

# A-Antics





Bachelder's Battle Of Brits DTS's Walk of Fame

Derrington Cross Flow Head Remembering Dick Feight

#### MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER

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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: <a href="http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/">http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/</a>

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 | <b>Bob Sutton</b> |
| 2005-2008 | Gordie Bird       |
| 2009-2015 | Dave Quinn        |
| 2016-     | Bill Weakley      |

Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman, Webmaster

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

Larry Pitman's Database Report: 61 Active and Paid-Up Members

Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: December 20, 2021

# **Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!**





# MEMBERS PAGE

## Letters

# Rowdie Racing #49 And The Glen

Chari and I, daughters Katherine and Laura, her hubby Dave are departing via RV to Watkins Glen today. Mark & Margie Barnhart are departing from Prudenville. Rowdie crew Don Robinson, Jose and Mary Jo Tapia, are at the Glen now. Jim & Holly Bollinger had to cancel due to the passing of Holly's sister. Many wonderful emails have been received from fellow racers with congratulations too.

Thanks to John Alexander for the mention of 9-10-2021 in the Rowdie Activities email. #49 & Rowdie Racing being inducted into the IMRRC walk of Fame is amazing. I can still remember Joyce Hart, Neil Griffin, Jim Bollinger, Mark Barnhart and so many other Rowdies gathering in our Garage to Build #49 in just 3 months in 1995. I also remember Joyce Hart having so much fun by pointing out the oil spot on the floor, even before the Prather Race engine had been installed. The new Apple Shock was the source of the oil leak.

#### Dave Smith

### #029 & Watkins Glen

#### **Dave Smith to Joe Tierno:**

"I just read the article on 029's history in the September issue of MGA! It was very enjoyable to read all of the early years, your acquisition of the car, and it's renaissance into the beautiful BRG race car that we all know.

You may not know of the car's impact on the Michigan Rowdies in full, but we do appreciate the reference to our role with '029'. Prior to learning of the car, the Rowdies were essentially a Michigan based car club, with Michigan based activities. One exception was Dave's Quinns interest in the 1960's European race scene.

After learning about your car, the Rowdies became much more focused with Vintage Racing in the US and Canada. Trips to Watkins Glen, Mosport and others became part of our routine, and were very exciting. The trip to Watkins Glen in the Smith Pickup and Camper by four Rowdies is still a topic to this day. Thanks for the memories!"

#### Dave Smith, Ken Nelson, Mac McDonnell, Mark Barnhart, & Dave Quinn Dave Smith to Ken Nelson:

Glad you liked the Rowdie outreach to Joe Tierno (see above). That trip in my Dad's camper truck still makes me laugh about the bits. Swimming in Seneca Lake, almost losing the radiator cap, running 99% out of fuel in Canada etc.

Dave Smith

# An Impressive List Indeed!

Editors:

Thank you for your emails and questions regarding the IMRRC Walk of Fame. There will be seven persons inducted this Friday 9-10-21, due to the combination of 2020 and 2021 ceremonies. The Inductees are:

-Kent Prather multi year winner in SCCA and engine builder to many of the top vintage race teams.

-Ben Harris III posthumous FIA and SCCA Racer and race promoter 1930's thru 1963.

-Willy T. Ribbs Trans Am racer, Tested for Formula 1, NASCAR Driver and 1991 Indy 500 qualifier & racer.

-Jack Lawrence

-Charlie Cook

-Tierno racing Driver/owner Joe Tierno

-Rowdie Racing Driver/owner Dave Smith.

Here is a list of the Drivers that have previously been inducted into the Watkins Glen Walk of Fame: https://connect.xfinity.com/appsuite/#

Three on the list were very good friends to our family, Denver Cornett, Otto Linton, and Tom Hoan, a Canadian driver. All have passed now. Several others like Brian Redman, Dan Gurney, Sterling & Suzy Moss, were acquaintances.

Others like Jim Clark and Sir Jackie Stewart were my heroes. Like the commercial said, "Priceless". The bold writing refers to the location of the closest business/Government building to the location of the plaque. The year indicates the year the driver was inducted. *Dave Smith* (see story on page 8)

Congrats From Tim Coyne

"Good Morning Dave. Thanks for the update on your IMRRC Induction, and I look forward to reading the review and seeing your pictures. Congratulations to all of you...well deserved recognition in the Walk of Fame. You all have contributed a lot to the vintage racing scene and Watkins Glen holds a special place for all of us. Sure wish I could have attended. Only about the 4th one I've missed in 30 years)...but hopefully next year. Congratulations again to all MGA racers..."Safety

## Dave wrote back to Tim Coyne:

Tim Covne

Faster."

Thanks for the Kind words. We certainly missed our Canadian Friends at the ceremony. Our time at the microphone was limited, but in a later ceremony I spoke of Tom Hoan and how special it was for Chari and I to befriend him and his grand daughter Kim. I will never forget the day at Mosport that I saw Tom and Kim walking thru the MG Paddock and looking mostly at the T Series MG's. Per our Rowdie Racing practice, I invited him to sit in #49 and he did so. I hooked up the removable steering wheel and he became very quiet and reflective. Kim also did not speak. After 3 minutes or so, he got out over the rollbar (amazing) and introduced himself while thanking me for the chance to sit in a racing MG.

Knowing very well his importance to Canadian racing history, I was (for once) speechless. When I was

#### THE JOURNAL OF THE MICHIGAN ROWDIES

able, I thanked him for setting in my beloved MGA. We became very close, and Chari and I twice stayed at his home in Hamilton.

On one visit, he was showing me all of his racing memorabilia. I was curious that he did not show me the very famous Miliken's Corner-Haybale photo. I asked him about it, and drew a total blank from him. Amazing that nobody had ever given him a copy of his MG TC recovering from a nasty skid, while the haybale was in mid air, about to shatter the Cafe plate glass window.

I later got 25 copies of that Photo from Bill Green at the IMRRC and on our next visit, gave the first one to him, and had him autograph the second one to Rowdie Racing. I gave #3 to Mark Barnhart, and sent the remainder back to IMRRC to auction. Vintage Racing has been very kind to me, and the many memories will last for years to come. **Dave Smith** 

# Crosspointe Meadows Car Show Novi, MI Sept. 26, 2021

John Alexander received a car show invitation from Phil Lyon. He's been restoring an MGA roadster he bought from Chairman Bill a while ago. He is a Rowdie so this was an official Rowdie Event! Bruce and Willie Mann showed up to help Phil show the greater Detroit area auto enthusiasts that the Rowdies would not be deterred from showing up "due to the antiquity of our rust and/or electrical problems - which are probably fuel related anyway. Our MGA's exhibit the artistic genius of English automotive design of the 1950's and should be publicly acclaimed!"

