



A TALE OF TWO MG'S

1961 - 2008

BOOK ONE: 1980 MGB-LE

THE SECOND SEED TAKES HOLD

By Kathy Goodman

CHAPTER ONE:

In 1950 when I was that 4 year old daughter in Tripoli I had no idea that I was cramping anyone's style. I just knew that I loved my Mommy and Daddy, my little brother, and my books – in that order - sometimes.

And for the record, I did not think 4 seat Morris Minor convertible was at all boring. I learned to shift in it. Dad would say 2nd gear and while he worked the clutch and the gas, I shifted the gears. I thought it was great fun.

As for the TD when he found it in Fort Walton Beach, I was not too thrilled because I just wanted to go to the beach, not be concerned with some clunky, beat up old car. As time went on I came to love the DeeDee car along with the rest of the family. I never liked to drive it but I did have great fun riding in it.

An interesting side note, when I was in the 9th grade (about the time that Dad was replacing every moving part) I had to take a Vocational Aptitude Test. My counselor was quite dismayed when I, a mere girl, scored the highest in the school on mechanical and spacial ability. They gave us pictures of a series of gears or pulleys and asked us to determine which way a specific gear would turn if another specific gear was turned clockwise. After spending as much time with Dad putting parts back together it was a piece of cake. But I was a girl and I was not supposed to know anything about things like that.

In 1975, not long into the 2nd restoration, I did jump ship and move New York. However, after 23 years on the east coast I moved back in 1998. That was when the fun began.

That summer Dad hosted the 2nd or 3rd of the now traditional MG car club picnics. And for the 1st time I met the most interesting, warm, friendly, generous, and unbelievably fun and funny group of people that I have ever had the pleasure to be associated with. As the years went by I became more and more involved with you good folks. But I never joined the club.

Dad and I had been talking for a couple of years about how we wished that we could go on more of the road rallies and trips that the club took. But with the TD it just was not possible. Neither of us would have survived that many miles in that car. Then in 2004 the new chapter began. Carole Looft and Dad had been conspiring (Sam was president so it wasn't to get Ryan's total up). The membership was around 95 or 96 and they had decided that when it hit 99 they would sign me up as the 100th member. The magic number came up on the Friday night before BCD while we were stuffing goody bags. So that night I officially became a member. Of course, everyone started right in on Dad – he had to buy me a car. The next day at the car show I think he spent the whole day being pulled from one car to another.

I, meanwhile, had been working registration. The prettiest Limited Edition came in and during one of my breaks I went to find it to give the woman who owned it information on the club. Much to



my delight there was a for sale sign on the car. I showed the car to Dad but he didn't want a rubber bumper. Oh well!

The next weekend we went car shopping. After driving what seemed like a hundred chrome bumper B's (it was actually only about 5 or 6) he suggested that we check out the LE. It was only a couple of blocks from home so we headed over. I don't think we had driven it more than 2 blocks when we both were sold. It took a bit of negotiation (I don't think she really wanted to sell it) but Dad was finally able to close the deal the Friday before the picnic.

And so, the picnic of 2004, I had a car. Just to clarify one point. The TD may be Dad's car but the LE is OUR car. We both have put a tremendous amount of work into it in the last 4 years. We both take it on trips and to shows. So when anyone refers to the LE as Kathy's car, they are only half right.

Vital Statistics: Car No.: 520753

Vin No.: VVDJ2AG520753

Body No.: GU23T995903P

Month of Manufacture: May 1980

In service date: 8/27/80

Sold new by Stillpass Bros Motors, Cincinnati

We are the 5th owners. The previous 4 owners were all in southwestern Ohio (Milford, Batavia, and Beavercreek).

During the spring and summer of 2005 we were having trouble with the engine dying. In fact, we missed the first car show we were going to take it to (2nd street) because it died about half way there. One at a time either Dad or Dad and I replaced the fuel filter, the fuel pump, the flexible fuel lines, the coil (twice), overhauled the carburetor, and installed a Petronix ignition. Whatever we did worked because that problem went away.

Our first excursion was to the Cincinnati BCD in July. Much to our delight it won a Certificate of Merit.

That summer and fall we both worked really hard on the engine bay. Someone, in their infinite wisdom had sprayed undercoating all over everything. I learned a lot of uses for old toothbrushes that summer. In 2005 we installed new cockpit carpeting, engine decals, and replaced some emission control parts to bring it back to original. In 2006, we installed lumbar supports, a wind blocker, and a new top and toneau cover. That fall, before it went into storage the clutch was replaced and a new starter installed. In 2007, it got new wheels.

What fun we have had!



Our first excursion was the road rally to the Vineyard that the Wolfe's put together. I had a blast. I was beginning to see what we really had been missing out on.

Who can forget the trip to Auburn when it died just outside of Greenville. Super Terry to the rescue with a new rotor and we were on the road again. Then it died on the trip back and another new rotor. We now travel with 2 spare rotors in the glove box at all times.

The trip to Gatlinburg for MG2006 was the most perfect 60th birthday gift any girl could want. Even with a clutch that slipped all the way there and all the way back. And we took a 3rd. What fun to show it in a class of 23 LE's.

I even had an interesting trip on my own back from the Cincinnati BCD that year following Happensack over hill and dale with the same slipping clutch.

We just got back from a wonderful trip to Valley Forge, PA for MG2008.

And then there was the not so fun Cincinnati BCD last year. We had been losing gauges for a month or more and could not seem to isolate the problem. Being intermittent we were never sure if it was fixed or not. So all the way down, with me driving, I kept losing gauges and getting them back. Then we got lost. What we didn't know was that the cooling fans are on the same circuit as the dash gauges. As soon as we slowed down on the city streets the car started to overheat. But since the temperature gauge was not working we didn't know that until steam started poring out from under the hood. Bonnie and I started going door to door begging for water – at 10am on a Sunday morning. We actually both found a kind soul that gave us water and one of them even led us to the show grounds.

But our troubles were only starting. As we left the show grounds that day, with me driving again, we were concentrating so hard on the gauges and trying to keep the car from overheating that we did not pay close enough attention to a rather disturbing clunking from the rear of the car. I heard it and was paying attention to it but was not overly concerned. No sooner had we it I270 when the car started to shimmy and shake like Elvis Presley. I must say that was some of the best driving I have ever done in my life. I managed to get it off the road and out of traffic. I couldn't get my hands unlocked from the steering wheel, or stand up once I got out of the car but I did get it stopped. Everyone looked it over and could not see anything wrong. Dad decided that since we were only about 500 yards from an exit ramp, he would drive it off 270 and see if he could feel what was going on. We were no more than just on the road when Ron started honking and yelling for us to STOP NOW. He had just seen our last 2 lug nuts on the left rear wheel go flying off. When Dad stopped the car, the wheel had about 1 turn before it was going to come off. The good Lord was more than looking out for us that day! Our poor LE had its first (and only) ride on a tow trailer back to Beavercreek.

Yes, we have had some hairy, scary, unusual, frustrating, and interesting times in the LE. But most of all we have had fun. Besides getting to associate with this wonderful group (I sang your praises already so be quiet), it has given Dad and I something that we can truly do together. He is not just helping me or I am not just helping him. We are working together. We have a division of labor - sorta. The line gets crossed a lot. He keeps it running and I keep it pretty. So far it has worked. We have taken home something from every car show that it has been entered in with the exception of when we had to show in the Premier Class at Cinci BCD last year and Valley Forge this year. But it is not about winning prizes, it is not about having a car that looks good, it is about the time that Dad and I spend working on OUR car. And yeah I will say it again – with all of you.

