THE JOURNAL OF THE MICHIGAN ROWDIES VOLUME 40, NO 6, NOV-DEC, 2015

A-Antics



Fall in Michigan-See letters to editor page 4
photo by Gary Cunningham

Fall Color Tours

Wheeler Dealer's Flip An "A"

T's and A's At Mueller's

Cars and Coffee



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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.mgcars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/

MG Car Council Site: http://www.mgcars.org.uk/mgcouncil/

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

Past Chapter Chairpersons:

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

MEMBERS PAGE

Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman, Webmaster

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

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

Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: December 20, 2015

Classified Ads

FOR SALE:. Two - 5 main 18V MGB Motors $100.00 each

3 main 1800 MGB motor $250.00

(all of these motors have been in storage for about 6 years and have been turned through every 6 months)

1500 MGA rebuilt Head with rebuilt rocker assembly – Head has been crack tested, resurfaced, and rebuilt with new valve guides, new seals and the valves ground $550.00

Jegs hydraulic 2 ton engine hoist with fold up legs for storage $140.00

Engine leveler for use with an engine hoist $20.00

Contact: Mark Barnhart (989) 366-8980

rowdie92@charter.net

FOR SALE: 1959 MGA Roadster. After 53 years in the family I have decided to sell my 59 MGA.

Partially restored in 1982 with several updates since. All original except for the water pump.

Included is the original tool kit. Black w/red interior. New gas tank, sending unit, floors and brakes.



Asking $8500.

Contact: Jeff Crockett 248-701-6584

crockettjd@comcast.net

Letters:

Early Warning Alert

Editors:

Thought you may wish to share this MG Vintage Racers (MGVR) announcement with your club membership (see announcement on page 6). This coming July 29-31, 2016 will be the best opportunity for MG/BMC car owners to observe British cars doing what the British engineers designed them to do-race. The Waterford Hills race facility will hold their yearly MGVR "Focus Event" race that date. It is an easy drive for Michigan, Ohio and Canadian club members. It has a great food pavilion where you can dine and also watch the on-track competition. The track management may be able to work with your club for a special British car corral, where you can view the racing and spend time with your friends too. Contact Joel Hershoren at 248-854-7496 or joel@waterfordhills.com if you have questions.

Michigan Entrants in 2016 will be John Deikis of Chelsea with his quick 1968 MG Midget and Rowdie Racing of Holt with # 49 1962 MGA. This MGA will be celebrating it's 20th year of vintage racing in 2016. The car was designed in 1995 and built in 1996 by the Michigan Rowdies. As the date gets closer, you will

receive updates to keep your club members informed. Over 30 members of the BMC family have raced at Waterford Hills. It is a very popular track for MG Midgets, Austin Healey Sprites and Mini. However a well prepared MGA or MGB can be competitive too.

Dave Smith, Events Chair, Michigan Rowdies

Picture Time

Hello Ken,
Trust You're doing well. Earlier today I posted a photo on Namgar's Facebook page. Quinn suggested that I send you the photo for AA. Also added a second pic taken at the same time. Took the photos after a lovely drive with my Wife this afternoon before the clouds rolled in.

Gary Cunningham

(*Ed note: Gary's photo is displayed on the cover of this issue, and your editor appreciates getting a copy. See Gary and Diana in the photo below also. Send in a shot of you and your car for a spot on a future cover as well)*

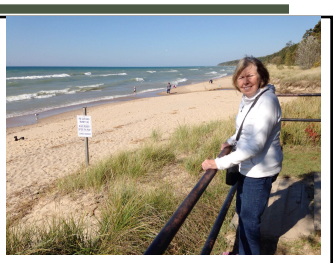


Last Drives of the Year?

Kathy and I missed the Rowdy color tour drive, so we also took a drive of our own out to Lake Michigan for a fall drive. The weather was perfect and the Lake spectacular with just the right amount of wind and waves for beach walking. We ended the day with a walk around Saugatuck and the harbor. Ken thought the sailboat they saw there would make a nice Christmas or birthday gift for "somebody".

Ken & Kathy Nelson









Condolences

I received word that Tracy Bird's father past away on Labor Day. It is my understanding he was 96 years old and went in his sleep. On behalf of the Michigan Rowdies I would like to extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to Gordie, Tracy, and Racheal for their loss.

Yesterday at the Battle of Brits, I learned that Bill Weakley's dad passed away at the end of August; he was 98 years old. On behalf of the Michigan Rowdies I would like to extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to Bill and Mary Ellen.

Dave Quinn

Rowdies Come Through Again

Rowdies,

For the first time in as long as I can remember there's nothing to read in my reading room. The rest of the family calls it a bathroom. How is that possible?

