

Member Featured Car of the Month

Chris and Jeanne Muia's '74' MG Midget By Chris Muia

This isn't a restoration story, but rather the story of how I jumped into the purchase of my long-awaited MG Midget. To partly justify my child-like decision, I'll offer a little background. My parents instilled my fascination with British sports cars at a young age. They both drove Spitfires (thankfully, that gene skips a generation but I am worried about our daughters) and told stories of all the fun drives...until I was born and they were forced into larger vehicles...although they did drive me around a while stowed behind the seats. My dad continued to increase my fascination as he excitedly explained all the different models as we watched 'The Avengers' (original series with Diana Rigg), James Bond movies and other British re-runs. Also, the toy models he would buy for me were all British cars, while all my friends were assembling replicas of muscle cars.

My love for all things MG started when I was around ten years old with my first close encounter of the MG kind. A neighbor came home from college with a chrome bumpered, BRG Midget. It was love at first sight: the shiny chrome bumpers and trim, big logo on the boot, MIDGET along the sills, walnut shifter and the dash with all the gauges and little red and blue lights. Every time he was home, I was there, helping him wash it or sitting in it while he tinkered under the bonnet (now I know why that happened kind of frequently). At the age of sixteen, I obviously expected my first car to be British and of course, an MG. I searched through 'Wheeler Dealer' magazines and classifieds until I found a local B roadster for sale. My dad and I checked out the car and I had my half of the price ready to go. Being a good dad he said, "It isn't a good first car. How will you take care of it?". I was devastated, even more so when I ended up with a used Dodge Champ.

With all that said, fast forward to March of 2024 on a Thursday evening when I received a text and picture from my wife, Jeanne, asking "Is this the kind of car you always talk about?" and a picture of a restored bright red chrome bumpered MG Midget. I met the owner of the car the next morning. The Midget was restored in Michigan and was



purchased to drive there while at his summer home. It was brought to Cincinnati to sell and be replaced by a Triumph, to go along with the other two that he owned. I was told that first gear needed attention and a fuel tank reading of half full actually meant empty. I took the Midget to a local Import garage for a quick inspection, thoroughly enjoying my first drive in an MG. Indeed, first gear was really loud and eventually would need help and fuel gauge problem would need diagnosing before a cost could be estimated. My dad's question rang in my ears "How will you take care of it?", but that was immediately drowned out by Elvis singing "It's now or never....". The rest is history.



Getting it home

I've owned the Midget for almost two years now and I couldn't be happier. To answer my dad's question, I searched and found our club with hope of finding mechanical help, if needed, and more importantly, comradery. Jeanne and I attended our first meeting and chatted with folks during break. Each time I described the carburetor on the Midget I was met with head shakes, eye rolls, jokes or looks of downright disgust. When we sat back down after break Jeanne whispered "What is wrong with your car?". I didn't know, but I soon learned and actually rebuilt and installed the SU's that came in a box of parts with the car. Everyone was right, the SU's really woke up the Midget and made it even more fun to drive! On the way to resolving the fuel gauge problem I learned all about Smiths gauges, fuel senders, voltage stabilizers and became very proficient in pulling the fuel tank. In both cases, our standing president provided guidance, hands-on help and increased the thickness of my skin....but in good fun!

My Midget has been a blessing in more ways than I expected. I've found the help and comradery from our club that I was seeking and have met many past MG owners who have gotten pleasure from seeing the Midget and relaying stories of their own cars. I couldn't ask for more, or could I?

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After a few meetings, I began to get strange comments...I'll use initials, to protect the guilty:

“You can't own just one.” ... L.G.

“She won't divorce you if you get just one more.” ... R.P.

“The Midget is a nice local car, but....” ... T.L.

Well, it did get me thinking, but that is another story.....



Resting at home!



The bonnet is off in the engine bay picture as the transmission adventure is starting. And yes, the compartment will be painted to match the car as part of the project!