Bruce reported "we went to the Rowdies event today, in Novi. This picture is Willie, Phil and I and our two MGA's. It was a nice day, with a good venue and lunch. There were 71 cars, including two MGA's and a 1951 TD, and four MGB's. We were the only Rowdies there except for Phil.



# **British Cars From Coventry**

*Just British* online newsletter sent out a link to a 1-hour documentary describing some history of British cars from Coventry. Take a look at least some of it. It's interesting, and discusses the history of the competition

#### VOL 46, NO 6 Nov-Dec, 2021

that MG faced in the 50s and 60s by Standard, Alvis, Triumph TRs, Triumph Herald, Hillman, Riley, Jaguar, and British Leyland among other famous British car manufacturers. It's easy watching, with plenty of period clips of the cars along with the history. Check it out at: <a href="https://youtu.be/bFLTPUYGwZM">https://youtu.be/bFLTPUYGwZM</a> and you won't be disappointed. \*\*Editor Ken

## Welcome New Members!

Name: Patrick & Mary Kondrat

Address: 3362 North Omena Point Road 231

Omena, MI 29674 Cell phone: 2487709612

Email: pamakomail@yahoo.com Type of MGA: 1600Roadster

Name: David & Patricia Decker

Address: 16201 Tindall Rd Davisburg, MI 48350

Cell phone: 248 640-3588 Email: ddecker@p-r-s.com Type of MGA: None (yet)

Type of MGA: None (yet)
Comments: I am a NAMGAR Member #7E4D1256. I
am searching for the "right" MGA to replace my first car
I ever owned, a Glacier Blue, black interior, wire wheels
'58. Ideally I would love to find my original car!
Currently own a '68 Porsche 912,'65 Porsche 356,'57
VW Sunroof Deluxe Beetle,'67 VW Bus,'82 VW
Vanagon Westfalia, 2003 50th Anniversary Corvette
(was my Dads),'69 Pontiac Grand Prix SJ (was my
Moms), and several more.

Dick Feight's Passing

I well remember Dick and Shirley Feight with their wonderful Remus Chili Meets at their cottage. Not only did he design a miniature MGA golf game for us, but he cut out a gymkhana driving course that he mowed through his field of grass and weeds. Several Rowdies' names from the past come up thinking about him-Rob Notier, Doug and Trudy Kniff, Dennis Johnson, Bruce Early, Herb Maier, Tom & Pandora Knoy, Bob Sutton, Bob & Shirley Noetzold, Rob McKenzie, Stew Beatty, Brian Beery, Rob & Denise Cote, Mike & Debbie Tyler, Joyce Hart, RB Hart, and many more. See the report on page 5 also. *Ken & Kathy Nelson* 

#### Schedule of Events 2021

Dec 5 Rowdies Christmas Party

# Dick Feight (1926-2021) R.I.P.

Richard "Dick" Jay Feight, age 95, of Tecumseh, MI passed away on Friday October 1, 2021 at Cambrian Assisted Living. He was born on August 10, 1926 in Ypsilanti, MI a son of the late Glenn Bennett and Olive Josephine (Dickerson) Feight. Dick grew up in Belleville, MI and after graduating from Belleville High School, he attended Michigan State where he earned his Bachelor's Degree. On August 30, 1947 he married Shirley Mae Cole and they shared over 60 years together before her death in 2008. Dick was self-employed and designed Kitchens for many people over the years. He was very active in the Tecumseh Kiwanis Club where he received the Hixson Award and just recently was awarded the Kiwanis Heart Award. The highlight of his year was always the Christmas event he put on along with his wife at the Porter Center. Dick was also a member of the MGA Club

From Dave Quinn: Rowdies,

Sadly I am reporting the passing of Dick Feight. Neil Griffin received word Dick passed away last week. Hard to believe but true - Neil and Dick were friends for 90 years – from the time they were kindergarten age. Both drove MGAs for decades. Dick was the Michigan Rowdies Chairman in 1983-1984 and was an all-around good guy.

The Feight's were very active in the '70s and '80s. They annually hosted one of the all-time most popular meets each fall -- a chili contest and golf challenge at their cabin in Remus. Dick and Shirley would lay out a golf course on their property and supply handmade wooden golf clubs with heads that represented MGAs. What great Rowdie spirit. It was that kind of spirit that made the club so popular and last so long.

On a personal note I recall the Hawaiian theme banquet at GT-8. Dick was grinning from ear to ear wearing an authentic Hawaiian shirt as he enjoyed jitterbugging with my wife to make me jealous! That was at the Cyprus Gardens, Florida in 1983. And he kidded for a long time about it.

His wife Shirley wrote a cute story, "Top Down Travel is for the Birds", in the A-Antics about one of their travels. She sounded the alarm - - "Duck, Dick, Geese!!!" Dick slowed the car but not quite soon enough and the bulk of "it" hit the top of the windshield but the rest landed "ker-plunk-splatter" on the deck, backs of the seats and luggage rack. It became difficult for Dick to continue his Rowdies membership after



Shirley died. He let his membership lapse but he always kept his MGA and we early club members would see him from time to time at events like Mad Dogs.

The arrangements for Dick are on Friday, October 22 at 1 p.m. at Brookside Cemetery on 501 N. Union Street in Tecumseh.

Curt & Stephanie Smith plan to drive the Griffins down for it. We hope to make it as well. Maybe we will see some of you 'old timers' there.

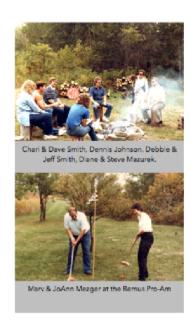
## R.I.P. Dick, Dave & Donna Quinn

What a wonderful couple they were together. I am hoping they are together again and at peace. The Remus meets were so much fun. I have so many special memories of my many wonderful 'Aunt and Uncle' MG family members and Dick and Shirley were there from the beginning of all the fun.

Thank you for the remembrances Dave. I remember cracking up reading Shirley's story too.

