THE JOURNAL OF THE MICHIGAN ROWDIES VOLUME 44, NO 2, MAR-APRIL, 2019

A-Antics



Cecil and his Car-Party on pg 17
Submitted by Brian Beery

Kimber Meet Report

Tales From The Glen

Tech Tips

Day In The Garage



MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER

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

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

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

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

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

Meets Chairman John Alexander
464 West Delhi Rd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
(734) 665-0682 king_alex@msn.com

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

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

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

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

Nickname: Rowdies

Motto: People First!

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

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

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

Past Chapter Chairpersons:

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



MEMBERS PAGE

Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman, Webmaster

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

Larry Pitman's Database Report: 55 Active and Paid-Up Members

Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: June 20, 2019

Letters

Interesting Riley Facts



Unbeknownst to many an automobile enthusiast is the fact that Riley Saloon cars may be purchased with their own set of unmatched luggage which can slip easily into the spacious boot leaving plenty of room in the cabin for your fellow travelers. This way the owner is assured of having a clean shirt and knickers available upon arrival at his next destination. Here is another satisfied Riley owner getting ready to take his lovely family for a vacation trip to the seashore! ***Sir Algernon BlueBottom***

MGA Parade Cars

Jerry Jesion sends in this video link to a parade of MGA's carrying the drivers for the Australian 2019 F1 Grand Prix race around the track just before the start for the fans to cheer on. Too bad the MGAs didn't get a chance to do some racing of their own. Take a look. The race winner was Valtteri Bottas.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMyZbz_mm5I&feature=player_embedded

Jerry Jesion

Getting There



Here a picture of Bruce Mann's latest MGA sent in March 2019. Knowing Bruce, I'm sure things have progressed already since then. Keep up the good work!

Bruce Mann

Shout Out For The Best

I wanted to give a Shout Out for the Rowdies coasters. They are the best. We have the soft NAMGAR



coasters, plastic coasters, etc. and none have been as good as the new coasters. They are heavy enough that they do not cling to any drinks, padded enough that they won't mark up any furniture, big enough to handle beer mugs as well as any size bottle drink, and the art work is the best.

Dave Quinn

Chairman Bill Presents

This is for anyone who had enjoyed road racing over the years. Some of the greats of racing are featured in this set of three videos. My first trip to Elkhart Lake was for the 1966 RA500. I've been in love with the place ever since. It has changed a lot. I was amazed to see the pits were not even paved. In 1966, we could wander around the paddock and get close to the cars and drivers. Today, it costs you an arm and a leg, if you can get it. https://bringatrailer.com/2019/04/13/video-inspiration-road-america-500-1964-onboard-w-roger-penske-175/?utm_source=dailymail

(continued next page)

Loose Wheels Revisited

In the Nov-Dec 2018 issue of "A-Antics" Mark Barnhart wrote in about the hazards of towing a wire wheel MGA on a tow dolly without wire-tying the knockoffs to prevent them from loosening. I haven't seen or been aware of this in the past, but Dave Smith wrote in of his experience with this problem:

Ken, it is entirely possible that I never shared this story on the acquisition of my 1959 MGA. In 1979 I had a 1952 MG TD and lived in Washington MI at 26 Mile and Van Dyke road. The TD needed some bits, such as a dash mount Turn Signal switch. One of my fellow Troopers saw the TD in the Romeo Post parking lot, and said that he had just seen another MG at a Towing Service and salvage lot in Almont, MI.

Thinking I may get some needed bits, I made contact with the Towing Service Owner. He said it was an MGA and that it belonged to his nephew Richard Loether of San Diego CA. His nephew was in the Navy and was driving the MGA from San Diego to Selfridge Airfield in Mt Clemens. The 1500 engine broke the crankshaft near Benton Harbor, MI after 92,000 miles. The nephew asked if he could store the car in Almont until it could be repaired.

Several years passed and the 1500 engine had been pulled out. Richard Loether had been transferred again to Norfolk Virginia, so repair of the car became impossible on a sailor's wages. I contacted Mr. Loether and made him an offer, which he accepted and mailed me the 1959 California Title.

The Towing Service Owner helped me get the MGA to the front of the lot. The brakes were topped off and bled and worked fine, so the plan was to flat-tow the car home behind a tow car. On the tow home, the last part of the trip was on M-53 Freeway. Keeping the tow chain tight, I rode the brake pedal. Suddenly the left rear and right front tires departed the car and rolled past the tow vehicle. The car stayed level, and I made small corrections with the steering to keep it level. I applied more brake and pulled onto the paved shoulder. More brake stopped the MGA and the tow vehicle and kept the tow chain tight. Only after it stopped did the Right Front brake drum contact the ground.

We found the two knockoffs and both tyres after a search. Both were reinstalled and with several hefty knocks to the knockoff, went the last mile to the 26 mile road ramp. Only later did I figure out that the splines on the RF and LR hubs were totally worn out. Riding the brakes for so many miles caused the wheels to gradually loosen the knockoffs.

The MGA was a one owner car and 99% complete. Other than the 1500 engine, the only missing part was the dash mounted Turn Signal switch. By spring 1980 with the help of 13 year old daughter Katherine, the car was fitted with a 3 main 1800 engine and sported Red paint with Biscuit interior. The only item missing was the darned turn signal switch. A friend said that the MGA had attended the Utica Carnival of Cars in prior years. I took the car to the Show to meet fellow MGA owners. The first person I met was RB Hart. Asking about the illusive switch, RB assured me if I joined the Michigan Rowdies, the switch could be obtained. I joined that day and got an A Antics talking about GT 7 at Indy. Daughter Katherine and I drove The MGA to GT 7 where we met Dave and Donna Quinn and many other Rowdies. ***David T. Smith***

So this theoretical problem could very well become real. In this case, if the wheels were not locked in place on the axle splines it seems there would be a strong force loosening the knockoff when the brake held the wheel as the axle tried to keep turning. This force would be much stronger than when "free-wheeling" on a tow dolly where no braking is used, but needs to be considered. ***Ken Nelson***

Corn Liquor Bad For MGAs

Owners of collector cars, or any vehicle built before 2001, beware: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is finalizing a rule approving the sale of E15 gasoline year-round, so use extra care when gassing up this summer.

In the United States, ninety-eight percent of gasoline sold already contains some amount of ethanol. Cars produced in the past two decades or so generally have no problem burning the common E10 blend, which contains 10 percent ethanol. Some stations have offered E15, which bumps the amount



of ethanol to 15 percent, since 2005, but the EPA had previously banned its sale during the summer amid concerns that it contributed to the creation of smog. The EPA is poised to rescind the ban and make E15 available throughout the year under a rule it could finalize by June 1 (*Ed. note: Moonshine contains about 40% ethanol, so we're gettin close enough that you soon might have to be 21 years or older to buy gasoline!)*

The change won't happen overnight, and you'll still be able to get E10. Still, motorists will want to be mindful when filling up. Not all cars can handle the higher concentration of ethanol, which can gum up fuel systems and cause corrosion in cars that haven't been designed to burn it.

