

THE OCTAGON NEWS



Volume XLIII No. 6

April 2016



MGB – Is it the Most Practical Classic?
Illegal to Modify Exhaust System?

Hot Exhaust

Bob Farrell

This is being written on April 18, tax day. Have you filed your taxes? By the time you read this, you will be delinquent if you haven't filed.

Also, it is the day after the pub run to Bennetts Publical. About twenty-five or so people attended. As we were getting ready to leave, a few people asked if we (the club) were going to meet at Bennetts for the April meeting. I said "No, we were going to meet at the Rusty Bucket for the April meeting." So, the April meeting will be at the Rusty Bucket and we will discuss moving our meetings to Bennetts Publical beginning with the May, 2016 meeting.

There are only two meetings before Louisville, April and May. If anyone has any suggestions, ideas or other ground breaking news, speak up at this or the next meeting.

Also, I am asking anyone who needs to get in touch with me and wants an immediate response, don't e-mail me. I am lazy and only check my e-



Southwestern Ohio Centre -- MG Car Club
P.O. Box 20032, Dabel Branch
Dayton, OH 45420-0032

Club Membership Information

Membership dues for the Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club are eighteen (\$18.00) per year, payable during September and October. On January 1st. the names of delinquent members are removed from the roster. See *Carole Looft* for further membership information.

MG Car Club Monthly Meeting

The Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the Rusty Bucket, 2812 Miamisburg-Centerville Road, 45459, in front of the Dayton Mall, at 7:30pm. The next meeting will be:

Wed, April 27, 2016

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Upcoming MGCC Events

Apr:

- 22 – Jelly Bean Day
- 23 – Tune Up Clinic at MG Automotive
- 27 – Meeting at Rusty Bucket

May:

- 25 – Meeting at Rusty Bucket
- 26 – Blueberry Cheesecake Day
- 28 – British Car Meet at 2nd Street Market

Jun:

- 6 – Drive-In Movie Day
- 22 – Meeting at Rusty Bucket

See meeting minutes for other area activities!!

mail two or three times a week. Please call me at (937) 477-9862. I will be more than happy to talk to you. Please do not call after 10pm. My phone goes to sleep and so do I.

Til April 27th at 7:30pm, be safe.



MGB – Is This the Most Practical Classic Car in the World?

Editor's Note – I found this online. No author or publication was given.

The MGB might not be the fastest classic car in the world. It might not be the prettiest, either. Or the most economical, the best handling, the most rewarding to drive, or the cheapest to run.

It is, however, the easiest classic car in the world to own. Nothing else comes close. As a result the MGB is perhaps the one that more people aspire to than any other, absolutely nailing the sweet spot between desirability and affordability. So let's take a look at what makes it so special...

Launched in 1962 as a replacement for the adorable MGA, the MGB spanned three decades and over half-a-million units before it was dragged around the back of the factory and put out of its misery with a well-placed bullet: by that time it had done an Elvis and become a shadow of the lithe and handsome car that everyone had fallen for almost two decades previously. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.



A NEW MG

On paper things didn't look promising, back in the day: the B-series engine that was fitted to the then-new MGB (and stayed fitted throughout its entire life...) might have been bored out to 1.8-litres but its origins could be traced directly back to the dark years immediately following World War Two, while suspension and brakes were themselves taken wholesale from the outgoing MGA, which was hardly a paragon of cutting-edge engineering. A degree of modernity might have been conferred by the use of a new-fangled monocoque body but make no mistake; this was evolution, not revolution.

But the world loved it. The engine might have been ancient but it cranked out a lively 95bhp, endowing the MGB with a 0-60mph time of just over 11 seconds. Not fast now but back then it must have felt amazing, especially with the roof down and your ears ringing with *Love Me Do* by The Beatles, that new Liverpoolian band that everyone was talking about.

Even contemporary road tests observe that the early cars were basic; a heater was an optional extra, as were wire wheels, Dunlop tyres, and an overdrive. They also remarked on the car's enormous steering wheel, necessary because the steering was so heavy at low speed, and its wooden brakes. But none of that mattered because the MGB wasn't really about driving. It was mainly about sex.

Sex is something the Brits hadn't been very good at until then, but the guys and gals from Abingdon couldn't have done a better job if they'd been force fed Viagra and forced to work to a backbeat of John Holmes grunting.

