**

Info call ; Tony Edge @ 613-443-2232 / aedge77b@gmail.com

Discover Waupoos Weekend October 15 - 17, 2010

[I didn't know it at the time, but the distance from Kilmarnock to Waupoos is about 80 miles; as the crow flies that is - not as the MG drives. It's an interesting fact to add to the stories of the Discover Waupoos/MG80 Weekend 2010]

Many folks know that Prince Edward County is a sought after place for a vacation. Just the right mix of things to see and things to do. Just the right combination of roads to meander along and villages to visit. Club members Martin Handforth & Elizabeth Pulker felt it was just the right place for a Bed & Breakfast business so they opened Happiness Haven at 44 Captain's Drive in Waupoos just a couple of years ago. Their generosity was evident when they wanted to hold a *Discover Waupoos Weekend* event for Ottawa MG Club members. And after hearing such positive reports from the participants of that very first *Discover Waupoos Weekend* event in July 2009, I wanted to be among any group who might have an opportunity to enjoy a weekend in the area. And it came to pass that Deb & I were among the folks who were on the list for the 2nd *Discover Waupoos Weekend*, in mid-October 2010.

Martin & Elizabeth provided a tentative weekend itinerary for the group with a suggested arrival time in Waupoos of about 4 o'clock on the Friday afternoon. Deb and I invited the other participants to join us in Kilmarnock for a Tomato Soup & Grilled Cheese Sandwich lunch around 11am and then we would be on our way to Prince Edward County directly thereafter. However, Mother Nature wasn't in a good mood that day and demonstrated the worst of her wide variety of weather options with lots of clouds and lots of rain. But you know, we MG drivers can't be discouraged by some inclement weather and in fact among our convoy there were those who drove with the roof down, all the way from Kilmarnock to Waupoos. Bless their soaked souls!

We arrived as planned and were very warmly greeted by Martin & Elizabeth, and those that needed to, were given opportunity to wring out their driving clothing. Elizabeth led us all about the B&B's 2 buildings and helped us select our rooms. Each room had it's own individual charm and warmth. Stuart was awarded a very special "cupboard-like" bedroom.... kind of like the Harry Potter room-under-the-stairs.... well, this was the room-under-the-eaves. Perhaps small; but glorious!

For Friday's dinner, we had been previously encouraged to select whatever local restaurant met our fancy, just NOT the Duke Of Marysburg Bistro, as they were NOT open on the Friday night and our plan was to eat there, as a group, on Saturday night when they were open. So there were various places selected by various participants and we parted company and would gather later, back at the B&B, for a nightcap. However, Stuart had made no arrangements for dinner and gave the Duke Of Marysburg Bistro a try anyway - open or not. To his good fortune, although the owners were unable to offer much selection, they welcomed him in and served him a wonderful burger platter dinner that won great praises from Stuart. Marvelous!

The day's travel and the good meals at the various local restaurants didn't leave us with much energy for anything more than a quick nightcap. Then we bid each other goodnight.

Breakfast buffet on Saturday morning was a real treat. Delicious food. Great company. The weather had changed overnight from rain to sunshine and the day's events were calling us; but first, the dishes had to be done. What a team! Gatherers, stackers, washers, driers, put-away'ers, clean-up'ers - we all took on a task and shared the work. Like clockwork.

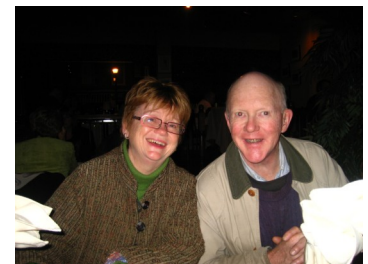
Then Elizabeth & Martin led us on a wonderful driving tour around the area. This area is just what MG's were made for. Roofs down; sunshine all about; Fall seasonal colours at every turn. Our visits to the cheese factory and the winery and the apple orchard couldn't have been better. Learning all about this.... sampling some of that..... buying a few of those.... and meandering along roads that I didn't want to end. Superb!

Next, Elizabeth brought us to a very special spot called "Little Bluff"; a high spot in this unspoiled area where you could see for miles about. Breath-taking!

Before dinner we had an opportunity to just lolly-gag about and explore the grounds. And talk about the day's events. And peek at Martin's special car projects. Saturday's dinner was at the Duke Of Marysburg Bistro, within walking distance of the B&B. Martin & Elizabeth highly recommended this spot and Stuart's review of the place (from his by chance visit the night before) got our appetites prepared and we were not disappointed. Wonderful!