# Kathy Bertolini





#### THE JOURNAL OF THE MICHIGAN ROWDIES

#### VOL 46, NO 6 Nov-Dec, 2021



#### Chairman's Chatter

Happy Autumn, everyone. As I write this, I am looking forward to the coming Sunday for our Color Tour. The weather prediction is good, so I have high hopes for a good turnout.

Speaking of turnout, we had a very good Rowdie representation at the

Battle of the Brits. I think there were 13 MGAs there, almost all Rowdie members. I like the casual nature of the current event. Voting and prizes are not that important to me. Perhaps that is because I don't win prizes with my cars. I would rather spend my time looking at the cars that interest me and talking to the owners, than trying to judge the whole field. Besides, people tend to vote for their friends rather than the best cars.

The attendance at this year's event was definitely down from what they got five or ten years ago. We can only hope that events like this will recover after the pandemic goes away. We were in the U.P. last month and then in Illinois for my high school 55 + 1 reunion. Pandemic precautions are very mixed and confused now. I haven't been in a restaurant for some time where the tables were spaced out or shielded between. Some restaurant staff wear masks and some don't. It isn't even consistent within a single restaurant staff. Some businesses have signs saying no entry without a mask, but it isn't enforced. I can't blame the workers for not wanting to enforce the rule when some people go nuts when asked to help stop the spread of a virus that has already killed over 700,000 people in this country alone.

Okay, I'll get off that soapbox. Mary Ellen and I are still wearing masks when it seems to offer some advantage, even though we both received our Pfizer booster shots last week.

Work continues on my 1600 project car. As you may remember, I bought the car so that I would have something to do last winter during the COVID pandemic. Of course, it will take me longer than that one winter to finish it. Then again, COVID seems to be taking a lot longer than expected as well. Just to be certain, there is no causal relationship between the length of my restoration project and the length of the pandemic. It's just a coincidence - really. Anyway, I think I am done with all the body work I am going to do. I need to get the center body section stripped and primed. Then it will be ready to go to the painter.

In the meantime, I have the drive train completely installed. I actually started the engine and ran it briefly. So far, everything looks good. I know the engine was rebuilt and was fresh when I got it. I don't

know any of the details of the rebuild which was done by a previous owner. Whoever did it though, seemed to know something about MGAs. The front timing chain cover had been swapped for a later one with the mechanical seal versus the original felt seal. That was reassuring. Of course, achieving the successful engine run came after a series of little fixes, mostly of leaks in fuel, oil and water systems, checking carburetors, setting valves, confirming oil pressure, etc. Now if I can just get the hydraulics bled, I will have a drivable chassis.

Recently, a fellow contacted me who was interested in buying an MG Midget. I was happy talk to him, although I am not selling my Midget. As much as I like Midgets, I cautioned him that they are not a good fit for tall people. So I invited him to come and look at mine. When he sat in it, his right knee was solidly wedged against the dash. So I showed him the A and the C, which fit him much better. It will be interesting to see what he ends up with. I wish that I had my 1600 ready to sell.

#### Chairman Bill





# A Veteran's Day "Thank You"



An MG Birthday Gift for a WWII Veteran With this issue of this A-Antics roughly coinciding with Veteran's Day, I dug through my old archives and pulled out this story – always one of our favorites – and thought to share it with everyone. The story originally appeared in the Hoosier A's newsletter in 2016, but seems worth retelling. It is about a softspoken and unassuming WWII veteran of the South Pacific campaign, Roger Houghton - born in Concord, Michigan in 1926:

Back in July, 2016, I got an email from a woman in West Lafayette, Indiana about her grandfather – a World War II veteran and life-long MG enthusiast – who was shortly to have a party for his 90th birthday.



He currently has a 1953 MG-TD, which is not operational (besides, he doesn't have a driver's license anymore). She thought it would mean so much to him to have a TD stop by and give him a ride at his party. I quickly volunteered, and soon found other ready recruits in Tom Wilson, and Greg and Sue Peterson. So, on July 24th, Tom, Greg and Sue, and Trudy and myself found ourselves on the road to the small Indiana town of Otterbein, with a small parade of a TC, a TD, and a TF to add our contribution to Roger Houghton's party. When we got there, we parked in the middle of the main downtown street (as apparently is the custom in Otterbein) and located the party in the Public Library. They told Roger that there was a surprise outside, and took him out the side of the building and around to the front. As he saw the line of T-types (still in the middle of the street), I heard him say "Oh, My!". With an ear-to-ear grin on his face, and his walker firmly in hand, Roger carefully and critically inspected each MG in turn. Then they told him he could have a ride in any of them, and to just pick one. Roger said "the red one!", and climbed into the TD like someone who has spent more time climbing in and out of TDs than I ever will.

And off we went, with some of his family joining us in the TC and the TF. As we drove around the countryside, he never stopped smiling and waving. Afterward, we went inside for snacks and chat for a while, took a few more family members for "MG rides", then said our goodbyes. According to his family, they haven't seen him smile that much for a long time. You can believe that we were also smiling as we headed home. It was a feel good day.

That was 5 years ago. In the intervening years, I learned that Roger passed away at age 93 in October, 2019. Among his numerous accomplishments listed in his obituary was this line: "He enjoyed driving around in his 1953 MGTD...". Roger was a fine and modest gentleman, and it was our honor to have played some part in brightening even a small paragraph of his life's story.

Bill Gallihugh



# The Watkins Glen 'Walk of Fame'-Rowdie Racer Dave Smith Inducted Into IMRRC's Walk Of Fame

Motorsports has been a big part of the Smith Family since driving a Slingshot Dragster in 1965 while still in high school. Later I bought my first MG TD. Chari and I and daughters Katherine and Laura attended many MG events, first in the TD, and later in a 1959 MGA

roadster. Daughter Katherine and dad attended GT-7 at Indianapolis. Later Chari and David attended the second GT held at this famous venue and, heading home, did a lap of Lake Michigan. Near Road America we spotted a poster advertising road racing. This race led me into a job on a New York race team. After 4 years as the crew

L to R: Charles Cook, Kent Prather, David Smith, Joe Tierno and representing Benjamin Harris-III is John Yasenko in the suit. Ben's award is posthumous.

the SVRA 3E Vintage National Championship. What a great season for Crew Chief Mark Barnhart.

