



A-Antics



All Packed And Ready For Spring!



Bill & Trudy's Adventures
Larry's Crank Complaints
The Marchal Black Cat
Early Rowdie History



MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER

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

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

Nickname: **Rowdies**

Motto: **People First!**

Rowdies Site:

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

MG Car Council Site: <http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/mgscouncil/>

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

Past Chapter Chairpersons:

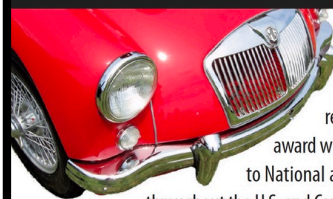
1976-1980	Bruce Nichols
1981-1982	Tom Latta
1983-1984	Dick Feight
1985-1988	Dave Smith
1989-1990	Dave Quinn
1991-1994	Mark Barnhart
1995-1995	Herb Maier
1996-1996	Tom Knoy
1997-1998	Neil Griffin
1999-2002	Bruce Nichols
2003-2004	Bob Sutton
2005-2008	Gordie Bird
2009-2015	Dave Quinn
2016-	Bill Weakley

Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman, Webmaster

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

Larry Pitman's Database Report: 58 Active and Paid-Up Members

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

Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!

Join over 2,000 enthusiastic owners in the restoration, preservation, and sheer enjoyment of driving an MGA, Magnette, or variant of this noble breed. You'll receive six bi-monthly issues of *MGA!*, our full-color,

award winning magazine, invitations

to National and Regional Get-Togethers

throughout the U.S. and Canada, plus a knowledge base

and support group second to none. All this for just \$37.50 per year

(North America), or \$52.50 (International). **Get more information at**

<http://www.namgar.com>, or contact registrar@namgar.com.

**Calendar Addition**
British Car Corral

Where: Bakers of Milford
 When: Select Sundays
 from 2 - 7 PM (DJ at 3 PM)

1 May 23rd
 1 June 13th
 1 July 18th
 1 August 15th
 1 September 19th

All British marques are invited to park together on the dates above. Join us to celebrate the cars we love and meet other enthusiasts. Baker's is America's largest weekly car cruise, with live outside entertainment, free raffle prizes, outside grill, hundreds of great cars, and restaurant dining discounts for all cruisers.

MEMBERS PAGE

Letters

I found this full page ad on the back of the December 1955 issue of the Orient Digest. It was a news/info/entertainment magazine of about 120 pages written and edited by Japanese staff for us "furriners" living there.

It was while my family was stationed in Okinawa that I saw my first MGA (three, in fact). A red, a white and an Iris blue MGA were being used to entice airmen at Naha Airbase to purchase one. They had a gymkhana course set up on the apron in front of the base hobby shop. How cool for a 10 year old to be so close to the action. There was quite a gathering of GI's waiting to drive and lots of screaming tires. Oh, the ecstasy!

Talk to you soon, **John Alexander**



Indiana British Car Union Meet

Indiana British Car Union 33rd Annual Show. **August 14, 2021.** This show is held at **Lion's Park, 115 South Elm Street, Zionsville Indiana.** Vendor Registration \$25. Car staging and on-site registration 8:00am to 10am, Early Bird Registration \$15 additional car \$5. Late registration \$20. Car Show 10am--2pm.



Awards thereafter: Best of Show, Lions Club Award, each category Best in Class & Excellence in Class. Parking for most British Marques Triumphs, MG, Jaguar, Mini-Cooper, Austin Healey, Bentley, Lotus, Rolls Royce, DeLorean, all British are welcome.

Featured marque this year is

Jaguar. Lion's Club selling beverages at the park. We suggest you bring your own chairs, drinks and food or you can walk over to Main Street Zionsville have drinks and food at restaurants. Spectators are free. For more information call Brian Henry 317-522-8260, brian.scott.henry@gmail.com or Allen Galloway, galloway.allen@yahoo.com 317-709-5135.

Event Schedule:

8:00 – 10:00 am – Vendor Registration
8:30 – 10:00 am – Car Staging and on-site registration
10:00 – 1:00 pm – Car Show and Voting
2:30 pm – Awards Presentation

One If By Land...

John Alexander writes in again. He explains how he is prepared for the next British Invasion whether it be by land OR by sea:

"This is how I frittered away the last year during Covid-19. This boat project fulfilled my need for a new sailboat, not too big, a simple sail plan and rigging a child can understand. Had to move it from the boatshop/ MG garage to be able to raise the mast. Happily found mast to be perpendicular to the hull. Attached the halyard and downhaul cleats on the mast. Took the mast down, hopped into the MGA and went for the first drive - to the petrol station. A wonderful day, to be sure!"

He had the occasional able assistance of stalwart MGA restoration experts Chairman Bill and Kevin Peck. It was fun giving commands: **"You there! Brace up that Mizzen Tops'l Halyard and**



belay the flapping gob!" and **"Where's my grog?!"**

The boat was a kit and was like building a model only big! Epoxy and fiberglass cloth holds the wood bits together.

John then used his MGA resto skills to update a small trailer to accommodate the hull. "It was fun - except for the 300 hours of sanding! - and I learned some things." Time to relax for a bit. **John Alexander**

Who Has The Earliest One?

Steve Chaffee wrote on the internet about his early MGA: "I have a 1955 (registered by California as a 1956) MGA. The ID plate on the heater shelf has only "10111" as the car number. (no HDL43). For engine the number is simply: "103". My plate is in poor condition but you can read the stamped numbers and I see no letter identifiers at the beginning of the car number string. I spent a little time with the id plate and used Brasso to lightly clean the two strips for car number and engine. I now have, car no. HDD43/10111 and engine no BP15GB/103. The heritage certificate has my car dispatched from the factory on the same day as HDC43-10106. This makes me think my car could be the

second North American MGA. (I LOVE this stuff!) My guide on this journey has been John Price Williams' 'The MGA'. According to his book, car number 10105 is Mabel: a Tyrolite Green works racer. 10106 should be Orient Red and is known, according to Barney Gaylord, as the first MGA in North America. Since it was built and dispatched with 10111 on the same day, and apparently sold at the same San Francisco British car dealer, I would say the only person who actually knew which MGA was the first in North America would be the stevedore who winched the cars off the deck of the ship that brought them both to New York. Probably long gone and why on earth would he remember which one was first?

My car, 10111, was owned for years by Jerry Redman of San Francisco who requested a heritage certificate in 1985 but apparently never registered the car with NAMGAR. Go figure!

