



A-Antics



MGA Wins Regularity Class In
French "Tour Auto" 2009-pg 5
Rowdie Calendar Of Events
Business Meet Pics & Brian's Award
New-Member's Profile Section



MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER

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A-Antics: Published every other month. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily of NAMGAR or the Chapter. Every effort is made to use appropriate material. The editor reserves the right to edit material for length and content. No placement is guaranteed. The entire contents are copyrighted, Michigan Chapter. Permission to use is granted, provided you give credit to both writer and the club.

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: \$20 annually (\$25 for printed newsletter)

Nickname: Rowdies

Motto: People First!

Rowdies Site: www.mgcars.org.uk

MG Web Site: www.mgcars.uk

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

Past Chapter Chairmen:

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

ROWDIES 2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OFFICIAL ROWDIE events are in “**Bold**” print; other events of interest are in “*Italics*”

FEBRUARY

28 Chicagoland MG Club Swap Meet 8 Am – 3 PM
www.britishcarswap.info/

MARCH

TBD Rowdies garage day in the house - old video day (tentative)

APRIL

19 – 23 Key West Florida NAMGAR Regional
17 Kimber Birthday Party Delhi Café, Holt. Dave Smith host.
29-May 2 VSCDA Driver's School and Races Gingerman Raceway

MAY

1 Drive Your MGA Day Nationwide
15 Rowdies Gymkhana, Ypsilanti. Curt Smith/John Burchwell hosts
21 – 23 Carlisle Import Show

JUNE

6 Orphan Car Show & Rowdie Meet, Ypsilanti & Bellville. Neil Griffin host
6 Fort Megs Perrysburg Ohio
17 – 20 MG Vintage Racers Focus Event Mosport Raceway, Ontario, Canada
18 – 20 Stratford Festival, Ontario, Canada, Philip Wiltshire host
26 – 27 Sloan Car Show Flint MI
26-27 MGB National in Belleville, Ontario

28-30 Put-In-Bay Historic Races, Ohio
TBD Day in the garage. Bruce Mann host

JULY

11 Mad Dogs event, Gilmore Museum, Hickory Corners
26 – 30 NAMGAR GT-35 Delavan WI

AUGUST

21 Rowdies Birthday Party, Rockford. Mac McDonnell host
22 Grattan Vintage Races, Belding. Mac McDonnell host

SEPTEMBER

9-12 U.S. Vintage Grand Prix, Watkins Glen Int'l Raceway
11 Lemon Creek Winery British Show, Berrien Springs. Bruce Nichols host
12 Battle of Brits, Orchard Lake
25 – 26 British day at Waterford Hills Race Track

OCTOBER

16 Color Tour & Campfire, Ann Arbor. Bill Weakley host

NOVEMBER nothing planned

DECEMBER

4 Rowdies Christmas Party, Jackson. Dave Quinn host

FEBRUARY 2011

19 Rowdies ANNUAL BUSINESS MEET, Holt. Dave Smith host

MEMBERS PAGE

Members Update:

It is with regret that we report that Caroline Robinson passed away on Jan 12, 2010. Caroline Scott Robinson, 56, of Ada, died Tuesday, Jan 12th, 2010, at home surrounded by her family.

Caroline graduated from Forest Hills High School in 1972 and received her BS in Business from Aquinas in 1978. She had a lifetime passion for horseback riding and reading. A fiercely independent woman, she valued family greatly and was extremely dedicated to and supportive of her four children. She left a brilliant impression on all she met.

For 33 years with her husband, she created, organized, managed, and directed University Motors, a local MG sportscar business of international acclaim.

An extraordinary wife and mother of intense character, she leaves her grieving husband of 31 years, John H Twist and four children: Mary (Chris) VanOpstal of Wilmette, IL, J Brooks Twist, Barbara Rose Twist, and James Oliver Twist, all of Ada.

Her legacy was her incredible strength. "Don't let yourself get weak; you are as strong as you stay." We offer our condolences to John and his and Caroline's families.



Rowdies Website:

Larry Pittman, Webmaster

<http://www.mgcars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

Mac McDonnell's Database Report:

73 Active and Paid-Up Members

Welcome New Members:

Forrest & Leslie Johnson

12777 N. Cedar Dr. Grand Haven, MI 49417

616-638-2856 mgforrest@gmail.com

57 MGA, 58MGA, 59 MGA, 60 MGA, 57 MGA, 60 MGA, Early MGB

Bruce & Willy Mann

960 Denbar Ct. White Lake, MI 48386

248-698-3372 bwmann@comcast.net "60 MGA

Win \$50

The Rowdies will have a drawing at each meet for a gift certificate worth \$50 in merchandise from Jeff Zorn's Little British Car Co.

We hope to see some new faces at our meets and encourage you to bring a friend to join. All paid-up members are eligible for the raffle to determine each meet's winner.

Classified Ads

Personal for sale or wanted classified ads are free to all paid-up members. Commercial ad rates: Full page \$40 issue/\$200 year; 1/2 page \$25 issue/\$135 year; 1/4 page \$20 issue/\$110 year; Business Card \$10 issue/\$55 year.

Total ads may not exceed 12-1/2% (2 pgs of 16); ads accepted on first come, first served basis.

Send Email & Address Changes to Editor.

Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: April 20, 2010

Tour de France by MGA

There were no purpose built European automobile race tracks during the dawn of motoring so all races were held on public roads. The most common were events between two cities but there were also longer races like the Tour de France, which was first organized in 1899. As the name suggests the event was basically a round-trip of France, much like the bike race of the same name that was first held a few years later. The Tour de France was held off and on until 1986. The interest in the event peaked during the 1950s and early 1960s. At that time it even was one of the World Manufacturer Championship rounds. Financial problems and concerns over safety saw the Tour de France cancelled after the 50th edition in 1986.

