

OTTAWA



CLUB

Newsletter

August, 1990 - Volume 1 No. 1

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

I am really thrilled that we have got ourselves a 'proper', organized MG Club at last. Everywhere you look in this city at this time of the year, there are MG's and they can't all belong to the people who are waiting to buy a Japanese replica. There has to be a big need for a club such as ours.

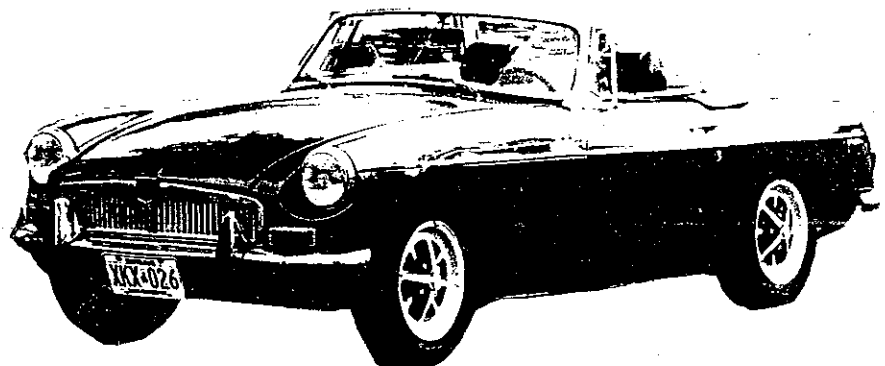
The two meetings we have had so far at the 'Swan on the Rideau' have been a lot of fun. The conversations I have heard people having, either standing around the cars or in the pub, have convinced me that we have a great fund of knowledge and expertise to share, and with the type of ancient machines we all own, that has to be a good thing.

I guess there are two big pitfalls we have to avoid in our early days. We are going to have to avoid catering to the tastes of the few at the expense of the many. And we must also try to avoid "burning out" the few who will inevitably be doing all the hard work on behalf of the many. I have a great deal confidence in our ability to do both.

Meanwhile, one garage owner has already agreed to give discounts to card carrying members. That \$10.00 of yours is going to be one heck of a good investment!

See you soon.

Hugo Leech



DRIVING MISS DAISY, uh, MG

It is amazing that a club for MG drivers has not been started before in the Ottawa area. There are sports car clubs to cater to most of the other marques, but for MG drivers, the closest has been the Toronto club, to which most of us belong, but it's somehow not the same--those road trips are killers unless the club is headed in an easterly direction.

With 16 signed up members locally, you do you have to own an MG to belong to the club. At \$10.00 per year, anyone who dreams of owning an MG can participate. This is a great way to get a ride in one of these little gems and to not have to bother with subsequent oil changes.

Meetings have been fun-filled and noisy. Imagine your neighbourhood being buzzed by a throaty MGA, 1959 vintage, leading a pack of swarming classic sports cars. Since MG stopped

production in 1980, all the cars in this club are at least ten years old, with most of them falling into the 1965 to 1978 range.

The president of the Ottawa MG club is Hugo Leech, with Jim Nunn agreeing to be secretary; Lonnie McPherson, treasurer, and a newsletter committee with three people, Doug Wilson, Andrew Moss and Shannon Lee Mannion. One club member, Doug Conlon, is particularly eager and has already designed a club logo which will shortly be screened onto T-shirts.

Some people call an MG a poor man's Jag--a tinge of jealousy perhaps, at MG owners's reduced repair bills. The excitement is about the same, however, on a balmy summer's night with the top down and friends in their cars in front of you and revving up behind following that ever elusive octagon.

Shannon Lee Mannion

Technical Tips

Electric Fan Motor Repair - MGB

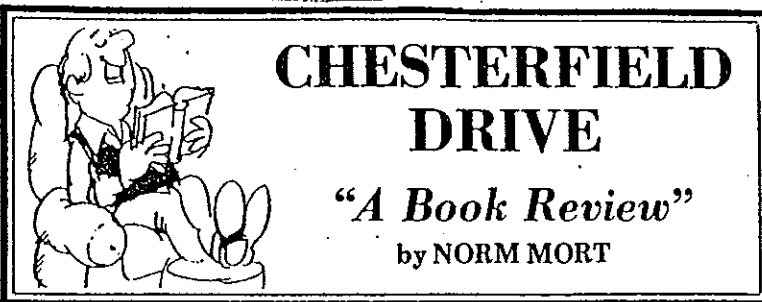
The electric fan on my 1979 Rodster ceased to work last year, causing excessive rise in engine temperature when idling in slow moving traffic. The fan could be started by firmly tapping the end of the motor casing, but this proved to be a somewhat unsatisfactory procedure in heavy traffic!