We might have been a bit slow on the uptake but once we'd discovered sex we were the world epicenter of the bonking industry, and the MGB – along with the E-Type and Mini – was our weapon of choice. 'Safety fast' was dead, replaced by slogans like 'You can do it in an MGB' at the bottom of a photograph of a beautiful woman leaning on an MGB, a suggestive smile playing on her lips...

NOT JUST A CONVERTIBLE

The convertible MGB was joined by the MGB GT in 1965, a fixed-head coupe with a hatchback boot and two tiny rear seats, opening the car to the family man and woman.

It too, was an instant success bringing four seats to the car in which your children may well have been conceived. It was, perhaps for the first time, possible to have children and still be seen as young and sexy: your dad might have piloted a sedate, upright, three-box saloon with a pipe clamped firmly between his teeth and a home-kitted cardigan to ward off the chill, but you could demonstrate your virility for the whole world to see. Family cars were now sexy and sporty.



1968 MGC GT

BMR-0703-1242

A Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon image for editorial purposes only

FOUR ON THE FLOOR AND SIX UNDER THE BONNET

With a three-litre straight six under the bonnet, the MGC was meant to be a replacement for the Austin-Healey 3000. With a heady 145bhp and only a simple bonnet bulge to distinguish it from its smaller brother, the MGC should have been a raging success. After all, a top speed of 120mph was properly quick and buyers could choose from a coupe or convertible, and a manual or an automatic, making it the perfect choice for anyone who wanted something small, fast and nimble.

However, despite different suspension and steering settings to accommodate an engine that was just over 200lbs heavier than the four-cylinder B-series, it didn't handle that well and received a lukewarm reception from the world's press. As a result, sales were poor and it lasted just two years, being taken out of production in 1969.

THOSE DAMNED YANKS – AND THAT BLOODY COSTELLO

For some people a lowly four-cylinder jobbie was never going to be enough, not now the MGC had showed that more performance was possible and the Buick V8 had made its way across the water and was sitting prettily in the Rover P5B. So BL popped one under the bonnet of the MGB GT to create the MGB GT V8.

Well, it did but only after the Costello MGB V8 of 1971 showed that there was a market for a V8-powered sportscar. The engine Costello used was tuned to produce around 160bhp, creating a car that could reach 60mph in under eight seconds and go on to a top speed of around 130mph.

BL, late to the party by two years, then royally cocked it up by only offering 130bhp in the MGB GT as Rover would only let MG use the low compression version of the V8 engine in case it cannibalised sales (however a couple of 'factory' high compression MGB V8s do exist like this one on Patina), denying customers the soft-top that Costello offered. This one lasted three years, killed off in 1976 not by poor handling (it handled very well as the V8 engine was actually lighter than the four-cylinder) but its poor fuel consumption. Twenty miles per gallon wasn't too bad, but these were the days of fuel hysteria and gas-guzzlers were unacceptable, politically and financially.

EIGHTEEN YEARS, BUT NOT THE SAME EIGHTEEN

The MGB changed a little, and a lot, over the years. While the standard bodyshell and interior stayed broadly similar, it did receive a few minor, and one major, change throughout its life.

AUTOCAR 16 August 1973

**If you've just bought a
Reliant Scimitar GTE, a Datsun
240Z or an Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV,
this will ruin your day.**

At 124 mph, the new MG is practically the fastest thing on four wheels up to £3000. It does 0-60 in a brief 8.25 seconds and reaches its legal cruising speed in 12 seconds. It has a light alloy, 3.5 litre V8 engine which gives 137 b.h.p. at 5000 r.p.m., and 193 lb. ft. of torque at 2900 r.p.m.

The lightness of the engine, the uprated suspension and wide radial ply tyres give the V8 outstanding handling characteristics. It has Laycock overdrive, brake servo, alloy wheels, twin electric cooling fans, tinted windows, head restraints and MG pedigree. All as standard.

The new 124 mph MGB GT V8



Price: £2085.42 including car tax and V.A.T., number plates, seat belts and delivery charges extra.
Performance figures obtained by British Leyland engineers.

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The Mark II was introduced in 1969 with a slightly different manual gearbox. An automatic gearbox was also available for the first time. It also gained an alternator to replace the dynamo, and became negative earth.

The Mark III of 1973 brought a new dashboard and interior, while legislative changes in the US market led to the infamous rubber bumpers and raised ride height that purists claim ruined the car's handling and looks.

