



A-Antics



*GT-48 Memphis
TN June '23*



Drive Your MG Day, 5-6-23

GT-48, Rowdies Rule Premier!

British Spring Car Meet

Center Your Carb Jet Tech Tip



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

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

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
2016-	Bill Weakley

Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman, Webmaster

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

Larry Pittman's Database Report: 65 Active and Paid-Up Members

Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: August 20, 2023

Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!



Join over 2,000 enthusiastic owners in the restoration, preservation, and sheer enjoyment of driving an MGA, Magnette, or variant of this noble breed. You'll receive six bi-monthly issues of *MGA!*, our full-color, award winning magazine, invitations to National and Regional Get-Togethers throughout the U.S. and Canada, plus a knowledge base and support group second to none. All this for just \$37.50 per year (North America), or \$52.50 (International). **Get more information at <http://www.namgar.com>, or contact registrar@namgar.com.**





Past Chapter Chairpersons:

MEMBERS PAGE

Welcome New Members

First name: **Matthew**
 Last name: **Rall**
 Spouse or Significant Other: **Stacey Rall**
 Cell ph: 734-417-9858
 Email: materal73@gmail.com
 Address: 6500 Raintree CT
 Canton, MI 48187-3530
 Type of MGA: Roadster
 Year: 1958
 Model: 1500

First name: **Lonnie**
 Last name: **Franklin**
 Spouse or Significant Other: **Joann Franklin**
 Address: 9394 Blueberry Hill
 Howell, Michigan 48843
 Cell ph: 181-063-25865
 Email: lonnie.e.franklin@gmail.com
 Type of MGA: Roadster
 Year: 1959
 Model: 1500
 Referred by Tom Fant

For Sale

FOR SALE Dove Grey 1962 Mark II Roadster, total restoration in 1996 - well traveled (we have driven it to 15 GTs) and carefully maintained and upgraded with safety and reliability features. For photos and a copy of the maintenance/parts-replacement log since 2017, drop me an email at bill.tru@att.net. **Bill Gallihugh**, Kalamazoo, MI. Asking \$25k.

Letters

Suggested Tech Tip:

Early in the driving season, we may want to make our LBC look a bit more Spiffy. One upgrade is to paint our disc or wire wheels, but the cost and effort to dismount the tyres is a challenge.

An Alternative is to cut a paper ring to fit closely between the outer rim and the tyre sidewall. However

these seldom fit well and overspray can get onto the tyre itself.

A better alternative is to get an old deck of playing cards. Insert them into the crevice at the bead and overlap sufficiently to keep overspray under control. Before you spray, take a picture and send it to your newsletter editor. Mix or match the colours as you see fit.

Dave Smith
MGVR Technical Editor

British-German Cooperation

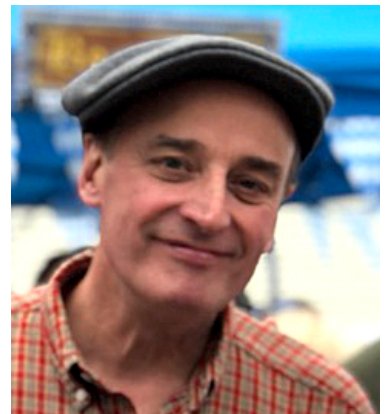
The internet provided this picture of a secret prototype car design approach combining the best of German and Britain engineering.



Todd Clarke's Obituary

(Rowdies, I don't believe this has been shared before and I know many of us who purchased items from Clarke Spares wondered about the loss of Todd. Dave Quinn)

Todd A. Clarke, of Doylestown, PA passed away at his home in January 2023 from complications of heart and Lyme disease. Born January 9, 1954 into a military family, Todd experienced living in many places, including Morocco, Africa; Okinawa, Japan; Arkansas; and New Jersey. Family ties to the Delaware Valley brought Todd's



family back to Yardley, Bucks County. He resonated with the history and natural beauty of Bucks County and chose it as his home, living primarily in the Doylestown area most of his life.

Willing to strike out on his own, Todd, after pursuing studies in cinematography at Bucks County Community College and Temple University, chose to establish Clarke Spares & Restorations in 1976, providing expert repair and replacement parts for British sports cars, specializing in MG's from the mid 1950-60's. Traveling on foot across the UK, Todd established a unique supply and client base for his business. He gained a true appreciation for British engineering ingenuity which he shared with purveyors and clients around the globe for over 45 years.

Todd's love of the cinema led to teaching the art of film-making and the history of cinema at Bucks County Community College. Independent films he produced were recognized at several film festivals. He especially loved good mystery films, as well as the art of illusion via horror and science fiction movies. In later years he was drawn to the "mystique" of Archaeology, enjoying reading of important discoveries, as well as exploring and making discoveries on his own.

