



A-Antics



Rowdies Celebrate Cecil Kimber's Birthday at the Delhi Cafe in Holt, MI
(More pictures Page 15)

SU Damping Piston Dissected
John Alexander's MGA
Upcoming Events
Pittman's Project



MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER

Chairman Bill Weakley
4120 Pontiac Trail, Ann Arbor, MI 48105
(734)996-2524 wmmweakley@comcast.net

Treasurer Jeff Zorn
403 Bayou Village Dr, Tarpon Springs, FL 34689
(727) 213-0663 jzorn@mg-cars.org.uk

A-Antics Editor Ken Nelson
3126 Brentwood SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506
(616) 957-3158 kenneth.nelson1@comcast.net

A-Antics Assist: Printing, distributing, & database: **Larry Pittman**

Webmaster: Larry Pittman
11406 Majorca Pl, Fenton, MI 48430
(810) 750-0047 larrypit@chartermi.net

Meets Chairman Gary Cunningham
5188 Timberline Ln, Brighton, MI 48116
(810) 227-1724 gacunning@sbcglobal.net

Regalia Chairman Bruce Mann
960 Denbar Ct, White Lake, MI 48386
(248) 698-3372 bwmann@att.net

Membership Chairman Bruce Nichols
56343 Buckhorn Rd, Three Rivers, MI 49093
(269) 273-3118 nicholsbm@aol.com

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History: The Chapter was established August 14, 1976. It was NAMGAR's first chapter. We are a low-key club, dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our MGA's/ Anyone is welcome to join our chapter and they are asked to join NAMGAR as well.

Chapter Dues: \$25 annually (\$40 for printed newsletter)

Nickname: Rowdies

Motto: People First!

Rowdies Site:

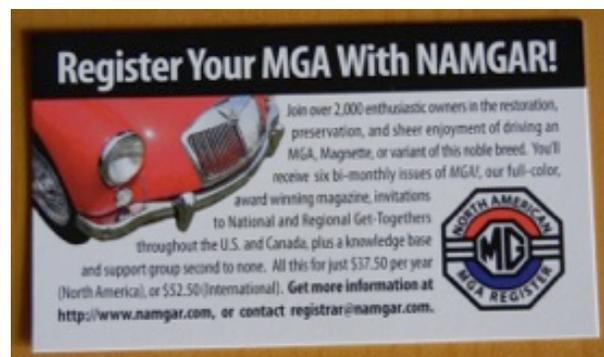
<http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

MG Car Council Site: <http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/mgcouncil/>

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

Past Chapter Chairpersons:

- 1976-1980 Bruce Nichols
- 1981-1982 Tom Latta
- 1983-1984 Dick Feight
- 1985-1988 Dave Smith
- 1989-1990 Dave Quinn
- 1991-1994 Mark Barnhart
- 1995-1995 Herb Maier
- 1996-1996 Tom Knoy
- 1997-1998 Neil Griffin
- 1999-2002 Bruce Nichols
- 2003-2004 Bob Sutton
- 2005-2008 Gordie Bird
- 2009-2015 Dave Quinn



MEMBERS PAGE

Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman, Webmaster

<http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

Larry Pitman's Database Report: 60 Active and Paid-Up Members

Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: June 20, 2017

Classified Ads

1500/1600 MGA grill. On a ground up total restoration MGA purchased in 2005. Likely a Moss grill. \$200 plus shipping. Dave Quinn 517-782-9749. Will deliver a reasonable distance for a couple beers. Otherwise, I will just hang it on the garage wall.



Letters

Dave Quinn writes in sending this self-explanatory picture to us. His thought for the day is "I can't believe they didn't sell MGs".



Pass The Cheesecake Please

Growing up I was always a Pontiac guy. Now I know why.
Dave Quinn

Marilyn Monroe and her 1952 Pontiac



What Comes Apart Must Go Together

Rowdies,

I've had some time for the Magnette. So far, I've been in disassembly mode. Interior is all removed except for doors (haven't figured out pin removal from door handles yet). Engine and trans removal are getting close.

Been trying to avoid spending any money on it as I don't yet have a title (long story).

Once I get the suspension and drivetrain off, I'll be getting it blasted to see what metal rot is there over and above what I can see.