DRIVING

With rack-and-pinion steering, a low centre of gravity, and almost 100bhp to play with the MGB was a revelation back in the early sixties. It sounded nice too and was low-geared enough to give pretty decent acceleration, especially through the gears, which is where it counts. So, with the wind blowing through your hair it must have been a lovely place to be.

It still is. Of course, the MX-5 is much better but then it is thirty years newer. So you have to approach the MGB with the right frame of mind, which just means a willingness to have fun at much lower speeds than you are used to – and at that, it excels. It feels a bit vintage, a bit crude but then you realise that you're smiling as you travel at 40mph.



Gearshifts are deliberate but can be made in a very satisfactory fashion with a well-timed flick of the wrist. The brakes might feel a bit dead but they do the job well enough, as does the suspension, which is a bit roly-poly but is soft enough to let you explore the effects of weight transfer on the handling.

It's a lovely old bus, but if lovely old bus isn't your thing, then no car can be inexpensively tuned like the MGB.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

It's a BL car from the sixties and seventies, so what do you think you're looking for? Yes, rust. It wasn't unusual for cars to suffer from catastrophic rust within five years back then; dial in some of the worst quality control in the industry, and you'll understand that few, if any, cars now exist in unrestored form.

This introduces its own quality control issues: if the restoration has been done properly then someone else has taken the financial hit, leaving you free to enjoy years of cheap motoring behind the wheel of a peerless example of British engineering. But, if they've done it badly (and there are plenty for whom a tub of P38 and a can of Halfords' paint constitutes a restoration), you are entering a world of hurt.

So you need to look past the shiny paint and immaculate interior (trim and seats are cheap to buy and easy to fit, giving even the rattiest example a credibility it doesn't deserve) and prod and probe with a screwdriver and a magnet. Use a torch to examine every square inch of the

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underside and lift carpets and door trim to get a good look into the sort of places that a bodger would ignore, including the bulkhead behind the dash. Door fit is a good guide to serious, structural rust and opening one and trying to lift it on its hinges will show up anything nasty lurking in the door pillar.

You don't need to worry about the mechanical bits because they're all cheap to buy, easy to fit, and offer a world of modification that won't harm the resale value one iota. In fact, given that there are few nicer ways to spend money than by buying an upgraded part because the old one is FUBAR, it might even make sense to buy a sound, but tired, example and upgrade the stuff that's important to you.

NEW AND IMPROVED

Speaking of which, one of the many joys of owning an MGB is that no other car offers the same range of tuning bits to develop and improve the car to better serve your needs.

The B-series engine is simple enough that you can work on it yourself or, if you really go to town – something that is ridiculously easy to do – you can send it away to be modified by any number of specialists, with the subsequent power limited only by your wallet...

The same holds true for the brakes, suspension, and interior. In fact, you could build a brand new car entirely from brand new parts sourced via the Internet. You'd have a whopping credit card bill – but the resulting car would happily be able to keep up with just about anything rolling out of a factory today.

If you really want to go all out, one company, Frontline Developments can restore your MGB to 'as-new' with a modern Mazda engine, 6 speed gearbox, air-con, electric windows and the list goes on. 300bhp in an MGB, now you're talking...

WHAT'S SHE WORTH, MISTER?

Values are almost impossible to accurately nail, as the range of cars out there is impossibly wide. You'll see one-owner-from-new, reference models going for silly money, and rusty, unfinished projects going for pocket money.

If it were me, I'd hold out for a convertible that's had a brand-new British Motor Heritage (or similar) bodyshell and decent paint job in the recent past and not worry about anything else. I'd then spend a very happy year and five grand bolting shiny bits to it before driving it to death and smothering it with love. Ten thousand would easily see that project complete, but half would buy a very usable car that's been cherished by a member of one of the many MGB owners' clubs.

If you want one to race or hillclimb, then I'd do the same with an MGB GT but there are plenty out there for well under five figures that have had the necessary work done and would be a reasonably cheap turnkey option.

MGC and MGB GT V8s are rarer and much more expensive and don't necessarily offer anything the four-cylinder cars don't other than added complexity (well apart from a some wonderful noise and the possibility of a much greater return on your investment)...

The EPA Wants to Make it Illegal to Modify Your Car for Racing

Steven J. Ewing

A proposal by the Environmental Protection Agency could mean bad things for racers and car enthusiasts across the United States. According to the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA), the EPA wants to make it illegal to modify your roadgoing car for racing, and could even prohibit the sale of aftermarket parts that mess with emission control devices.