Todd enjoyed working outside on weekends, cutting and splitting wood and used his unique problem-solving talents to handle difficult tree removal projects. Todd had a natural gift for sharing and never arrived anywhere empty handed. He regaled family and friends with his hearty laugh and interesting conversation.

Todd was predeceased by his father, Capt. Charles E. Clarke, and mother, Marilyn (nee Engle) Clarke. He is survived by his brother Steven (Barbara) Clarke, sisters Susan Clarke and Jaye (David) Colon, nephews Caleb Hopkins and Andre Colon, nieces Emily Hopkins and Hillary (Dan Layfield) Clarke, and two great-nephews Henry and Charles Layfield.

Reader's responses:

Thank you Dave . I did some business with him; his products were excellent and he was a pleasure to work with. A big loss on many levels. Is there any information regarding the future of his business?

Roger Melton

Thanks for sharing, Dave!

Stephanie Smith

Thanks Dave, This is a loss to our community for sure. Todd was a really great guy.

Katherine Bertolini

Thanks Dave, I've called and talked to Todd more than several times and his photo is exactly as I pictured him. He was quite friendly and seemed to like his life. In addition to his family, our MGA family will surely miss him. **John Alexander**

(Note from Clarke Spares: All orders have been suspended due to the sudden death of Todd Clarke. If you have an existing unfulfilled order, or have unfinished

business with Clarke Spares, please send an email to estate@clarkespares.com Your patience is appreciated.)

New Electric MG

Dave Quinn sent in this picture of a new electric MG Cyberster roadster. Due in the UK in the summer of '24 for approximately £50-60,000 and with between 350-550 hp depending on model. Electrics by Lucas, of course.



Save The Planet?

Recycling Used Coolant - I don't know if you have tried lately but it is near impossible. So much for Save the Planet. I started with a local parts store which took my 10 gallons of used oil. Sorry no take coolant! Called Valvoline oil change. Sorry no take! "Try contacting Earth911.com." Sorry not take unless you want to arrange a contractor pickup. Called my local truck mechanic. Sorry no take! Called our local scrapyard. Sorry no take! I asked, "What do you do with cars you scrap?" "Put in large barrel for paid pickup. Will take yours if you want to scrape out your car." Called my local radiator repair shop. Sorry no take! "What do you do with you old coolant?" Put in 55-gallon drum and pay \$65 or \$70 for pickup. It is always about the money isn't it. No one wants to pay for pickup. The radiator shop agreed to take my 3 or 4 gallons for \$5 because he heard my story.

Dave Quinn



ROWDIES 2023 EVENTS

JULY

- 9 **Mad Dogs-** Gilmore Museum, Hickory Corners, MI
- 14 **Rolling Sculpture Car Show-** Ann Arbor, MI
- 15 **Rowdy Birthday Party-** Dave & Donna Quinn's- Jackson, MI
- 21-23 **Waterford Hills Vintage Races-** Waterford, MI

AUGUST

- 5 **Rowdies Beach Party-Tom Fant's at Portage Lake**
- 12-13 **Alden Car Show & Antrim Co. Drive-** Alden, MI
- 19 **John Twist's Summer MG Party-** Grand Rapids, MI

SEPTEMBER

- 1-4 **MG 100th Anniversary & Historic Races-** Lime Rock Park, CONN
- ??? **Battle of the Brits-** Camp Dearborn- Milford, MI

- 17 **Orphan Car Show-** Ypsilanti, MI

- 19-21 **Put-in-Bay Vintage Races-** Put-in-Bay, OH

OCTOBER

- ??? **Rowdies Colour Tour-TBA**
- ??? **Larry's Day In Garage-** Fenton, MI

NOVEMBER

- 3 **Christmas Party-** Chelsea, MI

OTHER POSSIBILITIES

- Day In Garage
- Spontaneous Drives in Country
- Canoe Trip
- Bar Hopping Like It Was 1958



Dear Rowdies,

We have successfully launched our new **Michigan Rowdies Regalia website** and it is up and running.

This website is: <https://rowdies.itemorder.com/>. The website is active and you can order both men and women's clothing with our logo. The clothing has the Michigan Rowdie logo, however, currently embroidered at a size that is too large @ 3.250 inches. We are reducing the size to 2.250 inches and adding the Michigan Rowdies script which is also an added bonus and looks really nice.

The timing for making this logo size change is currently not available as the owner of the store has

some medical issues to deal with. Expectations are we should have that change made shortly. In the meantime please browse the website as it is very user friendly and provide any feedback you have for suggested changes.

We will be eliminating our current regalia order format on the rowdies website and replacing with a link that will connect to the website mentioned above. Timing to completely eliminate the current regalia items for ordering should be in a couple of months.