I'm in three car clubs (one's been trying to get a volunteer editor for nearly a year). I have an auto magazine subscription, I routinely exchange it for another, I get a auto magazine from the insurance company, I get fluff magazines on our daily drivers and still I have nothing to read. More and more pages of these magazines are filled with pictures. It seems writing articles is becoming a lost art in the printed world. Magazines and newsletters are becoming picture books. We all know it doesn't take long to look at pictures.

In an effort to get a few Rowdies to submit a write-up, your editor sent a request for articles responding to the *Wheeler Dealer* show about flipping an MGA. He had limited response from the membership.

Nothing makes an editor smile more than receiving a write-up on the highlights of an event to accompany pictures, restoration reports, technical tips, and general interest stories and I need more to read in my reading room. ***Gentlemen and ladies, don't let writing become a lost art in the Rowdies.*** Please send in those stories today

Dave Quinn

Ed note: I'm happy to say that Dave's challenge shook a few more stories from the trees (see the Wheeler Dealer article and Bruce's Cars and Coffee story). Way to go Rowdies!



"No Virginia, that's not snow you see on Santa's red and black suit, that's just a sprinkling of 'Dusty Dave's' magical dirt" *(see pages 9-10)*

ROWDIES 2015 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER - No planned events; day in the garage possibility.

DECEMBER

6 **Rowdies Annual Christmas Party**, hosted by Jeff and Debbie Smith. Details page 8.

2016

FEBRUARY

Rowdies Annual Business Meeting. Host Needed. Details to follow.



Mark your calendars for next year: July 29-31, 2016 MG VINTAGE RACERS

The nation-wide ***MG Vintage Racers*** have just announced in celebration of their 35th anniversary they have selected two focus event in 2016 - one in Michigan and one in California. The Michigan event will be July 29-31, 2016 at the Waterford Hills race track in Clarkston, Michigan. These are special events include some all



MG races, and every effort is made to encourage all MG racers to attend with special social functions and awards, which results in huge turnouts of MG racers and MG fans. This picture above could be Dixie Highway next year! Here is a link for more details on MGVR: www.MGVR.org".

The "MG Vintage Racers" will have both "Mid-West" and "West Coast" Focus Events for 2016, as they celebrate their ***35th Anniversary***! Founded in 1981 for MG vintage racers, they have supported MG vintage racing since then, and started their MGVR "Focus Events" in 1996. A "Focus Event" is a yearly vintage race event selected by MGVR where they work with the event organizers to include some all MG races. MGVR would then encourage all MG racers to attend, and would include their own social functions and awards at that event. It has resulted in record breaking turnouts of MGs racing at many different venues, including a record breaking 134 MGs racing at Watkins Glen in 2004, as well as creating exceptional MG racer's camaraderie over the years!

To celebrate their ***20th year*** of Focus Events, their 2016 designated Mid-West Focus Event will be at the ***Waterford Hills Racetrack in Clarkston***, Michigan the weekend of July 29-31st. The designated West Coast Focus Event will be with CSRG at Sonoma Raceway, in Sonoma California the weekend of September 30th - October 2nd. More information on these events will be available as they near. For more information on the MG Vintage Racers, visit their web site at "www.MGVR.org".







Photos by Daniel Mainzer Photo-graphy



Cars and Coffee-A Road Trip Tale

I have a friend, I know it is hard to believe, but I do. We have known each other for 48 years, since 1968. We both worked at Whirlpool Corporation for a number of years right out of college. We lived next to each other in Findlay, Ohio. He is a car nut, for sure. He has had as I remember 17 corvettes, and has two now. His name is Dave, and he will talk your leg, arm and the rest of you off.

He has been trying to get me to bring the MG down to Toledo for a few years. Every month they have a cars and coffee morning from 9-12. So I finally said yes and thought we would go.



Photo by unknown buxom waitress

It is always on Sunday morning, and it is about 80 miles from our house. So one day last week I called Curt Smith and asked if he was up for a drive down there and he said yes. It was to be a beautiful fall day, with highs in the low 70's, nice weather for a top down drive.

So Willy and I put the top up on the "A" and took off for Curt and Stef's house. We had to leave at 7:30 in the morning to assure us that we would get there in good time. So off we went and Willy and I arrived at 8:30 at Curt's house.

We shot the bull for a while and then we followed Curt via back roads to Alexis Road in Toledo and I took over from there and we made it to Central Avenue where Dave was waiting for us.

We put the top down when we arrived at the show.

There were a few cars there, we saw a couple of Porsches, Vettes, a TR3 and one other MGA. One big fire engine from way back in the day, along with some muscle cars were there as well, all decked out!