The Sunday breakfast buffet was another real treat. We enthusiastically joined in to share the fine food and then, just as we had done the morning before, we enthusiastically gathered; stacked; washed; dried; put away and cleaned up.

And just before it was time for us to head back home, it was time to give a very warm thank you and a hug to Martin & Elizabeth for their generosity. Thanks for helping us **Discover Waupoos**. Thanks for letting us pitch in. Thanks for a really great weekend event.





A Little History

Back in the 1980s, we began receiving complaints about wire wheels that were “egg shaped” or so far out of round they could not be balanced. We wound up checking every wire wheel upon receipt using a jig mounted wire wheel hub and a pair of dial indicators. After 6 months, we knew beyond the shadow of a doubt that 99.99% of the wheels were within tolerances. Why then, were we getting so many complaints? It turned out to be the equipment used to balance the wheels. As the new computer controlled balancing machines came into use, our problems increased because the new equipment (and the new technicians) did not understand how the wire wheels had to be mounted in order to be balanced. We prepared these instructions and since then, they have been included with all our wire wheels. Complaints about wire wheels essentially stopped in a matter of weeks. Now, when we get a complaint about wire wheels, it almost invariably comes down to a shop that has ignored our instructions because they have total faith in their “universal” state-of-the-art equipment.

Before you take your wheels to be balanced there are a couple of things that need to be done:

1. Check the splines

Jack up the car. Support it on jack stands. Remove one wheel at a time, and thoroughly degrease and clean the splines on the wire wheel hub. Inspect the splines carefully.

Fig 1 shows new splines.

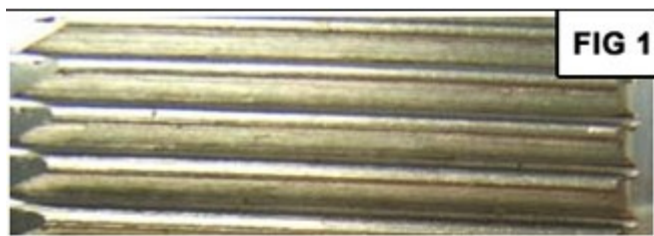


Fig 2 gives you the traditional guide to worn splines. If the splines are worn, replace the hubs. Putting new wire wheels on hubs with worn or damaged splines will quickly damage the splines in the wheels.

2. Check the wheels

If the splines are OK, pick a hub to use to check the new wire wheels. Thoroughly clean off the beveled surface on the hub where the wire wheel makes contact (3a). Use a tooth brush and solvent first, then a wire brush if necessary and take your time. Clean and degrease the wheel nut, particularly the bevel (which contacts the wheel) and the threads. Once the hub and wheel nut are clean and dry, mount a new wheel, and tighten the knockoff normally.

Attach a sharpened pencil to something high enough to bring the pointer up level with the rim of the wheel. I tape a pencil to a jack stand, but a stack of wood will work fine. The point of the pencil should almost touch the wheel at the point shown (4a). Do not use the rim bead (4B) as a reference. Rotate the wheel, looking for the section of the wheel that comes closest to the point of the pencil. Move the pencil in until it just touches the rim. Now rotate the wheel until there is a gap between the pencil and the rim. Measure it and record the number. Repeat this with all of the new rims. Triumph specifications call for a maximum “wobble” of 0.094” (~ 3/32”). MG was more particular, calling for 0.055”.

If your wheels check out OK, they can be balanced.

Please check the wheels before you have them mounted. The manufacturer will not accept any warranty returns if the wheels have been mounted, and regrettably, that means that Moss Motors cannot accept them either.



Balancing Center Lock Wire Wheels

The best way to balance wheels is on the car. You balance all the rotating mass. It always produces the best results. Many shops no longer have the proper equipment. Static balancing (bubble balancing) is simple and effective. Most shops will use the computer balancing machine because it's quick and precise. The illustration (Fig 5) shows the right way and one of the many wrong ways to mount a center lock wire wheel on a balancing machine.

Right

The splined hub or center section of a wire wheel (1a) is mounted on a computerized wheel balancing machine, which consists of the base plate (1b), the sprung cone (1c), and the balancer lock nut (1d).