Just FYI, we do have some items that will continue to be for sale such as Rowdie Key fob, Rowdie Logo badge bars and some misc. shirts. If you would like some of these items please contact Bruce Mann-Rowdie Regalia Chairman. **Bruce Mann**



Chairman's Chatter

I just returned from GT-48. A total of twenty Rowdies were in attendance as shown in the photo. Forrest and Leslie Johnson, Larry Pittman, Dave and Donna Quinn, Tom Fant and Lynn Combs, Steve Holliday, Curt and Stephanie Smith, John Alexander, Bruce and Willie Mann, Allen and Florrie Bachelder, Steve and Diane Mazurek, Todd and Connie Binsz, and me. The GT seemed successful and well-run. I spent a lot of time thinking about all the things we will have to do for GT-50.

Unfortunately, Mary Ellen was not able to go to Memphis. Our son, Thad, was in Ann Arbor for a conference that we didn't know about until after we had made our plans. Mary Ellen had other conflicts also, but she let me go. As it turned out, John Alexander was in a similar situation, so we had a caravan of two cars and two drivers. I planned the routes, staying off the interstates, except a couple short stints to avoid going through a city on surface streets. I highly recommend having an experienced BMC mechanic along on MG drives.

My car did have two minor issues. On the first day of the return trip, one brake pad stuck. Approaching an intersection, I smelled burning brakes and looked around for the culprit. When I stopped, smoke was rising from my left front fender. I pulled over immediately. With John's help, we managed to free it up. For the rest of the day, I braked using the hand brake for fear of it locking up again. On the second day, I started using the brakes gently at first without further problems. However, just south of Bryan, OH, my engine suddenly shut down. It was obviously electrical, so we did some trouble shooting and ended up deciding it must be a bad condenser. When I went to remove the condenser, I found the insulator on the mounting post had essentially melted and allowed the hot wire connectors to contact the post. I had the distributor rebuilt by Jeff Schlemmer, so hadn't expected problems in that area. Fortunately, I had the old insulating cylinder and washer in my spares kit. Within a few minutes, the engine was running and gave no more problems all the way home. Now I am wondering where to buy replacement insulators that will last.

The host hotel for the GT was a 27-story tower with the lobby and restaurants on the third floor. It was located away from downtown Memphis but near a few restaurants and a shopping center. However, the roads in the vicinity of the hotel were very confusing, at least for me. On the first day, I wanted to go to a Target store that looked just a couple blocks away. By the time I had figured out how to get there, I had driven at least five

miles. We had rain a few times, including on the morning of the car show, which delayed the show until noon. The show itself was in front of the Edge Motor Museum near downtown Memphis with Sun Studios just down the block.

While walking around the show, I found the fellow running the museum in front of my car. When I introduced myself, he said he had something to show me. In the sidewalk, there was a sign for "Weakley Key and Lock". He said that the museum building was originally a Cadillac dealer, but the last tenant before the museum was a locksmith named Bill Weakley. I am not too surprised to see some Weakleys in that area. There is also a Weakley County in northwestern Tennessee. It was named after a Colonel Robert Weakley who was a prominent politician in the early 1800s. From what I have discovered about my family tree, any connection with the Colonel's family must have been back in England.

For many, a highlight of the trip was a visit to Graceland. Although I was never a big Elvis fan, I didn't want to miss the opportunity to see it. The house itself is not as large as one might think. The associated museum complex is much larger. Most people I talked to agreed that Elvis was a much better performer than an interior designer, but then it was the 70s, so that explains some of it. The red MGA from the movie Blue Hawaii was prominently displayed in the car museum.

GT-49 will be at the Mt. Hood Resort on the lower slopes of Mt. Hood in Oregon. According to Google Maps, that would be 2,338 miles and 34 hours of driving from our house via interstates. Avoiding interstates would only be 33 more miles but 9 more driving hours. I'm not sure that I am up to that, or my A for that matter.

We have a lot of work to do in the next two years to get ready for GT-50. I think we did a great job with GT-40, and I think we will again. I'm also looking forward to introducing some NAMGAR members to the Traverse City area. In the meantime, let's all enjoy our short summer and drive our MGAs as much as possible.

Chairman Bill

P.S. I attended the Champagne British Car Festival in my hometown of Bloomington, IL the week before the GT. Mark Michalak was there with his beautiful MGA coupe. I thought some of the Rowdies would appreciate seeing his photo. Cindy was not with him.