Six years later, the **Tour de France Automobile** (later renamed **Tour Auto**) returned as an historic event. Representing the original race's heyday, the Tour Auto is open to cars of a type that competed in the Tour de France between 1951 and 1973 as well as later cars of special interest. Since then well over 200 cars have lined up every year for the five-day marathon through France. The field is split in three competition and two regularity classes. The entrants in the competition class need to set the fastest possible times, while in the regularity class consistency is key. Eligible for overall victory are cars of up to 1966 (the 'VHC' class), which represents the final time the original Tour de France Automobile was held as an important international event.

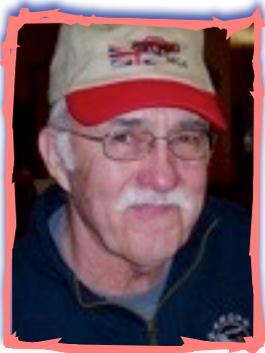
Although the route changes every year, the Tour Auto traditionally starts in Paris and finishes somewhere in the south either on the Mediterranean or Atlantic coast. This year the itinerary was fundamentally different. With the first stage heading from Paris to Beaune, it did start off in a southern direction. However, the subsequent days the cars headed north with stops in Mulhouse, Luxembourg and Marcq en Barceuil, eventually finishing in Deauville on the Atlantic coast. It was the first time to our knowledge that the Tour Auto visited Belgium and Luxembourg. As always the organization managed to find some amazing back-roads that really underline just how beautiful the country is.

Ferraris dominated the event in the 1950s and early 1960s. Most successful of all was the 250 GT model of which the competition version quickly earned the 'Tour de France' nickname. Surprisingly not one 250 GT 'TdF' lined up this year. There were nevertheless plenty of Ferraris assembled, highlighted by the 250 GTO that won the 1964 Tour de France outright. That was the final year the event was part of the World Championship. The bulk of the Ferrari field was however formed by the later 275 GTB. A vast majority of these were road cars, except for the 275 GTB 'Competizione' fielded by Stephen Read and the 275 GTB/C entered by Arnold Meier. Especially Read's 275 created a glorious howl that could be heard from miles away.

For the first time in some years mid-engined sports racers like the Ford GT40, Ferrari 250 LM and Porsche 904 were once again admitted to the VHC class and were thus in contention for the outright victory. That was clearly reflected in the final results, which saw Shaun Lynn in his GT40 take the win ahead of the AC Shelby Cobra that won last year and another GT40. The winner of the more modern class was 'Mr John of B' in his all-white Porsche 906. **The husband and wife team of James and Fiona Willis took top honors in the Regularity class in their MGA** (Ed. note: James, Fiona, and MGA are pictured in cover photo. James Willis is the stepson of John Milne who was a works driver for MGA in the 1950's and had driven this same car in the 1956 Alpine Rally and finished 4th in class). **Story and cover picture from Ultimatecarpage.com and submitted by John McMullan**



A picture of the 3 of the 5 MGA's entered in the 1956 Alpine Rally by the factory



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

The decade that began with Y2k nonsense seemed to fly by. It was a decade that saw MGA become a much more collectable car as auction values reflected a growing interest in an affordable car that represented pure British sports car motoring. On the flip side we saw a dwindling of MGAs proudly displaying unrestored patina. New Rowdies missed the opportunity to enjoy the likes of R.B. Hart. When R.B. put his MGA up for sale, prior to moving to California and Moss Motors, it was with two sale conditions. The first was the buyer must join NAMGAR. The second was agreeing they would 'not' restore the car! His MG was mechanically great with a strong engine but the body aging included large rust holes; as I recall, you could see the road through the floor board. Today several of the Rowdies' rides far exceed anything that rolled out of Abingdon. But we still love seeing someone show up at a meet with a non restored car. Nothing beats an MGA that you can slide down a gravel road sideways without worrying about stone chips. And please don't think you have to have to drive a MG to attend.

During the past decade we welcomed several new members and a few rejoining after a lapse. Those joining included John Alexander, Charles Auringer, Jon Burchwell, Jeff Crockett, Doug Butcher, Dave DeFauw, Brad Dryden, Steve Finch, Dick Gruz, Dave Harnish, Don Holle, Ron Junttonen, Tom Koch, Tom Lennon, Art Lewis, Ken McClure, Roger Melton, Mike Moder, Larry Pitman, Rich Pollion, Bruce Reed, Ed Schofield, Jeff Smith, John Somers, Chris Waclawski, Warren White,

Matt Wigent, Carl Young, David Terhune and our two newest members Forest Johnson and Bruce Mann.