We raced at Watkins Glen 12 times, winning the Collier Cup in 2006, the US Vintage Grand Prix Bucher-Decker Cup in 2005 and 2008. In 2020, the Smith women

(Chari, Katherine and Laura) were informed that their nomination of dad & husband Dave had been approved for induction into the 2020 International Motorsport Road Racing Center (IMRRC) Walk of Fame.

The Walk of
Fame began in 1993
and has honored over
160 Road Course
drivers for their
achievements in
Motorsports. The
ceremony in 2020 was

to build a race-car with the support of the Michigan

Rowdie MGA club. The team goal was to race reliably at as many road courses as possible.

chief, we decided

Our 1962 MGA Mk II #49 had its first race at Road America on 5-17-1997.



Using all of the experience while on the New York team during the build of #49, the car was quite quick. In its first SVRA Group 3 race the car finished first in class in a field of an Austin Healey 100-4 and other MGs. In the remainder of the 1997 season, we raced at Mosport Canada, Mid-Ohio (finishing second) and Watkins Glen where the car was bumped from class 3F into 3E, and now racing against 356 Porsches, we finished 5th in Group 3 and first in class 3E. Next was Summit Point and in the season ending race at Road Atlanta we clinched





deferred due to the pandemic. On 9-10-2021 the 2021 ceremony was held at Watkins Glen, NY by IMRRC Historian Bill Green. The Smith Family and Mark & Margie Barnhart and crew Jose Tapia were in attendance and experienced a wonderful conclusion to our Racing

Team's career. Dave Smith & Rowdie Racing



Rowdie Crew Jose Tapia, Driver Dave Smith Crew Chief Mark Barnhart

# "Little Red" MGA On Display at "Eyes On Design"

#### Bruce Mann writes in:

"We were invited to attend the "Eyes on Design" event on 9-19-21 at the Edsel Ford Estate. Drove over in the dark, Sunday morning in the 1600 with a 1957 Golden Hawk, and a 1954 Frazier Darrin, we were the youngsters on that trip. It sure was a great day. Little Red ran good and was sandwiched in between some great British cars."

Bruce

Hello Bruce.

Great talking to you today and I look forward to meeting you next Tuesday at 2:00.

We are absolutely delighted to have one of you MG A's at Eyes on Design this September 19 at the Edsel Ford Estate in Gross Pt Shores. Eyes on Design, began 34 years ago when the Design VPs of the "big three" got together with the **Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology** to create a design-focused car show to support the Institute's work in supporting visually-impaired people in our area and searching for a cure for blindness. You can learn more from our website: eyesondesign.org.

Each year the Eyes on Design show tell a story about the history of car design., This year the theme is "Significant Designs from Bygone Brands". The show will be called "Marques of Extinction" and will be held on the lawn of the Edsel Ford House (home of Edsel and Eleanor Ford) in Grosse Pointe Shores, MI on Sunday, September 19th.

One of the classes will focus on the Post-War development of sports car design in 10 cars beginning with the 1945 MG TC and culminating with an Intermeccanica Italia. One of your beautiful MG A's will represent that beautiful model in this class. Unlike a normal concourse, judging criteria does not include perfect authenticity; judges look for cars that are true to the designer's intent. Judges are predominantly car company design leaders and artists. You can choose to have you car judged or enter for display purposes only. Other car in this class include:

Austin Healey 3000 Austin Healey Sprite AC Cobra Daimler SP250 Intermeccanica Italia MG A MGTC (1948) Sunbeam Tiger Triumph TR6

Looking forward to seeing you next Tuesday,

Doug Richman Class Leader - Sports Car Development Eves on Design Car Show EyesOn Design was founded in 1987 with the

support of design heads of GM, Ford, and Chrysler as an automotive exhibition judged exclusively by automotive designers.

EyesOn Design is one of America's premier automotive events. Each year,



the event attracts members of the transportation design community, collectors, and the public to celebrate and reflect on design.

Vehicles are chosen based on the year's theme by





invitation only, and between 200 and 300 vehicles are at the show. **EyesOn Design** receives its support from both domestic and foreign vehicle manufacturers, as well as automotive suppliers and other loyal companies. Judging is facilitated by active and retired exterior and interior designers from leading automotive and supplier companies.

"One of the rare concours to focus on design rather than collectibility." — **New York Times** 



# Camp Dearborn "Battle Of The Brits" Sept 12, 2021 by Larry Pittman

Several Rowdies managed to make their way to Camp Dearborn near Milford for this year's Battle of the Brits on Sept. 19th. It was a great day for a drive with temps in the 70's. The sky alternated between overcast and sun. Rain wasn't forecast until later in the day. I arrived after 11am and found several Rowdies already in attendance with others arriving not too much later.

In attendance were: John Alexander, Allen Bachelder, Tom Fant, John Flannery, Kevin Peck, Steve Holliday, Bruce & Willie Mann, Larry Pittman, Bob Shafto, Curt & Stephanie Smith, and Bill Weakley. I believe everyone drove an MGA except for Allen Bachelder who drove his MGB-GT over from the Port Huron area. It was great to see Allen there.

Many thanks go to the Windsor Detroit Club who now sponsor this event. Although there's no longer voting, it was still good to get together and have a chance to catch

up. The parking was not as organized as it used to be when it was a "Battle", but that was possibly better as it encouraged mingling. I did notice that the attendance was lower than in previous years. Motorcycles were also in attendance as is typical but their numbers also looked lower. I'm not sure whether attendance was due to Covid concerns or other reasons. There were a couple of food trucks in attendance to keep the crowd happy during lunch time. Things started breaking up around 3 pm and it emptied quickly. A group left for a meal in Milford but I wasn't able to attend. Just after most Rowdies had left, I met John Flannery one of our newest members. It was good getting a chance to talk to him as I learned he had also just joined NAMGAR. Perhaps others had met John earlier. All in all, it was a good day. The drive home made for another good time for a ride in the A and the rain did hold off until later. Here's to next year! Larry















Pictures by Mary Ellen Weakley and Stephanie Smith

Page 10 of 20

# When is a Car Show Not a Car

Show...?

Allen Bachelder

I really learned something back on September 12th. I went to a car *non-show* and had a really great time. Remember when the Detroit Triumph Club used to sponsor "Battle of the Brits"? It was a significant show and most of us participated almost every year. Along about 2017 DTC got tired of managing this annual event. From there on, only the motorcycle part of the show continued in the old tradition. If one googled far and wide enough, one might discover that the car folks



were still getting together, but very informally, with no classes and no judging. Envisioning about a dozen cars showing up, people engaging in some uncomfortable conversation, anxiously choking down their picnic lunches and promptly leaving, this

"non-event" held little appeal for me.