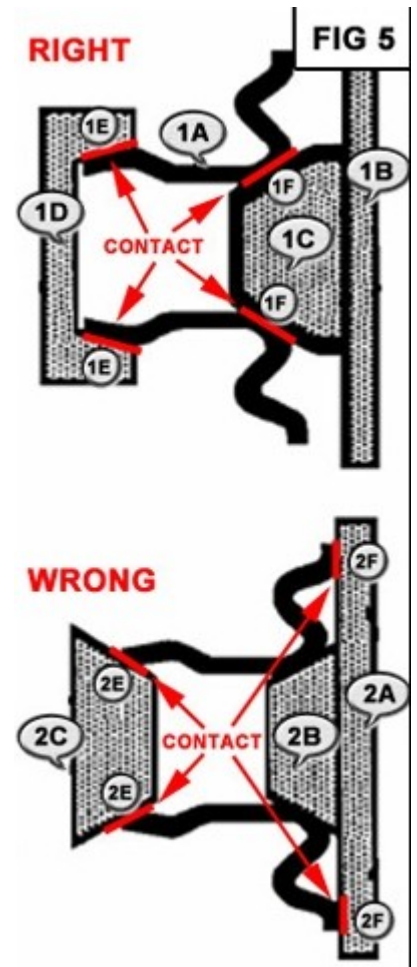
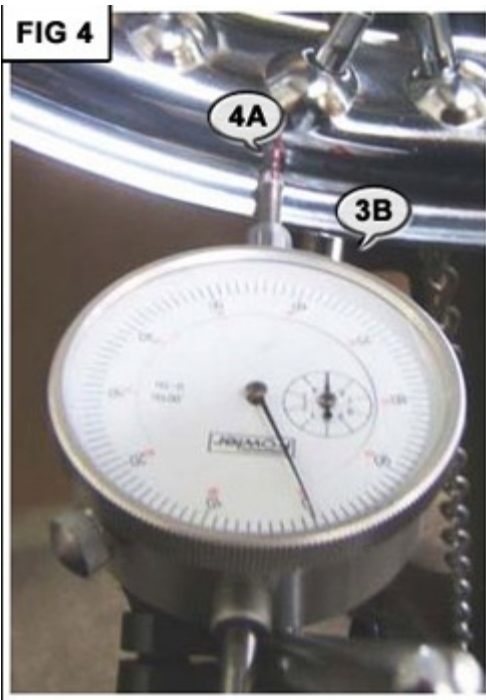
There are only two machined contact surfaces on the hub of the wheel. The outer surface (1e) is where the wheel nut makes contact. The inner surface (1f) is machined to match the sloped or angled surface machined into the wire wheel hub. If the sprung cone (1c) and lock nut (1d) touch the hub of the wire wheel anywhere else, the wheel will appear to be "out of round", and if they balance the wheel, it will take an unusual amount of wheel weights to "balance the wheel". Once on the car, the wheels will vibrate terribly because they have not really been balanced.

Wrong

Wire wheels are frequently mounted on computerized balancing equipment using two "universal cones". This causes several problems. If the sprung cone (2b) is too small, the outer edge of the wire wheel hub will contact the base plate at (2f). This area of the wire wheel hub is not a machined surface and it will cause the wheel to wobble on the machine, making it look like a defective wheel. If the outer cone (2c) goes inside the lip of the hub of the wire wheel, it is touching on two surfaces (2e) that are uneven, and this will also cause the wheel to wobble. There are a number of other problems which vary from machine to machine, but these are the main problems.

How Do I Get This Done Right

Remember that they are your wheels and your car. Have them balanced on the car if possible. If that cannot be done, ask the members of your club who balances British wire wheels in town. Call the shops yourself- ask them if they have balanced center lock wire wheels. You want to talk to the technician that did it. If they tell you they wobbled a lot and took lots of weight, find another shop. If they say they have done it and they have the proper adapters, check it out. If they have the pieces to mount the wheel correctly (as shown above) see what happens with one wheel. If you checked the wheels before you had them balanced, you know that the technician telling you the wheels are out of round is mistaken, and you can share this document with them and see if they have the proper equipment. If they don't, take your wheels to another shop or have the wheels balanced statically (bubble balanced). Remember to grease the bevels, splines, and threads on the hubs with white lithium grease before you fit the wheels.



An OMGC Variant Goes To GT-35



So, Andy says one day in the spring of 2010, a few of us are planning to go to GT-35 this year, would you be interested in joining us? There is a pause. What the heck is a GT-35? Andy explains that it is the annual Get Together of the North American MGA register. This year happens to be Get Together #35 and it will be staged at the LakeLand Resort in Delavan, Wisconsin at the end of July 2010. Andy goes on; they are featuring the Magnette this year. This comment generates a long pause. Mental gears are turning. Dave and the Magnette, in their time together, have never been to an event where the Magnette was featured.