Per my comments for the latest MGA! an early car is certainly different from later versions. Panel fit is poor, the boot floor is flat, the rear bulkhead is about 1" forward of later cars, and one item I forgot to mention is the dash had only two support brackets. I've added the other two to keep the dash from vibrating. There were NO holes in the dash bottom flange to indicate they had been removed. There is a comment in William's book about changes being made as the line rolled on and I totally believe this. (*Ed note: My car was built in mid-1956 and has one other early detail, and that was no inner splash panel at the front of the rear fenders. This allowed salt and mud to pretty well destroy my rear door post assembly, and was also evidenced by a lack of any holes drilled on my inner wings to mount a splash panel.*)

My car's other claim to fame, according to 'The MGA' is that it is the first Glacier Blue MGA ever built. Thankfully I did have the car repainted in this color, and we LOVE it!"

Steve Chaffee

Dave Smith also commented "I think the Rowdies can also have some fun with early/late MGA. I think Mark Barnhart has a very early MGA. I think Dave Quinn had one of the very last MGA ever built. We should make certain that both cars are registered with **Mike Jacobson**". Mike wrote back "Steve Chaffee does have an early car, HDD43/10111, making it the tenth MGA. NAMGAR also has HDE??/10105, registered in 2001 by Bruce Chapman in the UK, and HDC43/10106, registered in 2008 by Maynard Williams here in California. 10106 has a note saying that it was the first LHD MGA and the first exported to North America. Mr. Chapman & Mr. Williams are no longer members and I don't know the whereabouts of either car." **Mark Barnhart** said "At one time I had vin 1010? (I can't remember the last number now). I sold it to Dave Nicholas's Crew Chief Richards 3 years ago." **Forrest Johnson** had another early 1955 MGA, and **Dave Quinn** stated "I have had 5 MGAs and I registered all of them as I got them. One was a 1962 MkII and was 30th from the end of production. I sold it to a person in MA who owned a million dollar business. He

previously had restored a 190SL Benz to such a point that Benz had it flown to Germany for a special 190SL event. My hope was he would do the same with mine. He had it sent to restoration shop in the south but I never heard any more."

Finally **Dave Smith** summed it all up saying "One piece of information that I see as an opportunity For the Rowdies is with the *number* of MGA cars & variants registered by State. NAMGAR lists the highest numbers as:

California	181	(wow)
Pennsylvania	126	
Virginia	114	
New York	100	
Ohio	97	
MICHIGAN	91	

So Michigan is in SIXTH position. That is not acceptable. By registering just 10 more Chassis numbers we can move up into fourth place. With a bit more work we can be in the Top three. A worthy goal for the MICHIGAN ROWDIES.. Also something we can do in this pandemic that is MG related.

It's Lonely Out Here

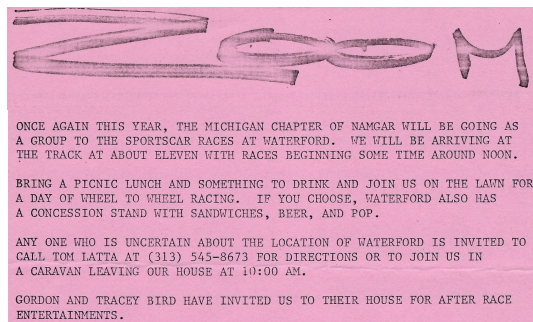
John Alexander writes in:
"As can be seen by the heavy coating of dust, the Factory doesn't call anymore. Those of us who remain among the faithful still await the call."

John Alexander



Different Times

From Diane Mazurek: "Looks like ZOOM had a different meaning 40 years ago!"



Welcome New Members**Kelly & Greg Schwartz-Garry**kmw2007@comcast.net

Kelly phone: 586-873-3245

Greg phone:

810-357-5920

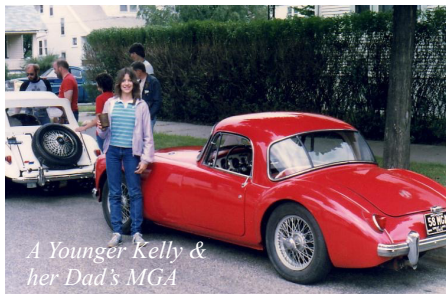
715 Juliet St.

Saint Clair, MI 48079

United States

"We were referred originally by Brian Berry as he was a neighbor and friend of my father's, Pat Schwartz. My MG

was my father's and we are currently in the process of a restoration. Thank you for sending the tribute to Brian. It was beautiful! I know how much the tribute to my dad meant to our family at the time. But on a brighter note we are happy to join the Rowdies. My husband also owns a 1978 Jeep CJ7 that he restored approx. 2012."



A Younger Kelly & her Dad's MGA

Thomas Borden

Spouse or Significant Other: Cheryl Orr

5952 York Way

East Lansing

Michigan 48823

United States

Cell phone: 517-940-0872

thomas.borden@comcast.net

Type of MGA: 1957 Coupe 1500

NAMGAR Member? Yes

Richard Illman

114 East Sherwood Rd.

Williamston, MI 48895

United States

Home phone:

517-325-1222

illman@msu.edu

Type of MGA: 1958

Roadster 1500

"I've been working with

Jon Hammond of

HammondSport in Haslett.

He does amazing

restoration work and

specializes in foreign

sports cars. (A Lamborghini Muira he did is now in Jay

Leno's garage.) He has taught me a lot about the whole

process. I would recommend him for any work you might need done."

**"DT Services"- At Your Service**

DT Services recently developed a Hydraulic Tool kit that can press apart the MGB Kingpin from the Top Trunnion Block. If this assembly is rusted, as most are, the force required to separate the kingpin from the trunnion is well beyond hand tools. The stub axle assembly does not lend itself to proper support during kingpin or bushing removal. This tool kit supports the top trunnion block and the stub axle when servicing to prevent damage. The tool kit presses the two worn bushings from the stub axle and properly reinstalls the new bushings. The tool kit uses the Churchill Double reamer to properly size the new bushings to fit the new Kingpins. It should be considered that new stub axle kits are made in China. Rebuilding NOS original parts will keep your British car original. DT Services is a MOSS Dealer to handle your parts needs. I am researching the process to rebuild MGC Stub axle assemblies. I can also provide factory parts to convert the MGB stub axles/brakes for the MGA Disc or wire wheel.

**Dave Smith**

David Smith

2401 Pine Tree rd.

Holt MI 48842

Email: mgaracer49@gmail.com

517-525-3290 cell takes text but not voicemail. Please contact me to discuss your project and get a quote.