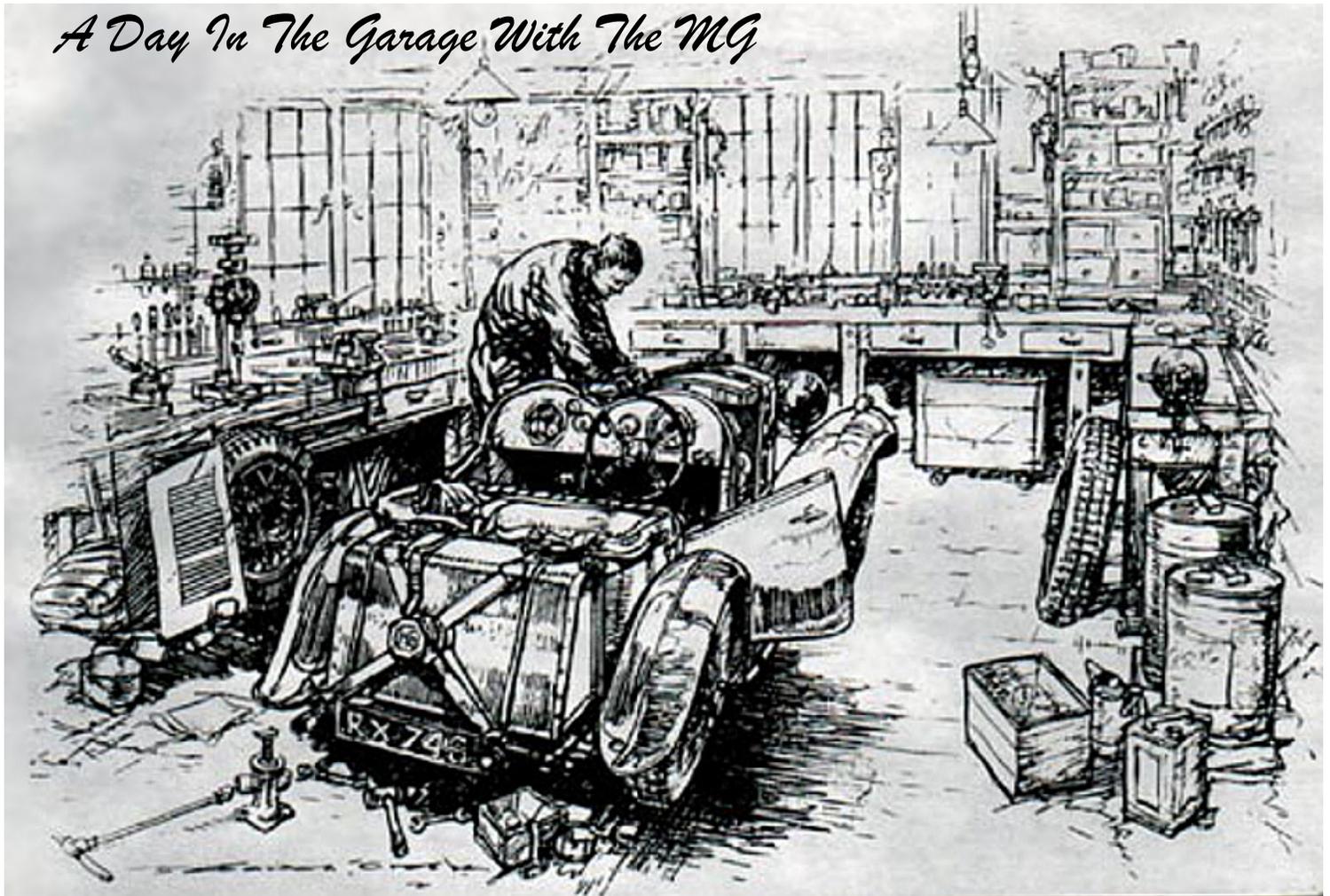
Photo attached of current disassembly before seats / interior panels / headliner were removed.

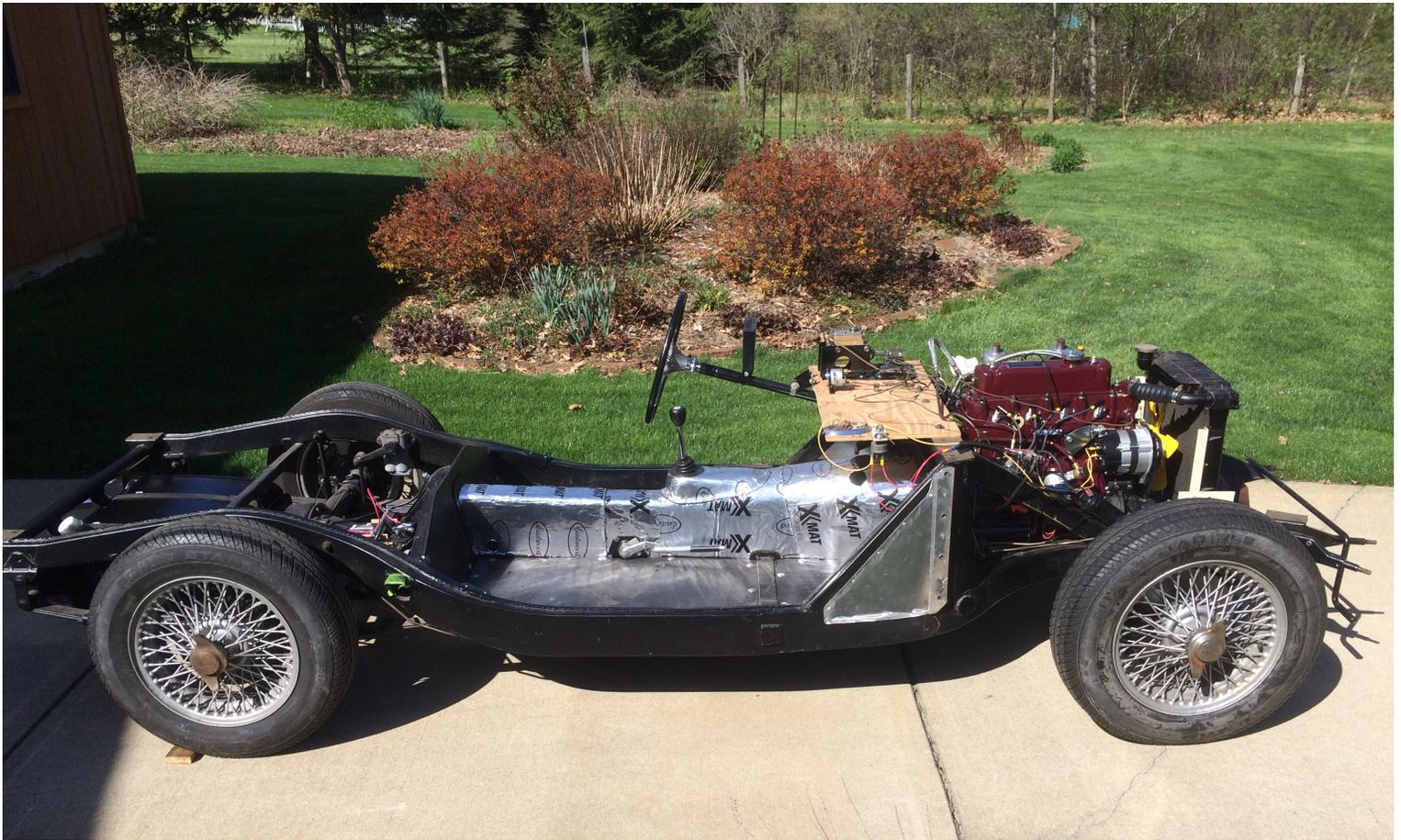
Larry Pittman

(see picture of Larry's car project on page 4 and Chairman Bill's restoration picture on page 5-keep up the good work guys!)