In fact they have never been to an event where there was more than one other Magnette. This raises interesting possibilities. An opportunity perhaps to meet with a few of the other rare souls who own Magnettes, compare notes and exchange technical tidbits. In short an opportunity to do what MGB, MGA and T type owners take for granted and do on a regular basis, share war stories about their performant vintage British vehicle with kindred spirits.

So the question is posed. How many Magnettes are they expecting? I don't know says Andy, maybe half a dozen. Wow 6 other kindred spirits. Definitely worth considering. Then Andy slides in the clincher. NAMGAR is raising membership fees at the end of April 2010. So Dave joins NAMGAR, signs up for GT-35 and then attempts to figure out where Wisconsin is. It is one of those mid-western states isn't it.

Scene 2: It's morning and a lone white MGA, parked on a windy hillside just outside of Kitchener, is approached by a black Magnette which has just exited Hwy 401. The 2 drivers exchange the secret signal confirming that they are both members of OMGC, synchronize their GPSs and "frappe la route" 401 westbound to Sarnia. Both the MGA and the Magnette are equipped with MGB 1800cc engines and 5 speed gearboxes so the miles roll by smoothly.



It turns out that Wisconsin is on the western side of Lake Michigan. Getting to Delavan involved 2 choices: going south around Lake Michigan thru Chicago or taking a ferry across Lake Michigan. Who wants to drive thru Chicago in an old car? The dynamic duo elected to take the Lake Express ferry from Muskegon across the lake to Milwaukee. Dave and Andy were almost the first 2 vehicles on the ferry on Monday morning. Excitement started to mount when the almost last vehicle to board the ferry was a blue-silver ZB Magnette with Ontario License plates owned by John Park. Note: John's car later won the best in class Magnette award. The ferry ride was smooth and uneventful.

The first unscheduled tech session almost happened while departing from the ferry. The ferry operators for some strange reason decided to put the oldest car on the ferry, front row center. No-one was leaving before the Magnette. It has only been a few hours, the engine should still be warm, so a decision was made to start the Magnette without first engaging the choke. Surprisingly this turned out to be a bad idea. OK no problem. The choke was engaged and the starter button pressed firmly. Click. This was probably a bad time for the battery to fail. Take a deep breath, count to 10 and make a plea to the battery gods. Once again the start button was firmly pressed. Thank god the engine now turned but still refused to start until the gas pedal was pressed firmly down to the floor. With a roar the engine caught and the expensive Italian convertible directly behind the Magnette disappeared in a cloud of unburned hydro-carbons. Dave wiped beads of sweat from his brow and breathed a sigh of relief. With 3 cars there was now the beginning of a convoy. A quick survey confirmed that John's ZB still had the original power train and it was decided to let John set the pace. Note this method of establishing the pace car was maintained thru-out the journey, particularly on the return leg when Karl's MGA was always unanimously nominated to be the pace car. This in turn generated stimulating interchanges at dinner about the pros and cons of an enhanced drive train in a certain MGA.

Arrival at the LakeLand Resort was a heady experience for Dave. There was a Magnette parked outside the registration desk, another at the car wash and a few more in the parking lot near the main entrance. Suddenly there seemed to be Midgettes everywhere. Wow.

Monday night was the first-timers get-together. There were 72 first timers including 15 Magnette owners. 5 of the Midgettes were black ZAs, some almost completely original and others with interesting enhancements. Apparently Saab 900 leather seats fit nicely into Midgettes. Food for thought.



Andy and Dave now join up with the OMGC advance team. Karl and Pat who had started their adventure a week earlier, reached Delavan on Sunday, registered, managed to locate and make use of the Laundromat and lay in an adequate supply of cold beer. The whole Laundromat thing was a new issue for Dave. I mean why not just bring enough clothes for the whole trip and put them into the boot. This was the subject of an animated conversation with OMGC MGA owners. Dave came away from the conversation convinced that size does matter.

This was Dave's first MGA event and he was suitably impressed. The Lake Land Resort in Delavan is well equipped with pools, bars, its own golf course, riding stable, sailboats, seadoos and etc. There was even a small airport and a Wal-Mart across the street from the resort. What more could you ask for. GT-35 went for 4 nights and 5 days, finishing on Friday with early morning coffee and a Kringle which is local pastry that is sticky, chewy and delicious. The organizers did a tremendous job. Lots of activities and something for everyone. GTs almost seem to be set up on the vacation model. Some people seemed quite happy to spend the week in their bathing suits sitting by the pool bar, working on their sunburns. Others participated in all the rallies, visits and events.



