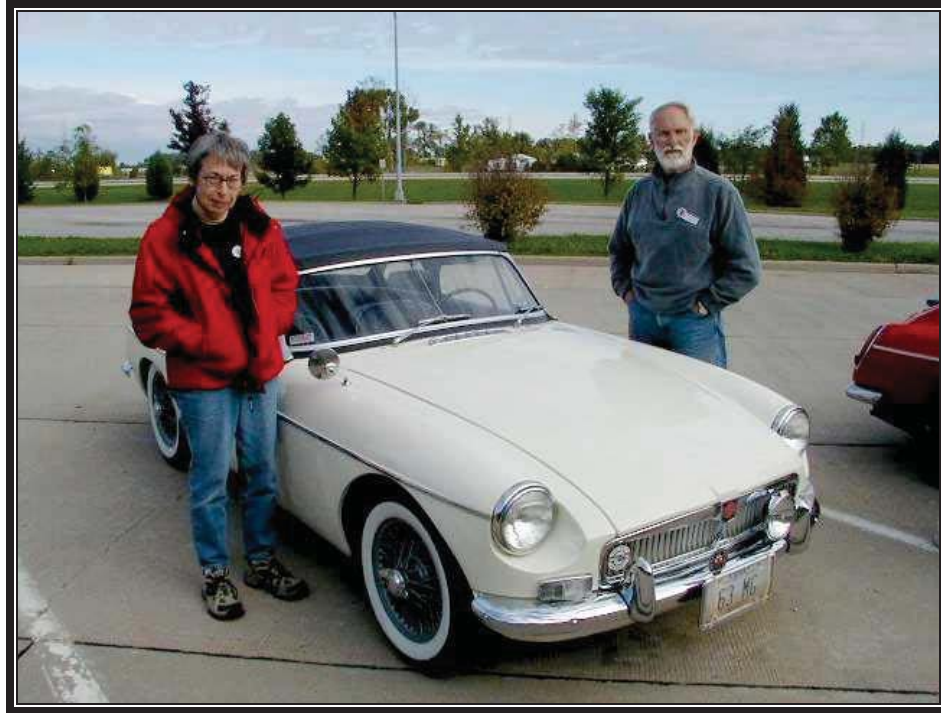


Ian and Kathy Cunningham's '63' MGB & Matching Trailer



Member Featured Car of the Month, October 2009, Ian Cunningham's '63' MGB, with Matching Trailer

By Ian Cunningham

A number of years ago when I retired, I decided that I should get an MG or some such little sports car to play with. I have enjoyed my share of motorcycles since the 1950's, but now thought that four wheels would serve us better. Our first LBC, the '75 Midget turned out to be less work to get into good shape than anticipated. I then wanted to find a 'project car', so I quickly located the '63 MGB in Jamestown, north of Wilmington.



It had been setting in a barn for ten or more years, under pigeons and other large birds, because the teenager it had been last purchased for turned up her nose at it. The familiar "ran when parked" story.

The car had come to Ohio from Texas, with holes in the floors for a roll bar, and I later concluded it had a mild cam. (Not much torque until the revs exceed 2700 rpm.) Bird excrement had destroyed the paint and interior, which was fine with me - that meant I got a lot of new appearance stuff. I did the usual mechanical replacements and rebuilds, and marveled at the responsiveness of the free-revving 3-bearing engine. It was nothing like the dullness of the '75 Midget, even with the Midget's minimal pollution control stuff disconnected.

The folding top is of the sideways hinging frame - an abomination. It takes an experienced committee to erect it or put it down, but I've been told that no one likes the take-a-part style either, so we live with it. We also have a period hard top, which is the best way to travel when the weather is bad. It does keep the water out, mostly. I wanted wide white wall tires to go with the Old English White Paint, but Coker only had Polyester Bias Ply narrow tread in Wide



Whites to fit the narrow 4 1/2 inch wheels, so I had to settle for that compromise, for appearance sake. I wasn't going to race the car anyway; though it must have been raced some time in it's past. But, I had forgotten how poor that old time tire construction really is. Not very safe at any speed! When I was a kid, we even bought second-time recaps for \$8.00 and thought nothing of it. That was before Goodyear began marketing 'Polyglas' tires, an enormous improvement in the 1950's. At that time, we could not have been able to even dream of something like a radial tire.

Three years ago I got a rebuilt tranny and overdrive from Eric Jones. What a difference the overdrive makes in cruising comfort. But now those simple tires are REALLY dangerous! They have more than 20 thousand on them, so my hope is that maybe someday, if my vision and reflexes remain adequate, I can find radials with wide white walls.

Five years ago or so, I was able to acquire a stripped out body tub from our own Bob Charles, to make a trailer to match the "B". I had been visualizing such a project for a long time. Basically, the trailer is made from the rear body section, from the "B" post rearward, floor, springs and all. A bit of the front fender was grafted onto the rear fender at the wheel centerline to put the headlight in, and the grille and hood section fell into place. Axle is welded from inch and a half water pipe, springs are missing several leaves each, and shocks are from an early Corvette. Total trailer weight is a bit over 400 pounds. The only time I notice pulling the trailer is when I take off after unhitching - then it's the lack of trailer that is apparent. Other wise, it seems part of the car.

Any of you who possess the body working skill and experience required and who may be seriously considering building a trailer such as this may contact me:
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