A Day In The Garage With The MG





Chairman Bill's beautiful MGA rolling chassis. Note his modified custom dashboard. Everything he needs is immediately at his fingertips, whether it involves filling the brake fluid reservoir while driving or checking to see if the brake light is working. Note also how he trimmed down the size of the speedometer to take up less room on the dash, and cleverly uses a sky hook to suspend the steering column.



ROWDIES 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2017

May

- 6 **Drive Your MG Day**
Garage Grill and Fuel Bar, Northville, MI-
Meet 11:30 Host: Ken & Mel Klemmer
(248) 444-4096 (*see Flier this issue*)
- 21 **Spring British Car Gathering & Picnic**
Camp Dearborn-Milford, MI 11am-4pm
Windsor Detroit MG Club

June

- 16-18 **Stratford Festival Tour**-Phil Wiltshire
Windsor Detroit MG Club
Guys & Dolls-Festival Theatre
- 17 **Brits in Bayfield (Canada) Car Show**
WDMGC-Phil Wiltshire 10am-9pm
Peter & Diana Thornley to Attend
- 19-23 **GT-42 Solvang, CA.**
See <http://gt42.namgar.com/>
- 22 **Memorial Service for Pat Schwartz**
Port Huron-Exact location TBD-Kelly Garry

July

- 9 **Mad Dogs & Englishmen**-Gilmore Museum
Hickory Corners, MI Host: Bruce Nichols
(269) 273-3118
- 11-15 **GOF Central XXXVIII**-Akron, OH
<http://www.gofcentral.com>
- 14 **Rolling Sculpture Car Show**-Main Street Ann
Arbor-**must pre-register** by 6-23
www.mainstreetannarbor.org

August

- 5 **Rowdie Birthday Party**
Jan & Lloyd Herring-Time TBD

7600 Jericho Ave, NE-Rockford, MI
19,20 **Thunderbirds Air Show**
Selfridge National Guard Base
<http://teamselfridge.com>

27 **Put-In-Bay Road Race Reunion**
Put-In-Bay, OH

September

10 **Battle of the Brits** Gathering of the Faithful
Camp Dearborn, Milford, MI
Detroit Triumph Sportscar Club

October

TBD **Rowdies Fall Color Tour**
Host: Dave & Donna Quinn
2929 Wolhaven Ln, Jackson, MI

December

3 **Rowdies Christmas Party**
Chelsea Depot-Chelsea, MI
Host: TBD

2018

TBD **Rowdie Business Meeting**



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

by Bill Weakley

Hello everyone.

Driving season is here. Hallelujah! Of course, I have had my MGC on the road since February, but now the top is down, and I can really enjoy it. We had a great Rowdie turnout at the Kimber Party on April

8th with many MGs in attendance. The weather was good, and it was great to see so many friends from all the clubs. We missed having Dave and Chari Smith there to host the luncheon and the afterglow at their house nearby. Dave and Donna Quinn stepped up to host a few hardy souls at their house near Jackson. Now we can look forward to the Drive Your MGA event on May 6. Ken Klemmer has a nice event planned for us. If you have never been to the Garage Grill and Fuel Bar in Northville, you are in for a treat. I hope Ken has arranged for nice weather as well.

Of course, I won't be driving my MGA quite yet. I have made some progress on the restoration since the last report. The engine and drive train is all installed, and the car is rolling around instead of sitting on jack stands. I have run the engine long enough to set the timing and stop several fluid leaks, including fuel, oil and coolant, in other words all the engine fluids. Oil pressure was good, and the coolant temperature gauge seems to work properly. It's too early to judge how effective the cooling system is. The rear seal on the crankshaft is doing its job, so far, with no sign of leakage at the bell housing. I had to pull the engine to reseal between the block and the backplate, but fortunately pulling the engine is a piece of cake with no body on. I don't plan to drive the chassis around like John Alexander did with his. I just want to make sure that the engine is functioning properly, so I won't have to pull the engine again before mounting the body.

Speaking of pulling the engine reminds me that Philip Wiltshire donated a nice roll-around engine hoist to the club. Bruce Mann is the current

custodian of the hoist, so if you are in need of one, give Bruce a call or email. The hoist can be easily transported in a van, pickup or trailer.

My next big goal for the A is to finish stripping the doors, boot lid and bonnet in preparation for the paint shop. Then I will mount everything one more time to make sure that it will all bolt on properly after painting. I need to be completely done with body work before the paint goes on. Then I'll have to worry about messing up the paint during the assembly. Getting the body painted is for me the biggest single step in this restoration, not to mention the most expensive. In any case, I am way past the point of no return.

On an entirely different note, I have completed arrangements for Mary Ellen and me to fly to England in June. We are going to be there for the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the MGC. At least six other couples from the American MGC Register are going. None are having their cars shipped over, so we'll just take part in the show day and banquet. I don't think I will ever have another chance to see over 200 MGCs at one time again.

While we are there, we will spend a few days touring the Midlands area, checking out a few other car sites, including the MG club home in Abingdon. I suppose we will have a chance to check out a castle or two and some gardens, too. Then we will spend four days in London and vicinity before flying to Scotland for a day to visit our daughter-in-law's parents and flying home, via Amsterdam.

It will be a fairly quick trip. I know there are many, many sights that we will miss, but I suppose that would be true, if we spent a month there. In any case, I am looking forward to going there and dreading the travel at the same time. I really don't like commercial flying or airports or big cities. But since I can't drive to England, I guess flying is my only realistic choice. We will miss the Stratford trip but should be around for other Rowdie events. It will be another busy summer, so get out there and drive that MG. I hope to see you on May 6.