From Hagerty Insurance Web page

Some Early Grand Rapids MG History

John Twist wrote about some early GR history dealing with MG's:

"Al Allin from Grand Haven raced a TD at Watkins Glen in the mid-fifties. He, Doug Elzinga, and Graham Porter were Performance Cars located on Lovett Avenue SE in East Grand Rapids. This was a break-away firm from Import Cars which was located on the NW corner of Eastern Ave SE and Oakdale St SE in the building presently owned by our fellow club member (*'Ol Speckled Hens*) Jim Jelsema.

Peter Cook was the ace salesman there. Jim Byers who later worked for all the VW dealers in parts, ending his career at Betten Imports, told me about the evening when they all stayed late at the Oakdale dealership waiting for Pete to return from Chicago with the new MG TF. They had a TC and a TD in the showroom already to showcase the newest of the line. When VW offered Import Auto a dealership, Peter Cook jumped at the opportunity, knowing that they could represent ONLY VW and all the other marques would have to go. All the employees assembled at someone's house and discussed the opportunity. Al Allin campaigned for the BMC products (Morris, Wolseley, MG, and Austin) so the company split.

It was at the Lovett Street location that Performance hired Clifford Bridge. Clifford later went on his own as "The Dyno Den" at the NW corner of Virginia St SE and Diamond Ave SE. Fellow club member Tim Sterken well remembers visiting Clifford there. Clifford later worked for Don Wylie at 3340 South Division at the MG dealership that later became Roberts Imports. Clifford left Wylie's with Clark Frain to form Bridge and Frain which was the pre-eminent British sportscar shop in Grand Rapids in the late 60s and early 70s. Clifford later moved to California to work for Jason Len at XKs Unlimited in San Luis Obispo, CA. But I digress….

Pete Cook went on to form Thrifty VW at the corner of Eastern and 28th Street and then a seven (?) state VW distributorship. Later he formed Great Lakes Mazda. Peter Cook did very well for himself and Grand Rapids, to say the least. Al Allin ended up with a Ferrari which he sold in the 1980s for $1.5 million. Jim Brooks, Brooks Imported Cars, Lansing, Michigan's oldest MG dealer, was at Al's house when he received payment for the Ferrari. It was still in Lira so there were a lot of zeros. Jim told me he put the number into his calculator and exclaimed to Al that the amount was "only" 1.3 million. "Well," replied Al, "I took a deposit."

The point of this is to let everyone know that Al Allin ran a TD (I don't think it was a TF) at Watkins Glen AND that he had a direct connection to our local MG world. He would visit us from time to time at University Motors and the whole shop would come to a stop while he recounted those early days at the MG dealerships."

John Twist, University Motors

(Ed note; John's Grand Rapids history goes back further than mine, since Kathy and I moved here in 1972. I don't know all these MG folks from the past, but did meet Graham Porter and was familiar with Bridge and Frain's shop and Roberts Imports dealership. In fact, I considered buying either a new MGB or Triumph Stag from Roberts Imports. But the Stag was too pricey, and the rather antiquated at the time MGB couldn't match the features of the 1974

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NORTH AMERICAN MG REGISTER

Fiat 124 Spyder convertible I did finally buy as my first new car. Unfortunately I later learned that the

(continued next page)

antiquated MGB was actually a driver's car while the Fiat was meant to be looked at and cherished, but not to expect to drive it. And as for the Stag, the MG books have a lot to say about its sad history, or you can talk to Dave Quinn who did buy one.)

Members' Updates

Kevin and Norma Peck announced that they were recently married. We all offer our Best Wishes to them.



Also in the news Dave and Donna Quinn just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary and their son Steve and daughter Tammy had a surprise party for them at Jerry's Pub.



And finally, not to be outdone, Andy Hoffman and Joanne also recently married. We wish all three couples many ongoing years of wedded bliss and happiness!



For sale: 1956 MGA roadster, older restoration 1999-2000. Overhauled engine and gear box less than 500 miles ago, new steering rack, wire harness, interior and seats, top and tonneau. Located in Champaign, Illinois. Asking $17,000. Call Dave 574-340-5404 or defauwdave@gmail.com.









ROWDIES 2019 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2019

April

6 WDMGC Tech Session-see page 9

20 Kimber Birthday Party-11:30 am
Delhi Cafe, 4625 WilloughbyRd.
Holt, MI 48842 517-694-8655
Host: Dave & Chari Smith

May

4 DRIVE YOUR MGA DAY
Host: Curt & Stephanie Smith
Inverness Inn: Gregory, MI

18 Spring British Car Gathering & Picnic
Camp Dearborn, Milford, MI 11am - 4pm
No awards. BYO lunch & beverage-Grill
available Host: Windsor Detroit MG Club

June

2 Brits Return to Ft. Meigs
29100 West River Rd Perrysburg, OH
Lake Erie British Car Club

23-26 NAMGBR - MG 2019
Great Wolf Lodge
Traverse City, MI

30 Michiana Brits 31st Annual British Car Show
Campus of Saint Mary's College 10am-3pm
Notre Dame, IN MGA is featured Marque
Michiana Brits British Car Enthusiasts Club

July

7 Mad Dogs & Englishmen
Gilmore Museum Hickory Corners, MI
Host: Bruce Nichols (269) 273-3118

10-14 GT-44 Dubuque, IA
NAMGAR GT-44

12 Rolling Sculpture Car Show
Main Downtown Streets Ann Arbor, MI
$20 Registration Fee 2-10pm Flyer to follow

27 Waterford Hills Racetrack Vintage Race
Weekend MG Vintage Racers
Host: Dave Quinn (517) 945-1267

August

3 Glider Rides - $80 for a 30 min glider ride
Group Drive is TBD **Alternate Weather Date August 10**. Bring picnic lunch to enjoy at Soaring club field. Adrian Soaring Club
Host: Larry & Mitzi Pittman

11 Alden Classic Sports Car Show Alden, MI
9am-4pm Awards at 3pm
Driving Tour of Torch Lake & Dinner on Sat
Twin Bay British Car Club

17 Rowdie Birthday Party-Ken & Kathy Nelson
3126 Brentwood Dr. SE Grand Rapids, MI
49506 616-957-3158 Arrive 12-1pm

September

8 Battle of the Brits - Gathering of the Faithful
Camp Dearborn, Milford, MI
Detroit Triumph Sportscar Club

8 Cars on the Green
5221 Church Road, Dixboro, MI
Eastern Edge of Dixboro Villager Green

15 Orphan Car Show Riverside Park Ypsilanti, MI
Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum

24-27 Put-In-Bay Road Races
Put-In-Bay, OH
Click on website for online or paper registration

October

TBD Rowdies Color Tour
Host: Dave & Donna Quinn (517) 945-1267
2929 Wolhaven Ln., Jackson, MI
Date Weather Dependent via email

December

1 Rowdie Christmas Party - Chelsea Depot
Chelsea, MI Host: John Alexander & Carolyn King (734) 665-0682

(Continued on next column)

Michigan Rowdies

The first chapter of NAMGAR, the North American MGA Register.

"It's the cars that get you there, but the people keep you coming back."