But this year I heard from Bill Weakley and Bruce Mann: they were going, and would I care to join them? I did. The day began with a pleasant, expedient 70-mph romp down I-94 from Port Huron, after which Mrs. Garmin took me on an endlessly circuitous tour of the northern Detroit suburbs, eventually, and miraculously, ending up at the Mann residence in White Lake. 'Tis the stuff of which TSD rallies are made!

Willy, ever the master of things hospitable, made sure I was not about to starve. After breakfast, we waddled

down to the Bruce Mann Surgical Suite – I mean automotive restoration center. Oh, how I sincerely admire folks who work this way, but alas, I cannot. It just isn't in my nature. My shop always looks like Charles Schultz's "Pig Pen" just walked into a Phyllis Diller stand-up monolog.

My B/GT had accumulated some muddy rooster tails



#### THE JOURNAL OF THE MICHIGAN ROWDIES

from a bit of overnight rain that persisted on Wadhams Road connecting Pig Pen to I-94. Yep... Bruce scrubbed it off.

But I digress. I had taken the chance on this non-show and discovered all the pleasures of a good regional car show without any of the detailing hassles. No last-minute discovery that the unanticipated angle of the sun exposed an inaccessible cruddy area under the heater fan motor that you forgot to detail. No last-minute rush to finish voting. And there were a *lot* of cars





there - I would guess close to 200. Lots of friendly tire kicking. Lots of old friends with whom to catch up. Lots of beautiful and/or unusual cars to admire. Unless one has a passion for trophy-collecting (and those of us of "a certain age" have long outgrown that), what's not to love? This event is going on my list of "must go's" from now on! **Allen** 



Page 12 of 20

# Classic Boats Lead John & Carolyn Alexander/King To Unexpected Windy Day Rowdie Meet On Shores Of Lake Lansing With 'Dora Jean'

Here we have a cold, clear day that began with a torrential downpour, designed to keep me from taking my recently completed sailboat to a classic boat show up in the Haslett, Michigan area (Lake Lansing). Carolyn and I loaded up in the rain. About 20 miles out the rain stopped, sky began to clear, wind picked up and temperature began to drop. It was a hint that winter is coming.



Carolyn King and John Alexander, Tom Borden, Jim & Pam Neal

We were greeted by Rowdies Jim and Pam Neal . That's a coincidence. They also are into classic small boats!

Carolyn and I, assisted by several other participants, figured out the spaghetti-like rigging of our new boat sail (which took hours!) just in time for a wonderful lunch. At lunch, Jim introduced us to New Rowdie Tom Borden - coupe owner, also a classic boat enthusiast. Then, sitting next to me was the owner of 2 MGA's! He is from the west coast of the state and the cars are to someday make one. I know that game. It seems many of us have similar interests that keep the brain juices flowing. This is a once-a-year boat show of classic wooden boats and canvas covered canoes, etc. which brought together three Rowdie families. Who knew!

Reporting from the ice laden shores of Lake Lansing

## Skipper John Alexander

PS If I had only completed my MGA 's trailer hitch in time I could have arrived in -really wet- style.

Word has just reached us from Steve and Diane Mazurek about a somewhat recent turn of events for Bruce Nichols, and he wished to give club members a brief situation report. Bruce is a founding member of NAMGAR, and the Rowdies, from day one, and I'm sure there isn't a

person in the club who hasn't benefited over the years from Bruce's vast wisdom and enormous hospitality, so it seems appropriate to let folks know of this news. In April this year Bruce discovered a new growth behind his right ear which when removed was discovered to be a malignant melanoma. He underwent further testing to discover whether it had spread to other areas of his body, and unfortunately that showed spread to other organs, including kidney, heart, and lungs. Bruce eventually was admitted to the hospital when fluid had to be removed from his lungs, but he is now back home with his family around him helping out, and providing care. There may be more immunotherapy treatment attempted, but it would be palliative, and Bruce is considering this currently. For now, Bruce is able to perform some routine tasks, but does require constant home care. Fortunately he does have a very



supportive family managing this. Steve relates that Bruce is very weak, but would enjoy hearing from his club friends, only not all at once. Steve suggests waiting a couple of weeks after reading this to give Bruce and his family time to adjust to his situation. We all wish Bruce the best in this battle, and I'm sure that cards or letters would also be appreciated. His address is in the front of this magazine under membership chairman.

# Rowdie Colour Tour (10-17-21)

Fall Color Tour, October 17, 2021

The day started cold and gray but soon turned sunny and warmer. Five MGAs and one Miata showed up for the tour, with nine Rowdies: Bill and Mary Ellen Weakley, Larry Pittman, Tom Fant, Jeff and Deb Smith, Kevin Peck and Bill and Trudy Gallihugh. The Gallihughs get the prize for the longest drive to the tour. I guess we can forgive them for driving their Miata instead of the MGA. We assembled in Lyndon Park North. Larry and Kevin arrived with their hoods down, so with the sun warming up the scene, the other three MGAs had their hoods folded away as well before we started the tour.

The route covered 31 miles past many lakes and included countless hills and curves. It had to include everyone's favorite stretch of pavement, Hankerd Road, which is like an asphalt roller coaster. Although the scenery was lovely, the tree color is still not at peak. We arrived at Zukey Lake Tayern just before their noon opening time and had a lovely table with a great view of the lake. After our meal and lots of

conversation, we said our goodbyes and headed home.











# Handy Tech Tip



# Dave Quinn writes

I came across this clever idea at a site I visited for the first time - MGA fan club. "Just 2 little metal legs screwed in the bonnet well. It helps to keep the hood at the bottom of its next and neatly close the cover."