Bill Weakley

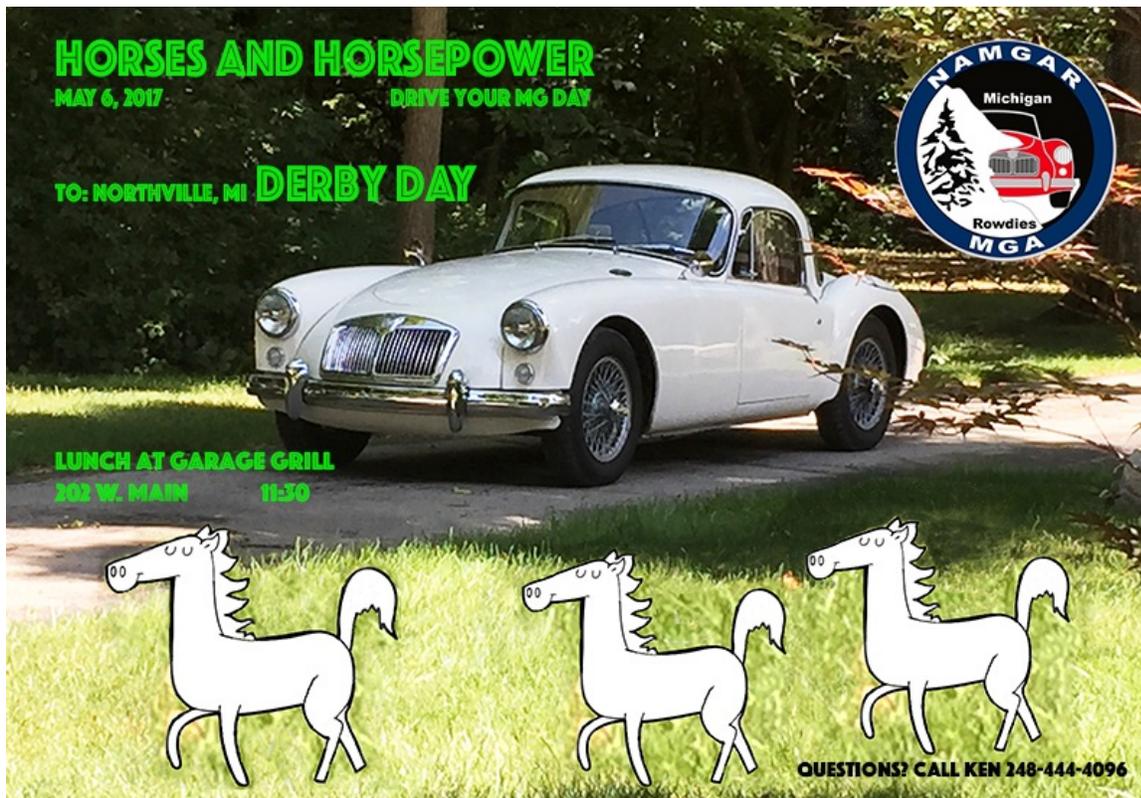
Drive Your MG Day-May 6, 2017

Hi Rowdies,

Here's a flier for Drive your MG day! Reservations have been made for lunch at the Northville Garage Grill (202 W Main St.-Northville, MI, 48167- ph: (248) 924-3367) we will have our own area and meet at 11:30. I made the reservation for 16 but we can add to this if it looks like there will be a lot of interest. Its so weather dependent....

We will plan a short fun route after (stopping for ice cream of course) or people can do their own thing. Some may wish to stay longer in Northville and attend Derby Daze at the track. Events are going on all afternoon and races are in the evening, hence the early lunch time. I am also sharing this with our TD club.

Cheerio, Ken and Melody Klemmer (248) 444-4096



The Garage... is a dining experience on Main Street at the corner of Wing Street in historic downtown Northville, Michigan. The menu is as classic as the circa 1940 service station that is home to Garage Grill and Fuel Bar .Built in 1940, the service station began as a Gulf Oil gas station named Atchinson Gulf. Later, the building became home to a Sunoco gas station, a Chrysler car dealership, a dry cleaner, and a garden shop. In 2012, the building was completely renovated and transformed into Garage as a grill and fuel bar. www.garagenorthville.com/



Fifth Annual Spring British Car Gathering & Picnic

**Camp Dearborn in Milford, MI.
1700 General Motors Road, Milford, MI 48380**

Sunday, May 21, 2017, 11am – 4pm

No registration - No formal car show - No class parking - No awards!
Just an opportunity to share our passion with fellow British car owners and clubs,
and to get to know one another.

We have reserved a large grassy area at Camp Dearborn in Milford. We will
have access to a large drum grill fired-up for anyone to use. BYO picnic lunch,
something to throw on the grill, beverages, etc.

Once again this year, we will have a **BOOT SALE!**
Have some spare parts, tools, etc. that are cluttering your garage? Bring them
along and offer them for sale from the boot of your car. We are not looking to host
a full blown swap meet, so please no trailers full of stuff.
Whatever you can get in your car or bring pictures of larger items that you want to
sell.

Admission into the park is \$7.00. For more information contact us at:
Board@WDMGC.com or contact Steve Finch at (248)343-1614
The Camp Dearborn Web Site is www.campdearborn.com



“Guys and Dolls” Stratford, Ontario MG Tour
Friday-Sunday June 16-18th Hosted by WDMGC/Phil Wiltshire

Friday June 16th - We will be traveling to Stratford leaving the Detroit area mid-morning. A second convoy can be arranged, leaving on the Saturday morning from the M59 and I94 area and arriving at St Mary’s early afternoon. It’s your choice, as we often have 2 convoys heading for Stratford that weekend. It depends on your plans!!