HarMo Muffler Story -Part 2, by Dave Quinn

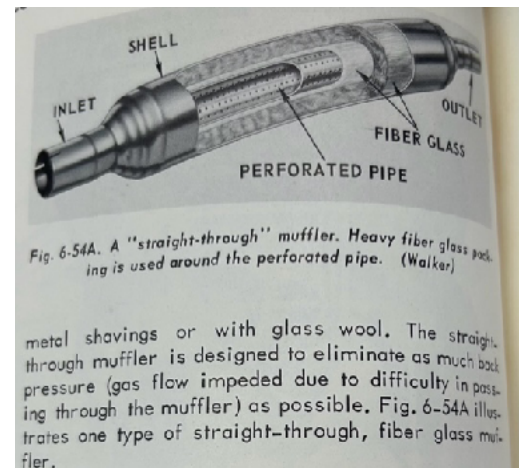
In July 2022 I purchased a NOS early 1960s era HarMo after-market muffler made in the UK hoping it would produce a MA 'factory' exhaust note. Likely made for racing, the noise was acceptable on local drives, but way too loud to enjoy long distances. Ken Nelson repacked one using stainless steel pot scrubbers. I had no interest in removing it, then cutting, packing, welding, and reinstalling it.

The outlet was straight and probing it showed no resistance. These 1963 muffler diagrams show no restriction for either, so I'm still not sure if mine is a steel pack or baffled, since it has features of both - round with the inlet and outlet off centered. Some baffled mufflers can be installed backwards and defeat its purpose but there was no chance with a 7" outlet. I considered inserting a pad or two into the outlet but it bunched up a short ways in and I didn't want them

shooting out the back like a James Bond car. Bruce Mann gave me a professional auto fabricator's number to pick his brain. Kerry's Custom Shop suggested I try a downturn tip. Hum, like the factory one. It was very cramped at the outlet as the pipe almost hit the bumper override. This UK muffler did not have a normal US 1.5" pipe size and Summit Racing determined my outlet with 1.48" ID and 1.64" OD made it too small for a 1.5" tip to go in it and too large for one to go over it. Amazon to the rescue. I bought a Tritrust clamp-on exhaust tip to fit a 1.5 to 2" tail pipe in stainless steel with a chrome effect for \$15.

It was a tight fit but doable. Since the tip was 2 inches, I bought fiberglass muffler packing from a local motorcycle repair shop for \$5. I wrapped it around the 1.5" outlet pipe to seal off the backside when the 2" tip was put on. It compacted it against the tailpipe clamp. Tight as a drum! Curt Smith suggested wrapping the packing using old screen which I secured with a couple stainless steel ties.

The real test after doing this is - did it work? Oh my, did it ever!! There was zero exhaust noise at 50 mph and the wife said, "Maybe you did it too good." Maybe. It will make it easy for her to yell at me! The DB difference was awesome, and the total cost was \$20. **Dave Quinn**



Rowdies and Mid Atlantic NAMGAR Chapters Team Up For A Winner!

TECH TIP: MGA H4 SU Carburetor Jet Centering

John Casey/Bruce Mann

If you ever discover your carburetor needle binding in the jet bore due to misalignment, consider these steps to remedy the problem (having the carb snug in a vice simplifies this procedure immensely):

PREPARATION:

Tighten the mixture adjusting nut to its full-up (lean) position so that the jet is all the way up and level with the top of the jet bearing and the bridge.

Loosen the carburetor jet bearing with a 13/16 wrench (Big Nut on the Bottom).

Loosen the dome screws and remove the dome and piston.

Loosen the needle retaining screw at the base of the piston.

Pull the needle out of the piston about 1/8" – 3/16" so the needle shank is visible.

Once 1/8" – 3/16" of the shank is visible, re-tighten the needle retaining screw.

WHY: Because when using the carb needle to center the jet, we want the tapered needle to be all the way down into the jet and the needle collar seated on the top of the jet. This allows the needle to center the jet with it's largest (thickest) diameter (explained later).

After you have the needle screw re-tightened, with 1/8" – 3/16" shank visible, insert the needle and piston into the carb body, then put the dome on in the proper orientation and snug the three dome screws.

ALIGNING THE JET:

Next, find a screw driver that will easily fit into the piston damper tube without scratching the sides of the damper tube.

As you keep light downward pressure on the piston, slowly tighten the 13/16 jet bearing nut.

CAUTION:

Don't push down too hard on the piston or you might force the needle shank up into the piston.

ALMOST DONE:

After the jet bearing nut is tight, check that the piston moves up and down without the needle binding.