We also saw the loss of members for a variety of reasons. Sadly the decade marked the passing of some members, some sold their MG, some moved to another state, some lost restoration interest, some joined other British clubs, and some simply let dues lapse. Departed Rowdies over the decade include Bob Sutton, Bill Ludtke, Jean Patchett, Chuck Benner, Kathy Bertolini, Bill Black, Christine Carlson, Rick Green, Bruce Cooke, Mike Costello, Rick Daniel, Scott Dayton, Jim Ehlers, Joseph Fortin, Gordon Fuhr, Allen Gigliotti, Mike Goeddeke, Wally Hall, Bruce Harton, Sam Heindel, Lee Hodge, Jonathan Hood, Matt Houser, Clarence Jennings, Erik Johnson, David Jonker, Jim Keller, Steve Kennedy, Doug Kniff, Tom Knoy, James Kozlowicz, Chuck Laubacher, Richard Lay, Michael Malinowski, Mark Michalak Jr, Mark Oldenberg, Dave Palmer, Michael Parker, Alan Partington, Rick Peet, Paul Perakes, Fred Pinder, Larry Pointe, Mel Reionel, David Ruby, Tom Shipley, Dan Shockey, Robert Smarda, Kevin Smith, Guy St. John, David Swisher, Joe Tolmecs, Dave Torby, John Twist, Duane VanConant, and William Worth. Some we knew well. Some were newsletter members only. Some will no doubt rejoin when circumstances allow it.

According to Hagerty, the car collector insurance company, no matter how good your club is, you'll be doing well if 60-70 percent of the members renew year to year. Any higher rate of retention is way above average. This means that if you have 100 members today and want a larger membership next year, you need a goal of attracting at least 41 new members just to count on adding one person to the membership list. That's a shocker, isn't it? So how are we doing based on Hagerty's numbers? Very well, thank you.... (continued next page)

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER (continued)

The club was formed by a handful of Rowdies in 1976 and within two years totaled 31. By 1987 it had grown to 46. In 1992 membership was 77, a number that stayed quite constant up to the current. Membership peaked in 2003 at 81. As we begin our new decade, the membership is 72. Considering the state's sad economic conditions, we've weathered the storm very well.

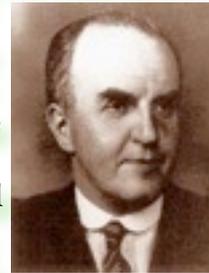
The crowning achievement for the Rowdies during the past decade was hosting GT-30 in Mackinaw City. Dave Smith and Mark Barnhart had memorable achievements with Rowdie Racing in the vintage racing scene. As the decade came to a close, we saw the closing of University Motors. John Twist played a key role in keeping many MG's on Michigan's roads, especially MGBs. Bruce Nichols and the other club founders set two key components right from the club's beginning - keep it fun and don't be afraid to drive your MG's long distances. No matter what decade you joined, if we

all do our part to make the club fun, we won't go wrong as the club proudly enters its fifth decade.
Dave Quinn

DON'T FORGET CECIL'S NEXT B'DAY PARTY! *Coming right up on- April 17 at the Delhi Cafe in Holt, MI*

4625 Willoughby Road (517) 694-8655

Blow the dust off that MGA and join the Rowdies, Ol' Lansing Area the Windsor-Club for some birthday-Saturday April noon to have socialize with British automobiles and enthusiasts (at least some of the old ones that is). We order from the menu and pay for our own, but the tall-tale-telling and the birthday cake is FREE!



Speckled Hens, MG Club, and Detroit MG tire-kicking, song-singing fun 17, 2010. Arrive at lunch and a variety of leaky

Modern day welders' outfit by Gucci. Modeled by William Weakley. Sold at all fine Harbor Freight Men's Wear Outlets



Behind the Badge



By Dave Quinn

Sports & Exotic Car magazine subscribers see a regular column called Behind the Badge which provides the history of car logos. In that vein, this is the Rowdies logo history. First, a little newsletter history. The first A-Antics was published in 1976. A year later the first front cover appeared. It was 1978 before the first photographs appeared. Photos continued to be rare for several more years due to the poor resolution of Xerox reproduction; as a result, artwork was common.

Mention of a possible club logo appeared in a 1983 survey asking for member interest in a design contest. That summer I took over as A-Antics editor. To draw members attention that they had all winter to submit an entry, I drew a cartoon in the November issue above the request and ask for entries to be submitted for the contest held at the 1984 Birthday Party. Here's how I reported the results in A-Antics: "As I was preparing the logo's for the contest, such as putting numbers on them, etc. I decided that the more entries - the better. So after much thought and layout design I grabbed the original page announcing the contest and cut out the cartoon, drew a circle around it and added NAMGAR . . . wa, la . . . another entry to fill up the board." Ironically, it won. Small changes for clarity and balance were then made. The street sign was dropped, Michigan placed in the sky and Rowdies below the car. Color was added. That logo style was retained for 20 years until a new clothing order in 2005 prompted me to simplify the logo by dropping the outer blue ring.

To meet the demands of the new digital world, the MGA was redrawn for clarity. The ring returned to encircle it for items such as the grille badge which will be available for the first time in 2010.

Rowdies Business Meeting Minutes-February 13, 2010

Dave Quinn opened the meeting at 2:40 PM on 2/13/2010. Bruce Mann volunteered to take minutes which were later edited and typed by Dave.

Officers Reports: Chairman: Dave thanked fellow officers for being a good team. **Brian Berry was awarded NAMGAR's Renkenberger Spirit Award** (see picture page 13). This is the first time the chapter has given the award. It is awarded to a person who has made a major contribution at the local level. The full details supporting Brian's award will appear in MGA! magazine. The award is only given every three years. Congratulations Brian! Dave encouraged members to submit photos of their cars to NAMGAR's upcoming new website. NAMGAR's home page will feature a different car for each site visitor. Send your photos to web@namgar.com. Dave welcomed new members Bruce and Willy Mann and acknowledged Dave and Chari Smith's 43rd wedding anniversary.

Treasurer: In Jeff Zorn's absence Dave reported the account balance is \$3,216.63. A revenue-expense summary is below. \$400 in regalia revenue from the Christmas party remains to be posted.