Saturday June 17th– “Guys and Dolls”- 8.00 pm performance at the Festival Theatre.

The musical premiered Broadway at the 46th Street Theater on November 24, 1950. It won numerous Tony awards in 1951. Considered by many to be the perfect musical comedy, this dance spectacular travels from Times Square to Havana, Cuba – where all bets are off. Featuring “Luck Be a Lady” and “Sit Down, You’re Rockin’ the Boat.”

We have booked the Westover Inn Hotel once again (built 1867) at nearby St Mary’s (15km from Stratford) for the Friday and Saturday evenings.

We will also be dining as a group at the Westover Inn prior to the evening performance of “Guys and Dolls” on the Saturday.

Many of the rooms for Friday and Saturday are already booked by us, so please call them (or your favourite Stratford / St. Mary’s Bed and Breakfast) and make your reservation under “MG Tours”. The Westover’s phone number is (519) 284 2977.

Please call me when you have made your hotel reservations. The costs are \$78 US dollars each for the theatre tickets. If you have an e-mail address that you use regularly, then I would also like those details.

Philip Wiltshire, 3105 Exeter Drive, Milford, MI, 48380.

My cell phone: 574 202 8919 E-Mail: pwiltshire@comcast.net



”Brits in Bayfield”-Meet Peter & Diana Thornley

On **Saturday, June 17th**, from 10:00 am till 4:00 pm, this **first Annual British Car Show** will take place on the Shores of Georgian Bay (part of Lake Huron) in the beautiful town of Bayfield, Ontario, Canada at the Ashwood Inn. This is a celebration of the Iconic MG and the man deeply responsible for making it what it still is today. Everyone is welcome, admission is free! Expect a fun day of cars, BBQ, live music as well as a special appearance from John Thornley's son Peter and daughter Diana.(There's lots of shopping and restaurants in the town too!). All LBCs have been invited to take part either staying over at the Inn or simply driving up for the day. Philip Wiltshire intends to bring the Stratford group by there for the show on the way to the Annual Trip to Stratford. Philip will be providing details for those traveling to Stratford as the date gets closer.

For those coming on your own or by Convoy from the Michigan side, it's not far up the coast line from the Port Huron/Sarnia border by way of the Blue Water Bridge. From the Windsor Essex area it's about a two and a half to three hour drive down nice two lane highways.

As the time gets closer, keep an eye on our [Facebook Page](#) for other members who might wish to organize a convoy together. Let's all try and support any new British Car events when they are in our area.

Click our link for more details at [The Ashwood Inn](#) link for hotel details or [Brits in Bayfield Car Show](#)





Namgar GT-42

Organized by MG Owners Club-Northern California & the Paradise British Car Club Solvang, CA

Save the Date. NAMGAR announces the location and dates for GT-42. Solvang, California, is the location for GT-42 to be held June 19-23, 2017. Registration is now open thru the event website. Register online or download a paper copy of the registration form. The website also contains information on the host hotel, regalia, and schedule of events. Convoys from the east and northwest are being organized. Further information can be viewed by clicking on the following link: http://www.namgar.com/events/article/gt-42_solvang_ca/convoys_to_gt-42/ Updates will be posted on the NAMGAR website as they become available. For more information, visit: gt42.namgar.com or [GT-42:](#)

Mad Dogs and Englishmen- Gilmore Museum-July 9, 2017



Come on out and enjoy the Mad Dogs and Englishmen's **27th annual British Car Faire** at the Gilmore Car Museum! The Car Faire is open to all British made vehicles and will also include a swap meet area! Enjoy people's choice judging, car games, bagpipers, and British Tea Time, too! For more information or to register for the meet at the Gilmore Car Museum, visit [http://](http://www.maddogsandenglishmen.org/mde/registration.cfm)

www.maddogsandenglishmen.org/mde/registration.cfm.

Location: Gilmore Car Museum, Hickory Corners, MI

Contact: Bruce Buxton, (269) 501-7257 Link: [http://](http://www.maddogsandenglishmen.org)

www.maddogsandenglishmen.org

***From Rust To Riches.....
One Man's Saga***

Little did John Alexander know that starting with this pile of rot (see below)....



He would end up with this beauty below... But let John describe it in his own words as follows.



“Lads...

And so it came to pass that a fine spring day appeared with temperature in the 60's, soft white clouds painted on a beautiful blue sky and, as luck would have it, a newly restored 1957 MGA ready to test the traction of the nearest macadam-covered surface. What-ho and away we go at least up to 50 mph. All systems function as they should, no rattles, temps around 195-200°F. Made a ten mile shakedown loop then slid her back into the garage where I'll look for leaks, etc.. No obvious markings on the driveway after our return. Three cheers for that! John Alexander

Thus, we are near the end of this project, needing only a little puttering about for fine tuning. I put it at 5 years, 6 months and 3 days since the first floorboard lost it's position to the floor jack attacking it from below. I think I'm going to miss the hours spent welding, hammering, welding, beating, fabricating, sewing, oiling, painting, gluing, bolting, etc.. I'll try to do more driving now. That's the pay-off for the work, I hope.

Oh, yes. There's the Mini lurking in the bowels of the garage.....

At any rate, thanks for your attention and I'll see you on the road! DEFINITELY! John Alexander

John's many friends and fellow Rowdies responded forthwith to his announcement with words of encouragement and wonder at what he had wrought with his own two hands. These are but a few of such comments:

“Good for you, John!! Your car looks awesome! We are jealous that you were able to get it out for a successful spin! Curt is giving ours a new makeover on the interior (new carpet) so that meant a day of raking all those twigs in the yard!! Congrats on your first adventure!!”
Stephanie & Curt Smith

“And so it was known, a tale of just conquest and new summons. Fie unto the doubters, for I am John!”
Sue and Al

“Well done John. I'm speechless at what you've accomplished so quickly.”
David of the Quinns

“Congratulations John! You have managed to accomplish in 5 years, 6 months, and 3 days what has taken me 39 years to remain unaccomplished-having a restored MGA that will get you out and home again

reliably without a breakdown! However John; ‘no markings on the driveway’? I remain dubious at best.