Alain Vaxelaire

# Another Handy Tech Tip!

I find that I spend more time looking at sockets to determine size. Sometimes I even have to go outside to be in direct sunlight to read the

size on an oldie but goodie socket. Here is a picture from one of many socket label vendors. The price is

very affordable and the labels are designed to be resistant to most shop chemicals. The SAE labels are black on white. The metric is Red on White. I just bought the pack of three for \$10.00 to take care of my short and long



socket sets. Dave Smith

https://socketlabels.com/shop/ols/products/find-ittool-marking-system

# A SPECIAL HEAD FOR THE M.G.-A

H.R.G. Light Alloy Head Gives 8 b.h.p. Increase in the middle-r.p.m. Range

THE M.G.-A sports car uses the B-series B.M.C. 11-litre engine in twin carburetter form. As this is a "bread and butter engine which has to serve a number of different B.M.C. makes of car it has its limitations, peak power being 72-73 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m. The B.M.C. engineers realise this limit and have developed a twin-o.h.c. head for this power unit, which lifts the maximum power hy 36 b.h.p. in conjunction with a slight increase in engine sweptvolume, at the expense of noise, increased cost and, it seems, other disadvantages, because Motor Sport has still not been allowed to road-test one of these cars, after being told last summer that the car had proved too unsatisfactory to be submitted to us.

Meanwhile, working independently, Godfrey and Proctor of H.R.G Engineering Co., Ltd., Oakcroft Road, Tolworth, Surrey, abetted by V. W. Derrington Ltd., have produced a far more simple and satisfactory method of increasing the power of the M.G.-A

through its cylinder head.

The H.R.C. head is of LM8 light alloy, weighing half that of the standard M.G. head, or less than a normal M.G. exhaust manifold. The siamesed inlet ports on the same side as the exhaust ports of the standard engine have been changed for four separate inlet ports. of the same size, on the off side. A special combustion space is employed, with slightly inclined sparking plugs towards which the mixture is projected on the compression stroke, the sharply divorced inlet and exhaust valve areas of the standard head being largely dispensed with. The exhaust porting is unchanged and can be used with the normal manifold or, more advantageously, with a Derrington three-branch exhaust system. Flat-top h.c. pistons are available. together with better quality valves and stronger valve springs. H.R.G. find it advantageous to lighten the valve end of the rockers and Derrington has in hand lightweight tappets and push rods.

To revert to the H.R.G. cylinder head, this costs £58 10s. and comes complete with special stub- for attaching the normal twin S.U. carburetters to the four ports and a special spanner for the repositioned plugs. When installed in the car the heater is moved to the near-side. The special exhaust system costs £17 10s., the h.c. pistons £12 12s.

We recently spent a day at the H.R.G. works to check the claims made for this cylinder head. First we saw an engine fitted with this head run on the test bench, complete with dynamo, Derrington exhaust manifold and car exhaust system, but no fan. The engine had pistons giving a compression-ratio of about 9.3 to 1 and the S.U.s had BF needles.

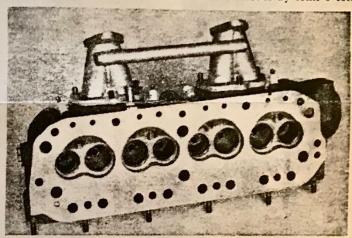
Afterwards, under exactly the same conditions, a standard M.G. head was substituted, the only other alteration being to change the carburetter needles to GS. The power increase with the H.R.G. head was 8 b.h.p. at 4,500 r.p.m. and 7.1 b.h.p. at 4,000 r.p.m. The Derrington manifold is worth about 2 b.h.p. Incidentally, the engine "ran-on" when switched off, with the M.G. head, but not with the H.R.G. head. The latter weighs 16 lb. without manifold. folding, the former 32 lb.

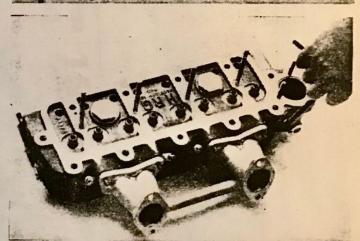
Maximum power from the H.R.G. head with Derrington exhaust system is achieved at 5,500 r.p.m., when an increase of nearly 10 b.h.p. is obtained over the M.G. head with standard manifolding.

To complete the check we spent the following day driving an M.G.-A two-seater with H.R.G. head, special cool-air inlet box and three-branch exhaust. Although running on comparatively soft K.L.G. FE80 plugs no trouble was experienced, even when crawling through the December fog, while subsequent experiments proved that the H.R.G. head renders the engine extremely flexible, a satisfactory top gear range of 10 to over 100 m.p.h. being available, an indication of efficient carburation and combustion.

Fog hampered performance testing but on a wet road the extremely creditable time of 9.4 sec. was recorded for 0-50 m.p.h. acceleration, two-up. On a dry road this could undoubtedly be reduced to under 9 sec., as wheelspin was excessive in bottom and second gear. The speedometer was, of course, corrected for this test, being 1.4 m.p.h. fast at 50 m.p.h. The standing \(\frac{1}{2}\)-mile was covered in 18.8 sec. under the same adverse conditions. These times better those of the M.G.-A coupé by 1.4 sec. and 1.0 sec., respectively, and are but 2.1 and 0.7 sec. slower than the equivalent times for the Twin-Cam 1,588-c.c. M.G. It became necessary to change up from second to third at just above 50 m.p.h. and thereafter the car fairly surged

away in third, making us wish for better visibility so-that acceleration checks coud be made to higher speeds. We believe that up to 70 m.p.h. this H.R.G.-tuned M.G. will beat a normal M.G.-A by some 5 sec.





Two views of the H.R.G. cylinder head and inlet manifolding for the

The car gave no trouble while in our hands and although as noisy. crudely sprung and difficult to enter as every M.G.-A, the engine proved not only very flexible, as has been said, but smooth and free from pinking or running-on, in spite of the 9.3 to 1 compressionratio. We understand that fuel consumption is, if anything, fractionally improved, the water temperature never rose above 160 deg. F. in spite of radiator blanking and, had the opportunity arisen, we think this H.R.G.-M.G. would have come within 10 m.p.h. of the Twin-Cam M.G., comfortably exceeding 100 m.p.h. And the hard, purposeful engine noise is that of the normal M.G., not being increased by the special head or exhaust manifolding.

Those who contemplate racing or rallying in M.G.-As next season should investigate these mods. Already some competitors have proved them advantageous.—W. B.

# From a 1950's issue of Motorsport magazine

(See more comments on the Derrington crossflow head on the next page as well)

More On The H.R.G-Derrington Head On An MGA (with excerpts from Mark J. McCourt in Hemmings online 11-21)

Hemmings online newsletter in their latest Nov. '21 edition has an article written by Mark J. McCourt describing an MGA MkII Deluxe car owned by Carl Meyer that is equipped with an H.R.G-Derrington crossflow cylinder head, as well as 1-3/4" SU Carbs and a Monza exhaust. The article describes the potential advantages that MG could have built in by using this head and marketed it, even over the Twin Cam engine. Today original H.R.G-Derrington crossflow heads are hard to come by and expensive, but Moss Motors has made reproduction items. MGA owners today thus have options to improve their engine's horsepower by either using an 1800 cc MGB motor, or a supercharger, or a crossflow engine head.

