

# The Long and Winding Road: with apologies to The Beatles

Skip Peterson

I purchased my 1959 MGA out of the local newspaper classifieds in the late 1990's, and found a non running, numbers matching, beat up, complete, rust free Alabama car. I got it running the next year and drove it maybe a half dozen times before hearing that terrible metal sound of main bearings going out. With the help of fellow members of the MG Car Club Southwestern Ohio Centre the engine and trans came out and later the body came off the frame.

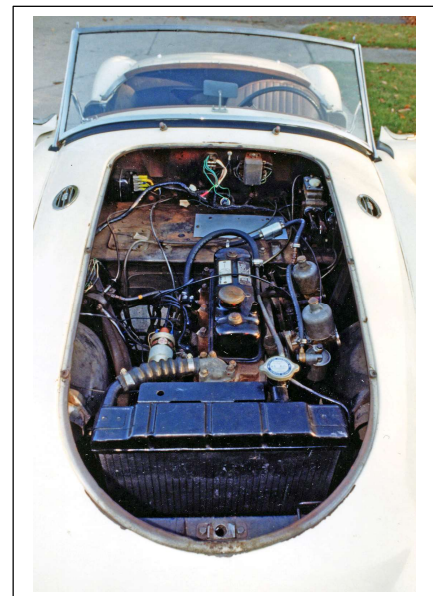
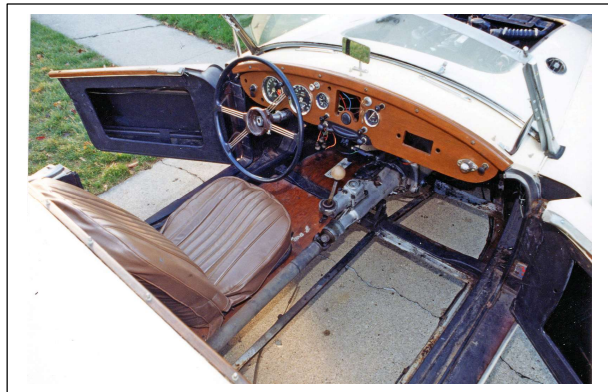
I stored the body at a friends shop for a number of years while the chassis was redone (blasted and painted) and I then rebuilt all the components, made new floorboards and reassembled. MG Automotive in Kettering handled the engine and trans rebuild. Again, the club lent a hand as the engine and trans were reinstalled in 2002.

The body was sent to Carl's Body Shop locally for a strip and repaint. It's now late 2004 and things kind of ground to a halt. The body was sitting on a 2x4 rack I built above the chassis and sometime in 2005 it was dropped back on the chassis with the body shop doing the final fitting of the fenders.

Now back home, up on jack stands, the body wiring was finished, lights, brakes, bumpers, etc. and then it just came to halt. I was losing interest and kind of hit the wall with the dash wiring and the interior. It sat like this for many years and became the butt of jokes from the club, my kids and later my grand kids: "When will the A be done?"

Sometime in late 2020, I finally realized, with encouragement from my wife, I'll either finish it or sell it, and I really didn't want to sell it. In early spring I dropped by to talk with Steve Miller at MG Automotive about finishing the car and he said he had no "projects" at the time. Steve, Jeff and Mimi attacked the car

It was delivered to the shop on May 5 and Steve, Jeff and Mimi attacked the car. The long dormant engine started on the first try on May 20. The next day we dropped a seat in, literally, and I drove it out of the shop and around the block.





Insulation and carpet was installed, followed by the reupholstered seats on July 1. With seats and seat belts in place I took it British Biscuits and Tea in late July. After some delays with the upholstery trim pieces around the cockpit I brought it home to stay on Aug. 4 and was able to drive it to British Car Day on Aug. 7<sup>th</sup>. After more than 20 years, the A is done.



PS. Many club members lent a hand and lots of advice on this project, but I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the help from Ron Parks, the late John Zeno and the late Bill Hammond. Great times with these men in my garage.