Still, a gorgeous car which you can feel free to park on my driveway anytime.

God Save The MG-the Queen can manage on her own!”
Viking Ken

“Thanks for sharing your shake down cruise with us. The pleasure taken on that ride is clearly present in your writing. Very happy for you and Carolyn. Hopefully you will have an abundance of great weather in this driving season.”

Dave & Chari Smith

“Yeah, that’s what we’re talkin’ about. Shear grit and desire, the determination to get it over the finish line with that last ounce of strength. Anybody

(with a team of mechanics, painters, sheet metal workers, metallurgists, welders, boiler makers, propeller balancers, rocket scientists, etc) could have finished in a few months, but where is the fun in that?

Well done, and I’ll vouch to Ken for you on the “no markings” bit (he’s just more jealous than usual).
Jeff & Deb Smith

WOW!!! THAT IS ONE FANTASTIC RESTORATION !!!!!!! There are a bunch of best of show awards coming its way this summer for sure!!!! 5 years is great, considering what was involved. That sh*t box Cobra took 11 years of my life to do.

“A Mini project for the winter months, eh?? Enjoy it.”
Tom Schoenfeldt



This year's Kimber Meet was another great kickoff for the 2017 summer MGA driving season. Attendance included many Michigan Rowdies and Windsor-Detroit MG Club members. Weather was beautiful many members drove their LBC's to take advantage of it. Our pictures below were

Kimber Meet Pictures

supplied by Dave Quinn and Bill Weakley; Cecil celebrated his birthday once more with close friends and camaraderie as he looks forward to joining us in spirit as we travel to our club outings.



Dashpot Damping Piston Facts 101

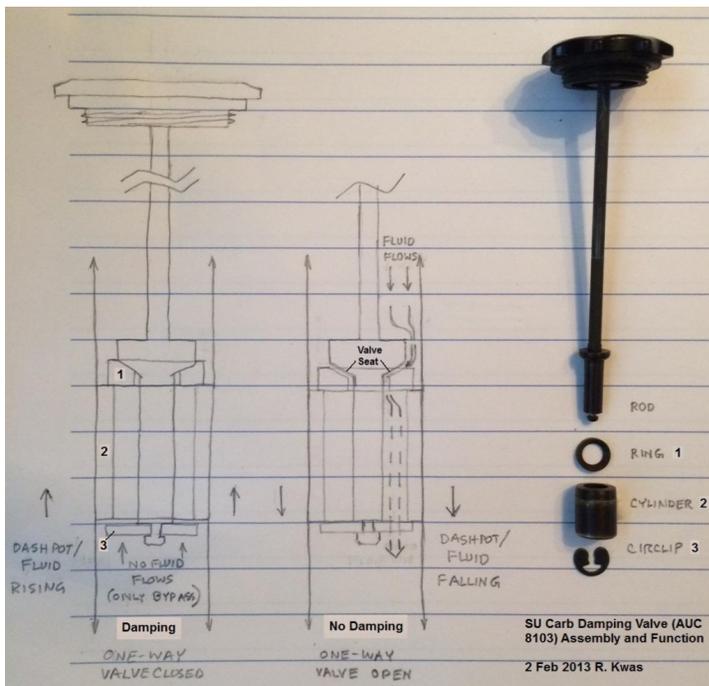
It seems there are times when it becomes necessary to learn how to reinvent the wheel over and over again. I knew that SU carburetors have used “vented” and “non-vented” damping pistons for their carburetors. It depends on how the air chamber inside the dashpot is vented to the atmosphere to equalize pressure as the dashpot and needle move up and down. I knew that one has a hole in the cap of the damping piston, and the other way no hole, but it’s easy to forget about that as one digs through their box of spare SU carb parts to build up a “mix and match” carburetor. I knew that keeping the piston and suction chamber as a matching pair is important for proper function, but I never really paid much attention to the dashpot damping piston that screws into the top. In fact, I never realized that by slowing the upstroke of the vacuum piston and needle in the suction chamber the dashpot damping piston helps enrich the fuel/air mixture during acceleration. Since the venturi at the fuel jet area is being “opened” or enlarged *slower* than normal (due to the oil in the damping piston tube resisting upward dashpot motion) when the butterfly valve opens, there is *increased* vacuum over the fuel jet to draw more fuel into the engine with no increase in the amount of air-hence an enriched mixture. The differing weights of oil that are used for the damping piston affect this slowing effect, but most people seem to recommend using about a 20wt. oil.

The information source I was gleaming this from actually came from a Volvo enthusiast site called “Six Five Brick” and was posted by J. Jai with excellent pictures. He was discussing the twin SU carb setup on a 1965 Volvo Amazon; these early Volvo engines were almost direct takeoffs from our MGA and MGB cars, complete with twin SU carburetors

In any event, the information transfers easily to an MGA, and provides a good explanation of the lowly dashpot damping piston and its function. Reference is also made to just how the damping piston valve functions to slow the rise of the dashpot piston yet still allow it to fall rapidly. This diagram shows that when the dashpot rises, it pushes the cylinder (#2) and sealing ring (#1) up and seals them, forcing the oil to flow slowly around them. When the dashpot is falling, it pulls #1 and #2 down and allows the oil to flow more rapidly through the cylinder. The author explains in more detail with his drawing.

“Damping Valve Assembly. This is a one-way (check valve) consisting of four components show below, which assures there is damping action when

Dashpot(12) is rising against counterforce of Spring (14), and no damping action when Dashpot is falling. It does this in conjunction with the Damping Oil.



Damping Valve Function (Reference Graphic below).