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Learn more at www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

by Bill Weakley

In the last issue, I described how I had the backplate of my A engine modified by enlarging the crankshaft hole by .05" from 4.34" to 4.39" diameter so that the add-on seal would fit in the hole without interference. That way the seal could be self-centered on the crank before attaching it to the backplate. The original hole in the backplate is not necessarily centered perfectly on the crankshaft, so the enlarged hole won't be centered any more precisely. In the original design, the hole just needs to be big enough to allow the crankshaft flange to pass through. With the excessive blowby problem, I have driven the car enough to see that the new rings were already seated better in just a few miles than the previous set was after a thousand miles.

Before I was able to drive the car much, I realized I had at least a couple other oil leaks that needed to be fixed. I put the car up on stands and ran it while cleaning it and watching for leaks. By the way, the scar on my arm will testify that the exhaust pipe gets very hot even at idle. I found several leak suspects and decided I needed to pull the engine again. This was the fourth removal since the original install. I wouldn't want any bolts rusting in place, you know. One of the leaks was from the spin-on oil filter adapter, which I remounted with a new o-ring. I also replaced the pan gasket. The good news was that there was no hint of oil leakage from the rear crank seal, but I did have leakage from the front cover of the transmission. I have driven about 100 miles since re-installing the engine, and the oil leakage problem seems to be under control. Hip, hip, hooray!!!

OK, now that I have celebrated, I have some words of caution for anyone considering the seal modification. First, be sure that the seal can self-center on the ring. Second, polish the ring to provide a clean, low wear surface. This should be done when the ring is made on a lathe. Third, use the actual model seal recommended in Barney's write-up and get it from a reputable non-Chinese manufacturer. One of the earlier ones I had deteriorated rather quickly. Fourth, even the best seal that I could find is not rated for the surface speed of the seal against the ring at high RPMs. So I don't know how long it will last. I don't expect to red-line my engine very often, so maybe it won't be a problem. Only time will tell. So stay tuned. For now I am happy to have a leak-free engine.

BREAKING NEWS: I bought another MGA. Really? Why? I guess it was a case of temporary insanity. I went to an estate sale with a number of cars being sold by sealed bids with a reserve on each. The A, a 1960 1600 roadster, seemed like it would be worth the reserve, so I put in what I thought was a low-ball bid, just over the reserve. The deciding factor was that the dash had a NAMGAR number dash plaque, so I could trace some of the history. Apparently my bid wasn't low-ball enough. So I have spent a day rearranging the garages so I can squeeze in another one. I won't know how big a mistake I made until I get it home and go over it in detail. It may take a week or so, because of an issue with the title.

I have told several people that I felt that three MGs was probably one too many to make good use of. But at least three fit in my garage fairly comfortably. I don't intend to keep this car long term. I just want to see what I can do to make it road-worthy and usable before I pass it along to someone else. Of course, that is what I said about my MGC almost 10 years ago.

In the meantime, I am ready to drive my MGA on "Drive Your MGA Day". I'm looking forward to seeing a bunch of Rowdies and hoping for good weather.

Chairman Bill



Dave Smith Reports On Lee Jacobsen's Day In The Garage-April 6th

Saturday April 6th started with thick fog at 7:30 am in Holt, but it burned off by 9:15 am. Much to the disappointment of my neighbors, the Austin Healey Sprite with the 1275 from Hell fired off cleanly. After a few blips of the throttle the engine warmed a bit and would actually launch with the Tach under 3000 rpm. The drive from Holt to Dave Quinn's home in Jackson was quite nice. Traffic was light, the sun was promising a warm day. Unlike my MGA, the Sprite has a rather effective heater that warms about 70% of your lower body, even with the top down. The yarn hat and driving gloves did the rest. Lots of waving and smiles from the occupants of the Detroit Iron.



The Windsor Detroit MG club day in the garage was unbelievable. Lee Jacobson hosted about 120 British Car enthusiasts from most of the Michigan British Car clubs. His shop is about 10,000 square foot with year around operations at comfy temperatures. In addition to some very rare MGs, he also has Packard projects. Lots to enjoy on this walking tour. Each project had a page of information with interesting details. He is also building a MGA 1600 roadster. I met Bill Case who is the MGA engine builder and had an interesting conversation with him. Lee also made his sand blast booth available and many of the attendees made good use of that. Sadly I forgot to grab the transmission support from my MGC restoration. Not enough coffee at 7:30 AM! The project of the day was a driveshaft removal from an MGB and replacement of the U joints. The site of almost 20 persons under a lifted MGB was certainly a photo op. Hopefully someone got that picture. Update on the driveshaft.....we were trying to fix someone else's bodge...ended up scrapping it, buying a new 'U' joint for $22 and finished the work with Windsor Detroit members Sat 4-13. Mike's MGB now works great!





Rowdies In attendance included Chairman Bill Weakley, Meets Dude John Alexander, Curt Smith, Dave Quinn and Guy St. John. We were treated to Tim Horton coffee & rolls upon arrival. For lunch there was a make your own sandwich bar and many side dishes, brownies & fantastic cookies for desert. The event was a great mixer to meet members of the other Michigan clubs including 25 from the Michigan Jaguar club.

Dave Quinn took advantage of the free samples of sound deadener panels provided by Lee's business. We arrived back in Jackson around 3:00 PM. The Austin Healey fired up without choke this time. After using the 127 freeway down, the decision was to navigate on back roads without a map. First was the metropolis of Rives Junction, and then open farm land, eventually finding Aurelius road to Holt. Temps were near 70 degrees with only light cloud cover and no wind. About a perfect British roadster driving day as can be expected.

I urge all to keep an eye out for this event in 2020. Lee is a great host and gave all of us a great way of eliminating Michigan cabin fever. Thanks to WDMGC for arranging this and inviting us to attend.

Dave Smith, Michigan Rowdie

Racing At The Glen-1994

Chairman Bill Weakley wrote in to the Antics about a Moss email from March 2019 posting a link to a YouTube video about the history of racing at Watkins Glen and the formation of the Collier Cup all-MG races that have been held since 1954 in honor of Sam and Miles Collier who were two of the founders of the Watkins Glen races. In 1994 there was a special 40 year celebration Collier Cup race and this video was filmed then to give some history and perspective to the Collier Cup and Watkins Glen. The link is:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ux9htRSNSp0

and Bill wrote in to the Antics saying "*Some of you have probably seen this, since Moss sent it out a few days ago. If you watch it again, look at the crowd at the 55 second mark and the 12 minute mark. You'll see our own Mark Barnhart. You'll have to look a little harder to see Margie next to him. Dave Smith was there at Watkins Glen that weekend too, but he didn't have his race car there then. Maybe you can spot him somewhere.* ***Were any other Rowdies there?***" I responded to Bill with some history of my own as follows:

"You know memory gets a bit fuzzy, but I suspect that video might be when Mark Barnhart, Dave Smith, Mac McDonnell, and I drove out to Watkins Glen for the MG races. I could check the year if I were home, but I'm not. The year we drove out we went up through Canada and we took Dave Smith's father's pickup camper if I remember correctly. We were driving rather fast and at one point the truck overheated and blew the radiator cap off. I think it stayed somewhere in the engine and was retrievable. I may be confusing that with another trip, but it was a lot of fun anyway. I do remember that we drove back to Smith's on Sunday, and I drove my MGA home to Grand Rapids from there. I arrived home about 5am Monday morning in time to go to work at 8am that day. Bummer of a day as you can imagine!