Editors Report: Ken Nelson announced plans to continue member profiles based upon their starting date with the club - oldest members first. He plans two members per issue.

Printing & Database Report: Mac McDonnell reports we have 68 paid, 2 in renewal, and 3 in past due status for a total of 73 members. A-Antics average cost per member is \$3 per issue or \$18 per year (72% of the \$25 dues). The costs are based on 2009 print costs of \$1.60 per 16 page issue. The best quote found to date from a potential replacement printer (our current one may close) is \$2.20 per issue; a 38% increase in print costs. Mac asked for a volunteer to take over database upkeep responsibilities, which lead to a discussion how labels and printing are tied to the records. A vote was taken and approved to replace the membership booklet with a two-sided single page members list. This will accompany a future issue of A-Antics.

Webmaster Report: Larry Pittman expressed interest in making some changes to the website, i.e., background color change, drop downs, etc. He was encouraged to be creative.

Membership Report: In Bruce Nichols absence Dave asked for a vote and received approval to replace postcard reminder notices with an email reminder. An exception would be when an event date is changed; then a postcard should be sent to ensure all members receive the notice.

Regalia Report: Brian Beery: Brian pointed out that the club lost it's best vendor event with the closure of Twist's all MG event. Mad Dogs and Battle of the Brits, offer limited opportunity for sales outside our club. The club will try a new approach. Brian will take individual photos of his inventory (can coolers, etc.) to be posted on our website along with prices, which will include our new regalia. We will promote regalia in A-Antics with links to our site. We approved Chari Smith's suggestion to place a short ad in NAMGAR's magazine to link all MGA readers to it. Brian made a motion, which was approved, to thank Jeff Zorn in the minutes for his contribution to the 50/50 drawing. Thanks Jeff.

Regalia Report: Philip Wiltshire presented the Rowdies new ball cap, with a tan top for coolness and dark blue bill to avoid showing finger marks. The cap is \$15. Our caps, patches, t-shirts and key fobs can be ordered by contacting Philip. The club plans two new regalia items - a Rowdies grille badge for a badge bar and Rowdies lapel pins. Quinn made a motion that was approved for the club to pay the initial setup fee of \$180 to create the grille badge. Philip will order 20 grille badges and 50 pins. We anticipate selling the badges for \$20 each and pins for \$5 each. The pricing is in keeping with the club's belief that regalia is not about making large profit; it is about *showing your colors* and being proud you're a Rowdie. Philip reports an additional \$50 in regalia sales during the business meet.

Meets Chairman: Mark Barnhart presented a calendar of events which was approved. See listing on page 3.

Old Business: Tech manual: There are currently no plans beyond selling the club's existing inventory.

CD photo project: Dave Quinn said the goal is to celebrate the club's 35th years in 2011. A total of 980

photos have been uploaded for consideration, with more pending.

Club calendar: Bill Weakley proposed restoring the club photo calendar. He will investigate making an electronic version that can be shared via email without incurring high print costs.

Christmas party: Quinn pointed out 2009 expenses, after collecting \$5/person, still represented 41% of total revenue. A vote was taken and passed to collect \$10/person, with children free. Consensus is it's still a great bargain. We will cut back on the food ordered; savings to be determined. Left over food goes to the local homeless shelter.

New Business: GBC binding machine: Voted and approved the selling the machine to Jeff Zorn at cost. Jeff expressed interest to buy it and to make it available for members. Chari Smith asked if the we planned to host GT40; deferred to the February 2011 meeting.

Poll responses: Larry Pittman reviewed the online poll response:

1. Would you support placing the club membership listing (name, address, phone numbers, etc.) on a 'secure members only' section on the Rowdies web site, provided a secure pathway can be developed?

YES: 31 NO: 4

2. Question for members who currently receive the printed version of A-Antics: We are in the process of replacing our current printer. The quotes we are receiving double the current cost. The club can't make up all the shortfall. Would you support higher dues to continue receiving the printed version? YES: 16 NO: 11

3. Would you support eliminating maps in A-Antics to a Rowdie meet location if the location can easily be obtained using your own access to an internet source like Map Quest with the host's address and zip code?

YES: 29 NO: 5

4. Do you plan to attend GT-35? YES: 20 NO: 11

5. Would you be interested in taking a Ferry crossing to GT-35 as part of a group to save perhaps \$40 per person one-way? YES: 14 NO: 15

6. Use this space to submit anonymous ideas how the club might improve or add a comment on any of the survey questions above. The comments submitted were not read or discussed due to time limitations. However, Dave has summarized them after the minutes.

GT-35: Dave Quinn reviewed GT-35 costs. Resort rooms with tax are \$146.42 per night. Event register before May 1 to ensure you are eligible for a refund if your plans change and you can't attend. Wed evening picnic is \$54/couple and Thur banquet is \$84/couple. One-way ferry costs for a couple with car are \$225 to \$282, depending upon the ferry used. A group rate of 15 people could reduce this to \$175 to \$254. Taking the ferry, for most, means getting a motel at one end or the other due to the ferry schedules. Everyone agreed this will be the closest GT for some time and interest remains high. GT-36 will be in Reno-Tahoe NV. It's a lot shorter to drive around Lake Michigan or ferry across if you prefer. (Ed note: A Hampton Inn is 6 miles away and a Super 8 and Comfort Suites are closer in Delavan and all range from about \$80-100/night)

Thanks to Steve & Cathy Holliday and Gordie & Tracey Bird for hosting the business meet. Gordie Bird won the drawing, and Dave adjourned the meeting.