Tuesday the OMGC team headed up to Milwaukee to visit the Harley Davidson museum. On the way back from the museum and about 30 meters before the exit to a south bound hwy out of Milwaukee, Pat's GPS decided to resynchronize and make a route amendment. This resulted in a couple of OMGC MGAs making dramatic left turns in 3 lanes of rush hour Milwaukee traffic to conform to the new route instructions.

Wednesday was the car show. The cars were arranged along the shore of Lake Delavan according to age, class etc with the Lake as a nice back-drop for the event.



The highlight of the car show was the 31 MG ZA & ZB Magnettes that made it onto the field. Talk about finding kindred spirits. A few Magnettes had to be pushed into position but that was OK. At the end of the show the Magnettes and most of their owners gathered for a photo op. John & Lou Shorten, guests from the UK, are seated between the front row cars.



Magnettes were driven from Florida, Texas, Ontario, most New England states and trailored from Vancouver and San Diego. Steve Hanegan assisted by John Shorten provided an interesting tech session on how to reassemble the Magnette door. Alan B volunteered his newly repainted and only partially assembled ZB as the guinea pig car. Apparently there are a number of ways to reassemble Magnette doors which Steve and John attempted to demonstrate using Alan's newly repainted doors. By the end of this tech session Alan was looking a little pale.

Wednesday concluded with a barbeque and a Human Funkhana on the lawn of the resort. The Green Team including OMGC members, Pat and Karl won the Human Funkhana.

Thursday started with the Magnette owner's breakfast where Lou and John Shorten were presented as guests of honour. Lou and John Shorten, invited to GT-35 as NAMGAR guests, own and operate a business in the UK which is solely focused on providing parts for and repairing Magnettes. John makes body panels to order and Lou is a wealth of knowledge about a variety of Magnette bits and how they fit together. John has completely restored about 40 Magnettes in the last 50 years. John later provided an interesting tech session on replacing rusty Magnette parts. According to John the cars were not really designed to last for more the 5 years and no thought at all was given to mitigating the impact of water ingress. In parallel with this John Twist & Jeff Schlemmer provided a rolling tech session which proved to be immensely popular. The team would spend about 20 minutes on each car and check timing, points, carburetors etc. This tech session ran for about 6 hours and only stopped when everyone finally had to break for the closing banquet.

OMGCers had an extensive debate about the preferred route back to Ottawa. Karl convinced other, somewhat skeptical OMGC members, that there was an acceptable way to navigate thru Chicago, in spite of the significant road ongoing road construction. With

Pat navigating, the convoy of OMGCers departed from the Lake Land Resort at dawn on Friday, sustained by coffee and delicious Kringle pastry from the GT-35 hospitality suite. The route thru Chicago was as promised uneventful, mainly because the convoy avoided main highways and did not go anywhere near downtown Chicago but instead circum-navigated the great metropolis. It was a busy day. The convoy left Wisconsin, traveled thru the states of Illinois and Indiana and finally ended up in Jackson, Michigan.



It was decided the next day to avoid the border crossings at Detroit and Sarnia and instead take the ferry which crossed the St Clair River at Marine City. This worked very well. The convoy arrived at Marine City and a short interval later was boarding the ferry. The crossing took about 5 minutes and cars were thru the Canadian customs on the other side in about 10 minutes. This was a big improvement from the 2 hour wait that Andy and Dave endured while waiting to cross at Sarnia.

The OMGC convoy reached Kitchener on Saturday night and at this point decided to split up, some returning directly to Ottawa and Dave and the Magnette going to visit Dave's relatives in south western Ontario. Instead of taking Highway 7 the Magnette and Dave made the final run to Ottawa using the northern route thru Orillia, Bancroft and Renfrew. This route recommended by Dave's Uncle, turned out to be great drive and all was well until just outside of Renfrew, when the Heavens opened. It rained so hard the alternator of the Magnette shorted for awhile. It was still raining when the Magnette drove into the construction on Highway 7 and later during the eastbound rush hour traffic on Highway 417. Dave used this opportunity to conduct a leak test on the Magnette. Actually he wasn't given any choice and the results were pretty much as expected. Welcome back to Ottawa.