Tucked away in an EPA proposal titled *Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Fuel Efficiency Standards for Medium- and Heavy-Duty Engines and Vehicles—Phase 2* is a section that indicates this sort of vehicle modification is a violation of the clean air act. Here's the exact wording, found on page 862 of an official EPA document:

EPA is proposing in 40 CFR 1037.601(a)(3) to clarify that the Clean Air Act does not allow any person to disable, remove, or render inoperative (i.e., tamper with) emission controls on a certified motor vehicle for purposes of competition.

SEMA met with the EPA to confirm the agency's intentions, and issued a statement saying, "The EPA indicated that the regulation would prohibit conversion of vehicles into racecars and make the sale of certain emissions-related parts for use on converted vehicles illegal." The association added, "SEMA will continue to oppose the regulation through the administrative process and will seek congressional support and judicial intervention as necessary."

Cars used exclusively for racing have not always been held to the same emissions standards as their roadgoing counterparts. This EPA document outlines exactly how the Clean Air Act applied to cars used exclusively for racing, as well as new cars the EPA and various automakers classify as "competition" models. Here, it was simply not allowed to modify cars that would be used for both competitive *and* recreational use.

"This proposed regulation represents overreaching by the agency, runs contrary to the law and defies decades of racing activity where EPA has acknowledged and allowed conversion of vehicles," said Chris Kersting, president and CEO of SEMA.

The EPA is expected to publish its final regulations in July.

Editor's Note – Congress ordered the EPA on March 18th to remove this paragraph. So...nevermind.



Car (Song Lyrics) of the Month

Little GTO 1964 – by Ronny & the Daytonas

Little GTO, you're really
lookin' fine

Three deuces and a four-
speed and a 389

Listen to her tachin' up
now, listen to her why-
ee-eye-ine

C'mon and turn it on,
wind it up, blow it out
GTO

Wa-wa, (mixed with
"Yeah, yeah, little
GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa,
wa, wa

(mixed with "Yeah,
yeah, little GTO")

Wa-wa, (mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa, wa, wa

(mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO")

Wa-wa (mixed with "Ahhh, little GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa, wa, wa



You oughta see her on a road course or a quarter mile

This little modified Pon-Pon has got plenty of style

She beats the gassers and the rail jobs, really drives 'em why-ee-eye-ild

C'mon and turn it on, wind it up, blow it out GTO

Wa-wa, (mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa, wa, wa

(mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO")

Wa-wa, (mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa, wa, wa

(mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO")

Wa-wa (mixed with "Ahhh, little GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa, wa, wa

Gonna save all my money and buy a GTO

Get a helmet and a roll bar and I'll be ready to go

Take it out to Pomona and let 'em know, yeah, yeah

That I'm the coolest thing around

Little buddy, gonna shut you down

When I turn it on, wind it up, blow it out GTO

Wa-wa, (mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa, wa, wa

(mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO")

Wa-wa, (mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa, wa, wa

(mixed with "Yeah, yeah, little GTO")

Wa-wa (mixed with "Ahhh, little GTO") wa, wa, wa, wa, wa, wa

Classifieds

Free classified policy: *We are happy to run your auto-related ad for three months free of charge, but may cut older and non-MG related ads as space requires. Please contact the editor when your item sells or if you wish to continue the ad for an additional three months.*

For Sale: (this supposedly appeared on Craigslist):

Either the motorcycle or the wife; one has to go.

Sportster: 2006 XL1200L in excellent condition

Wife: 1959 model year in excellent condition, considering

Sportster: Only 6,500 miles (less than 900 miles per year!)

Wife: High Mileage

Sportster: Well maintained. . .and it shows—see the pictures

Wife: High maintenance—and it shows—see the pictures

Sportster: Gently ridden—never ridden in the rain—stored in climate controlled garage

Wife: Rode hard, put up wet

Sportster is available for try-before-you-buy test rides.

Wife: don't even ask.

No name or contact information given.

MG Car Club Minutes, March 23rd Meeting

Sam Hodges

MGCC March 2016 Meeting called to order at 7:31.

President Bob Farrell, "We had a Pub Run last Sunday at Bennett's Pubical. We had 24 people show up. In other news, I've been retired for over 7 years and I recently started a new job. I'm now the shuttle driver for Castrucci Auto Mall. I've been to Germantown, WPAFB, Springboro High School. There's supposed to be a 10-mile limit to how far we'll drop off, but all of those places seem to be within the 10-mile limit.