We met a guy who attended our meet in Frankenmuth GT40 and said he was impressed with the entire venue. He invited us to come to Perrysburg next year for the Fort Meig day with the Toledo MG Club. **Might be a nice thing to do in June.**

Dave was there, of course, with his '65 fastback. Guess what, no coffee at the cars and coffee place. Who has Cars and Coffee, without coffee?????????? So we went over to the Waffle house and had a cup and a waffle.

We found a lot of people looking at our cars, which was amazing to me, but I guess MGA's are nice to look at.....

After the show we decided to drive west and then North and ended up at Jerry's for lunch on Wampler's Lake in Irish Hills, Go Irish!!!!!!!!! Nice day to be driving for sure.

After lunch we drove to Saline and once we got there we split up. When we got home, we had put 215 miles on the "A" which is the longest drive in one day since I can't remember when, other than driving to the GT's.

Our car ran well and checking with Curt his did also.

Bruce Mann

***(PS.* Dave Q. now you have something to read.)**

Rowdies Christmas Party

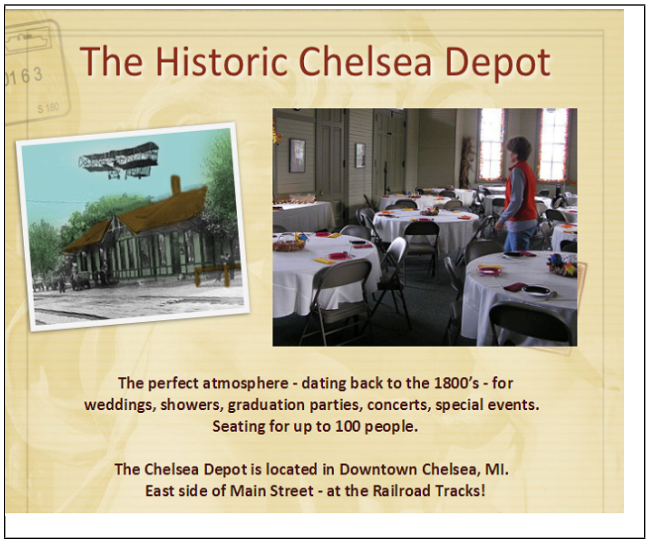
Festivities start at 1:00 pm, Sunday, December 6, '15 at the Chelsea Depot



Catered buffet dinner will be served at 3:00 pm. Beef Brisket, Pulled Pork, BBQ Chicken, baked beans, mac and cheese, tossed salad, and a holiday desert table. Gift exchange follows dinner.

The deadline to sign-up is November 22th. You must let Jeff Smith (jlsmith1984@hotmail.com) know if you are attending, and how many will accompany you. Cost is a mere $15.00 per person at the door, and children are free!

Each attendee, including children, is encouraged to bring a *wrapped gift* for the *fun gift exchange*. Bring your favorite beverage to enjoy, there is no adjoining bar this year. Coffee and pop are provided.





Example of a wrapped gift for a guy (above)



Example of typical gift for a gal (left)

Chelsea Depot Restaurant
125 Jackson Street, Chelsea, MI 48118
(click on line above for satellite view)

From I-94: Take exit 159 toward Chelsea. Turn left onto Chelsea Manchester Rd, which becomes S. Main Street. Continue onto S Main St to Jackson St, about 1.5 miles. Turn right onto Jackson St., immediately south of the RR tracks.



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

by Dave Quinn

I was eagerly awaiting NAMGAR's MGA! September/October 2015 magazine and it lived up to my expectations with 9+ pages of great GT-40 coverage in both text and photos. Thanks once again to all the Rowdies who helped make the event such a success.

In the same issue there was a story entitled "Fairly Confidential" which I found equally good. After one has been in the MGA hobby for as many years as yours truly its very rare to read something new. The exceptions being Ken Nelson's always entertaining stories of a struggling die-hard trying to keep his British fleet afloat. Or the great one liners from the Niner's, like "..... you're also a sadist because you subjected me to what amounts to a ten hour ride in a Weber grill." Good stuff; but back to my subject. The Fairly Confidential piece had the actual 3-page Hambro announcement letter of the MGA's coming that was sent 31 May 1955 to all the Nuffield Distributors. I only wish each of A.E. Birt's pages had each been given their own page in the magazine. I found them authentic, delightful, and thoughtful to read. They should be frame-able. NAMGAR should consider putting the pages online at the website for members. I know I would print off the set for my archives.

I want to thank the Rowdies' Jan Zorn for volunteering to serve as Regalia Coordinator. She joins a long list of Rowdies who have served at the national level.