EMC Thurs. Nov 25/10

EMC WestCarleton.ca

Breaking in new MGA at the local drag strip

EMC Lifestyle - Ted Lowrey reads this column in the Hamilton Spectator. He writes:

"Hi Bill: Do you remember when all new cars had specific break-in procedures? There were speed or rpm limits for the first thousand miles to prevent excessive wear. The first oil change took place at a thousand miles so that small metal particles from the engine break-in period would be caught up in the oil and removed.

"I took delivery of a new MGA on a Friday afternoon in mid-August of 1958. Knowing the car would eventually be raced, my mechanic gave me very specific break-in procedures. He was Craig Hill, one of the best Canadian racers ever. At that time he worked at Carter's British Cars on Concession Street in Hamilton. I was given very specific rpm limits

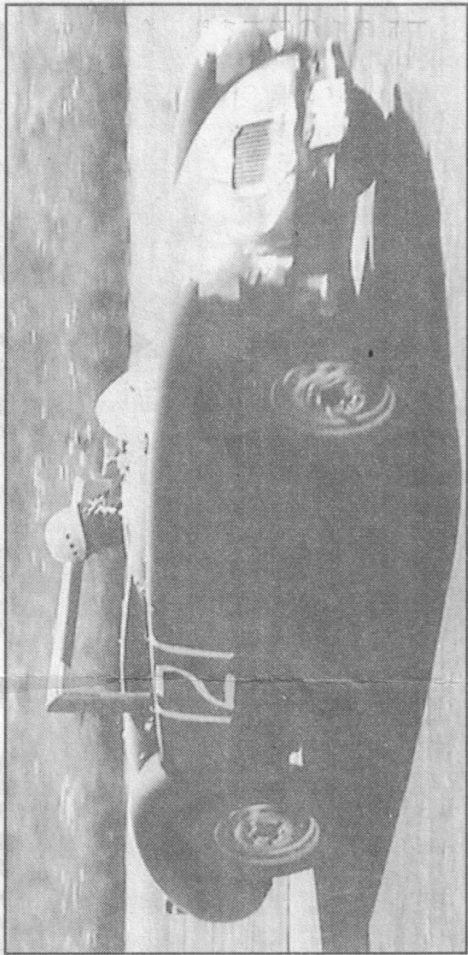
The Old Car Detective Bill Sherk



which increased at certain mileage levels - 100 miles, 200 miles, 500 miles, and so on. But (and this was important) I was to accelerate quickly up to the rpm limits.

"That Friday night, I took my new MGA to our local pub - the old Paddy Greens on Main Street West in Hamilton - and one by one took my friends for a ride around the block in my new car. I probably put on about 50 miles.

"What would I do on Saturday? I went out and watched the drag races at the Kohler drag strip (near Cayuga). At the entrance to the track, I got into the wrong line and found



Ted Lowrey racing his MGA at Harewood in 1960.

It read exactly 100 miles. I could raise my rpm limit by 500 (just like Craig said I should). It worked. The TC broke at the 1/8th mile point and I won the class. My MGA won its first trophy in its second day with me and with less than 101 miles on it!

"I still have that trophy. Every once in a while I take it out of storage and put it on the mantle in my den. My grandkids think it's cool."

As a thank you, if your story is published in this column, you will receive a copy

of Bill Sherk's book "60 Years Behind the Wheel: The Cars We Drove in Canada 1900-1960." To share your stories or photos, email billtsherk@sympatico.ca or write Bill Sherk, P.O. Box 255, 25 John St., Leamington, ON N8H 5E2.

This article was found and forwarded to me from club members Wayne & Nancy Kilrea

2010 British Invasion of Stowe

Paul Williams

The British Invasion of Stowe marked its 20th anniversary this year, and as usual, a small but enthusiastic contingent of Ottawa MG Club members made its way to this picturesque Vermont town to enjoy the festivities.

According to event coordinator Michael Gaetano, the mid-September British Invasion has grown from "an idea over a glass of ale...to the largest All British Motor Car Weekend in the United States."

Indeed, the 2010 British Classic Motor Car Show (which is the big show on Saturday) fielded 670 collector vehicles, with another 300 or so in the parking lot. Along with all the wonderful classics, there was a good selection of newer British cars -- Aston Martin, Land Rover, Jaguar, Morgan, Lotus, Mini and Bentley -- which bodes well for the future of our hobby.

Less common cars were also evident, including a Humber Super Snipe (what a name for a car!), a small fleet of Rover saloons, a Riley Elf, a Wolsely Hornet, a fabulous AC Ace, a nice selection of Daimler and Sunbeam models, and the occasional Berkely and Elva. There were a few Singers as well, but more about those later.