Eventually I dismantled the fan motor to find that the carbon brushes were completely worn. Being a Lucas motor I thought that I would be able to replace these with no problem at all. After enquires at some reputable MG suppliers and motor accessory shops it became apparent that these motors were now manufactured in Yugoslavia - would you believe - and that there was no chance of obtaining the new brushes without purchasing a new motor.

I found the answer at my local Hoover repair centre. They had a enormous range of carbon brushes for different types of motors. I never expected to find the exact size, so settled for a pair of brushes slightly larger than required. I filed down the brushes to the appropriate size using fine abrasive paper and inserted them into the retainers. This job is very simple and requires no special tools. The commutator ring should be cleaned and the bearings greased before reassembly. The cost of the new brushes - mere pennies!

(ed: could be useful on other motors - windshield wipers)

(From "Enjoying MG" - MGOE England)



**ORIGINAL MG T SERIES -
THE RESTORER'S GUIDE
TO MG TA, TB, TD & TF**
written by: **Ander Ditlev
Clausager**
published by: **Bay View Books**
hardcover, 103 pgs.,
approx. 150 colour photos
\$39.95
Book courtesy of Autophile
on Bayview Ave., Toronto

Ahh, my beloved MG ...the
marque that launched this
humble pedlar of words on
a career of late nights, failing
eyesight and a photo develop-
ing bill that comes close to
topping our national debt.

It has been a while since
I reviewed a book on the
sacred octagon. It could be
there hasn't been a new book
on the market since I sold
my little MGA but the fact
it is rather painful may be
closer to the truth.

Regardless here we have a
book on the sports car every-
one loved first; the MG T-
series.

Clausager is no stranger
to the marque. In fact he is no
stranger to the historical
background of the British
motor industry as he is
currently their Heritage Trust
Archivist. With these qualifi-
cations you would expect a
book full of insight into histor-
ic facts, first hand familiarity,
and expertise. Everything
from a historical point of view
is here but there is nothing
new to be found. I have it all

in the dozen or so books that
already grace my book-
shelves.

What this book mainly deals
with are proper colours,
materials, parts and fittings.
It doesn't make great reading
but it does point out the
"proper" way to restore an
MG. Many of the examples
shown have incorrect bits and
pieces that trusting owners -
cash in hand - turned over to
suppliers who didn't give a
"tinker's cuss" whether the
part was original or not.
Buyers Beware! Come armed
and ready and don't be
fooled. The five T-series cars
are well documented but there
is little info on the Arnolt-MG.
(See Old Autos - Foreign
Affairs Sept. 1988).

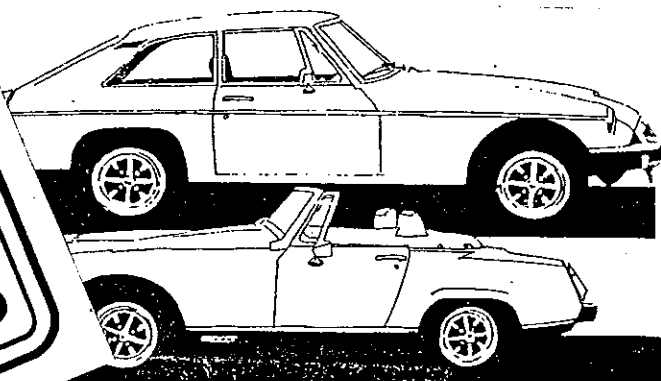
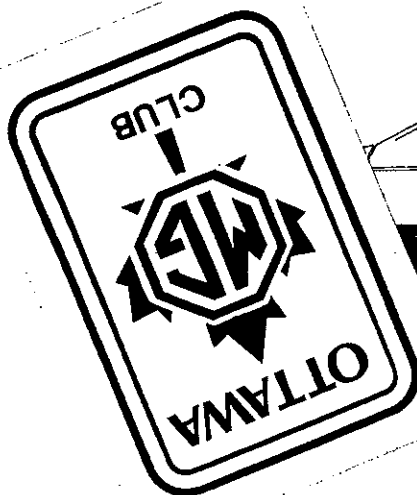
All the factory options are
listed, production changes
noted, production info listed,
and colour schemes matched.