There is a growing body of research that has proven we're wrong to think that happiness is correlated with youth. A wealth of scientific and anecdotal evidence demonstrates precisely that it's when people have surpassed many of life's big landmarks that their overall satisfaction and happiness peaks. What made me think of that, you ask? Reading the latest Moss Motoring, issue 3, 2015. What? Are you serious? Specifically it was John Twist's article entitled "An Interdisciplinary Education". John does a piece in which he reflects how the MG gave him an education equal to any college education. After reading it, I would not argue the point. I believe it was Robert Frost who said, "I talk in order to understand; I teach in order to learn." And, John's always excelled at being a good teacher. Heck, I even got a diploma from one of his courses. As for myself, I've spent nearly three-quarters of a century growing into who I am today. It seems one of the great, grand purposes of life is to understand ourselves as John attempts to do in his piece. But as I sit here sipping on my bourbon my thoughts drift away from any meaningful search for the meaning of life and instead I'm watching the birds in the backyard…

"Dusty Dave's" Dirty Trail Fall Color Drive

This year the Rowdie Color Tour event was planned for the end of October with the day to be determined at the last minute to coordinate with a good weather day. Originally October 17th seemed to be the day, until temperatures dropped to the upper 40's, and cloudy weather was predicted. The day was then tentatively switched to October 24th, only to find a prediction of clouds and possibly rain. After a quick huddle with the crew chiefs and planners, a final change was made to Tuesday Oct 20th. Because of a mid-week day and a late pick, the turnout was lower than Larry and Mitzi Pittman had initially been hoping for at first planning, but in the end Dave Quinn, now forever to be know as "Dusty Dave", commandeered the group down a route that he picked, so that more members could easily get there. The colors did indeed put on a spectacular show for our procrastinating participants as they realized that Dave's country cruising meant meandering on dusty

dirt roads before reaching their rendezvous. **John Alexander s**upplies the rest of the story:

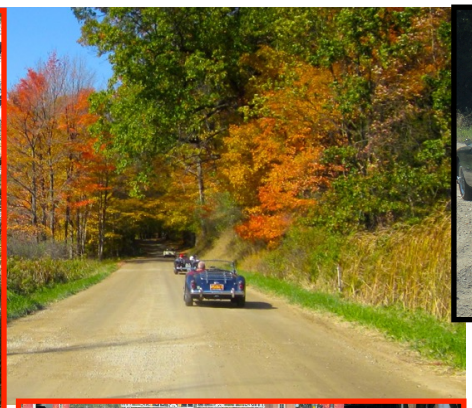
"The weather, though cool to begin with, was PERFECT for a colour tour with crisp, clear skies and the trees in early color. Carolyn and I acted as the "sweeper car" in our MGyota, not a true MGA but it's red and has an "MG" emblem decal. As we brought up the rear in the parade through the countryside, I was happy beyond measure that we'd brought the enclosed car. My, but there was a LOT of dust in the first half of the trip.

Dave "Dusty" Quinn led us all on an interesting, winding tour which we all enjoyed. We visited the Sandhill Crane Winery which was new to us and one we will revisit soon, then traveled on to the Inverness Inn tavern for our afternoon meal and chit-chat. The waitress, I'm sure, said she'd split the tab with us - but she didn't. POOP! From the Inn we found Hell then went home (*Ed note: Some of us may find this identical place eventually, just not at the end of a car ride).* It was a great deal of fun with a super crew of participants and some nice roads. Tuesday is a superb day for a tour as there's very little traffic!

The following photos were taken at speed (except the ones in the car parks) through the windscreen for evidence.

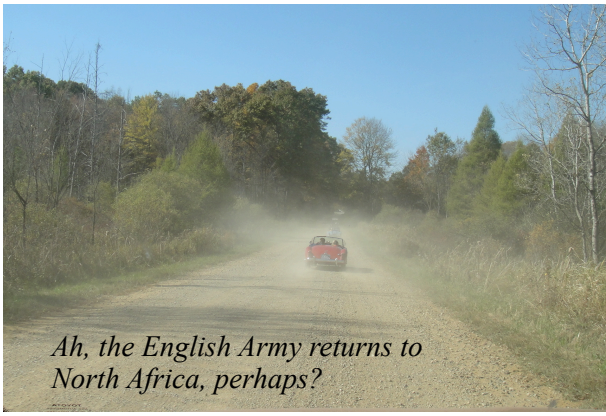
John Alexander


This isn't right, is it?




Mitzi points the way and she was right!