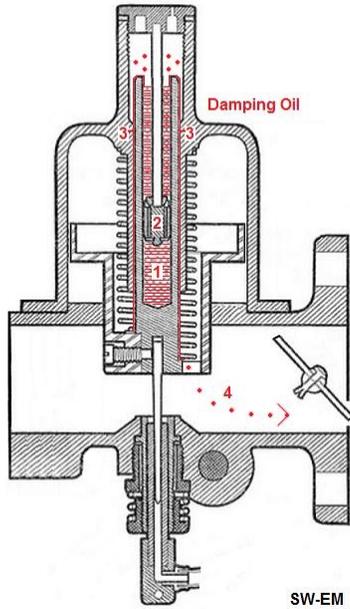
Dashpot Rising: When Dashpot/Fluid are rising, floating Ring(1) is in contact with Valve Seat. A small [I measured this at 0.025"] but important gap is located below Cylinder(2), between cylinder and Circlip(3), valve is therefore closed, and no fluid (other than the bypass leakage past Valve-Seat and Cylinder to Dashpot tube wall -see: The "5-7 Second Test") is allowed to flow. Here is where Damping Fluid viscosity determines flow resistance and thereby rate at which Dashpot is allowed to rise.

Dashpot Falling: When Dashpot/Fluid are falling (center), Ring is lifted off its seat (gap is then located above cylinder and Ring, between Ring and Valve Seat surface of Rod, and Damping Oil is allowed to flow past seat without restriction, through Cylinder and Circlip. As the oil encounters very little resistance, dashpot is allowed to fall quite freely.

The next diagram also shows the flow of damping oil in the carburetor and explains:

“...vacuum in the Dome liberates droplets from the Damping Valve and Reservoir as Dashpot continuously rises and falls, and these droplets get into precision clearance between Dashpot and Dome Tubes, lubricating this joint and its continuous action

in this way...and since the relocation of the droplets is driven by vacuum, it also leads to a drop in oil level, as oil is (exceedingly) slowly consumed (through vacuum



holes in bottom of Dashpot) This explains the slow loss of damping oil and the need to occasionally replenish it.

So when I recently noticed one of the 4 English cars I own idling very poorly, I began investigating the SU's workings and came upon this article. Interestingly the article described a phenomenon that my car exhibited and which I like to call "The Shooting Rocket Phenomenon". That is a situation where a violent lean mixture backfire

actually sends the shaft of the damping piston up through the plastic screw cap as if it were trying to enter orbit somewhere above the bonnet of the car. This is caused by a rapid rise in the dashpot air piston from increased engine back pressure forcing the damping piston up hard enough to puncture the top of the cap. It readily explains why my damping piston, as well as the one in the article, looked like this picture.

However, investigating further, I noticed that the dashpot damper in one of my carbs was mismatched for the type of carb it was in. It had no vent hole but was in a non-vented dashpot body with the shoulder on the neck as shown in the pictures below. I haven't had a chance to get the proper vented damping unit yet to confirm how much of a difference it will make in the



idling, but I'm looking forward to finding out. These pictures show very clearly what is correct. Who knew that the lowly dashpot damper could be so important for the proper running of our cars, and that there is some elegant theory behind its humble functioning? Here is the information from the Volvo site explaining the proper matching of air chamber bodies with the type of damping piston:

There are two types of dashpots - "dustless" and "non-dustless." Dustless dashpots have a vent hole on the inside of neck, while non-dustless types are vented on the damper cap. Dustless dampers should only be fitted to dustless dashpots, and vice versa. One of my carbs had a dustless dashpot but a vented cap, so I plugged the vent on the damper cap with a small screw.



mismatched - vented "non-dustless" damper cap and vented "dustless" dashpot-note the smooth neck of the air chamber body on this SU carb



matched - vented "non-dustless" damper cap and unvented "non-dustless" dashpot-note the shoulder on the neck of the air chamber body.



fixed - "non-dustless" damper with vent sealed, and vented "dustless" dashpot

Roadside Diagnostic Repair Tips

Ignition Testing Made Easy

Link to This Post (Permalink)

<http://www.mgexp.com/journal/oily-hands/4951>

Owen Frankland — Posted on The MG Experience

Sunday June 6, 2010 9:13 AM

Ignition testing made easy. The only tools you will need is a plug spanner and a 12v test light. A helper is useful too.

This is written primarily for cars which were running but now refuse to start. The information will apply to cars which have no history of running but there may be other factors involved in those cases. As with all things, I find a methodical approach works best when fault finding and if you follow these steps you should find the answer to your problem.

1. Remove a spark plug, connect to its lead

and lay on the block. Have somebody spin the engine over while you watch for spark. If you have a spark, do the same for the other plugs. If you have a spark at all the plugs, it's unlikely that you have an ignition problem.

2. If no spark hold the plug lead about ¼" from the block. Have somebody spin the engine over while you watch for spark between the lead and the block. If you are worried about the tiny tingle you may get (*Ed. note: tiny tingle indeed, with 30,000 volts or so going through that lead wire!*) hold the lead with insulated pliers or make sure you aren't in contact with bare skin to the car. Alternatively get the helper to hold it and you spin the engine (*definitely a better solution I'd say!*). If you get a spark the plug(s) is/are dead. Very unlikely for more than one plug to die at the same time but I've got to mention it.

3. If still no spark pull the king lead (center) from the distributor cap. Have somebody spin the engine over while you watch for spark

between the lead and the block. If you get a spark the problem lies in the distributor. If no spark go to point 6.

4. Remove the distributor cap and hold the king lead about 1/4" from the brass top of the rotor arm. Have somebody spin the engine over while you watch for spark. If you get a spark, the rotor is dead and needs replacing.
5. If no spark the rotor arm is good. Check the inside of the cap for damage or cracks. Pay particular attention to the carbon brush in the centre. Is it there, is it free to move against its spring to make contact with the top of the rotor arm.
6. This applies to points systems only. With the distributor cap off, have somebody spin the engine over while you watch for spark at the points.
7. If no spark, check that the points are actually opening and closing. Then check that all leads to the distributor and coil are firmly connected. Also check the thin flexible lead that runs between the base plate and the body of the distributor. With the test lamp check for voltage at both sides of the coil and where the lead attaches to the distributor. If no voltage, the fault lies in the wiring harness, connections or ignition switch.