Ken Nelson

PS Hopefully Mark, Dave, or Mac have better memories than I do about it.

Somewhat surprisingly it turns out that Mac and Dave Smith did remember the trip and verified my account. Dave Smith wrote:

Thanks for sharing your memories of Watkins Glen in 1994 and other years too. I am sure we can pin down the year of the infamous Camper Trip to WGI as being 1994. I do remember the good fortune of the truck blowing its radiator cap, but retaining it in the engine bay. I also remember grabbing a nap, and I think with Mac driving, I awoke and looked at the gas gauge, which was below empty. The 460 engine was not known as a mileage getter, but Ford thoughtfully put two 20 gallon fuel tanks on board. Unfortunately I had already run the first tank bone dry. I vaguely remember putting fuel in the never run out 2nd tank by the liter in Canada. Ouch!! I also remember pulling into Watkins Glen at Clute park downtown and in the middle of the night. I also remember all of us going swimming in Seneca Lake a day later and freezing our manhood quite seriously.

In 1994, I and Mark were just beginning our "crew" status with Joe Tierno. During the weekend, Tony Roth had to return to Florida, and gave me permission to move his T car into the Car/Driver photo taken on the track. Tony's T car is the last car in line in this video. I walked out of the picture, as I was not a driver, and did not feel it was right to be in that photo. However driving Tony's car around the paddock was very intoxicating. I very much remember the incredible drivers cap for that event. I tried very hard to obtain one, and eventually did so. I still have that cap today, and wear it on special occasions.

Yes, #49 was still a pile of Holt Michigan sheet metal in 1994, but without a doubt the friendship of the Rowdies and our New York friends made it a certainty that the rubble would become a race car later on. Dave Smith

And Mac McDonnell wrote back also:

"Ken,

I think you are correct. I won't send any of the photos along because what happens at the Glen stays at the Glen. I don't think Dave Smith was campaigning his A yet in '94. Mac



Now go to the next page for a report on the Collier Cup race that day in September 1994…

(Continued on next page)

Moss Motoring Sept '94 Collier Cup Report

*…**Moss Motors has long been a supporter of MG meets and events and in their 12-1-94 edition of "Moss Motoring" they reported on the Collier Cup race that our* **Roving Rowdies** *attended that year (see article on prior page)***

There was thunder in the hills around Watkins Glen. Not the kind with flashing lights and pounding rain, but rather flashing cars and ground-pounding horsepower. The Zippo Vintage Grand Prix of Watkins Glen, representing some 46 years of continuous racing in the area, was held September 9-11, 1994, at Watkins Glen International.

A great deal of excitement surrounded the Collier Cup All MG Race. This year being the 40th anniversary, a special effort was made to draw as many entries as possible. Chief organizers of the recruiting effort, Greg Prehodka of Clifton, NJ, and Joe Tierno from Honeoye Falls, NY, outdid themselves drawing the largest entry of any MG race ever held in North America. Even the huge 3.4-mile Watkins Glen International track looked crowded as 64 entries prepared for the event.

Along with the vintage races, 1994 marked the second anniversary of the downtown Grand Prix Festival. This recreation of the original Watkins Glen Grand Prix road race gave the entire weekend a historic feel. Race fans, nowadays relegated to watching from behind acres of fencing, were allowed a chance to get up close and personal with the cars. Participants drove over the original course, featuring 6.6 miles of public roads complete with a famous stone bridge, an infamous railroad crossing and a picturesque view of Seneca Lake. Downtown on Franklin Street, the cars lined up in starting grid fashion for a review and celebration which lasted through Friday afternoon.

Saturday's activities centered on practice and qualifying. Unfortunately, Ohio-based MG racer Bill Eberhardt spent most of his weekend nursing an ailing motor. After spinning a bearing in practice, Bill dropped the sump, replaced the bearing and immediately developed a rod knock. With his spirits at low ebb, Bill was ready to call it quits; however, several racers convinced him to try one more time, if only to take a green flag in the Collier Cup. Once again Bill removed the sump. An egg-shaped connecting rod journal spelled doom for his engine, but some judicious filing and scraping gave him enough oil pressure to take the green and complete one lap. Bill Eberhardt exhibited the spirit which marks sports car people as a different, hardier breed.

Race day Sunday dawned windy and cold. MG racers, usually concerned about too much heat, were seen frantically taping over oil coolers in an effort to keep engine temperatures up. On the pre-grid, spectators were treated to a cross section of MG racing history. The beautifully prepared N-type Magnette of Bob Sterling from Andover, IL, represented MG's prewar origins. T-series cars, from bumper and windshield equipped to full-tilt racers, were equally mixed with the various permutations of MGA. There were also MGBs, Midgets, an early Lester MG and even a surprisingly quick MG 1300 sedan. Was anything not represented? Well, this writer was hoping to sec a ZB Magnette with big rally lights on top, or maybe a Y-type—just to round out the field.

With the cars lined up, and the parade lap complete, it was time to race. Tony Simms of Ontario, Canada, in his well-prepared MGA Twin Cam led from the pole, but he couldn't hold off the hard charging MGB of Tim Handy. Tim, who came in from Goode. VA, took the lead on lap five and held on to win at an average 75.97 mph. Not bad for an engine which, according to Tim, never turned over 6,000 rpm on the 3.4-mile course. We suspect a few extra revs may have been lost in the telling. Sixth overall, and first among the MG T-series cars, was Don Martine of Pacific Grove, CA, in the John von Neuman MG TD. This famous West Coast car was undefeated in its first full year of racing in 1950.

Another entrant of particular note was Denver Cornett from Prospect, KY. Denver wasn't driving fast out on the track, but that's to be forgiven, as he and his 1947 MG TC competed in the first Watkins Glen event back in 1948. The car has recently been restored with an emphasis on maintaining originality. By his own account, Denver was the first person to roll a car in a US Grand Prix after World War II. We'll bring you a more detailed account of his exploits in a future Moss Motoring.

The Collier Cup itself is not awarded to the first car across the finish line, but rather to the individual who best exhibits the spirit of camaraderie and competition. This year, the cup was awarded jointly to Greg Prehodka and Joe Tierno. Their investment of time and effort in recruiting entrants and coordinating activities was beyond the call of mere volunteerism. We at Moss salute you two gentlemen for your efforts. We would also like to thank Frank Rupp of Sportscar Vintage Racing Association for sanctioning the Collier Cup through thick and thin. A great race weekend can't happen with out a great venue. Special thanks are due J.J. O'Mally, Maryanne Schumaker and Lynn Hodges and all the staff and management of Watkins Glen International. You all worked together and put on quite a show!