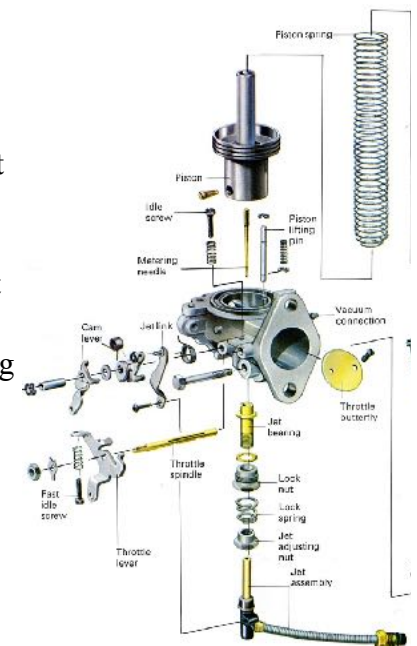
If the needle rubs just a bit, don't worry because that portion of the needle shaft used to center the jet will be above the jet once the needle is returned to its correct position in the piston and the jet is lowered when adjusting mixture.

Remove the dome screws and the dome, pull out the piston, loosen the jet retaining screw and reinsert the needle so the shank is even with the bottom of the piston.

Tighten the needle retaining screw, re-assemble the piston and dome, return to the carb body and tighten dome screws.

After re-assembly, turn the mixture nut two and half turns, check for free piston travel and no binding of the needle in the jet bore.

If it moves freely as designed. Success!



RTG

Rowdies Find Cost Saving With New “A-Antics” Printer!

Hi Everyone,

*You should be receiving your next print issue of the **A-Antics** shortly, if you are on the print issue list. We have changed printers in order to save some money.*

The shipments to all members who get the edition went out 5-11. The postage was less than we forecasted and came in at \$1.74 per issue. The club is saving in excess of \$120.00 per issue on printing and mailing costs. The all in cost this issue was \$241.00 compared to \$365.00, per Jeff for the last issue. If this continues we should save about \$750.00 per year.

Special thanks to Bruce and Willie for spearheading the effort and for doing the actual mailing. Also thanks to Ken and Jeff for their input.

We hope you enjoy it.

Chairman Bill

Effective with the printed Antics issue May-June 2023 we changed our printer source to a company called **Printivity**. The reason for this change was financial. We normally print 30 copies of the Antics to members requesting a printed version instead of the on line version.

In previous issues the Rowdies all in cost for printing, packaging and mailing were \$365.00 per issue. On an annualized basis these were the club's highest expense items at \$2,200.00 per year.

Effective with the May June edition our costs were \$242.00 for a savings of approximately \$125.00 per issue which calculates to \$750.00 savings per year.

Printivity is located in New Jersey and ships the Antics in bulk to Bruce and Willie Mann, and they package and mail them to members. *(Ed: Thanks to Bruce and Willie!)*

Bruce Mann

Rowdies Beach Party

Saturday August 5, 2023

When: Anytime after 1:00 “til ????

Where: 9601 Portage Lake Ave
Pinckney, MI 48169

Burgers, Hot Dogs and Brats Provided

Bring: A Dish to Pass
Beverage of Choice
Folding Chairs

RSVP: To Tom Fant at mgtom1960@gmail.com
or
734-735-5383

Come on over,
the water's fine!



***Rowdies Celebrate 'Drive Your MG Day' With
A Drive To Jerry's Pub on Wampler's Lake***

Arriving around Noon at Jerry's Pub on Wampler's Lake in the Irish Hills were 10 MGAs of our Michigan Rowdies. Our colorful troop really spiffed up the car park at the Pub. Shortly after we parked, another car club showed up with an eclectic collection of Detroit iron from the fifties, Alfa Romeos, a Model T, etc. There was no comparison. It was, as predicted, a spectacular day for showing the breed! ***Rowdies Rule the Road!***