Tentative Schedule of Events 2021

April 24	Cecil Kimber B'day Party
May 1st	Drive Your MGA Day
15th	Spring Party at Camp Dearborn ***
June 6th	British Return to Ft Meigs
14th - 17th	MG 2021 International
Last week of June	Mid-Ohio Vintage Races ***
July 11	Mad Dogs
23 - 25	Waterford Vintage Races ***
August 8th or 14th	Alden Car Show ***
August 14	Indiana British Car Union-Zionsville, IN
TBD	Rowdies B'Day Party
TBD	Rowdies Beach Party
Sept TBD	Battle of the Brits
Last full week of month	Put-in-Bay Vintage Races
Oct TBD	Rowdies Colour Tour
TBD	Rowdies Up North Weekend
Dec	Rowdies Christmas Party
*** (Good guess at actual date)	

Chairman's Chatter

Bill Weakley

As I write this on April 26th, I am looking forward to Drive Your MGA Day this coming Saturday and reflecting on the Kimber Party last Saturday. Attendance was down a bit from usual, but not bad under the circumstances. Although MGs were scarce at the Kimber Party, it was still great to see people. We didn't ask, but I am assuming everyone there has had their vaccinations. With the effectiveness of the vaccines being much better than initially projected, I feel pretty confident. At the same time, it feels a bit odd to let down my guard after all these months. Once we get this virus under control, I will still consider wearing a mask in public during cold and flu season. I don't know anyone who has caught a cold or flu this year. That has to be the effect of masks and social distancing. I have had my MGC and MGA out on the roads, but the little bit of wet snow we had last week was enough to get the salt trucks out in our area. So, the MGs are quarantined in the garage until after the next good rain. They have plenty of company. My Midget is still on jack stands, and my 1600 is again divided between body and frame. I've started assembling the suspension, as I gather the necessary components. I have been placing parts orders with Little British Car Company every two or three weeks. I had been waiting for Moss to put their upholstery on sale, so my last order included seat kits. There is still so much to be done that I find myself flitting from one task to another, not worrying whether one task is done before starting the next. It may not be



the most efficient way to work, but sometimes I get bored with something and need a break. I now have all the body components completed. I made the front splash panels for the rear fenders, using the old ones as patterns. And I bought a battery cover from Bob Shafto. So that is the last of the body pieces. Now the only major component I am missing is a radiator. I'll probably buy a new one, since the cost of re-coring an old one can cost as much or more.

On another note, the Rowdie officers recently held a Zoom meeting. It was our first attempt and worked pretty well. The most important topic of discussion was GT-50. I hope to try a Zoom meeting for the general membership soon. Again, the main topic will be GT-50. Do we want to host it? And are we willing to do the work? If the answer to both of those questions is yes, then one of the first tasks is to pick a site. During the board session, it was suggested that we could return to Frankenmuth. The hotel accommodated us well and was within walking distance of the downtown attractions. It was also convenient to have the show field at the hotel. On the other hand, there are many interesting sites in Michigan that would be fun to share with out-of-state visitors. So we'll take this one step at a time. I hope to see many of you at our Drive Your MGA Day lunch at Jerry's Pub.

Chairman Bill



And Chairman Bill isn't the only Rowdie doing another restoration these days, as demonstrated by Kevin Peck below:



MG 1600 (McMullan) & Early Michigan Rowdie History-by John McMullan

Well I have 50 years ownership of my 1960 MGA 1600. I bought the vehicle in 1971 from the dealer who originally sold it back in 1960. I know this as a fact because I was lucky enough to work for this dealership from 1971-76; approximately six years (as a youth from 15 through 20 years old). Not bad for a teenager in love with British and Italian sports cars in the 1970s. This British Leland dealership in Toronto named Ensign Motors, was the very last factory dealership ever, in the world, owned by British Leland in England. We as Leland employees were considered Leland (principal) employees. I was the youngest employee of the dealer (starting at late 15 years through my early 20s before I could legally drive). And boy I did a real sales job on myself for initial employment, but I got it. My father did ask about my driver's license. I told him I had lied, enough said. You can imagine how happy I was driving cars at the dealership.

Our product line at Ensign/Leland included Jaguars, 6 & 12 cylinders, E-types, 2 door Coupes, sedans, and the new S-type 12, although they did not want me to drive the 12 cylinders and then get into trouble. During all the years at Ensign, I did not put a mark on any car I drove. This included the least powerful MG Midget to the most powerful tuned 12 cylinder Jaguars.

The line continued with Land Rover, the full line including the most rugged four wheel drives, 4 cylinder (real animal machines that were regularly used in deepest darkest Africa).

Continuing with Triumphs, the Stags, early sedans, TR6, GT6, Spitfires; then the MG line, including MGB 1800, a few 6 cylinder & V8s, then the Midgets, and MGB Coupes, the BGT.

Then there was a full line of Austin Marinas, which had 4 cylinder MGB type engines. They were rear wheel drive, nothing special cars, small & good running with a little bit of care they never received.

Also there was the line of 1000cc Minis, a few 1250 Mini Coopers (used cars), Austin America 1250, and Austin 1600 (big 4 door).

We also had a line of used cars that ranged extensively from sports cars to American sedans.

So let's get back to my MGA 1600. One of my earliest experiences with the car was helping to clean & polish the car for the showroom. Cleaning up the 1600 I knew that I wanted the car for myself. Even though the car was eleven years old it was perfect. Low mileage, all original. The paint, leather, vinyl, rubber all original, and perfect. The engine ran more than well and all engine parts were perfect. Even though the car was only a model and appeared to be a decade old, it was perfect. I told the

president, and officially the dealer, that I wanted to buy the car, now. He looked at me, the car polisher, go-getter, useless person, and laughed me off, as a waste of time and in effect told me to SCREW-OFF. The reason; I as a 16 year old punk wasn't worth a damn taking seriously. Boy did that really BURN ME. I let this sit in my mind for a day and burned. The third day in the showroom there was an offer to sell the red 1600. But JM was not sitting around. I had the needed cash, more than a 16 year old should be carrying around in his pocket. The people sat around talking as if the car, the 1600, was about to go out the door, sold.

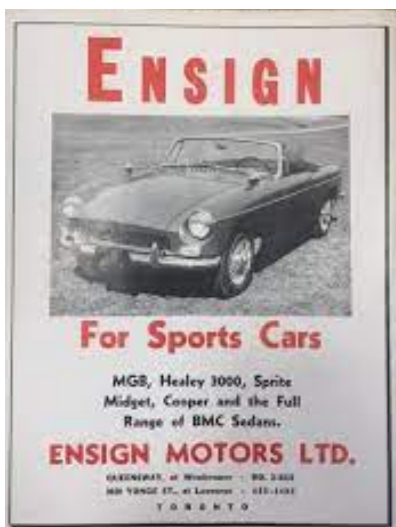
I immediately went to the dealer's office, asked permission to come in, quietly went in, and closed the office door. Before he could ask me what I wanted with him, I literally took the needed cash, including sales tax, out of my pocket and slammed it, literally on his desk. I then said I was buying the DAMNED MG in the showroom. He was so surprised that I would come in and order the purchase of the MGA. He knew that my Ba**s were ready to knock his lights out. The dealer phoned his No. 2, who I reported to, to come immediately in.