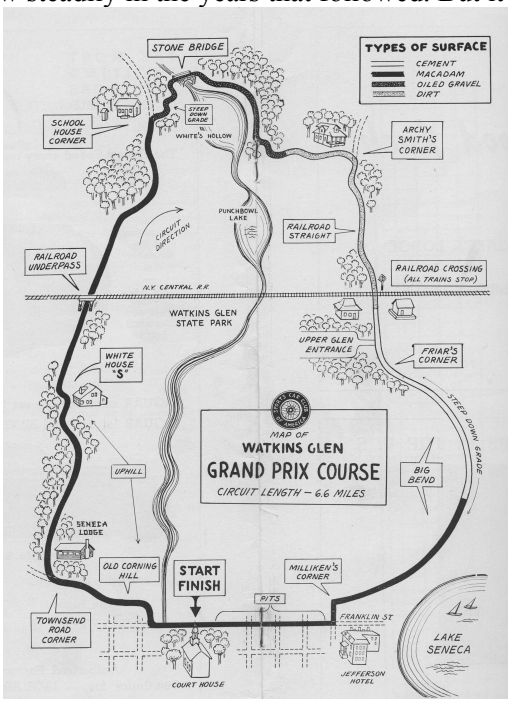
Now read the next page for how the course evolved…

(Continued on next page)

How Racing Through The Streets Gave Way To The 2nd Circuit At Watkins Glen

From The International Motor Racing Research Center at Watkins Glen

Organized races through the village of Watkins Glen and surrounding roads were started by Cameron Argetsinger in 1948, marking the beginning of post-war sports car racing in this country. Crowds grew steadily in the years that followed. But it was



The original 6.6 mile Watkins Glen circuit utilized the main road through town, Franklin Street, as the front straight. The rest of the layout wound its way through the hills above town. Source: International Motor Racing Research Center

the 1952 Watkins Glen Grand Prix weekend, during the running of the main Grand Prix race, when a tragic accident occurred at the beginning of the second lap that changed everything.

Fred Wacker, driving a Cadillac-Allard, attempted to pass second place John Fitch at the wheel of a Cunningham on the approach to the first turn, directly across from the main entrance of Watkins Glen State Park. Wacker brushed the crowd, injuring 12 spectators and killing a seven-year-old boy. This area of the track was designated as a no passing zone and a no spectator zone. Throughout the day police repeatedly chased spectators out of the location, but with a large crowd on hand that year it was impossible for them to keep full control of the excited swarms of spectators. After the accident, the race was stopped, never to be finished.

Because of the accident, road racing at Watkins Glen was at a crossroads in the late fall of 1952 and the early months of 1953. A short time after the September race, a public meeting was held to determine if the community would hold more races on the existing circuit or find a new circuit within Schuyler County. The general feeling was that a new, safer course should be found.

In its January 1953 session, the New York State Legislature considered two proposed laws to ban racing on public roads. One bill was passed in the Senate but never made it out of committee in the Assembly. Thus, there was never a law enacted to ban racing on public roads in New York State. What the State actually did was withhold issuing of permits for racing on state roads – dooming the use of the original 6.6-mile circuit at Watkins Glen, which was made up of more than 85% state roads. In addition, Lloyds of London, the insurer, refused coverage of the race if it ran through downtown Watkins Glen.

The Race Committee, empowered to make the selection of a new circuit, consisted of representatives of the community: Chamber of Commerce President Don Brubaker; Grand Prix founder Cameron Argetsinger; attorney Henry Valent; proprietor of Smalley's Garage Lester Smalley; Watkins Glen Mayor Allen D. Erway; Schuyler County Highway Superintendent Ernest Porter; 1952 Grand Prix Chairman George Shannon; attorney Liston Coon; long-time member of the Chamber of Commerce Leon Grosjean; trainmaster for the New York Central Railroad ("the man who stopped the trains") Frank Chase; and reporter for the Elmira Star-Gazette Arthur H. Richards, Jr. They considered five potential sites for the circuit: a 7.2 mile layout in the Town of Orange; two in the Town of Dix – one 8.0 miles and the other 4.6 miles; and, two circuits on east side of Seneca Lake – a 4.8 miles layout in the Town of Hector and a 6.7 miles layout in the Town of Montour (which overlapped in part the Hector circuit). Both the Hector and Montour

(continued next page)

layouts ran under the Lehigh Valley Railroad underpass at the Dolphsburg Road corner before making a right turn.

Most of the roads proposed for use as a replacement circuit were made up of county and town roads which were narrow and had little hard-top surface. They were largely gravel surfaces and the circuit selected would require widening and paving.

The Committee settled on two possible race course sites. One was a 7.2-mile course in the Town of Orange (called the Brigham Young Circuit) which would have run through the small hamlet of Sugar Hill. The second was a 4.6-mile course (called the Jane Delano Circuit) in the Town of Dix near the hamlet of Townsend.

Before the work was to start, the Committee asked James Lamb, Contest Board Secretary for the American Automobile Association (AAA), which then sanctioned sports car racing in the U.S., to tour the circuits and offer an assessment. He reported favorably on the circuits but was concerned that the road work could not be completed in time for the September 18-19, 1953 race date.

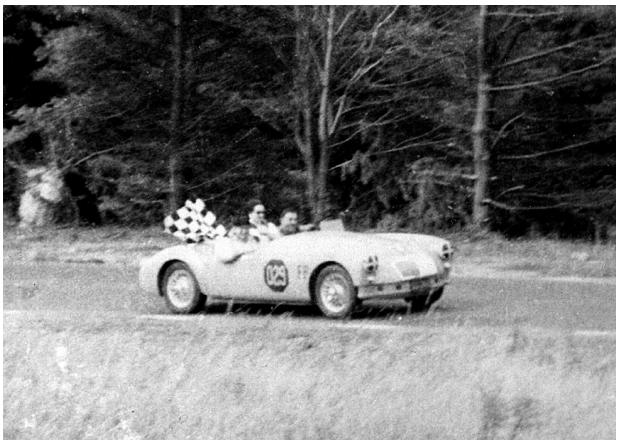
The Town of Orange circuit ran through a section of the New York State Forest. The State Department of Conservation was uncooperative, fearing that spectators would cut down small trees for use in campfires during the race weekend which would lead to forest fires. For this reason, the proposed "Brigham Young" circuit was ruled out and the Town of Dix "Jane Delano" circuit was selected as the Watkins Glen Grand Prix venue.

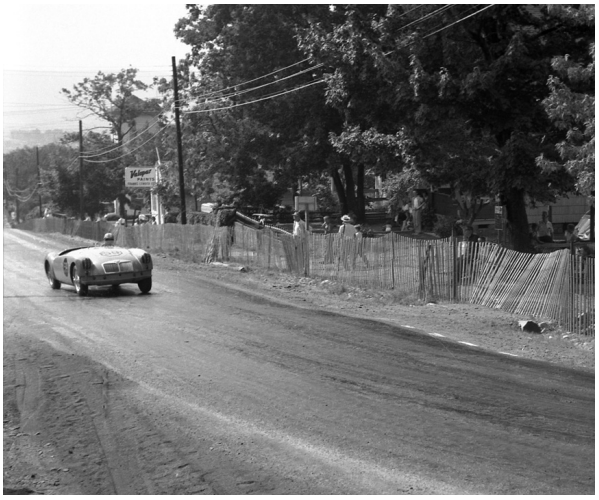
After meeting with the Town of Dix Board, the race organizers were given permission to make use of town-maintained roads. A short time later, SCCA representatives, unable to make a complete tour of the proposed 4.6-mile circuit because of road conditions, decided they would not sanction the 1953 Grand Prix.

