

# Member Featured Car of the Month, July 2011

## Al & Dianne Freeze's 1974 MGB

By Al Freeze

I had owned two MGBs before, so when we moved to Ohio in 1991, I was eager to purchase another one. I had a 1970 in California and took it with me to Hawaii, so I had lots of "top-down" time. I purchased another 1970 when we lived in Miami, FL. It was a "project-car", which I towed home and stripped down. Due to an unexpected and immediate job change, I had to sell it in boxes and crates, never having had the opportunity to drive it.



In 1992 I purchased my 1974 MGB from Gary Sammons in Cincinnati for \$3300.00. It was originally purchased 11-26-74 by Susan Ruoff of Greenville OH, from Davis Buick Co in Centerville. The car was in pretty good shape mechanically, and I drove it to work (weather permitting) for a couple of years.

One day I was jacking up the left side of the car (using the MGB side jack) to investigate a muffler leak when suddenly the jacking bracket and entire rocker panel collapsed and folded inward. Thirty-five years of aircraft maintenance experience made me immediately suspect that this was not designed to do so. After removing seats and carpeting I found that all the floor structure, from door to door, except the tunnel were badly rusted out and needed replacing.

Finding a body shop around Wilmington willing to take on this massive a restoration project was not easy. Their "money-makers" are quick insurance repairs, so most are not interested in tying up their space with restoration work. Rusty Kessler in Sabina was willing to take on the job (as long as I paid up front) under the condition that he would work on the car only between insurance jobs. We agreed. I ordered all the body parts from Moss, stripped the car down to bare body, rear end and front end and had the car transported to Rusty's shop. After nine months and many trips to Sabina (with checkbook) the car was completed. I again had the car transported home, put it in the garage up on jacks, covered with car cover and.....THERE IT SAT FOR TWELVE YEARS

After I retired, (Dianne was still working) I agreed that as long as she was still working I would take care of all the housework. (Bad decision.). Anyway, we started traveling a lot, as our kids are scattered from FL to CA, and started several house remodeling projects. Finally I decided if I ever wanted to drive the car in this life, I needed to get busy.

I had been to several BCDs and picked up numerous membership applications so I finally joined the club hoping for "inspiration". I took my carbs and distributor up to one of John

Twists workshops, where we rebuilt the units. I took the head to Steve Miller for rebuilding and finally got the car back together last year. As a testament to my mechanical skills, we just returned from the Reno trip with no major malfunctions (none that could be attributed to me anyway!). A bent front wheel from a pothole in Yellowstone, some carb idling issues in the mountains and a cracked windshield in Nebraska (probably from a giant grasshopper!) .....There was one other ingenious “Terry-Fix” for my overdrive, with a bungee .....But that’s another story.