Meanwhile, the dealer was counting out the cash presented to him. When "Ron" his Irish No. 2 saw the money and the "P.O.ed" look on my face, he realized that I wanted to be taken deadly seriously about the car. He knew that I was not being taken seriously about the purchase of the car.

Well as it turned out, I purchased the car and drove the car myself, out of the showroom. Even though the dealer didn't take me as an equal, I did receive more respect around the business. I was not the 16 year-old punk anymore. I attribute this to my MGA and forcing the full price on the dealer principal president.

So now that I had my "old" classic MGA 1600, I needed to join a car club. Because we occasionally got some MGTDs in for some service and tune-ups, the service manager gave me his contacts to the Ontario MG "T" Club. They willingly accepted my dues payment but would not allow me membership being that I did not own an MGTC, TD, or TF. I only owned an "A". It was hard for a man to accept that an MG is an MG, some were older than others, but all were the same. As a matter of fact I drove a few of the MGTDs that came into Ensign Service. They were slow as hell, with a boat anchor for an engine. How racers made these cars "fast" is a wonder.

Over the next year I met some men that were restoring MGTDs. They accepted me and enjoyed the A's performance when I let them drive it. This was acceptable



and made up for the treatment received from people at the Ontario "T" meets that I attended.

At the "T" meets I met Rob MacKenzie from London, Ontario. He had a very sharp '62 Mk II Deluxe. At another meet we met Ruth & Len Renkenberger who spoke of having an MGA meet at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. In my teenage mind, here was a guy in his 50s who owned "Ts" and drove his "A" to a meet in Ontario for "Ts". The Renks were special people and sure made Harper's Ferry enticing for Rob & I. You may remember the Renkenbergers as the members of NAMGAR who started the club years ago. You will also remember Brian Beery was awarded the NAMGAR Renkenberger Spirit Award in 2010.

Well Rob MacKenzie and I went to the first NAMGAR meet at Harper's Ferry. Rob & I met a lot of enthusiasts of MGAs. Many of the founding members of NAMGAR, like The Renks, Mac & Billy Spears and Reed Willis, were there. Here I felt so good being accepted as a full member. In fact Ruth Renkenberger signed my car & myself as full members of NAMGAR. Rob MacKenzie had joined with the Renks earlier, before Harper's Ferry. Not that I put too much into it, but I was presented with two awards at HF. Number 1 was second place for 1600 and more importantly the "Distance Award". In addition, I had the time of my life at GT-1. An even more important event was Rob & I meeting Bruce Nichols along with Diane & Steve Mazurek at GT-1.

Now we finally get to the Michigan Rowdies.



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Bruce Nichols was and is the first and original Rowdie. NO DOUBT ABOUT THIS. Bruce, Rob & I spoke on the phone about the meets Bruce was planning about MGAs at his home in Bad Axe, MI. He told the Canadians when he wanted us, two or

three times it was. Our only fee was to bring enough Canadian beer in our cars, that was all we needed.

At each early meet we enjoyed the car talk, especially about MGAs. The talk was very informative; we learned that Bruce Nichols knew a great deal about MGA mechanicals.

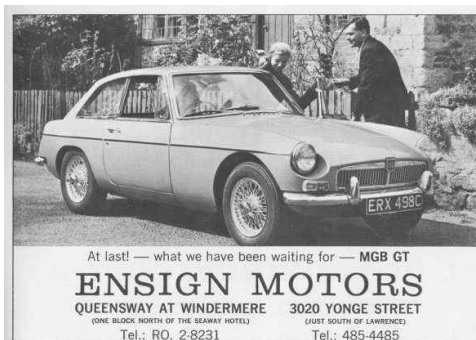
When we got to the Nichols home in Bad Axe we were told where we could camp, whether it was in a tent, on the ground, or in our cars. We felt most welcome. Amy Nichols, Bruce's daughter, offered her horses for rides if we were so inclined. There were a number of Michigan MGAs welcomed to the Nichols home. Unfortunately my memory is a little taxed, maybe Bruce can remember their names now.

In 1973, before I went to university in Michigan I made two MG purchases, The first was a 1935 MG PB, the second a 1953 MGTD in a million parts. Both of these cars' ownership was kept quiet to the MG "T" Club in

Ontario. In the fall of 1977 I went to university in Michigan. My school was in Midland, MI. My fourth MG was made in 1978 when I found a 1962 MkII Deluxe, unfortunately it needed a complete restoration

During the fall of 1977 I caught back up with Bruce Nichols in Bad Axe. We would enjoy the occasional weekend in his garage.

When I found the MkII in 1978, that became the Number 2 in my projects, the first being school, and the third being two jobs to support my new car passion. With the MkII needing a full restoration it gave me plenty to do over the next three years. I restored the body and chassis



At last! — what we have been waiting for — MGB GT
ENSIGN MOTORS
QUEENSWAY AT WINDERMERE 3020 YONGE STREET
(ONE BLOCK NORTH OF THE SEAWAY HOTEL) (JUST SOUTH OF LAWRENCE)
Tel.: RO. 2-8231 Tel.: 485-4485

of the MkII at the body shop I was employed at. The four wheel disc brakes were no problem.. It was important that four discs were set up to run as true & straight as possible. The second was to make sure you were able to get all the air out of the metal lines between each of the two cylinders (per wheel) along with each of the cylinders. You see I learned the Dunlop system of brakes from the best British mechanics at Ensign Motors. The MkII & Twin Cam, Dunlop system was used on the Jaguars for years during that period. I was able to learn the system "on the job" at work.

During my fourth year of university, on what was supposed to be my university graduation day, Bruce Nichols and I put the engine in and bled the brakes on the MkII Deluxe. At that time there wasn't too much left on the vehicle. While all this restoration and schooling was going on I had met my future wife (Rosanne) up at Central Michigan University. She has put up with me ever since.

Between buying the PB & TD and university in Michigan, I traveled to southern California in my MG 1600. But that is another story that was approximately 8500 miles in length. It was shortly after graduating university that Rosanne and I married and together we moved all my possessions from Ontario to Michigan.

There were a number of Michiganders who came to the early Nichol's meets. I don't remember all these people. Maybe Bruce Nichols can remember all the names of people who attended the meets. That will give you some history of our Rowdie cars and the Rowdie Club history as it started out.

John McMullan

Crankshaft Woes-by Larry Pittman

Way back in 2018 and 2019 I started noticing issues with what I thought was probably my clutch. What I noticed was that engine speed would increase when going up a hill but car speed would lag behind and finally catch up to the increased engine speed. I figured that was the clutch slipping so I asked our own Forrest Johnson about the symptoms and he verified it was the clutch and said it should be replaced right away. Of course I put it off but finally decided to tackle the clutch change in 2020 expecting that I'd have a day in the garage with lots of help.