On July 15, the Watkins Glen Grand Prix Corporation was formally organized and chartered. The organization originally consisted of seven directors appointed by the Watkins Glen Chamber of Commerce. The Grand Prix Corporation soon issued bonds in the form of "Six-percent Certificates of Indebtedness" in the sums of $100, $500 and $1,000. The Corporation leased all the grounds surrounding the new circuit, entitling them to the exclusive and complete jurisdiction of the leased properties. In exchange, landowners received one-third of the profits from the event, with the remaining thirds shared equally by the Community Chest and the Grand Prix Corporation.

Bill Milliken and George Weaver were consulted regarding road work and related engineering considerations. Work started on August 2 with the construction firm of Martin & Son of Burdett, New York as the general contractor. All around the course



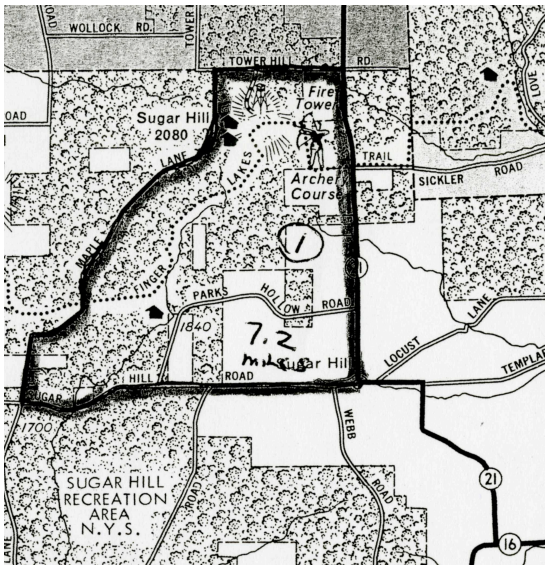




trees, hedges and brush were removed and utility poles and fences were relocated. The road was widened to 28 feet and the shoulders extended to four feet on each side of the road. Extensive grading,

(Continued on next page)

ditching and culvert work was also required. Remarkably, on August 19, one month before the race, work was finished and the course was half completed. The remaining half, laying the asphalt,



The 7.2 mile "Brigham Young" circuit layout was one of two race course sites considered by the Watkins Glen Race Committee following the disastrous 1952 Grand Prix through the streets of the town. Source: International Motor Racing Research Center

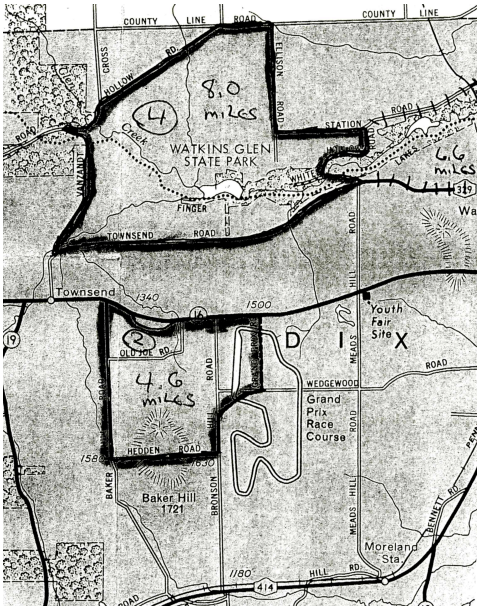
was undertaken by the Watkins Glen firms of Harry Suits and Franzese Brothers. Completed on September 9, the track was ready for the race on time.

It was decided that no spectators would be permitted inside the track or within 30 feet of the track. Spectators were not allowed to drive on the actual course to reach the designated parking areas at any time during the race weekend. RCA race safety systems and public address systems were installed around the circuit.

General admission for the races was $1.25, grandstand seats ranged from $3.00 to $5.00, and parking was $1.00 per car. For the first time in the Glen's history, Friday prior to race weekend was used for official practice.

On Saturday morning, the first race of the day was the Seneca Cup, an 11 lap (50.6-mile) event, with 19 starters. The race was won by Dr. M.R.J. Wyllie driving a Jaguar XK120M, with Wyllie moving out on the shoulder to pass Phil Cade's Grand Prix Maserati R1 in the final turn of the last lap, winning by less than 100 yards. He averaged 72.1 mph.

Later the same day, twenty-nine cars took the green flag in the Queen Catharine Cup, a 22 lap



The 4.6 mile "Jane Delano" circuit layout through the town of Dix (bottom) became the home of the Watkins Glen races from 1953-1955 until the current track (illustrated to the right of the Jane Delano layout) was built on the hill above town. Source: International Motor Racing Research Center

or 101.2 mile race. George Moffet claimed the victory, driving an OSCA with an average speed of 73.7 mph.

The last race of the day was the 6th Annual Watkins Glen Grand Prix, a 22 lap (101.2-mile) event with 27 cars starting. The Grand Prix featured a race-long duel between Walt Hansgen driving the Hansgen Jaguar Special and George Harris in a Cadillac-Allard. The lead changed hands four times on the last lap, with Hansgen winning by a scant 1.1 seconds at an average speed of 76.1 mph.The race on the new circuit was judged a huge success in the local press, with crowd estimates ranging from 20,000 to 60,000. The next two years' races were sanctioned SCCA national events and run on the same circuit. Today, parts of the 1953-1955 circuit run through the current racecourse at Watkins Glen International, built in 1956 and substantially rebuilt in 1971.

Finally, Bill Weakley tops all of this with his own story from attending the 1998 Watkins Glen races. Read the story on the next page…

(Continued on next page)

Chairman Bill's Watkins Glen Story

After all the stories above about Watkins Glen in the past, Bill Weakley has a story of his own going further back in time. Oh to be young again, when we could get away with such adventures and think nothing of them! Bill tells his tale...

I showed Dave Smith the 1994 Watkins Glen video today. He confirmed that he was there and recognized a number of the people, but he did not have his race car then.

I was not there in '94, but I have a Watkins Glen story from 1968. I was a college senior at U of Illinois. Another fellow that lived in the same house and I wanted to go to the F1 race. He knew a girl who wanted to go to Cornell to visit her boyfriend. She arranged for the boyfriend to let us sleep in the attic of the frat house. My '56 A was my daily driver then, so I traded cars with my parents for the weekend. So I had their '62 Falcon station wagon, and they had my A, since the Falcon was their only car. I really did have the best parents ever.

We took off from Champaign right after Friday classes. I didn't have a lot of money and no credit cards. On the NY turnpike, we had to stop for a new fan belt which ate into the budget. Saturday morning, my friend and I bought some bread, peanut butter, jelly and pop. Everything at the track seemed very expensive, and there was no free drinking water. By Sunday morning, the pop and jelly were gone. As I parked the car at the track, I saw a young woman looking under the hood of a Datsun roadster. When I offered to help, she said she had a loose radiator hose clamp. I got a screwdriver and tightened it up. About that time, she mentioned that her boyfriend had gone looking for tools. She hadn't mentioned anything about boyfriends before that.

So he showed up and was very appreciative. He offered to pay me, and I declined before I had a chance to think about the fact that I had very little money and only bread and peanut butter to eat. Then he offered something to drink. By that time I had come to my senses and said OK. So we had peanut butter sandwiches and a bottle of red wine for sustenance the rest of the day.