REVENUE	2009	2008	% Change
ACCOUNT BAL 1-1	\$4,573.87	\$6,562.51	-30.00%
Membership Dues	\$1,470.00	\$1,423.00	3.00%
Birthday Auction	\$190.50	\$480.00	-60.00%
Tech Manual Sales	\$369.68	\$209.00	77.00%
Misc Income (Christmas Party)	\$205.35	\$0.00	100.00%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,235.53	\$2,112.00	6.00%

EXPENSES	2009	2008	%Change
A-Antics Newsletter	\$895.97	\$921.81	-3.00%
Meeting Expenses (Christmas, etc)	\$1,133.98	\$1,174.81	-3.00%
Tech Manual	\$219.03	\$1,200.62	-82.00%
Meet Door Prize	\$50.00	\$250.00	-80.00%
Hosting Event	\$0.00	\$100.00	-100.00%
Membership Supplies	\$99.80	\$0.00	100.00%
Name Tags	\$53.94	\$101.00	-47.00%
Regalia Inventory	\$1,140.05	\$0.00	100.00%
Calendar	\$0.00	\$352.40	-100.00%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,592.77	\$4,100.64	-12.00%
ACCOUNT BAL-12-31	\$3,216.63	\$4,573.87	-30.00%

Rowdie Financial Sheet-Jeff Zorn, Treas.

The following are the 14 comments received on the Online Poll. Your Chairman thanks you for your input; he condensed the comments and attempted to reply as appropriate.

1 Consider ViData for printing; they do WDMGC and DTSC.

Thank you. Ideas are welcomed!

2 Newsletter is a privilege of membership and should not be surcharged.

Agreed. However, our three revenue sources - dues, auction, tech/regalia sales may not cover future expense. Time will tell. No dues increase is currently planned.

3 Is there interest in a call system for caravanning to meets?

This sounds like a good future online poll question. Members have told us they do not want a lot of polls, so it will be awhile before the next one.

4 Like to see more club activity on the west side of the state.

We are spread evenly this year. Four east side: Ypsilanti, Belleville, Orchard Lake, Ann Arbor. Four west side: Hickory Corners, Rockford, Belding, and Berrien Springs. Three in the middle: Holt, two, Jackson.

5 Likes Ferry idea.

By coordinating with other clubs we might be able to meet the minimal requirements for savings - at least 15 people are needed.

6 Is anyone in the club doing any of the work of putting the newsletter together and shipping it out or do we hire that out?

Club members do everything but the actual reproduction - the printing. Members, at no charge, do the writing, photographs, newsletter creation, editing, take/pickup from the printer, stuff envelopes, add stamps/labels, and take to the post office, plus replace any of these when then run out and ensure it is on-line and everyone notified.

7-9 Like Ferry idea.

10 Likes Ferry idea; took before, great experience but got sea sick; drove back.

The lake crossing can rough even in a large ship; motion sickness pills help.

11 Prefers a one-page membership to copy and carry. Doesn't trust putting private information on the internet.

The club agreed on the one-page. Our web master will only place the membership on line provided known risks are reduced but there is always some risk. On line information planned would be limited to name, address, phone number, and email address.

12 Didn't answer Q2 since they receive the printed version but prefers to receive an email version and doesn't support a dues increase.

41% of the members who do receive the printed version agreed with you. I know dues increases are not popular. Before increasing dues, we would consider cutting costs such as elimination of the Christmas party catering, elimination of door prizes, etc.

13 Would welcome more 'technical' info in A-Antics; for example, the supplier codes cast on the undersides of the vents or the grille badge.

I suggest submitting specific questions, as the example, to our editor. He needs tech articles from all of the members, even if just a reference from other magazines. Send info to Ken Nelson.

14 Show more interest in new members

Agreed. It is something all our members, especially me, need to be aware of. It takes more effort than chatting with old friends but spending time with new members can quickly turn into making new friends. And, on the reverse I strongly encourage new members to join in any ongoing conversations

Poor Jeremy Gets Hit By The Michigan Winter "Blahs" Again.....



In An MGA!

Rowdie Business Meet 2-13-10



New Members Bruce and Willy Mann with Neil Griffin & Curt Smith



Member Profile-John McMullan



1982 photo by Rick Green-RB Hart's House at 910 Veto, NW Grand Rapids

I am an early member of the Rowdies, having unofficially joined when asked by my good friend Bruce Nichols to attend the Michigan Chapter events. Bruce and I, along with Steve & Diane Mazurek, met at GT1 in Harper's Ferry, WV. For GT1 my age was 19 years, but I had met Len & Ruth Renkenberger a year earlier at a "T" meet they were attending in Ontario. Both "Renks" were promoting a new MGA group they were forming in the USA.

My friend Rob MacKenzie of London, Ontario and I spoke with the Renks about joining their group they were calling NAMGAR. Rob joined shortly after; Ruth signed me up at GT1. What a difference the NAMGAR group was. From the start, they were a bunch of enthusiasts who loved the cars for exactly what they were, fun sporty machines. I am now going to editorialize: for the most part the Ontario "T" group did not accept me as a true MG enthusiast, even though I attended their gatherings from age 15 till I joined NAMGAR.

My first MGA is a '60, 1600, which won the first distance award at GT1. It is an original car with the factory red paint. It has been from San Diego, CA to Cape Breton, Nova Scotia along with a 95 mph run on the Bonneville Salt Flats. My second MGA is a '62 DeLuxe which I restored during my university days in Midland, MI. (*Ed. note: See photo above-a beautiful car with a dashing driver*) My university graduation day project was spent with Bruce Nichols, installing the engine in the DeLuxe. When I told my mother what I did during my university graduation, she was not happy. But ask Bruce, the beer tasted great.