The photography is specta-
cular for this type of book and
Tim Andrew should be con-
gratulated for his "colourful"
efforts.

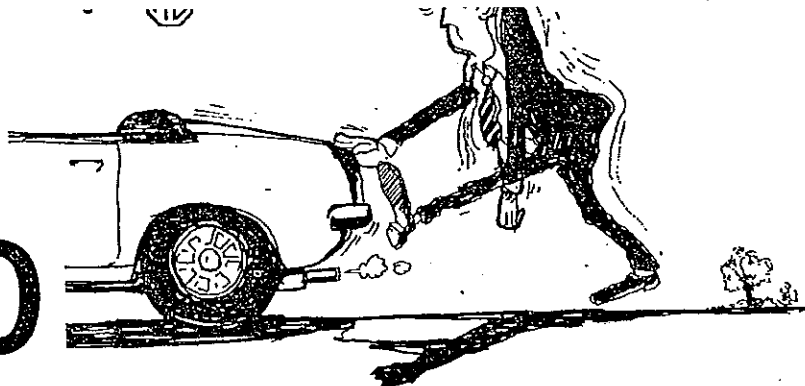
Many close-ups are evident
so even the tiniest of detail
is right there in living colour.

The binding is more than
adequate and will withstand
spilled cups of tea.

At \$39.95 I can't encourage
the non T-series owners to
pick up a copy but if you have
an "octagon" in your garage
this book is certainly worth
a jaunt along to Autophile -
top down of course!



SO IT WON'T GO



In this article I do not intend to go into detail as to why an engine will not run because of major fault (ie broken crankshaft holed piston) but the niggling little faults that plague even the most well maintained engines (I hope that all MGOC MGs fall into this category).

To run a petrol engine requires three things, fuel, air and electrics. Mixed in the right proportions at the right time, the engine will run at peak efficiency. Unless the proportions of fuel and air or the timing is way out, the engine will still run.

The most common fault is electrical. If the engine suddenly cuts out, the fault is usually in the electrics, (a fuel fault will make the engine splutter and misfire before expiring). The first thing to check is that there are no wires hanging off. If all wires appear to be intact, then remove the distributor cap and with the ignition switched on, flick the contact breaker points open with a screwdriver. If there is a spark, then the low tension circuit is in order, but if there is not a spark then the connections from the distributor to coil should be checked, and a check should be made to ensure that the points are actually opening and closing by spinning the engine over on the starter. New contact breaker points tend to close up. A faulty condenser in its early stages of failure will cause the engine to expire when warmed up, but will allow the engine to start when the condenser has cooled down. The give away sign for a duff condenser is badly pitted contact breaker points. If the engine fails to start directly after new points have been fitted, then a check should be made to ensure that the insulating washers are in the right position.

If all is well with the points and low tension circuit, then the high tension circuit should be examined. Before replacing the distributor cap examine the inside for cracks and condensation. The carbon bush in the centre of the cap should be checked to ensure that it is free on its spring. Check that the rotor arm is not cracked. To test, hold the end of the main HT lead from the coil close to the centre contact of the rotor. If there is a flash then the rotor arm is faulty. Replace the cap and remove a sparking plug, connect the plug to the HT lead and spin the engine over on the starter. A spark means that the circuit is in order, if no spark then the leads should be checked, especially when the lead from coil to distributor pushes in to the coil, as this sometimes works loose although it appears to be connected properly. Modern, suppressed carbon string HT leads can break down and the only way to check on this is to fit a new set of leads, not forgetting the lead from coil to distributor. Copper-cored leads are best, but extra suppression will have to be fitted to them. If after all these checks, the engine will still not run, then the coil should be checked. To test the coil remove the Negative lead from the coil and connect a length of wire, remove the coil to distributor HT lead from the centre at the distributor cap and switch the ignition on and the HT lead held about 1/4 inch away from the engine. flick the end of the piece of wire, previously connected to the coil to earth. If the coil is working then a thin spark should jump from the HT lead to the engine. If there is no spark then the coil is faulty and should be renewed.

