

Member Featured Car of the Month November 2011

The Lange's 1972 MGB

By Adrienne Lange

The desire to own a MG was planted when I was a youngster and my Uncle owned an MG midget. I thought it was the coolest car on the road. We had attended the BCD event a couple of years and had admired the cars...and I had even purchased some "gear" because I figured I might never own an MG but I could at least have a hat and a shirt. . We had a set amount of money and knew what our requirements for "the car" were. Any MG purchased must be: #1 drivable, we did not want to spend a lot of



time and \$ overhauling an engine, drive train, exhaust system, electrical system, etc. #2 presentable, we were not looking for perfection, just something that would not need all new body parts, interior, etc. #3 preferably pre-1974, I loved the chrome bumpers. & #4 a reasonable drive to view the car, take it out for a test drive, and get her home. Tom and I began our search in earnest in June of 2008. Being just your run- of- the- mill car shoppers, we had no idea where to begin the quest. E-bay? On-line auto shoppers? Auto sales publications? Well, we looked at all of them, with no luck. I finally "hit" upon some obscure web-site for car sales. I couldn't tell you now what the site was, but there "she" was, a fairly reasonably restored 1972 MGB, British racing green, for sale in Crystal Lake, Illinois (about 400 miles from Troy, Ohio).

We contacted the seller, Jim, and asked him as much as we thought was relevant about the car. Hind sight is 20/20, there were tons of questions and things we SHOULD have asked him prior to the purchase, but we were uneducated on the finer points of MGB cars until we became owners, and we're still learning! We set a date to drive out and take a look at the car, with the intention that we would buy it and drive it home. That date had to be changed a few times. The car was not equipped to drive in the rain; no top and no wipers, a fair weather car through and through. We rented a car to drive to Crystal Lake with the option of returning the car there (if we purchased the MGB) or driving the rental back to Troy.

We met Jim early Sunday morning, under the assumption that we would look the car over, take her for a drive and possibly be on the road in an hour. Three hours later the sale was finalized. Jim decided that we were appropriate buyers for his baby. We saw the full photo restoration book, were given ALL the receipts for said restoration, and received some miscellaneous pieces parts that had not been re-assembled (frame for the convertible top, spare light covers, etc). Little did we know that there were some parts that were just plain missing and would need to be installed ASAP.

We began the trek home. I decided I did not want to attempt to drive 65-75 mph on the interstate so we had a state route plan that would take us approximately 10 hours to reach home. The weather was comfortable, clear (no chance of rain) and not too humid. Tom began the drive and once we got out traffic, it was my like putting on an shoe. It had been had driven a wasn't sure I would but no driving my old



The car some interesting Bang-Bang” noises we did NOT have (mechanical,

the entire drive home. One thing we could not figure out was why our feet were so hot. We did not realize that the interior controls for the heat were not operational and the heater valve was wide open. Once the sun had set and the stars came out we really enjoyed driving under God's beautiful canopy. We reached home between 10-11 p.m. I still couldn't believe that this was our car. Now the real work began, but also lots-n-lots of fun.

First thing that was “fixed” was the installation of a choke cable. It was almost impossible to start the car due to the lack of a choke cable. It was a 2 man job to start the car, one person to manually hold the choke lever open and the other to turn the key. Next was cleaning and adjusting the carburetors, replacing the intake manifold gasket, replacing the horn switch and replacing the horns because they were “frozen”. These made the car more operationally friendly. The repairs, adjustments, and replacements have continued with the major ones being the convertible top, windshield wipers, and some minor cosmetic improvements. Tom has earned the loving nickname “Sparky” by me, his adoring wife with a car that needs “assistance” every once in a while. The car's never been to a commercial garage under our ownership...all at home mechanics.

away from a lot of turn to drive. It was old comfortable quite a while since I manual, and I be able to right off, problems...just like Pinto hatch-back.

occasionally made “Chitty-Chitty- (carburetors), but any problems electrical, etc) on

We have had many great drives and some quite unexpected adventures. We have only been “flat-bedded” home once. We were in Greenville and the battery lost all charge and Tom figured out that the alternator belt had been loose and the battery had discharged. The dash indicator light had not been hooked up when it was reassembled (previous owner), but you can bet it works now. We look forward to many more years of driving FUN!