Barney Gaylord also explains testing for a bad distributor rotor in his MGA Guru Articles:

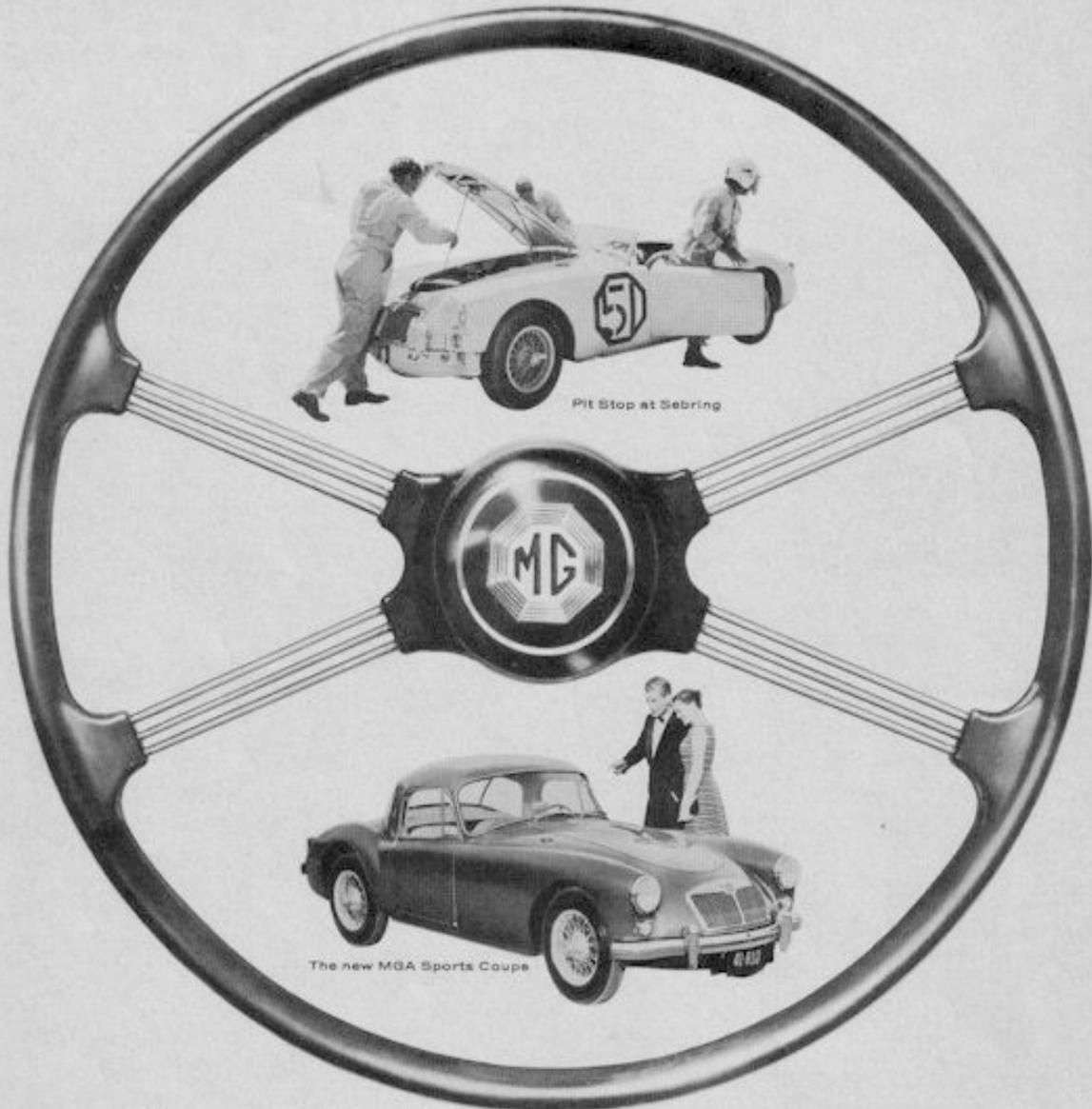
If the engine suddenly stops running with little or no warning, you may have a failed rotor in the distributor shorting the spark to ground on the the drive shaft. First disconnect one HT wire from a spark plug, hold it near the spark plug or near a head bolt, and crank the engine to determine if you have spark or not. If you have spark out from the plug wires you are "barking up the wrong tree" and need to look elsewhere for the problem. When you have no spark at the plug wire, then check for spark from the coil.

Disconnect the coil HT lead from the distributor cap. If you have the side entry type cap with a screw holding the HT leads in place, this could be easier if you have a spare HT lead handy. Hold the

coil HT wire close to a head bolt and crank the engine to verify that you have spark out from the coil. Then hold the coil HT wire close to the intended connector hole in the distributor cap and crank the engine to verify that you have spark going into the distributor cap. If there is spark going into the cap but not coming out, it is a very good probability of a failed rotor.

Then remove the distributor cap, pull the rotor out, and look inside of the bottom of the rotor. Sometimes you may find a dark powder smear that is indicative of spark leakage through the rotor to the shaft. Quite often visual inspection of the rotor reveals nothing. In that case, reinstall the rotor, and turn the engine until the points are closed. Switch on ignition, but do not crank the engine over. Hold the coil HT lead near the tip of the rotor, and flick the points open. You will get spark as the points open. If the spark jumps from the HT lead to the rotor, then the rotor is bad and is grounding the spark to the rotor drive shaft. Solution is to install a new rotor.





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