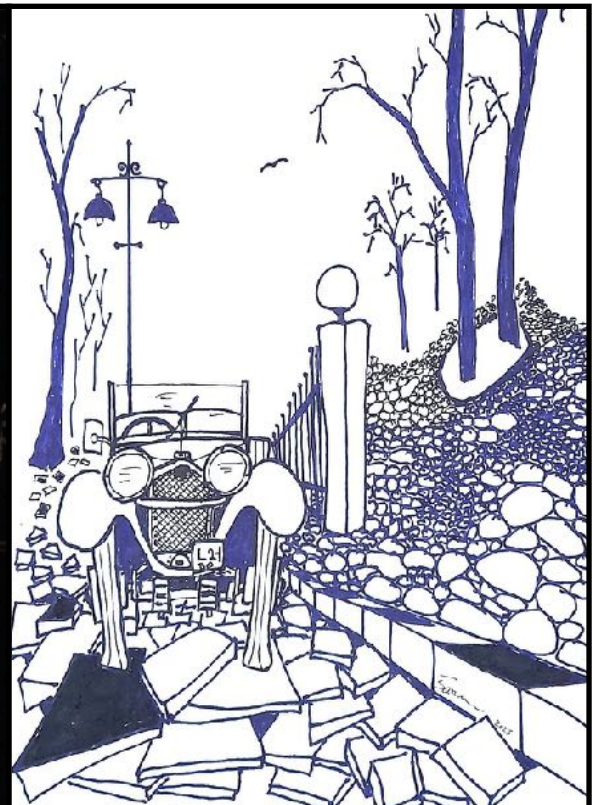
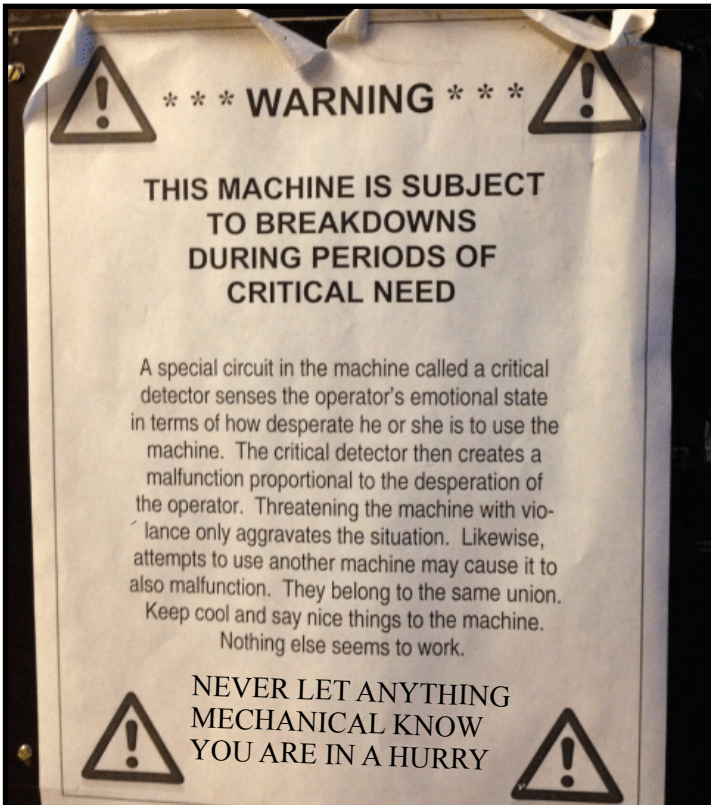
Celebrating the day were Larry Pittman, John Alexander and Carolyn King, Tom Fant and Lynn Coombs, Bruce and Willie Mann, Bill and Mary Ellen Weakley, Gary and Diane Cunningham, Dave and Donna Quinn, Bob Shafto, Curt and Stephanie Smith, Adam Weakley and friend Ko, and Gregg Patten

John Alexander, Meets Chairman





Pictures by John Alexander, Bruce Mann

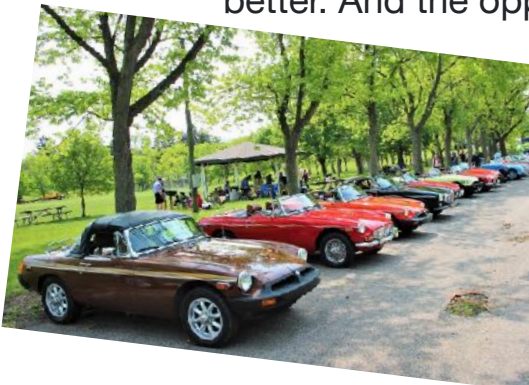


WINDSOR-DETROIT SPRING MEETING 5-21-23



On Sunday, May 21, the Windsor-Detroit MG Club hosted a gathering of British cars and friends at Camp Dearborn in Milford, Michigan. The weather was splendid — probably the best ever for the event. The picnic lunch was even better. And the opportunity to gather in friendship after a long winter was best of all! *(from the WDMGC website)*

(Photos below by John Magee-Above photo by Kevin Peck)

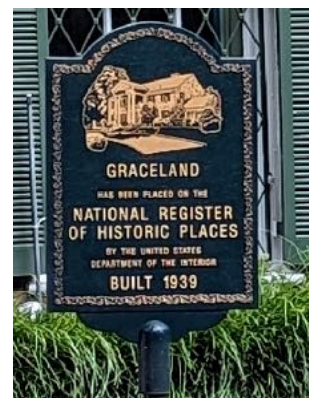


NAMGAR GT-48 IN MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE



Pictured above are the Rowdies attending GT-48 in Memphis, TN June 12-16, 2023 and include Bill Weakley, Forrest & Leslie Johnson, Larry Pittman, Dave & Donna Quinn, Tom Fant & Lynn Coombs, Steve 'Doc' Holliday, Curt & Stephanie Smith, John 'Meet-

Man' Alexander, Florrie & Allan Bachelder, and Bruce & Willie Mann. Missing from the picture are Todd and Connie Binsz. The front cover picture shows 7 of the stalwarts crawling their way through the pubs on Beale Street. Story and further pictures continue below.