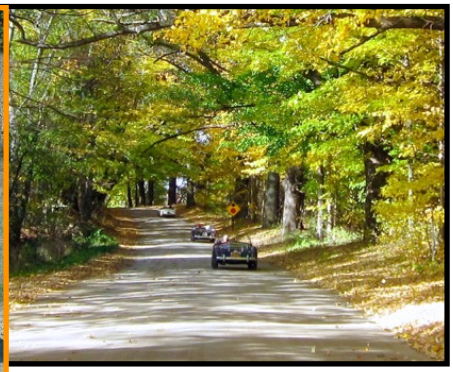

A line of 5 "A"'s in downtown Chelsea.


Ah, the English Army returns to North Africa, perhaps?


Yea, we've come to the winery!


At the Mickey D's prior to departure. Note the clean clothes.


I think we should have turned the other way.....



Photos by Tom Fant, Dave Quinn, Stephanie Smith, John Alexander


Time to Relax and Refresh!


John explains that his MGA is "almost done"



Mueller's Orchard Meet 9-20-15

impromptu Fall car meet September 20th at Mueller's Orchard in Linden, MI near Larry & Mitzi Pittman's house.

The Michigan Chapter of the NEMGT Club put on an

Several Rowdies were planning to join in for the fun and we later all gathered at Pittman's for more socializing. There was a good turnout of vintage cars for the event, with everything from our MG's to 50's American and later muscle cars.




Melody, Willy, & Shari Pelic


"A, B, T..." the MG Alphabet


The Crew, back at Larry and Mitzi's house


Larry & Mitzi's MGA




Lots of Detroit Steel


Ken & Melody Klemmer's Coupe



Photos by Ken Nelson, Mark Stump, Bruce & Willy Mann



















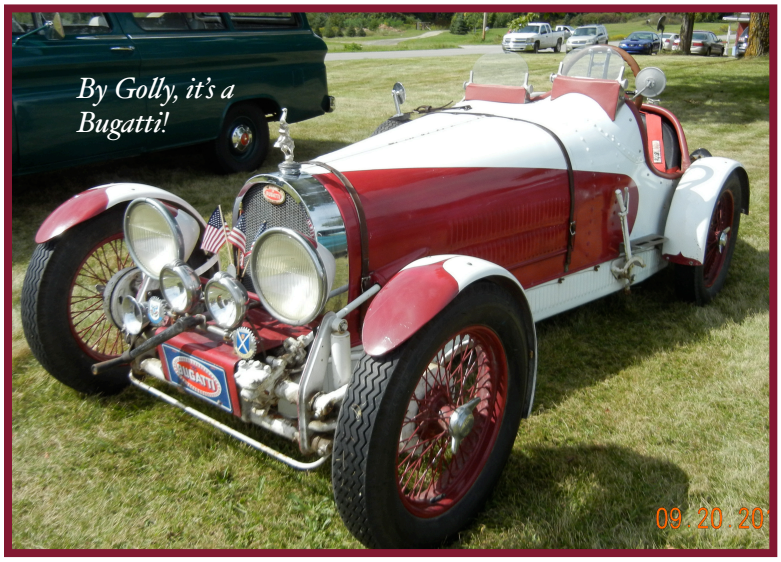



STOP
09.20


Ladies Relaxing at Pittman's


Change partners and Drive...
09.20.2015


09.20.2015


By Golly, it's a Bugatti!
09.20.20



'Ol #49 Does It Again At Put-In-Bay Races - September 1, 2015

Put In Bay 2015 was a great event. In 2010 Rowdie Racing was one of 8 cars in a short autocross. This year in 5 groups there were almost 100 cars. Some from California, Colorado, Florida, Wisconsin, Indiana etc. Grassroots and professionally maintained race cars such as Elva Mark 6, Alfa Romeo Giulletta, Austin Healey Sprite, MG TD, Twin cam & 1622 MGA, and MG Midgets made up the field.

Chari and I left the F250 and Trailer in the Miller Ferry commercial lot and drove #49 and our Ford Edge onto the ferry at noon. I had a young lady taking lots of pictures of # 49 and she quickly accepted an offer to sit in the car. Eventually her dad, and grandpa, also sat in the car & had their pictures taken. A great start to the weekend. Also on the ferry was Keith Friemark and his beautiful Jaguar XK 120. Keith and I met in 1988 when I was Joe's crew chief for # 029.



Upon arrival at the Race Paddock, I joined Tom Baumgardner as the Tech team. We inspected about 65 race cars until 7:00 PM. Then off to the wine & cheese party. We sat with the Kintners, Bob & Lori Deeks (whom I met at Mid Ohio this year), Keith Price, John Deikis and Dan Metzger (event photo dude). Later went to Hooligans for supper.