Since university, I married my wife Rosanne and have lived on and off in Illinois and New York, but primarily in Michigan. We have two children, Rachel, age 15.5 and Scott, 14. Many of you have met Scott at various Rowdie gatherings. He has a strong interest in the sports cars and cars in general. It has been fun including him in our events. Scott's godfather is Bruce. My daughter Rachel is learning to drive. This is to Dave Smith: Was teaching your daughters "skid control" fun or scary? I'll let you know how we make out. As you have heard before, the Rowdies have been the greatest bunch of friends to have. Thanks to all.

John McMullan

I would like to re-introduce the Rowdies to long time members as well as new ones. To do this I will plan to run 2 brief member profiles each issue with a prior photo as well. We'll start from the beginning; please send me a brief story & photo upon request. Thanks, Ken Nelson

Member Award-Brian Beery

Recipient of NAMGAR Renkenberger Spirit Award



Below: The Japanese designed original MGB copycat car- the Datsun 2000. (Ed note: They did it again later with the Mazda Miata). Perhaps this car would make a tempting winter or spring project for one of our Rowdie members?

Above: A rare period shot of the sleek prototype MGB hardtop designed by Pininfarina as a planned replacement for the MGB roadster. Leonard Lord killed this as soon as he saw it was a far more attractive car than his beloved Triumph TR7 (see "What Went Wrong" in this issue)



WHAT WENT WRONG?

Reprinted from the Emerald Necklace MG Register Newsletter-"The eChatter" 8-09 by Geoff Wheatley
(Ed. Note: This is Part One in a Two-Part series.)

In America it's Hershey, in Europe it's Beaulieu. I'm talking about motor auctions, vendors and 150,000 classic car enthusiasts assembled in one location twice a year. Beaulieu is situated on the south coast of England a few miles from the sea. About two hours by road from London, assuming you don't visit when the motor show is on! Like Hershey it can take a few hours to arrive and even longer to depart but who cares, the prospect of 2000 vendors and at least 500 cars up for sale makes it all worth while.

I try to visit Beaulieu at least every three years and have managed to maintain this routine since I came to North America back in 1976. Sure it's a 6,000-mile trip each way with a visit to my relatives after doing the important things like looking for spare parts and negotiating with vendors. Like most expatriates I can always find an excuse to return and I am pleased to say that the beer tastes as good today as it ever did!

On my last visit in 2005 I managed to pick up a few trinkets including a 1952 "Earls Court Motor Show" catalogue. Earls Court was the premier car show of the year back in the 1950s. Every British manufacturer introduced their new models at this annual event in company with a few American and European companies with an eye on the then British/Commonwealth market. Buyers from as far a field as Australia and New Zealand attended in company with dealers from South Africa, India, Pakistan, Kenya, etc.

Looking through this faded publication I was struck by the number of British manufacturers there were back in 1952. "Austin, Morris, Vauxhall, Singer, Hillman, Armstrong, Bristol, Lagonda, Triumph, Rover, Riley, M.G. Sunbeam, Bentley, A.C. Motors, Jowett, Daimler, Rolls, Morgan, Allard, C.V.R. Standard, Jaguar, Bond, Healey, Lancia, etc. Today, only Morgan and TRV still survive as British companies, the others have either been taken over like Rolls Royce now part of BMW and Bentley the VW Group. (Who would have ever believed that back in 1952!) Jaguar is now part of Ford (Ed: now

Tata of India) who also own the Range Rover name, while the rest have simply just faded away never to be seen again except at Classic British car show events where we dedicated idiots still spend time and money trying to keep these lost names alive.

Why did this happen? The answer is not that easy to find but a brief review of the antique management structures, coupled with government interference including a total lack of vision mixed with poor labor relations and antiquated production techniques leading to virtually no quality control of the end product, may provide the answer! Let me hasten to add that the latter was not exclusive to the British Motor industry as Detroit managed to produce a few examples of "Rust Buckets" during the same time period.

In reality the British motor industry was given a world market in the post "World War Two" years. Europe was in ruins and would take at least twenty years to get back into real consumer production. The American post-war car market faced a serious supply problem as did most other industrial countries and Detroit was never able to meet the US demand until the 1960's. Only the US and the U.K were producing private vehicles during this period so almost anything that Britain could make with either two or four wheels sold.

America was the prime market and the British government who were broke after six years of war, encouraged export sales to countries with a hard currency. Government controls were placed on all basic materials to ensure that production went overseas, especially to the USA. Britain had a major debt to the USA for war supplies and needed to export anything and everything in order to clear this commitment. This export drive by the British government put some companies out of business, including certain motor manufacturers who were forced to export knowing that their products would not succeed. (More on this later.)

The vast majority of the British cars were too small and under-powered for the US market yet people purchased these vehicles and put up with poor service facilities, prewar designs and a general lack of the comfort usually found in the American automobile. Heaters and radios were considered luxury extras by the British manufactures who never

understood that such things were a standard feature this side of the water. Nevertheless these small vehicles did find a ready market, a market that Detroit had simply ignored for reasons that even today are still unclear.

In the so-called sports car market the situation was even more astounding. The small British sports car was certainly known in the USA prior to the war but imports were minimal and usually went to the rich and famous. Lord Nuffield, head of the Morris Empire, did give Edsel Ford an MG for his birthday as a token of his esteem for his father, and I believe the car still rests in the Ford Museum. Several film stars of the day had British sports cars including the humble MG but it was not a serious sales situation and no British Sales Manager lost any sleep over export figures in the 1930s.