As we all know that thought didn't stand a chance of happening last year. I needed to wait until the weather improved and I finally decided to take it on by myself but knew it would take me longer. I purchased all the parts ahead of time and finally got started. I decided to check out the clutch slave cylinder while I was at it. I removed it and took it apart to check it out and promptly dropped the interior spring only to watch the spring break. I decided then to buy a new slave cylinder and installed it along with a new clutch hose. I installed a new release bearing and noticed that the bearing was quite a bit forward in the transmission. That turned out to be a problem – after I got the new clutch and pressure plate installed to the back of the engine and went to install it into the car I completely failed at getting the engine to go into position. I finally enlisted some help from Bruce Mann and Curt Smith. The three of us worked at it for quite a while before Curt realized the release bearing & lever was not where it should be. I had apparently forced it into that position as I was trying to bleed the clutch hydraulic line. Anyway, release some brake fluid from the slave cylinder, push the release bearing lever rearward and we were able to install the engine. After attaching the trans to engine bolts and engine to mount bolts, the engine was firmly back in place.

I elected to install the crankshaft pulley after the engine was installed since the pulley causes a bit of an interference fit if left on for the engine install. It was then that I noticed the engine side of the pulley had some very small cracks in the interior where the Woodruff key fit. After talking to Forrest again, he indicated this was something he saw every now and then and recommended a new pulley. So I bought a new pulley and proceeded to install it. Step 1 was to put the woodruff key in place before sliding the pulley on – except the pulley kept pushing the key out of position. The key didn't want to stay in place and seemed too narrow, so I managed to widen the key slightly by punching divots in it. I'm not sure that really helped, but I finally managed figure out a way to hold the key in place with a screwdriver while installing the pulley and then it was on. Then onward I went to finish up the install of the crankshaft bolt and washer. Next came the radiator, starter, distributor,

manifolds, carbs, and all the other engine compartment parts – you know the drill. Then the oil and antifreeze and it was ready to go again.

BACK TO NORMAL?

Time to start the engine and check things out. It came back to life and all was normal. Took it for a short drive and everything seemed fine. Shortly after that, I drove over to a nearby car show and had a nice time talking to other owners. I think I was the only British car there but that's more or less normal at most local shows. Next up was a trip to Willow Run Airport for a display of old airplanes and the chance to take photos of the car alongside. We headed off on a Saturday morning for Willow Run, about 50 miles from home. We'd only driven about 15 miles or so when I heard a "bang" in the engine compartment followed by the ignition light coming on. The engine was still running and things seemed normal except for the light, but I decided to stop to see if anything obvious had happened underhood. I was thinking maybe the fan belt had slipped off.

I opened the hood with the engine still running and the belt was still where it belonged except it wasn't moving! The crankshaft pulley had slipped forward from the crankshaft and was laying at an angle without a crankshaft bolt and no longer turning even though the engine continued to run. The generator was therefore not turning which explained the ignition light and the water pump wasn't doing its job either. We turned around and headed for home. I figured the battery would keep us running until we got home and I also thought the engine temp would be OK with the air flow from driving. We made it home but I was completely wrong about the engine temp. It had made its way into the oil pressure area of the gauge so the engine temp was really up there by the time we got home.

CRANKSHAFT ISSUE

Next up was to figure out what happened and, several days later, it was time to take on my new, unexpected project. After getting the fan belt off, the crankshaft pulley was still trapped by the engine. After getting the engine mount bolts off, I was able to raise the engine enough to get the pulley out. Then a quick look at the pulley and the crankshaft and the issue was obvious. The woodruff key slot in the crank had partially broken and was no longer much of a slot - See Photo A showing the front of the crank after the pulley was removed. I started looking to see if I could buy a new crankshaft, but had no luck finding anyone selling them. My engine is actually an 1800 3 main. It was time for another call to Forrest to ask "what do I do?". He said my options were to: a) have the slot welded closed and then have a new slot cut; b) have a new slot cut in another location and then re-time the engine; or c) find a used crank. I decided to go for the used crank option and Forrest offered to find



Photo A



Photo B



Photo C

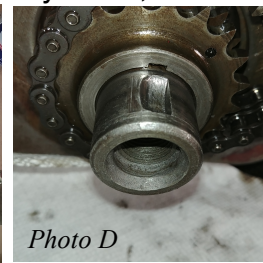


Photo D

one. He located several at Sports Car Craftsmen in Colorado – I picked one with the smallest bearing needs (closest to original dimensions) and picked it up at his shop a few weeks later.

While waiting for the crank, I repeated the entire engine removal process and put it back on the engine stand. I ordered the new crank & conn rod bushings I would need. I also ordered some other replacement parts like new gaskets, a new oil pump, new cam & crank sprockets and chain, and a new crankshaft pulley. See photo B for the damage to the pulley I had practically just installed.

I held off on disassembling the engine until the crank arrived – I didn't want to leave the engine open to accumulate dirt or grime while waiting. When I had the new crank in hand, I began engine disassembly. It's easy to forget how much there is to get things apart to finally be able to remove the old crankshaft. I decided I would not touch the pistons or piston rings so I left them in their cylinders during this whole process. I also left the camshaft alone. Once the engine was disassembled and especially after the old crankshaft was out, the woodruff key slot damage was obvious. See photo C for the engine interior almost ready for the crankshaft install. See photo D for a better view of the damaged key slot at the front of the crank.

I first installed the new crank bushings followed by the connecting rod bushings. Then the conn rods were installed to the crank. During this time, I continually checked to make sure the crank and pistons would rotate with no binding. See Photo E for the new crankshaft in position. The new oil pump was installed next. There wasn't much to it except to make sure everything was kept clean during the install. Finally, the oil pan was installed back into position. Then came the front of the engine, mainly the cam & crank sprockets along with the chain. It's very important to get them installed correctly to make sure valve timing is correct. It's just a matter of making sure the timing marks on the sprockets are aligned with each other, but I was still worried about doing this correctly and knew I wouldn't really know until the engine was restarted and running correctly. I had bought new woodruff keys and worried about getting them installed correctly after the issue during clutch install. I had learned how to modify the width of the keys to make them wider (punch several divets on the side) or thinner (use fine grit sandpaper). Turns out I needed to make the keys for both the crank sprocket and

the pulley thinner to get them into the slots in the crankshaft. I was happy to see that they stayed in place while installing the sprocket and the pulley.

Finally, I was able to get the engine back into the car. This time I did it on my

own and it went back in with only minor issues compared to the first time when the bearing release lever was out of position. After the engine was in, I installed the crankshaft pulley to avoid the difficult engine install with it still in place. Then came the install of all the extra parts to make an engine actually work. So the starter, distributor, generator, intake & exhaust manifolds, and carbs went back in. Last was a new oil filter, new oil, the radiator and all the hoses along with antifreeze.

BACK TO NORMAL NOW?