On Monday I still had my volunteer hat and started Tech at 7:45 AM with Tom. By then we had all the cars thru Tech, so Jack W. asked me to work on Track Layout. This is a bit difficult, as the spectator areas were fairly close to the race track. Trying to keep race speeds under 90 MPH required the use of chicane to break down the long straight pieces. However if the chicane is a bottleneck, you can expect rear end collisions too. The airport surface was closed with an agreement with the FAA, and we had trailers and a large group of young strong men to position the straw bales. Eventually I and Jack made some last minute changes, and we opened the track to practice after the drivers meeting at noon.

#49 had the same engine as at Waterford, and was quick off the trailer. It ran the practice, Qualifier, and three 15 lap races and got stronger for each race with a run time of 1.5 hours for the event. For the races we were gridded 6th in a field of 20 group 2 cars. Our Field had a 356 Porsche, 4 MGAs, an Alfa Romeo GTV and Giulietta, some Triumph Spitfires, and plenty of MG Midgets and Mini's too. A great field to race with.

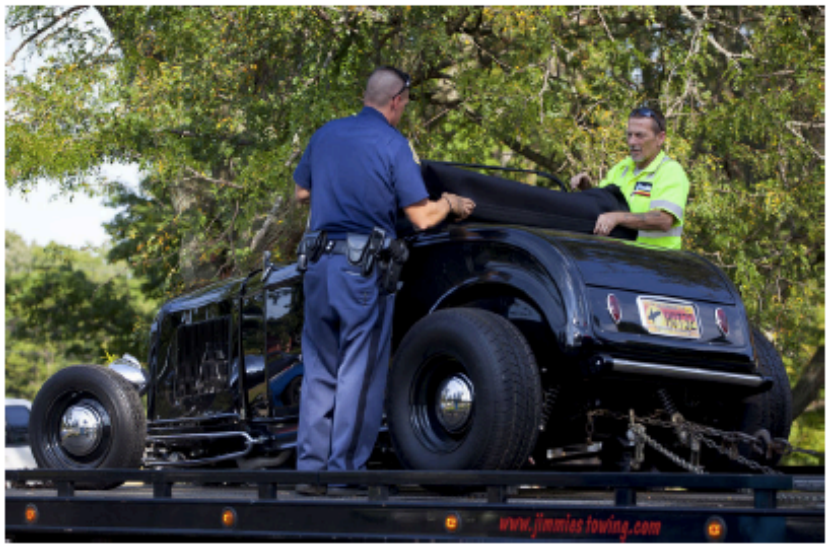
There were several spectacular car/haybale shunts, three of which occurred in front of me while #49 was entering the chicanes. However all drivers were able to recover and go into the black flag station for their moment with the Chief of the course. I appreciated their contributions to the layout, as the bales were "rearranged" and the line thru became a bit quicker. Mark Griffith stopped by the paddock, and was quickly put to work as the official Rowdie Racing team member. In spite of the 90 degree temps, I think he had a great time. There are lots of pictures on the PIB Facebook page.

Thanks to all the Rowdies for building such a great racing MGA. After 19 years on the track, it is still capable of running up front.

Dave & Chari Smith

Safety Fast or 'Bring 'Em Back Alive'

People do not have to wear seat belts in a car manufactured before January 1965, according to Michigan law.



I was reminded of this law September 25th of this year when an accident happened just south of town. A man and a woman were both seriously hurt in a two-vehicle crash. The two were in a beautiful black 1932 hot rod convertible headed south when a woman traveling east in a VW Jetta stopped at an intersection but failed to yield and the hot rod T-boned the Jetta. Sadly, the hot rod was not equipped with seat belts. The man and woman were thrown from the car. Looking at the pictures there appears to be no serious damage to either vehicle. The woman driving the Jetta had minor injuries and went to the hospital on her own. At this writing I do not have a further update on the condition of the other two beyond seriously hurt.





This accident was identical to an accident I had near Buffalo, New York on September 12th 2004 returning from a Watkins Glen vintage race weekend with passenger Mac McDonnell. A young driver in a full-size Jeep pulled directly in front of my 1960 MGA of 32 years ownership. Thankfully I had installed lap belts. At 45 mph the MG was totaled. We both had serious yet not life threatening injuries and were damn thankful to be alive. The hot rod accident sparked my desire to share our story with new members that did not hear it.

(continued next page)

(continued...)

After assessing our outcome we both resolved that lap belts, while certainly better than nothing, had limitations. The inherent jackknife effect could not provide the safety offered by modern 3-point seat belts.

From that time on both Mac and I have strongly urged MGA owners to forego the "period look" or the "it won't happen to me" approach for their own safety.