Using some excerpts from Mark McCourt's story, the article states that:

"...enterprising enthusiasts were improving on factory engineering and making go-faster parts for cars long before the 1962 Mk II De Luxe on these pages was built. Those keen individuals weren't limited by considerations of cost, economy, or warranty-friendly longevity, so their personalized cars could be highly tune...A new, high-compression, crossflow aluminum head had hemispherical combustion chambers and relocated, opposing intake and exhaust ports matched with high-flow intake and exhaust manifolds..."

"...BMC engineers weren't the only ones working to improve B-series performance... racing specialists at the H.R.G. Engineering Co. had their own ideas about how to get the most from this four-cylinder. This firm....debuted an alloy DOHC cylinder head...atop a Singer engine in 1955. H.R.G.-Derrington was the eponymous speed equipment and accessory company of V.W. "Vic" Derrington. This prominent tuning firm marketed these lightweight alloy crossflow heads...with patronage from the world of Formula 1 Grand Prix, as well as private racers and enthusiast drivers...H.R.G. had apparently offered it to MG as a performance accessory, but it was refused because of the in-house work."



In the 1950's H.R.G. did comparison testing of a standard MGA 1500 engine with one equipped with their crossflow head, as well as an MGA Twin Cam. Their results were quite impressive as shown by this period graph:



William Spohn also has a website with much information on the original Derrington crossflow heads as well. View it at <a href="https://www.rhodoworld.com/HRG.html">https://www.rhodoworld.com/HRG.html</a> and view the complete Hemmings article at <a href="https://www.hemmings.com/stories/2021/09/21/rare-period-speed-parts-make-this-1962-mga-1600-mk-ii-de-luxe-perform-better-than-a-factory-twin-cam?">https://www.hemmings.com/stories/2021/09/21/rare-period-speed-parts-make-this-1962-mga-1600-mk-ii-de-luxe-perform-better-than-a-factory-twin-cam?</a> refer=news&utm\_source=edaily&utm\_medium=email&ut m campaign=2021-09-22

Finally, Dave Smith replied with some comments about the output of the 3 different MGA power choices: "I love the comparison chart of the stock pushrod, the Twin Cam and the cross flow. Interesting that the cross flow could yield such strong MPG, in addition to the performance. A modern footnote is that the pushrod factory cylinder head and a private label camshaft on a 1622 is capable of 130 HP at 7,300 rpm using the 1 3/4 Twin SU carburetors. I never saw a Derrington head on a vintage racer, but that was likely due to their rare availability. Also interesting that the Factory 1800 three main crankshaft can easily handle that horsepower and RPM if fitted into the 1622 engine block."

So we've got some good options to extract more hp from our little MGAs, if we're willing to spend the money and time to pursue one. For now, I'm happy to put up with my 1500 cc engine as it is, and just read about all the rest. *Safety Fast* (or *Faster* with a Derrington head).

Ken Nelson



is BACK!

# And You're Invited!

December 5th, 2021

The festivities begin at 1:00 pm for the Social Hour. Appetizers arrive at 2:00 pm.

We will feature our customary catered dinner from Knight's of appetizers (Stuffed mushroom caps & Swedish meatballs) and main course choices (Beef and Fish, Au Gratin Potatoes, Steamed Veggy Medley – green beans, carrots and cauliflower, Mixed Green Salad w/choice of 2 dressings, Rolls w/Butter. To complete this repast will be Chocolate Chip Cookies and Brownies!

We will provide coffee and soda so remember to bring your own favourite beverage.

Once again, the club will pick up the tab in celebration of the season and our return to Party Central, so please RSVP!

Following our dinner will be the famous **Rowdie Gift Exchange** so all are encouraged to bring a "Wrapped Gift".

The deadline to RSVP for this year's party is **November 18**th. Please let John Alexander (king\_alex@msn.com) know if you will be attending and the number in your party.





# The Chelsea Depot

125 Jackson Street, Chelsea,

Michigan From I-94: Exit 159 toward Chelsea. Turn North onto Chelsea/Manchester Road which becomes South

Main Street. Continue North approx.. 1.5 miles to Jackson Street (immediately South of the railroad tracks) and turn right. You Have Arrived.

# MG Test Drives Courtesy of Car & Driver, 1962

What an exhilarating experience our day with the first production MG turned out to be—storming around Lime Rock track somewhat slower than is now possible in some modern sedans, but with the fresh breeze (and a little rain) in our faces, a hard seat and stiff springs under us, and a very quick-acting steering wheel in our hands, requiring a good deal of muscular effort. You enjoy this car in its own way, and relish the knowledge that you are driving the ear; it is not driving you. This car was made long before

and is hinged at the front. It may be operated at any angle, and is easily worked by the driver if he is alone. A gauge on the dashboard registers fuel tank pressure, and you should have a fairly high reading before moving off.

Engage first gear, release handbrake, advance ignition, release clutch, and off you go. But only up to about 15 mph before it is time to shift up. There are only three speeds and no synchromesh, but up-changes can be made reasonably fast without double-clutching. For down-

shifts doubleclutching is indispensable. Third gear is direct drive, with an axleratio of 4.4 to one. In its younger days, this car had a top speed of 82 mph, but we did not attempt to ascertain its pres-

ent maximum. We did, however, get around the circuit fast enough to experience the limited adhesion of the high-pressure, narrow-section 4.40 x 27 tires on some of Lime Rock's turns.

There is absolutely no body roll, and even if the rear end can break away rather suddenly, it does not break away completely. Moreover, correction is made extremely easy by ultra-quick steering. Considerable centrifugal force can be felt, but lateral support is so good that no grab rail has been found necessary. Elbow room is unusually ample, since the body sides are cut away on both sides of the cockpit.

With the hard suspension, there is necessarily a lot of vibration in the car, but it is surprising how the effects of road shocks diminish as speeds increase. After getting used to the car, we found its behavior perfectly predictable, and the car perfectly suitable for competition, just as it was designed to be.