Ensure that the correct replacement is fitted, especially cars fitted with 'cold-start' coils. A further mention of these coils. They run at about 8-9 volts when the engine is running, the voltage being obtained by a ballast resistor. In the case of MGs fitted as standard with this set-up the resistor is incorporated in the wiring loom. When the starter is operated the resistor is by-passed and the full 12 volts is fed to the coil. As soon as the ignition switch is released from the start position the coil reverts to its normal

supply. A fault in the resistor will allow the engine to run with the starter in operation, but will cut the engine when the starter is released.

Finally, the spark plugs. A spark outside the cylinder does not mean that the plug will spark under compression in the cylinder, so substitution is the only answer. Time-expired spark plugs are not worth re-using, but could be kept in the car as an emergency.

To illustrate the spark plug faults, here is a tale of a Princess (Leyland variety). The vehicle with 7000 miles on the clock had never been driven hard until its owner drove 'down country' to visit relatives. The car was driven at 70 mph down the motorway to the relatives' home. The next morning, the car refused to start. The local garage was called out but was unable to start the car, so it was towed back to the garage and all checks carried out. There was a spark at the plugs, and petrol getting into the cylinder. The apprentice suggested changing the plugs and the engine ran. The cause of the problem was discovered to be lead forming on the inside of the sparking plug. As the car had been driven hard the lead had coated the central insulator and when the engine had cooled off the lead had hardened and caused a short. (I am grateful to Editor of 'Motorist' for allowing me to quote from this article).

One of my area Members had a problem with his 1977 MGB roadster so I was asked to help. There was a spark at the points and plugs and fuel at the carbs. The dwell angle on the points was correct but still the engine would misfire badly. I checked the timing and found it out, so I moved the distributor after which the engine refused to start. The distributor cap was removed and the engine turned over on the starter. There was an intermittent short circuit in the leads from points to condenser and coil. Re-aligning the leads cured the problem.

Fuel problems come next. The first thing to check is that there is petrol in the tank. Fuel gauges are notoriously inaccurate, so remove the filler cap and rock the car when petrol should be heard sloshing about. If nothing is heard the answer is obvious. Next, remove the fuel feed to the carburettor and with a container held under the end, get someone to switch the ignition on (unless you have got exceptionally long arms and can reach the keys). Fuel should shoot out of the pipe. If nothing appears then locate the electric fuel pump and tap it smartly on the Bakelite cover. The diaphragm points are prone to sticking and can be freed sometimes in this way. If still no fuel comes out, then check that the electrical feed to the pump is live. If there is power, then remove the filler cap and try again, just in case there is an airlock in the tank. If still nothing, then the pump is faulty, so you should find your RAC recovery card. If after tapping the pump it works again it should be replaced at the earliest opportunity, as the fault will happen again.

If the engine has been flooded due to excessive use of the choke, then push the choke right in, push the accelerator right down to the floor and operate the starter. In nine cases out of ten the engine will start because the air being drawn in on full throttle will blow out the excess petrol, however, if this does not work, then the spark plugs should be removed and dried, and the engine spun over on the starter on wide open throttle before replacing the plugs.

By this time the engine should be running, but if not then there is a major fault and the RAC AA or a garage should be called.

Coming Events

Date	Time	Event	Location	Contact	OMGC Contact	Remarks
Wed Aug 15	6:30-9:00 pm	Annual Corn Boil Hosted by the Model A club	Nepean Campground Corkstown Road		Shannon Lee Mannion	
Thurs Aug 16	7:30 PM	OMGC monthly meeting	The Swan Pub on the Rideau	Jim Nunn		
Sun Aug 19	10:00 - 4:00	Boot's n Bonnet All British Car Club British Car Day	MacLachlan Woodworking Museum, Grass Creek Park Highway 2, 10 miles east of Kingston	Linda Thomas tel. 542-8110 or 545-2816	Jim Nunn	Good day for a top down run to Kingston with other M.G. s
Sun Aug 26	10:00 - 4:00	Import Sportscar Fair and Flea market	Manotick Arena	John Carr Tel. 692-6277	Andrew Moss	The club will have a display and parts booth. Volunteers?
Sat and Sun Sept 15-16	10:00 - 4:00	Antique Automobile Club of Ottawa presents the Annual Antique Car Show	Nepean Sportsplex	Shannon Lee Mannion 594-9128	Shannon Lee Mannion	To show your car please pre-register ASAP
Thurs Sept 20 Tentative	7:30	OMGC Monthly meeting	The Swan???	Jim Nunn		

Note : If you know of any other events that the club might be interested in please get in touch with the editors.