Pictures by Bruce Mann, John Alexander, Bill Weakley, Dave Quinn



***Congrats To
Bruce &
Willie Mann
For
Winning
The Premier
Class With
Their MkII
MGA!***



***Pushing the Limits Of a 64-Year Old Car and an 82 year Old Driver-
One Man's Report On GT-48***

1,707 miles of mostly pure hell ... why you ask? First off, my clutch slave cylinder sprung a leak. A hotel parking lot repair was made by driving the car onto a concrete border slab. A wonderful mechanic and fellow Rowdie, John Alexander, offered to install a new unit purchased from a Rhode Island vendor (who else but Cecilia) who had brought two to the meet. That took care of the first afternoon at the site.

We always travel with the top up due to all the luggage. I put the top down and drove it around the parking lot to test the repair and then put the top up because a bad rainstorm was coming in. Whopeeeee - - that was the only time it was down the entire trip. There was a fair amount of moisture in the air that week. It rained the entire day on our second day of travel. It rained so hard the morning of the car show, the show was shifted to the afternoon. It was the only GT I ever attended (this was number 22) that I did not wash my car, nature did it for me.

Traffic and insane Memphis drivers had everyone in our group willing to let the MGs sit in the hotel lot most of the meet.

Donna and several Rowdies did the Graceland tour. Everyone said the same thing, "Glad I did it once."

Read into that what you want to. Gotta love the creepy decor.

The car show was a 20-minute drive downtown and within walking distance of SUN Studio where numerous legends made recordings. It was surreal to be where Elvis, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, BB King and others started out in the 1950s. It was a highlight. The three-hour Back Beat bus tour to Beale Street was another highlight. A very talented guitar player sang songs nonstop while pointing out all the famous city landmarks. The tour included seeing places where Elvis lived, went to high school, and the bandshell where he first performed before a live audience. It was not a surprise that everything at the Hilton Hotel with its 26 floors was pricy but it was a surprise they forced everyone to charge everything to their room rather than accept cash. I had a double pour of a good bourbon that was \$32 but it only took a second or two to scratch my room number on a piece of paper.



All the MGAs at the show looked great. The last I heard there were 100. It was personally disappointing to see so many were trailered. Not so with the Rowdies. Not a single one was trailered. We had a very large smoked sausage topped with coleslaw and BBQ sauce from the food truck at the car show. Awesome; and just six bucks.

Larry Pittman received well-deserved recognition for his efforts in pulling everything together at the GT. The banquet meal to my surprise was excellent. Bruce and



Willie Mann took top honors by winning the Premier Class.

The backroads route going down had a couple long detours. Like really long . . . long like twenty miles out of the way on each one. But the detours in Indiana coming home were head pounders. Time and time again we were sent the wrong way. The worst was in Lafayette where we were forced to drive in circles when following the detour signs trying to get out of the city. We were there so long Curt said he thought he was going to have to change his mailing address. Finally, we pulled over and a local told us how to get back on course to keep heading north.



There was no end to road construction on the trip home. We must have seen 60 or more road constructions. Looking at the total miles for the week, if all the routes were free of construction, we would have driven 1,470 miles. Best guess is we drove 50 miles going to the car show and looking for places to eat, so we drove 190 extra miles thanks to detours and missing, hidden, or poorly placed route signs. What added to the stress for me was having my gearbox freezing up. At times it would not go into any gear. We



were not sure we would be able to make the drive home on the last travel day as outside temperatures heated up. And, as if that wasn't enough, my engine was constantly trying to stall out at every red light while I fought with the gearbox. What saved the day was the suggestion by either Steve Holliday or Curt Smith to put STP oil treatment in the gearbox!! The Andy Granatelli miracle juice transformed the gearbox, or we would still be in Indiana. John Alexander said he experienced similar gearbox heat related issues. In the same discussion it came to light I had not drained and change gearbox oil in twelve years! I always checked annually and topped it up, but it was seldom down. But for some dumb reason it never occurred to me to completely change it. The oil likely lost its properties and gears don't like shifting without some slick on them in the heat of day. That is not going to happen again. Same with the differential. A complete drain of both is on the to-do list; as for me I was already drained. It was a Happy Father's Day when





we finally pulled into the driveway. Dave Quinn

Here's a reprint of an old article about Joe Curto, the "Carburetor King" who has been rebuilding British SU Carburetors and other subassemblies for the last 50 years. The article is by Jonathan Stein who has been an MGA owner from those early days as well. He asks Joe if he's worried that the work would dry up soon for the antiquated SU carburetor fuel systems he builds. Twenty-three years later I just had a carburetor rebuilt by Joe and I had to wait 4 months for him to get to it because he's so busy...read more of Joe's story here.