But really, when you're talking numbers, which marque do you think was the most popular at Stowe this year? If you guessed MG, you'd be right. There were 84 MGBs alone, and I reckon that if you add up all the A's, B's, C's, Magnettes, T's and Midgets, about a quarter of the show was built in Abingdon.

As a weekend car event, the British Invasion has a lot to recommend it. Stowe is not too far away (about 360 kilometres), and the drive there and back is scenic and enjoyable. Some of us took the "ferry route" across Lake Champlain, crossing the border at Cornwall, driving to Rouses Point, over Smuggler's Notch and down into the town below.

The "Notch," by the way, is quite an experience, and highly recommended if you get the urge to attend next year's event. Just make sure your clutch is good and your brakes are up to snuff.

Unlike the big Bronte Creek British Car Day that happens on the same weekend, the British Invasion runs Friday through Sunday. There are driving events scheduled Friday, but many people use that as their arrival day. By Friday night, downtown has closed to traffic, welcoming the British Invaders onto Main Street. There you'll find live music, stores open for business, restaurants, British-style pubs and an impromptu car show.

Saturday it's the British Classic -- the main event -- with several vendors of all-things-British, a Concours d'Elegance, local ale for purchase, and lots of regalia and souvenirs. This year, the first three-hundred registrants received a beautiful 20th Anniversary chrome bumper badge, while others, through no fault of their own and likely due to some administrative error, had to actually buy one. Some of us were a bit cheesed about that, receiving very little sympathy from a certain owner of an Old English White MGA and his buddy, a former club President.

But I digress. You may have heard that the show field has been boggy in the past, but this year it was just fine, and at Stowe they've got vehicle organization down to a science. Our own Jordan Jones won First Place in the MGB Conversions category, and the aforementioned former club President Terry Haines took home a Third Place plaque in the Gorgeous Early B category.

The day truly didn't last long enough, such was the fine array of vehicles, great weather and enthusiastic participants.

Saturday night there are numerous restaurants from which to choose (at least one has a brewery attached), with Ye Olde British Inne probably the most popular, as you might expect. A few of us Ottawa types returned to the Partridge Inn Seafood Restaurant on Mountain Road for the second year in succession. The food's great, the service

is fine, and the wine list is extensive (and expensive, if you misread the price. Another administrative error...).

I can't tell you much about Sunday, as I've always used that as my travel day home. But for those who want to stay, there is a range of activities on the show field, including an event where cars are grouped together by colour (the Competition of Colours), a photo opportunity for award winners, the Notch Run Driving Tour, and a Tailgate Picnic Competition (not sure what that is, but I believe it involves food and costumes).

Oh, and about those Singer guys. Ever seen the TV show, "Fringe?" They're kind of like that. You can't miss their white coveralls, rude noises and endless wisecracks, but these blokes are a friendly and funny bunch who once again won the Car Club Participation Award. With their wacky display and cartoon cars, you'll only find characters like this at a British car show.

The drive back was brilliant. True, it started out a little foggy, and the trip over the notch was...dampish, but later in the day it was top-down weather all the way home. What a great ride.

Next year's event is September 16-18. The website's already updated at www.britishinvasion.com



These pictures can also be seen on the OMGC web site in the Photos area.



It'll Only Take A **Couple Hours**

submitted by an "anonymous" contributor
(names withheld to protect the innocent)

Got a call last summer from a friend..., how long do you think it will take to put new carpets into the "B"? Oh maybe a **Couple Hours** says I.

OK; when can we do it? Well, let's pick an afternoon; the ladies can chat and we can get the job done and all go out for dinner when it is done. Great; set the date.

Day arrives; pouring rain; no problem the "B" is in a garage.

Removing the seats and old carpet took at least 3 hours... you can see where this is going.

Putting in the first carpet pieces; yes we followed the directions (sort of); took another **Couple Hours**.

Let's go for a late meal and finish up tomorrow; should not take more than a **Couple Hours**. Being infinitely wiser we decide on an early morning start. No consideration of dinner. The ladies tell us we are on our own.

Next day, bright, no rain, hurray, we can work outside. Get an early start; **Couple Hours** work should see us finished by noon. We take a lunch break about 1PM. The seats and top are still not reattached to the "B".