Now it was time to see if the engine would start and run again. It took some time with cranking but it really was up and running again. Talk about feeling relieved! Everything seemed OK right now with how the engine is running. On my second engine start, the ignition light was staying on with the engine running. I checked the generator (twice) and it checked OK. I checked the battery voltage and it looked OK. Finally, I changed the control box/voltage regulator and still no change. Then I remembered something I had read in a Moss "how to" on control boxes and it said to check the wires to the generator as heat sometimes caused an issue at the generator end. Sure enough the main feed wire from the generator to the control box was open circuit internally due to a failed splice I had put in the wire years ago. Once fixed, I was back in business. I still haven't gotten the car on the road or even driven it around the neighborhood, but I'm thinking I really will be back to normal in the very near future.

So my last year plus with my A has been spent with a clutch replacement, a crank replacement, and now a charging system problem. We all have issues every now and then but it seems like I got a bunch of issues all one after the other. I know that none of us have managed to put many miles on our favorite cars lately but my mileage for the last year seems worse than most. I only managed 121 miles in 2020. So far no miles for 2021, but I'm planning on that changing very soon and am looking forward to a better year.

Larry

Adventures on the Side of the Road – Part 1

Bill Gallihugh

One of the very real possible outcomes of any trip in an MG is coming home on the back of a tow truck – after spending half a lifetime on the side of some road with your head stuck under the bonnet, staring haplessly at an inert block of cast iron. In these cases of “catastrophic” breakdowns, no amount of mechanical ingenuity, vast knowledge of MG’s, nor copious spare parts will save the day. It’s just broke – and it ain’t a’goin’ nowhere.

To those of you who have never had the pleasure of this experience, it may sound remote and even hypothetical – but to the rest of us (who smile and chuckle at your naiveté), we know better.

But for Trudy and myself, the real stories here are the people we’ve met, and the way we experienced this turn of events because of these people. A good example of what I’m talking about can be found in Ken Nelson’s recent story of his failed Jeep water pump in the forbidding wilds of Northern Michigan (see *MGA!*, March/April 2021).

Three times over the years we have broken the First Rule of Abingdon (which states “Never venture more than walking distance from your house”), and found ourselves stranded roadside, and at the mercy of the elements, traffic, and the kindness of strangers. Twice it was in our MGA (which I’ll relate in future installments), in which our plight got only a curious glance from unconcerned motorists zipping past. But a similar incident in our 1951 MG-TD produced a unique, and memorable, experience. So let’s start with that tale.

We were returning to Indiana from the Mad Dogs & Englishmen show in Kalamazoo,

buzzing down US-31 north of Kokomo, when all hell broke loose. It sounded like someone was ringing a chuck wagon dinner bell inside the engine bay. I hit the clutch and the ignition key immediately, but it was clear that it would take more than a minor adjustment for us to ever take to the road again. We got off to the shoulder, and pushed a bit to get off onto a side road. After puzzling for some time over a seemingly intact drive train (at least on the outside), I grudgingly took out the cell phone and called for “the hook”. But what happened



while we were waiting was the real story.

First, car after car began to pull over. Some wanted to see if they could help, others just wanted to look at

the TD. It seemed that there were always 2 or 3 cars on the road shoulder with us. And there was a steady stream of southbound cars slowing down as they came near, with the driver putting their thumb to their ear, little finger to their mouth, and raised their eyebrows – which is, course, the universal pantomime for “do you need a cell phone?”. Then a State Police cruiser stopped and checked out the situation and see if we needed anything. Later a Sheriff’s car stopped and inquired if we were all right, and then checked out the ID of the tow truck driver (who had by now arrived) and asked if we were comfortable going with that particular tow truck. A guy with his arm in a cast drove by, then went some miles down the road before turning around and returning to see if we needed anything. A mowing crew arrived on the scene and stopped – the tractor driver said he would check on us later, and if needed,

he had a pickup truck that he would get to tow us home. Somewhere during all that, a guy on a Harley stopped and offered to help.

The highlight was an Amish woman who stopped to try to assist – she said her husband was working in their field, but she would get him to come help (I had this vision of a team of Clydesdales pulling us and the TD down US-31 through Kokomo. It would have been a great photo op.) She was quite taken with the TD, so Trudy asked her if she wanted to sit in it. After some hesitation, she slipped behind the wheel and seemed to have a great time imagining she was zipping down some country road.

The tow truck driver, who had just moved to the area from Kentucky, was very concerned about getting our “exotic” car onto the flat bed without harming it. On the way back we overheard him call a friend and brag that he had a “million dollar car” loaded up. Since he worked out of Kokomo, that would be our destination. But that’s still 40 miles from home, so I asked him what it would cost to deliver us and the TD to home in Carmel. He got out his map, studied it with furrowed brow for a long time, and finally said (with some trepidation), “I’m afraid I would have to charge you an extra \$20”. We immediately reached for our wallets.

So why were so many people concerned with our plight, and so willing to help? I think it was in large part because the TD is a very non-threatening car. (Can you imagine a mafia hit squad making their get-away in a Crimson Red MG-TD?) But mostly I believe it’s because people just want to help others who might be in distress. The Beatles said *“I get by with a little help from my friends”* – we would amend that to *“...with a lot of help from total strangers”*.

Gearhead Postscript: The next day, with the TD now sitting in the “repair stall” of my garage, I pulled the plugs (seemed like a good place to start). Pistons #1 & #4 were at the top, #2 & #3 at the bottom. I turned the engine over a bit, and #2 & #3 came up, #4 went down... and #1 never moved. Now facing the inevitable engine pull, I drained the oil – which came out thin and green. So now I knew that piston #1 no longer had a mechanical connection to the crank, and the lubrication system and the



cooling system now shared a common path through the engine.

Later, (much later), when I separated the crankcase from the engine, the first thing I saw was the top half of the rod small-end pinch-bolt laying on the oil pan cover. The bottom half of the bolt was found to be still dutifully threaded into shredded remains of the rod small-end.

So, the bottom line was a thrown rod – caused by a split small-end bearing – caused by a snapped pinch-bolt – caused by over-torquing - caused by an incorrect torque setting in the pinch-bolt instructions (which the manufacturer now admitted to). I even remember exactly when the bolt snapped – one year earlier at the GOF in Lake Geneva. I had heard a sudden metallic rattle in the engine that lasted about 2 seconds, and then never repeated. So I drove for a year with the #1 small-end bearing not secured around the wrist pin – until metal fatigue finally snapped the small-end bearing with predictable results.

But all’s well that ends well, and the engine needed cleaning anyway. A re-sleeved cylinder (cracked through into the water jacket where the rod slammed repeatedly against the cylinder sides), new rods and pistons, and re-ground crank - and we were back on the road again, with another great memory of *Adventures on the Side of the Road*.