Thankfully, several Rowdies have taken our advice and installed 3-points. *(Ed note: I did, after seeing these pictures. Look for Todd Clarke's 3-point kit.)*

The law of survival should take precedent over the law of Michigan!

Dave Quinn

PS As a footnote I did save everything I possibly could from the red 1600 and later on transferred it to the white 1500 I now drive. Parts swapped included the engine (rebuilt), carbs, transmission, front disc brakes, drive train, differential, plus the seat interiors, and three of the four wire wheels. So in a sense it still lives on!







Have We Got A Deal For You!

Most everyone in the MGA community today has heard about the TV show called "Wheeler Dealer", which originated in England and consists of two dudes buying classic cars on the cheap, fixing them up, and selling them for a tidy profit. One of the cars they chose for the show was an MGA from California that was purchased for $14,000 and purportedly sold for $35,000 after repairs and refurbishment. None of their cars are put through what any car afficionado would call a complete restoration, but they try to chose cars carefully to find the best ones that will look good with minimal work. Mike Brewer does the dealing, and Edd China does the repairing. Edd does a very nice job of explaining his repairs on the show, and appears to be a rather good all around mechanic. Mike, as any used car salesman, has to be taken with a grain of salt, but is as entertaining as they come. All in all, the show appears to be a success among the gearhead population of the world, but the question I had was whether or not there was good value for the money spent on these cars? In other words, were they worth it? So I sent out a question online to all the Rowdies and these were the answers so far:

Dave Quinn wrote in, "I enjoyed watching the show, especially how they approached the

engine's common oil leak at the rear main crankshaft seal. I'd be interested to know in a few years if it really worked. I've heard of far too many fixes that didn't, and some were a lot more expensive. I guess the camera guy was not around when they did the patch panel repair of the front fenders.

What they don't mention is always in the back of my mind when watching Wheeler Dealer. Did they change the brake shoes? Did they change the brake fluid? Did they change the brake lines? They didn't mention it. What about the top, the side curtains, and the tonneau cover – they never mentioned any of those items and I'm sure what came with the car was rot? I noticed they did not put the trim strip on the bottom that runs the length of the car.

I thought it funny they made a big deal out of painting it in the original color. Since it did not have the original engine or wheels, did it really matter – only if you wanted it black any way? Unless they added quality insulation in the foot well and over the transmission the color would just make a hot car even hotter. And the toughest color to keep clean.

Ok, I know in the end it's all about making a show and flipping the car. It is nice how they can do a couple years work in a half-hour." (*Amen to that! Ken)*

Then **Dave Smith** took up the challenge: "Ken; In response to your request for feedback on the Wheeler Dealer episode on the MGA:

I often watched this show, when it was based in England and featured upgrades for many European makes & models. The American version was not as interesting to me until the MGA episode.

I enjoyed Mike's search for a solid West coast MGA, but was astounded to see him pay $14,000. The hideous dashboard, Stewart Warner gauges, incorrect engine, front wing rust on both sides, totally worn out interior, and equally awful and incorrect wheels and hubcaps were apparently not a consideration for the purchase negotiations.

Once Edd got into the car upgrades, the story line became more interesting. His work on the trunk floor to eliminate the rust was well done. The conversion of the car to aftermarket wire wheel hubs was interesting, but in my opinion should not have made this car more collectible. Edd's idea to reverse the brake drums on the hubs to check run-out was creative and interesting.

The Engine: Mike's conversion of the engine back plate for oil control was interesting, but seemed more complicated than needed. The 1600 engine had recently been fitted with new main & rod bearings, but it was obvious that the engine had not been balanced. A MGA selling for $35,000 should have this important upgrade. Without a balanced engine the car would have the same ride feel as a bed in a cheap hotel, with quarters stuffed in the coin slot.

Returning the car to black was a good decision, however their reported cost for all body preparation and paint application seemed quite low." *(Thanks Dave, you're in the running for $25 to repaint your car with! Ken)*

Don Holle out in New Mexico put some money behind his thoughts about the car; "Hi Ken; OK, here's my two cents worth on the Wheeler Dealers MGA project. I've watched every one of Edd and Mike's WD programs and look forward to many more. What gets me, and this applies to the MGA project as well, is that there is no labor cost. Is Edd an indentured servant? Is Mike blackmailing him? Can we borrow Edd at no cost for a month or two? I guess Paul works for naught as well. Labor, labor, labor!

The buggering details are always left out. Drives me crazy. That was no $35K MGA they ended up with. And they surely had more than $25K in it. As long as there was a very unoriginal 1600 motor, why not do it right and throw in an 1800 and a 5-speed tranny?