Carburetor King

One man perseveres at a dying art

British carburetor specialist Joe Curto jokes that he's at "the vanguard of a dying industry." Working out of a 2,500-square-foot shop in his hometown of Queens, New York, Curto is one of North America's top rebuilders of SU and Stromberg carburetors—which haven't been fitted to a North American production car in at least 20 years.

Like most careers, it started by accident. Although he grew up in unlikely sports car territory, Curto fell in love with the MG TD. "When I was 17 I bought my TD—which I still own. I learned how to repair it because I couldn't afford a mechanic." Joe then became a certified aircraft mechanic, a career he continued when he joined the Navy at 18.

After the service, Curto started repairing British sports cars out of his parents' garage in 1973. He graduated to his own shop because "I liked the work and it provided a living." However, Joe says he "was getting tired of climbing under cars and had little room to bring them inside."

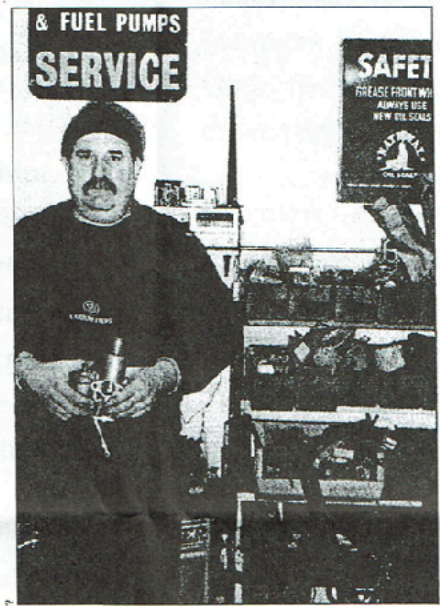
Meanwhile, Curto noticed that *Hemmings Motor News* was starting to expand its advertising of parts and services for old cars. "I decided to do carb stuff," via mail-order, "because that was something I figured people couldn't do themselves and they could easily stick in a box and send by UPS."

He decided to service every variety of SU and Stromberg, but parts were scarce 20 years ago. Often he'd wait weeks for a shipment, only to find that the parts were sometimes wrong.

Curto remembers, "I'd have to make throttle shafts to fill my two-week backlog." As a result, he'd have to produce a larger quantity than needed in order to achieve a low per-unit cost. Then, he'd have the challenge of selling off the balance of the run.

Although Curto buys some parts, he now manufactures many items, including jets, seals and throttle shafts. The parts he produces are bought by shops, catalog vendors and individual customers.

Once Curto gained a clientele, it was only logical to take in other bench work. And be-



JOE CURTO forges ahead in a dying field, with the help of a stash of hand-made parts.

Carburetors were something people could simply stick in a box and send by UPS, says Joe Curto.

cause Curto retained his giant collection of shop manuals and aftermarket catalogs, he had the resources to tackle virtually any British car subassembly. Now he also rebuilds electric and mechanical fuel pumps, Lucas wiper motors, turn signal switches, trafficators (semaphore turn signals) and brake and clutch hydraulics. "I'll do anything I can put in a box and ship," he says. In addition, Joe likes the challenge of creating custom carburetors, and, when time permits, he'll take on some complete car restorations.

When asked if he's worried about the future, Curto says that "While the overall market actually gets smaller, there are also fewer guys repairing these things. My business keeps growing because more people find out about me." And even with a shrinking market, Curto is sure he'll have enough work to keep him busy—and happy—well into the 21st century.

—Jonathan A. Stein

Rowdies Birthday Party 2023

The club will be 47 years old

Celebrate at Dave & Donna Quinn's in centrally located Jackson Michigan on Saturday July 15th



2929 Wolhaven Lane

(517) 782-9749

1:00 pm – till the Lucas lights come on



The main dish, BBQ pulled pork, will be provided. Bring a dish to pass and BYOB. Bring your stories from attending GT-48 in Memphis, travels you took this summer and restoration updates.

As our original founder Bruce Nichols might have said, we are a low-key organization dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our MGA's and cars in all conditions are welcome and that includes daily drivers.

Historically we have always had an auction to help the club treasury. If you have something you would like to donate, please do, but don't feel you have to. We hope to keep the auction short so you can enjoy fellowship.

We have lots of new members in the club and it is as strong as ever, so we are hoping for a good turnout. We are getting new streets in our subdivision so do your part and help to oil them.

We look forward to seeing you!