But by 1948 with the forced export of the MG TC, a prewar sports car design with the steering wheel on the wrong side made by the Nuffield Group things had certainly changed. By 1948, seeing the potential MG and others started to design cars for the US market and by 1950 MG had produced a modern version of the TC built for export called the MG TD.

Jaguar had set the motor world on its heels with the launch of the X-120 which had more orders in its first six weeks of promotion than any other sports car in the world. The Standard Motor Company who had purchased the Triumph name when the company went under a few years earlier came out with an equally modern sports car that was a success on American roads, while Healey, with the personal knowledge of its founder on prewar racing developed the now famous Healey 3000.

To understand the situation in Britain during this period it is important to reflect on the political change that had taken place immediately after the war. The Conservative government led by Winston Churchill had been defeated by a strong Labor Party, dedicated to the idea of state ownership. The railways, coal mines, road haulage, steel industry, fuel production, and health service were now under government control. Industry had to do as it was told or supplies of basic materials were withheld.

Example, if the motor industry did not export at least 80% of its production, which included tractors, buses, coaches, motorcycles, trucks as well as private cars, they did not get adequate steel supplies, coal or oil

for their boilers, guaranteed road transport or easy railway access. Yes, it was "Export or Die", as the government slogan proclaimed but it could also mean a slow death for a manufacturing company who did not meet the government export requirements.

Some companies resorted to producing cars in alloy as this was not rationed but these cars were not that successful. The Singer Company was one such corporation. Once the third largest motor producer in Britain it suffered the slow death being forced into bankruptcy by 1954 simply because they did not meet government export quotas.

Standard Motors who had a modern production plant at Coventry that once produced tractors and some of the most attractive cars on British roads suffered the same fate. The Triumph Motor Company, which Standard had revamped after the war, continued under new ownership through to the 1980s.

This Government involvement with private industry continued for several decades with disastrous results and in many ways can be blamed for the decline of several industries throughout the United Kingdom. It should also be understood that the British Motor Industry was never that keen on serving an export market. The whole idea of setting up dealerships overseas and maintaining a supply of spare parts for these outlets was almost beyond their comprehension especially when, without government restrictions, they could sell everything they produced to the home market with a few cars left over for Australia and the other far flung outposts of the gone but not forgotten British Empire. The idea of setting up and dealing with American retailers who sold monster cars with equally monster size power units covered with Christmas Tree chrome horrified the average British export manager. They would expect him to start chewing gum next!

In consequence when the British cars hit the American shores dealers were hard to obtain and effective service was even more difficult to establish especially when most of the technology employed in these cars was pre-war, i.e. side valve engines, three-speed gear shift and starter handles just in case the Lucas system failed. Need I say more!

However, by 1953 most of the successful export vehicles had moved into the 20th century and a few years later some were ahead of anything else in the world, as illustrated by the Jaguar range or the Lagonda, Rolls Royce, Daimler etc.

At the other end of the financial scale cars such as the 1950s MGA set a standard that few other inexpensive vehicles could match. Add the Triumph TR3 and the Healey 3000, the MGA Twin Cam, and the Sunbeam in the sports range. Now look at the Rover Turbo and successful 2000, the Triumph Stag, the Lancia and of course the incredible Mini that first saw the light of day in 1959. Who can ever think of James Bond without an Aston Martin by his side? Not a cheap car but one that most of us would love to find in our Christmas stocking even if it was thirty years old. The ability was certainly there but a few other important features always seemed to be missing like an adequate supply of spare parts for the limited number of service outlets!

One interesting story out of this period was the fate of the Riley Motor Company: In the 1930s they produced some excellent cars both on the track and of course for the general public and were at one time a strong rival to MG. However, as an independent and small company it was difficult to keep the operation in the black, (as was the case with MG in the prewar years but MG always had Billy Morris to bail them out as and when required). In 1938 just prior to the Second World War Billy Morris, or to be correct, Lord Nuffield, as he was then known, took over the company and merged it within The Morris Empire. With the end of the war Morris personally took control of Riley and started to make the 1.5 liter and 2.5 liter saloon cars which were a true semi-sports classic in their own right. They sold well both at home and overseas and Morris decided that they should be made at Abingdon, the home of the MG! The MG people were not that pleased to hear the news as this would mean that part of their production ability would be taken up with these fancy Riley vehicles. It was even suggested that Abingdon should be closed and all production moved to the main complex at Cowley, Oxford.

Thank goodness very few people ever argued with Billy Morris, who was pro-Abingdon, or the MG and of course the Mini may well have had a stunted career! The success of the MGA and of course the

Healey sports that was also made at Abingdon eventually forced Riley production to the main Morris works where it remained until the marque ended. A nice car, especially the Riley Pathfinder with a 2.5 power unit that did much to sell the car in the USA where it was the darling of the social set as the wife's vehicle. However, despite this success it was discontinued as an expensive toy in favor of the more basic Morris vehicles. Around this time the bean counters had started to take over the British Car Industry in company with the government of the day!

Equally interesting is the story of Jaguar which in 1932 was a small company producing a sports car with a Standard Motors engine and various bits from other manufacturers. The company started by making sidecars for motor bikes but by the mid-30s they had moved into sports cars with the now famous hand produced SS range. (The name Jaguar was not introduced until 1936 when the company wanted to express speed as well as elegance. The term SS was removed after the war for obvious reasons!).