Bill & Trudy Gallihugh

(Ed note: I asked Bill later if he called the factory to see if the engine was still covered under the factory warranty but he says the factory never answered their phone. I guess John Alexander’s letter and picture on page 4 explain things pretty well.)

MG AUTOS | THE MIDGETS OF THE TRACK**BY JAKE GALLAGHER-FEBRUARY 10, 2015**

American cars of the 1960's can be summed up in one word: big. Big engines, big hoods, big windows, big benches, even big headlights. The American road was strewn with these

glimmering metallic behemoths throughout the sixties, but across the pond, things were quite different. There were British companies like Rolls Royce, Aston Martin, and Bentley that aimed for luxury, creating an automotive experience that was akin to an ultra-cushy carriage ride, and then there were companies like MG. While their competitors were busy inserting plush leather seats and squishy handling into their rides, MG was playing out on the track, producing compact cars that epitomized English speed. Their coupes were designed to hug sharp turns, leap off the line, and dart around corners, setting the benchmark for the British sports car for decades to come.

The MG origin story is a fairly complicated one – Cecil Kimber, a sales manager for Morris (a now defunct British brand) started MG sometime around 1924, as an extension of Morris Garages, the Oxford, England car dealership where he worked. Kimber had been developing custom models for Morris for quite some time when he decided to officially form MG as an independent entity. To confuse things further, William Morris, who also owned Morris, served as the main shareholder of MG from the beginning. In 1935, Morris folded MG into Morris Group, and then in 1952, he merged MG once again to create The British Motor Corporation Limited, thereby expanding MG's international reach.

MG had always been a sports car brand, but more than that, they had been a brand concerned with size. Unlike their American rivals, MG wasn't focused on making their designs larger, rather they aimed to do the opposite, going as far as to name their most famous model, "The Midget." The Midget was actually not a singular model, but rather a series of similarly styled compact cars that embody MG's sized down approach. The first Midget came out in 1929, and while this two-seater did feature the sloping lines and set back cabin of most automobiles from that era, it was distinguished by its shrunken proportions.

The Midget would pave the way for most of MG's subsequent designs, but it wasn't until post WWII, when MG introduced their MGA as a more streamlined modern sports car that they began to gain international acclaim. The long nose and tight design were still intact, but the car now packed a sharp modern look, rather than the drawn-out country look of past MG's. In 1962, MG took this shape even further with the MGB, which was a faster, more comfortable iteration of the MGA silhouette. The lightweight MGB was like a rabbit, tiny and yet quick, making it perfect for quick jaunts around the crowded city streets. The MGB, alongside the Midget, and the MGC (a similarly shaped coupe which arrived in 1967) made MG globally famous for their swift and sporty autos. Unlike many of the competitors, MG did not appear in many movies, or boast celebrity owners, in fact the closest they ever came to making a real pop culture impact was when Steve Prefontaine died in a car accident while driving his '73 MGB. Nonetheless, MG's autos remained popular for their speed and style alone until the 1980's, when car customers began to prefer the practicality of sedans to the swiftness of sports cars.



In response to this waning support, MG changed hands several times over the years and is now owned by a Shanghai based car conglomerate that produces all current MG models (none of which really capture that sharp, sporty style) within China. Fortunately for fans of that classic MG look, these mini autos still pop up at auction all the time, and as antique cars go they are quite affordable. Yes, they're just a buncha Midgets, but when it comes to sports cars, that's high praise.



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The Kimber Party Returns!

After a pause of one year due to Covid-19, Michigan's annual party in honor of Cecil Kimber took place this last weekend, April 24th, at the Delhi Cafe. This has been the traditional setting for the event, but required a bit of extra planning because, with Covid, the restaurant is normally closed on the weekend. Thanks to Dave Smith's smooth charm, the owners agreed to host a special party just for our event and brought in their servers for this. First to arrive on the scene were Ken and Kathy Nelson driving their 1966 Rover luxobarge, and followed shortly after by Marlene Hammond in her beautiful 1964 Chevy II Nova. Next up I believe was Guy St. John in his gorgeous 1973 Volvo P1800 coupe. To prove that this really was an MG meet, next came a gaggle of MGAs and Bs, along with a bit of American iron. The weather was cool and cloudy at first, and smattered with light rain off and on throughout the afternoon, but later warmed up to perhaps 60° or so.

As people were arriving, the group moved indoors and the socializing began in earnest. People met up who hadn't seen each other for over a year, and there was much catching up to do. We noted that "Drive Your MG Day" will also be here on May 1st (over by now I'm sure) and plans were made among the Rowdies to meet up on the outdoor deck at Jerry's, near Jackson. John Alexander promised to get a notice out to members within a day or two.

There were over 40 members at the party, from LAMGA, Rowdies, Old Speckled Hens, British Motor Club, and Windsor-Detroit MG club. We couldn't arrange special dispensation for our Canadian brethren, so no members from north of the border were in attendance. But among the attendees from the Rowdie ranks we saw: Ken & Kathy Nelson, Kathy Bertolini, Larry Pittman, Bill & Trudy Gallagher, Dave & Cheri Smith, Dave & Donna Quinn, Bruce & Willy Mann, Bill & Mary Ellen Weakley, Mark & Margie Barnhart, John Alexander, Forest Johnson, Kevin & Norma Peck, and most important of all, one of our latest new members Richard Illman, who drove his MGA as well.

Extra thanks were due to Marlene Hammond from the British Motor Club who gave everyone a beautifully painted colorful rock with "MG" to take home as a souvenir of the event emblazoned on it. I believe it is safe to say that a good time was had by all. We drove home

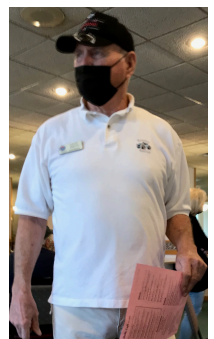
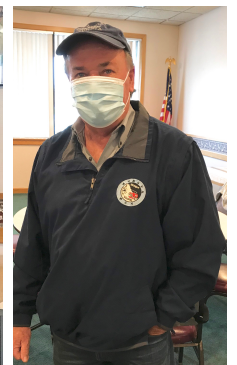
with a light splatter of rain off and on, but nothing that would take away from the joy of finally getting our little British cars back on the road again!
(pictures on this page and next)

Ken Nelson



New member Rich Illman and Marlene Hammond in back





The Legend Of Marchal, Motor Racing's Lucky Black Cat

Blake Z. Rong

Sept. 4, 2018

Haggerty Media

Those who know me are fully aware I am the proud owner of an eight-pound, 11-inch-tall black cat. She is a stalwart friend and faithful companion. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that I am infatuated with the black cat logo of S.E.V Marchal, which pegs that perfect combination of vintage motor racing and abject cuteness. Strap in, feline fiends.