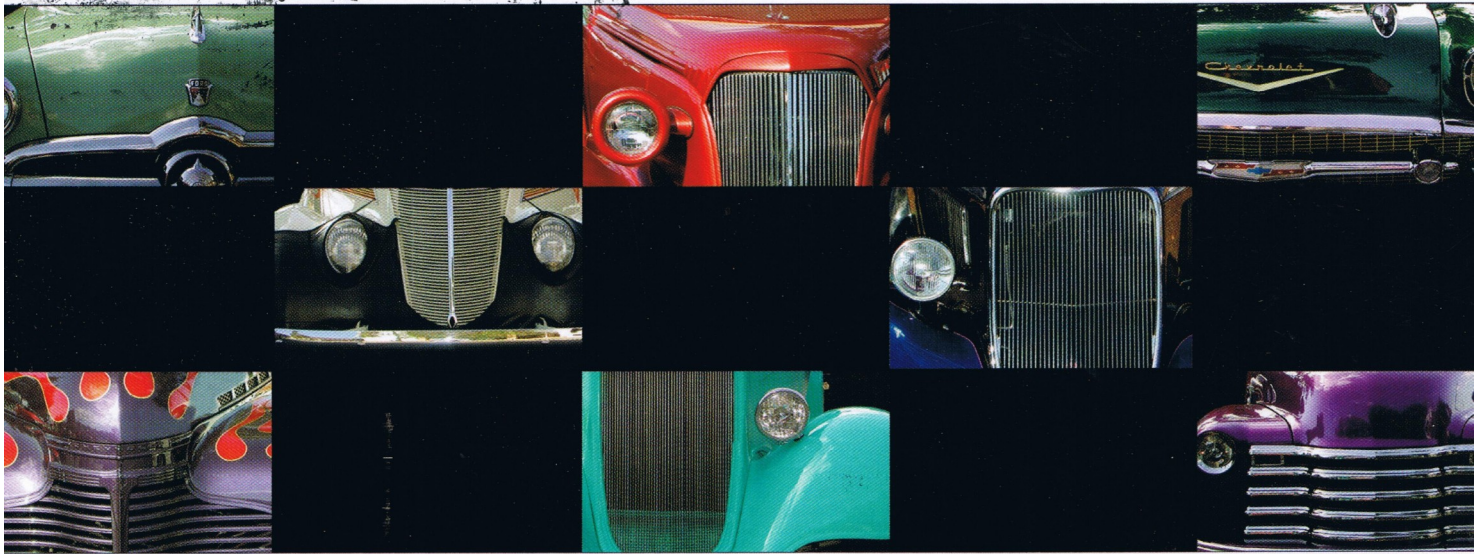
At 4 o'clock we see the completed work. Great! Amazing what can be accomplished in a **Couple Hours**. Even the navigator approves of our efforts.

Oh s--t. The radio is dead and some lights don't work. Somehow we allowed the Lucas smoke to escape from some parts of the electrical system. Another **Couple Hours** should make it right but I need to get some extra smoke; once I have that, we will fix it.

The day arrives; find the leaks; repair; top up the smoke. It only took a **Couple Hours**.

All this to say that caring for an MG is a commitment requiring dedication, a few tools, a sense of humour, good friends and a **Couple Hours**.

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The 50 Worst Cars of All Time

As the North American International Auto Show kicks off in Detroit, TIME and Dan Ne Prize-winning automotive critic and syndicated columnist for the Los Angeles Times, l greatest lemons of the automotive industry

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1958 MGA Twin Cam



MORE

A point of personal privilege. I own a 1960 MGA that I restored with my own two hands, and it is a fantastic British sports car, with lovely lines penned by Syd Enever, a stiff chassis, and a floggable character. The car was introduced in 1955 as a replacement to the venerable TD and was itself replaced by the MGB in 1962. Along the way, somebody decided my little car was anemic — hey! I resent that! — so MG offered an optional high-performance engine with dual overhead cams, thus the "twin cam." It was a leaking, piston-


burning, plug-fouling nightmare of a motor that required absolute devotion to things like ignition timing, fuel octane and rpm limits, less the whole shebang vomit connecting rods and oil all over the road. Many years after the engine was taken out of service, it was discovered that the problem lay in the carburetors. At certain rpm, resonant frequencies would cause the fuel mixture to froth, leaning out the fuel and burning the pistons. I've never had any such trouble with my iron-block, pushrod, lawn tractor engine. I'm just saying.

This article above was located and forwarded to me from club member Bill Curnoe.


And might I mention..... Debi's A is NOT a Twin Cam!

In the next issue of **The Dashpot** there will be an article about the *Octagonal House of Clarence Darrow*, reprinted with the permission of NAMGAR's MGA! Magazine

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