After the race, we picked up the frat girl and headed back to Illinois. The other fellow couldn't stay awake (maybe something to do with the wine), so I drove most of the way. We got back to Champaign at 7 AM with a quarter tank of gas and $1.75 between us. I walked into my 8 o'clock class wearing the same clothes I had worn all weekend but with a smile that lasted all day.

Bill Weakley



Bill wearing his Mechanics outfit ready to rescue damsels in distress



The famous Bill Weakley all-day Smile

Join the Rowdies at the Waterford Hills Vintage Races July 27th

Waterford Hills is celebrating its 60th year of wheel to wheel racing at this very challenging 1.5-mile road course July 27-28, 2019 on a newly paved racetrack!

MG Vintage Racers are Invited
Waterford weekend follows the MG Vintage Racers focus event at Road America at Elkhart Lake on July 18-21. I want to give a shout out to any MGVR's wishing to extend their mid-west visit and fun.
Full details and registration: http://www.waterfordhills.com/vintage.html



Racers Registration
The early entry list of various racers at this writing (April) include '60 Lotus Seven, '61 Sprite, '62 Lotus Seven, '64 MG B, '64 Austin Mini, '65 MG Midget, '65 Volvo 122S, '70 Porsche 914, '70 Lotus 4, '70 Titan Mk6, '72 Porsche 914, '73 MG Midget, and '73 Corvette.

Track Location & Times
The track is in the Waterford and Drayton Plains area, north of Pontiac. It is located at 4770 Waterford Rd, Clarkston, MI on the grounds of the Oakland County Sportsman's Club. You travel a short distance on a dirt road leading off Dixie Highway to get to the track. The road is in excellent condition and everyone respects the classic cars and drives slow. Gates open at 9am, with practice and qualifying at 10am. Saturday racing starts at 1pm. Sunday races begin at 10am. The racetrack is 1.5 miles with 12 turns and good elevation changes. ***Most Rowdies arrive about noon on Saturday.*** For those who can't make it, Sunday, the July 28th, is an option, as it is a two day event.

Friday Evening Fish Fry Offer to Rowdies & Racers
At the on-site Oakland County Sportsman clubhouse enjoy a GREAT all you can eat fish fry from 5:30 pm until 8:00 pm. Fried or baked wild caught North Atlantic cod fish and fried chicken, roll, corn bread, hot vegie, fries, coleslaw. Adults $9; 62+ $8.50. Carry out available. Full service bar.

Michigan Rowdies Car Corral
The Rowdies have our own roped off parking area to the left of the viewing stands at TURN 6. This is at the end of the long back straight. Upon paying at the main entry follow the dirt road to the 'right'. Go down a short hill, past the race drivers track entry on the left, and continue up a short hill. Approaching hilltop you will see restrooms on the right and Turn 6 viewing stands on the left. You can't miss the Rowdies sign. Turn 6 viewing provides the best viewing of the entire track - see 80% of the entire track action with the best often just a few feet in front of you!

Food & Beverages
Excellent track food and beer is sold at Turn 6 and the main viewing hill to the left of the main entrance. It offers a little wider selection. You may bring your own food and beverages if you prefer. If you bring your own beer keeping it 'low key' as they discourage beer in the stands.



Saturday Evening Offer to Rowdies & Racers
Dave Smith has offered to bring his motorhome to the Waterford's RV Park that is walking distance from Turn 6. In the past his Saturday evening meal usually has 20 or so racers, former racers, and want-to-be racers. Very casual and tons of ~~history~~ BS!

(continued next page)

Kimber's Birthday Party

While April 20 was not an absolutely perfect Spring day for top-down MG driving it was nice enough to draw a good crowd of people and cars out for Cecil Kimber's 131st Birthday Party. All the usual suspects were there, including members from Windsor-Detroit MG Club, British Motoring Club, Lansing area club (LAMGA), and of course, the Michigan Rowdies. Fran brought the usual Cecil cake which had been baked by Marcia Greiner. The Windsor-Detroit group made their usual run from the east side of the state and wrote in their newsletter that *"many of us left our MGs at home in the face of a cold and rainy weather forecast. Dave Hornby and Dale Brown braved the elements and the border crossing and brought their B's along with Kurt Ill, Guy St. John, and Jim at the second stop.*



All in all it was a nice day - the route we take is truly a nice ride and we had the road to ourselves a lot of the time. The rain held off until after lunch and a good time was had by all. Dave Smith & his wife even came in their Midget with the top down!"

Ken and Kathy Nelson represented the west side of the state and drove their 1966 Rover since it was the only car in their fleet that was accessible from garage storage for the winter. While it was cloudy driving over, they escaped the Lansing area just as some rain was starting, but drove west into sunshine on the way home.

Special news for the Rowdies was Kevin and Norma Peck announcing they had recently been married, and the appearance of Kathy Bertolini who came with dad Dave Smith and is moving back to Michigan again. She was greeted warmly by all, and we are looking forward to seeing her at Rowdy meets. Best Wishes and Congratulation to Kevin and Norma, and welcome back to Kathy! As always, this was a wonderful way to start off our new season!

Ken Nelson













(pictures continued next page also)





Pictures by Mary Ellen Weakley and Ken Nelson







NAMGAR GT-44

July 10-14, 2019

Organized by Minnesota MG Vintage Racers
Dubuque, IA

Registration is now open. Visit the event website to register online, or to download a pdf of the registration form. GT-44 will be held in the historic town of Dubuque, Iowa from July 10-14, 2019. The event will be organized by the Minnesota MG Vintage Races. Located on the banks of the Mississippi River, Dubuque offers visitors breathtaking views, award-winning restaurants, charming shops, art and river history museum, elegant turn-of-the-century homes, etc.

We chose Dubuque for its beautiful sports car roads that wind along the bluffs astride the Mississippi River, its rich history, the wonderfully preserved homes and businesses, and its location a little off the beaten path; but easily accessible from most major metropolitan areas in the Midwest. You can choose to arrive by car or plane, or with Dubuque's location on the Mississippi, you can choose to arrive by boat as well. There are slips available for rent within walking distance of the hotel and convenient to downtown. This could be your unique opportunity to play Tom Sawyer and





The Ignoble Fuse Holder

from WDMGCC "Can-Am Connection" July 2018 by Rick Astley

I have recently seen a rash of failures concerning the fuse holders on MGBs, but the problem could potentially occur on any MG. It exhibits itself as being the symptom of a blown fuse, but when the driver checks the suspect fuse, it turns out to be intact, yet current is not getting from one side to the other. The solution is usually (but see below) to take some fine sandpaper, grit side out, wrap it around the end cap of a fuse, insert the wrapped end of the fuse into each of the fuse clips one by one and move it around to clean the inside surface of the clip. The effect is to remove a very thin layer of electrically insulating oxide from the inside of the clip that prevents current flowing to and from the clip and the fuse cap. But why is the problem occurring?