The widely spaced gear ratios and the long gear lever were of course a disadvantage, and the four brake drums seem ridiculously small in comparison with latter-day huge, finned, multi-leading-shoe brakes. But four-wheel brakes were not very old when the MG went into production and cars continued to be made for several years afterwards with rear brakes only. The MG #1 brakes proved adequate for the speeds we drove it at, and reliable in operation.

Much of the success of the early MGs was due, of course, to engine dependability. The 1923 prototype had a rebuilt 11.9-h.p. (taxable) Hotchkiss engine as used in the Morris Cowley The rebuilding carried out by Cecil Kimber at the Morris Garage consisted in converting it from side valves to overhead valves, balancing the crankshaft, installing new cast-iron pistons, while retaining the wet-plate clutch and the Oxford three-speed transmission. The brakes, incidentally, were of the four-shoe type.

Many alterations were made before Kimber decided to manufacture the MG, He reached that decision in 1925 and seven cars were completed that year. They used the four-cylinder 1,802-cc Morris Oxford engine instead of the 1,400-cc Cowley unit. In standard form it developed 28 bhp at 2,350 rpm, and no reliable figures for the MG version are available. The MG had aluminum pistons and a single side-draft SU carburetor, high-tension magneto and thermo-syphon cooling. The wheelbase was 106.5 inches.

The instrument panel, with its dials somewhat unsystematically arranged, had an oil pressure gauge all the way to the left, while the ammeter took up the center location, surrounded by a speedometer on the left and a tachometer on the right. The water-temperature gauge was placed directly in the radiator cap, with an arrow which could be read easily once you had memorized the temperature readings.

There was no weather equipment and no luggage space, no bumpers, and headlights which would prove impossible in modern night traffic.

The fact remains that with all its age, noise, and inconvenience of operation, this little car has a way of endearing itself even to those not normally attracted to vintage or antique cars. Any keen driver soon finds an affinity with a genuine pioneer sports car, and must enjoy getting in closer touch with the road than is considered permissible in its modern equivalent.

Wot-no doors! Norbye and Mann board.



# A traditional sports car in the true sense literally offers open-air motoring

Oscar (the dummy now used for measuring the habitability of new designs) was invented, and it may surprise many younger drivers that this car has a very comfortable seating position and a sensible layout of the controls, with the sole exception of the outside handbrake.

In common with most later MGs, it was created with racing in view (the prototype built in 1923 secured a Gold Medal in that year's Land's End Trials) and the seats were arranged as was then normal racing-car practice; the passenger (mechanic) slightly behind the driver, to offset their shoulders and thus permit a narrower body. Doors were, naturally, dispensed with altogether. Although tall and narrow, the car gives the driver no impression of the lack of stability that onlookers may expect in it.

The seats are very low—although the floor height above ground level is considerable—and you sit with legs practically stretched out. The view from behind the wheel is typically vintage, with a long hood tapering evenly into a curved radiator grille, leaving a good view of the right front fender. If you are very tall, you can see both.

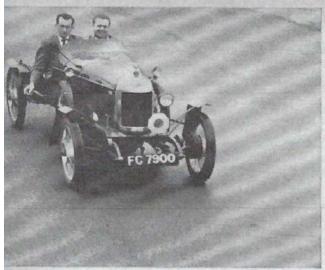
The pedals are placed in standard order, with the throttle nearest the right wall. Starting the car is easy, even if you are alone—with the proper ignition advance it will start at the first pull of the crank and idle smoothly.

The fuel pump is manually operated, the passenger or mechanic pumping air pressure into the tank at intervals to provide a steady feed. The pump is on the cockpit floor,

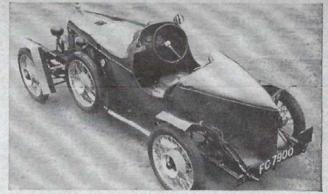
NOVEMBER, 1962

23

# MG Test Drives Courtesy of Car & Driver, 1962

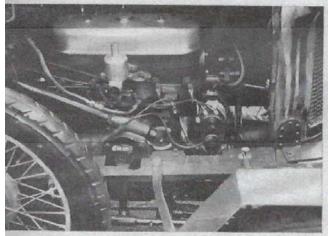


J. Cameron Mann of MG takes our tech editor for a trial run.

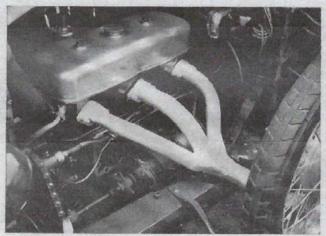


The instruments may be spartan but not the driving position.

# Driving Impressions of the First Production MG

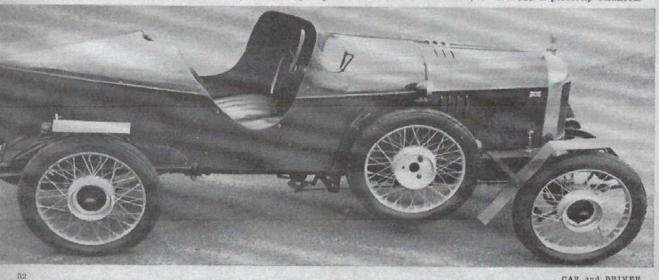


The HT magneto is carried behind and below the SU carburetor.



The generator has long shaft drive from the pulley in front.

With no overhang at either front or rear end, and the engine placed well back in the chassis, the first MG is perfectly balanced.

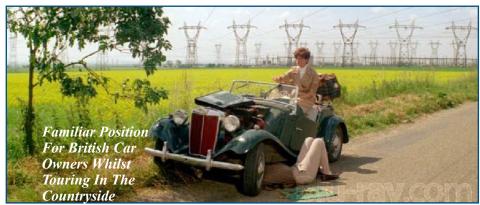


Page 19 of 20

# Car collectors! More cars! We don't know!

"Are We Happy? I Should Say!"

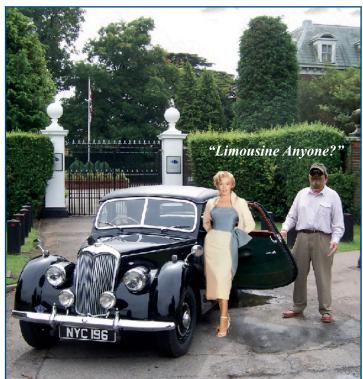
# A Little Of 'This and That'













Page 20 of 20