Marchal headlights adorned the noses of Chaparrals, Ford GT40s, Porsche 917Ks, and BMW 2002s and lit the night from Le Mans to Daytona, Monte Carlo to Finland. There are very few constants in life, but vintage motorsport readily supplies the same images—and the black cat has remained an enduring mascot.

In 1923, Pierre Marchal and a few friends started a company dedicated to electric lighting. One night, as the story goes, he drove home to his garage when he caught the reflection of his cat's eyes staring back at him, piercing through the darkness. And so, for his eponymous company, he adopted the image of the black cat and paired it with



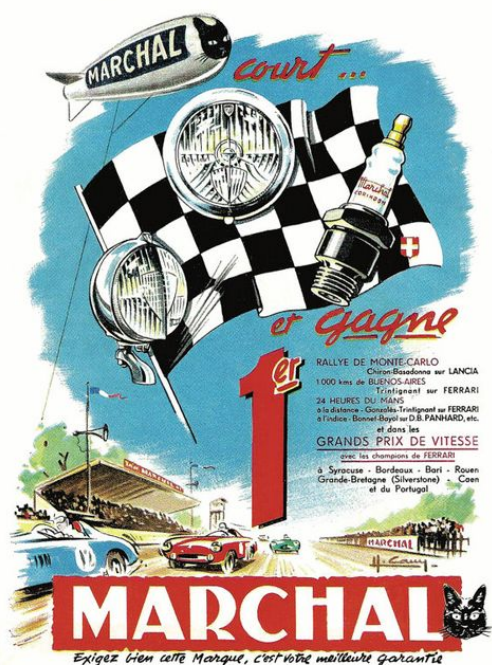
the slogan, "I only lend my eyes to Marchal."

The French love their black cats. Witness Théophile Steinlen's iconic poster for the bohemian Montmartre cabaret Le Chat Noir, currently hanging in the dorm room of sophisticated college Francophiles next to that one James Dean poster. The French believe in the matagot, a spirit in the form of a black cat who walks between worlds, waits at the crossroads, and will also grant you near-limitless wealth if you feed it well. Paris' most famous cemetery perpetually hosts a gang of cats roaming around. Hell, the French put a cat in space. It was black and white, and it survived.

Marchal supplied lights to the most exclusive carmakers. By the 1930s, its lights adorned the chromed front ends of Delahayes, Hispano-Suizas, and Talbotts—though its logo was a simple M, an Art Deco motif. In the James Bond novels, writer Ian Fleming gives Marchal a nice shout-out for Bond's 4 1/2-litre supercharged Bentley.

The cat branding truly took off sometime in the late 1940s, after World War II, like in a 1950 ad promoting the lights onto American cars. Peer through these early ads and you can see all kinds of goofy cats. In 1954, a Marchal-equipped Ferrari 375 won the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and a Lancia flipped on its Marchals to win the Monte Carlo Rally, and you bet the ads made good mention of that.

And yet, it wasn't until the mid-1960s that the angular logo with the checkered flag truly took off. It lasted through every decade of motorsport that you can call the Golden Age. Phil Hill used the company's iodine projectors to win Le Mans in 1962. Marchal-logo covers adorned Alpines, Renault Gordinis, and nearly every BMW, while its headlights could be seen behind the taped-up headlight covers of every Porsche 917K, especially the Gulf livery ones.



Marchal merged with the company S.E.V, the aptly-named Société d'Équipements pour Véhicules, which made distributors, windshield wipers, spark plugs. S.E.V. Marchal became a one-stop shop for all of your Matra's or Simca's consumables.

To promote S.E.V. Marchal's diversification, in 1964 the company customized a Citroën H-Van into an incredible rolling billboard: up front was mounted every possible light available to buy, a dozen horns, transparent display cabinets on the sides with car parts, and giant S.E.V. MARCHAL signs on the roof. It was built by Carrosserie Le Bastard, a family company with a family name. It is a vehicle you must see to believe. If you go to the Museum of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, you can.

That same year, Pierre Marchal passed away. By 1970, Ferodo—another name of motorsports legend—took over the concern. Then, in 1977, S.E.V. Marchal and rival CIBIE merged. Ferodo became Valeo, the lighting business fell by the wayside, and the name fell into the proverbial dustbin.

In 2009, a Japanese company acquired the rights to the Marchal name. It immediately brought the same enthusiasm as the Japanese embraced the American speed shop Mooneyes; you can buy Marchal-branded shirts, stickers, Baby On Board signs, and Marchal-specific riffs that other famous black cat logo of Yamato Transport. Today's Marchal mostly sells motorcycle lights, complete with the Marchal logo in the center, as God intended. In true French form, they are also available in selective yellow. Limited automotive options are being produced. You own a Hakosuka Skyline, a Datsun 240Z, or other enviable Japanese machinery, you're in luck.

The tradition never dies. The logo reflects a bygone era, summoning a tinge of nostalgia. Recreations are hotly debated on forums from Porsche to Ford, where they were hot OEM options. Someday, the Japanese Marchal



Renault Daphne with Marchal lights



Daniel Stern lighting

will expand the way it deserves: bringing French-branded lights, made in Japan, for our old-school German and American cars. Imagine that.

Until then, we wait, and we imagine. Twin headlights, golden amber in color, cutting through the pitch black of the Mulsanne Straight. At night, I imagine the solitude of the French countryside, the eerie forest, full of myths, and the truth of that slogan, "je ne prête mes yeux qu'à Marchal." I find myself unable to fall asleep. I open my eyes to see the cat staring at me from the impenetrable dark. Like the twin candelabra eyes of Marchal's inspiration, they are watching; the cat watches the breath leave my body. The horror, the absolute dread! Its golden eyes of fire!

Blake Z. Rong



John Steinbeck in "The Grapes of Wrath" could have been thinking about how most of us drive our old cars. Does any of this sound familiar to you Rowdies out there?

"Al, bent over the wheel, kept shifting eyes from the road to the instrument panel, watching the ammeter needle, which jerked suspiciously, watching the oil gauge and the heat indicator. And his mind was cataloguing weak points about the car. He listened to the whine, which might be the rear end, dry; and he listened to tappets lifting and falling. He kept his hand on the gear lever, feeling the turning gears through it."

"Listen to the motor. Listen to the wheels. Listen with your ears and with your hands on the steering wheel; listen with the palm of your hand on the gearshift lever; listen with your feet on the floorboards. Listen to the pounding old jalopy with all your senses; for a change of tone, what a variation of rhythm might mean. That rattle - that's tappets. Don't hurt a bit. Tappets can rattle till Jesus comes again without no harm. But that thudding as the car moves along - can't hear that - just kind of feel it. Maybe oil isn't gettin' someplace. Maybe a bearing's startin' to go..."
(Taken from the Riley RM Club Forum online)



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