The secret of Jaguar success was simple; a small company with dedicated workers and great leadership. Whilst the other guys were trying to outmaneuver the government regulations in 1947/52 and go for the easy home market, Jaguar saw the export potential and went after it. The introduction of the XK 140 and its magnificent win at Lemans sealed the future of this company until it was taken over and was virtually micro-managed to death, but that's another story for another time!

One simple example of how to win friends etc., was the Jaguar policy of training overseas service staff. If you were a Jaguar dealer your service staff were invited to come to the factory and work with the people who made the cars, inspected the cars and tested the cars. However, if you were the dealership for any other British manufacturer at this time the best you could hope for was a training film and a couple of books. If you were a big outlet a guy might visit for a week from the "Old Country", but don't count on it. Even if he did fly over and give you a few tips the chances of you getting a steady supply of spare parts to make up for poor quality control was slim.

This did eventually change but it took too long and only came about because the Japanese and Germans were after the same markets as the British. From 1950 through to the early 1960s the British sports car manufacturers had no real competition. The MG and Triumph vehicles had the low end of the market, Jaguar the top and Healey/Sunbeam/Riley catering for the middle price range while a few other British manufacturers picked up what was left. Detroit seemed either blind or simply not interested in sports cars even as this market grew each year.

Economists will tell you that competition is the secret of success, and I think they are right, but this message never seemed to get through to either the British government or the British motor industry. Did they expand this unique hold on the American market with better cars, better service and better quality control? ANSWER...NO! Why not? They saw no need. In fact by the early 1960s the British development policy was to destroy all the features that had made Jaguar and Aston Martin and Morgan a success, like individual production units and a loyal work force with strong individual leadership.

Encouraged by the government of the day companies started to merge into larger groups that had little in common. The Government had a special interest in encouraging such activity regardless of their political party; they had made a pact with the powerful Trade Unions that workers would not be laid off in any of the declining industries. By bringing the good and not so good manufacturers together jobs could be saved. The successful company would hold up the not so successful even when the product was no longer acceptable or was outdated by normal progress.

This happened to the motor industry, shipbuilding, the coal mines, and the railways each with the same tragic results. One of the first, and certainly a classic example, was the amalgamation of the Nuffield and Austin empires through the creation of the "British Motor Corporation". It should be understood that Mr. William Morris and Mr. Herbert Austin had been tough rivals since the 1920s so this merger did little to enhance the working relationship between these two major car companies whose marques covered Morris, Austin, Riley, MG, Triumph, Healey, and Wolseley. (The original Wolseley Company asked Herbert Austin to design the first Wolseley vehicle in 1899. It was a

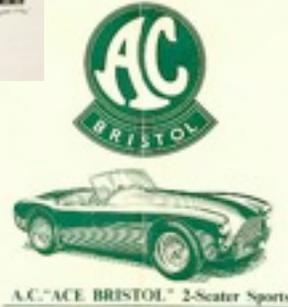
success, but in 1927 the company went bankrupt. Seeing a good purchase at a give away price Morris snapped up the Wolseley Company in the face of opposition from Austin. This started the ongoing rift between these two motor moguls!)

With this background there was considerable distrust between the Austin workers who had a strong Union representation and the Morris workers who never felt the need to create a union structure. Billy Morris was certainly a man who liked to get his own way, but he was also a good boss who had never laid off his work force even when things were slack and the economy weak. He had a special relationship with his employees that was almost unique. However, the rejection of union's attitude by the Morris people changed when Morris retired from active service.

One could ask why Billy Morris allowed this to happen. His empire was a commercial success, he owned MG, a sure winner in the export market. He also produced one of the most successful family cars of its day, the Morris Minor which is still being produced fifty years later in India under a different name. The Mini was off the drawing board almost ready to go into production and there were a couple of other new projects just around the corner. On the other hand Austin had not set the world on fire with any of their products.

I think the answer was simply financial; Morris was always a bottom line man who saw success as figures in the black. Sure his companies were selling more cars but the return, especially on export sales was not healthy. You simply pushed out more cars for much the same return and at the end of the day profits went down. Shipping vehicles 5000 miles also took a bite out of the bottom line. Now, add the costs of overseas dealers who wanted money up front to carry your products and expected service at the drop of a phone call. By joining forces with Austin there would be a larger allocation of steel and more cooperation from the government for home market sales where the real money was to be made.

There is no official record of this but he may have been advised that the new CEO of the British Motor Corporation was going to be a Morris Motors man. The selection was to be made by the British government and Morris did have some pull within the majority party of the day..... *(to be continued)*



Philip Wiltshire is again organizing a Stratford, Ontario MG outing this year-come visit a foreign country in your MGA!! Call Philip at 248-676-0986 (h) or 586-354-8855 (c) for tickets and planning.



Friday/ Saturday/Sunday June 18th, 19th and 20th 2009

The musical "Kiss Me Kate" at the Festival theatre.

Friday June 18th - We will be traveling to Stratford leaving the Detroit area mid-morning, or Saturday June 19th - A second convoy will be 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 normally have 2 convoys heading for Stratford that weekend.

Saturday June 19th - "Kiss Me Kate"; 8.00 pm performance

Synopsis - As backstage bickering between the co-stars of a musical version of *The Taming of the Shrew* threatens to sabotage opening night, along come a couple of gangsters with a gambling debt to collect. The result is hilarity on and off the stage - all punctuated by Cole Porter's unforgettable melodies and wickedly witty lyrics.

Music and lyrics by Cole Porter

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

Call the Westover at 519-284-2977 for rooms or check other lodging at <http://www.townofstmarys.com/discover/accommodations/accommodations.aspx?id=35>



JAGUAR