Body work happened as if by magic. Instruments all worked perfectly. No replacement of brake shoes. And I'll bet there was more chassis rust than shown.

Got a chuckle out of seeing the two of them shoe horned into that little car. I kept waiting for the driver's door to pop open and for Mike to spill out onto the pavement and for a shot of how Edd got his 6' 6" plus frame into the other side.

Despite the fantasy - as in all their projects-- I enjoyed the show. I had the going price pegged at $30K. The buyer should have checked out the offerings in MGA! before writing a check.

By the way, we currently have a '69 E-Type Jag roadster in our garage that belongs to a friend with more classic cars than garage space. We are authorized to exercise it at will with the gas bill going to the owner. Nice deal. However, the MGA has no monopoly on limited legroom and unease of entry for tall folks. Considering how ungraceful one must get to get in, especially so for the ladies, I wonder how they ever sold ANY E-Types. Cheers, Don" (*Thanks Don, I agree there would have to be a LOT more done to that car to make it 35 grand worth of British motorcar. Ken)*

Todd Binsz was a bit more lenient toward Mike and Edd with his comments: "Hello Ken! This show was really interesting. For one who is mechanically challenged, they made it look like a piece of cake! I would have been interested to see what problems and unexpected curves in the road they encountered. They most certainly ran into some. The car ended up very nice and I think they were smart not to cut any corners to save money. They did it up right!" *(Thanks Todd. I'd have to agree the car came out looking like a nice piece of cake, but maybe without a full dose of frosting.)*

Jeff Smith seconds the repair technique the Edd China used for the rear main seal engine oil leak and gives it good marks as follows:

"Hi Ken, Jolly Good Show! If only we had all started with such a good platform, it might have been that easy for us too. Mike's exuberance was definitely inspiring, and the glowing words about the MGA were music to our ears.

I especially liked the way Mike and Edd handled the engine oil leak, something very near and dear to all MGA owner's hearts. For me, that part of the show was déjà vu, since I just had that work done last summer at a local machine shop (Gentle Machine Tool & Die Inc). If you play the video again, watch closely when Mike hands the drawings for the machining to the machinist. Those are the diagrams from Barney Gaylord's MGA Guru site, the same ones I handed to Aaron Gentle when I had him do that work for me! No more leaks. I highly recommend having this work done when you take your engine out for any reason.

Still, it was surprising how well the car turned out for the little work that Edd did. The body shop/painter evidently did most of the work. We didn't see how the boot looked painted, nor did we see under the bonnet. Did the inside of the engine compartment even get painted? How, with the engine and everything else still in place? Did they paint over the fender beads, or did they find them in black? Not sure I would pay $35,000 for it, especially since they did no frame or suspension work at all.

Lastly, Mike needs to pay more attention to the road, he barely kept that little car between the lines! All in all, it was fun to watch, and to see others get as excited about MGAs as we do." (*I'll second that! Ken)*

Finally **John Alexander** chimed in with this review: "Ken, I did see the MGA episode a while ago and made some notes at that time, not knowing you'd be having a writing contest. I only wanted to pick the show apart with my Wednesday "Red Wave" survivors group.

As requested, I'm sending along a photo of the +.030 piston - actual piston to arrive in your mailbox soon! To summarize my notes:

Door panels non-original

Grille emblem missing

Non-standard instrument facia w/non-standard Stewart Warner gauges

Non-standard wheels

Good rear engine seal explanation

No explanation of rust repair on wings, or rocker panels

Easy to paint but did they mask the welting or remove the wings?

Replaced the door cards with coupe cards - STILL not original

$100 for MG boot lid insignia!!!!!!!!!!!!!! WHAT!!!!!!!

Other than those bits, I was happy to see one of our cars featured on a popular TV show. The Bugeye has already been featured with similar factual "softness".(*Yeah, I* HATED *those stupid 'fake' gauges also! Ken)*

Well, I'd say that even with some diversity in our member's evaluation, there is a generally common feeling that while the car certainly ended up looking rather nice overall, none of us would be willing to fork out 35 big ones for it. Mike and Edd must have put more effort and work in that original car than was shown on TV. When you consider the cost of labor, you'd be lucky to break even. To me there is no question that I'd rather be looking at the For Sale ads in **MGA!** magazine for a better bargain. Still, I enjoy watching the show, and that's what Mike and Edd really want to accomplish most of all. Thanks to all our members who took the time to write in and share your thoughts with the rest of us!

Note: One of our writers above will be a winner of a $25 gift coupon from LBCCO. The name will be drawn from a hat at the Christmas party. Will mail to winner if not present at the party.

MGs in the News, or Quotable Quotes