The reason the inside of the clip is building up a thin oxide layer is all to do with nobility. Yes, class comes into everything and metals certainly have class, or as is it's called in the world of metallurgy: nobility. As you may guess, the noblest are the precious metals platinum, gold and silver, in that order of nobility. The least noble, are magnesium, zinc and aluminum. When two metals are put together in the presence of an electrolyte, corrosion can occur. An electrolyte is a solution of water (which when pure does not conduct electricity) and elements that cause it to conduct. Under the hood of a car, and particular an older car, there are fairly aggressive acidic elements that are the product of combustion, which can result in some rapid corrosion. Note that I stated that "corrosion can occur", whether it does, or not, depends on how dissimilar in nobility the metals are. The corrosion will occur to the least noble of the two – again, as in life, the poorest get the roughest deal. This type of corrosion is known as galvanic and there are galvanic tables that chart metals to show if two are sufficiently different in nobility for the risk of corrosion to occur.

The clips that retain the fuses in a Lucas fuse holder are made of a copper alloy, probably beryllium copper, copper being highly electrically conductive and beryllium imparting some springiness. Both copper and beryllium are relatively ignoble. The original glass fuses used in MGs, which I believe may still be available, had copper end caps. As the copper fuse end caps and their retaining clips were not made of dissimilar metals, corrosion was negligible to nil. However, look at the glass fuses in your MG and you'll likely find that unlike the original fuses, they have bright and shiny nickel plated end caps. Nickel is relatively noble and corrosion will occur when they are in contact with the inside surface of the copper alloy fuse clip, and because the clip material is the less noble, it oxidizes (a fancy word for corrodes) in the area in contact with the fuse cap, while the cap itself remains nice and shiny. Copper oxide (verdigris), while it does prevent electrical conduction is obviously a lot less destructive than iron oxide (rust). The long-term solutions are probably:

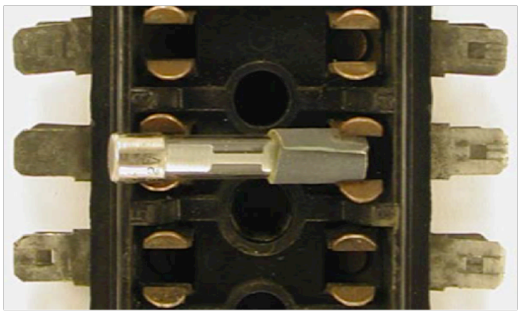
Acquire and install original style copper ended fuses

Use sandpaper to clean the inside of the clips at the beginning of each driving season.

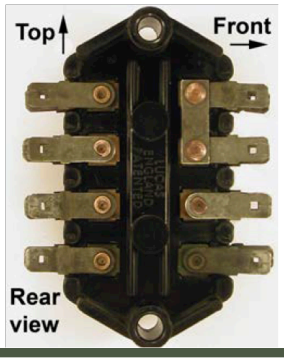
Install a modern fuse block, itself with nickel clips. However, finding one of suitable size with double contacts at each end may be a challenge.

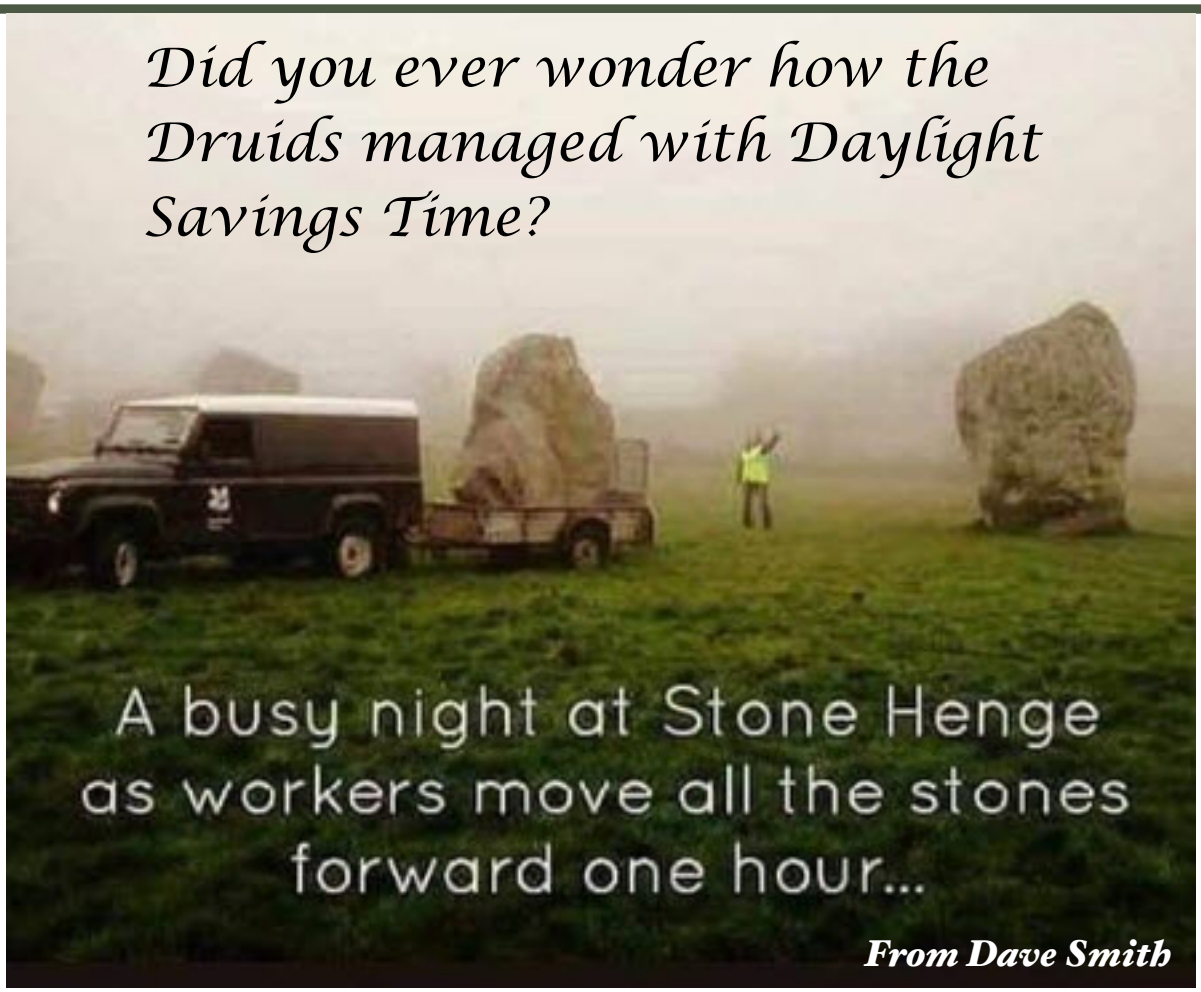
There is another less common failure of the fuse holder and that is loosening of the rivets that hold the terminals, the plastic body and the clip together. If it is easy to 'wiggle' the terminal relative to the fuse block plastic housing, then it may be necessary to tighten the rivet. Care must be taken in doing this as the plastic used is not as resilient as that found today and it will have become even more brittle over time. Using a rod, such as a nail-set punch, working from the underside, support the top side of the rivet, which can be seen at the bottom of the fuse clip, and gently tap the bottom side, again using a suitable punch. Note the bar joining the left and right side-lamp fuses. Make sure that the block is reinstalled correctly with the bar toward the front and top of the car.

by Rick Astley











Sir Stirling Moss driving an Alamo Beige 1600 at a BMC public relations event in 1960 at Harwood Acres, Ontario, Canada. Harwood was an old RCAF training airfield.