I took the MG out after the engine rebuild and took it to Kroger's. When I came out, it wouldn't start so I had to bump-start it. Ron Parks, "That's a rousing endorsement for the rebuild..." Bob, "I bought three new wheels, hubs, spinners and have been trying to put miles on the car. So the early Tech Tip is to always park on a hill where you can easily bump-start a car."

Vice President's Report. Dave Gribler, "If I had any official duties, I've severely neglected them. I did make significant progress on the MGC."

Minutes were next. Bonnie Hankey motioned to accept the Minutes as reported. Skip Peterson seconded. Eddie Hill and Terry Looft simultaneously opposed. Terry, "I didn't know Eddie was here." Once he saw Eddie was actually here, changed his vote.



Treasurer's Report was next. John Scocozzo reports: The MGCC had total expenses of: MGCC Website hosting charges (\$109.04) + Curt Dalton Poster supply acquisition (\$200.00) for a loss to the MGCC of \$309.04. The MGCC had gains of: Dues & Regalia (\$35.00). Total loss to the MGCC was (\$274.04). Monthly Total loss when subtracted from our beginning balance of \$3,677.33 leaves the MGCC with an ending balance of \$3,403.29 in the primary checking account. Gumball cash-on-hand was \$70.00 after payment of the Gumball Rallye. The Savings account currently has \$379.57. Total ending balance of all accounts was 3,852.88. Dave McCann, Jr. motioned to accept. Art Barnes and Charlie McCamey. Eddie Hill oddly does not oppose. Eddie, "It's money, no I'm not going to oppose it." Ron, "If we bought a CD, would we get \$.04 return?"

Activities with Eddie. Ed Hill, "Tune-Up Clinic is April 9th. Rain date 23rd. Steve & Mimi are going to be out of town on the original rain date of April 16th." Skip, Why don't we just do both days, it'll be fun? You can keep the coffee maker for two weeks." Steve Miller, "Bring the doughnuts and you can come every week."

Eddie continued, "The Second Street Market show is Saturday May 28th." There's a rumor about a picnic sometime later in the summer..."

Sunshine Committee was next. Dave McCann Sr. "I'm here!" Carole has a birthday card for Reuben. He'll be 81.

Membership Committee. Carole Looft, "We had no new members for this month so we're still at 85. We have relatively new members, the Boitnotts, who own an MG TD, are here with us tonight?

Birthdays for the month are Nancy Edgerton, Larry Youngblood, Linda Wolfe, Charlie McCamey, Ron & Linda Parks and Rueben Wasserman.

The British Museum of Transportation has no members present. Skip Peterson, "Their newsletter is going to be revamped after a computer crash took out the old information. There's a new Daimler but calling it rough is being polite to rough."

Newsletter Editor Steve Markman, "If I forget to print something, just let me know, call me and scream at me. I might have forgotten."

Webmaster John Scocozzo, "I've got nothing new."

Back to President Bob, "Any, old business other than Charlie? You're another year older."

Skip Peterson, "The posters that we purchased are now in the possession of the Regalia Queen, err, Chair. There's some guy who's selling them for \$15 on eBay. He's claiming that they're limited Edition. I didn't want to burst his bubble by pointing out I'd just bought 100..." A lively discussion about how to sell/ship/mail the posters to future buyers. Steve Markman, "We could always just fold them and put them in envelopes." Steve Veris, "Second class mail would be the cheapest." Carole Looft, "Let's figure out what the shipping tubes and shipping will be before we set a price." Skip, "I'll gladly look into that."

President Bob, "I'm sorry to have to say this, but Beer Brake. 7:51."

Back from Break 8:13.

TerryLooft and Ron Parks were both engaged in different conversations... Bob, "It's always the old President's." Terry, "I've got nothing." Bob (to Ron) Care to join us? Ron, "Rough room tonight..."

President Bob continued, "Aug 21st is an MGCC Picnic scheduled for Lake Laramie. Art & Kathy Barnes are hosting. Stay tuned for further details.

Skip Peterson, "Window decals. I've mocked up some samples (He holds them up for us to see). Dave Gribler. "If I recall, the five year council at Reno used a window sticker that went in the top of the window. If they do something like that again, we might have a logistics issue with your older banner." Terry Looft, "I move to sell them for \$2.00 each." Skip, "How many do we want to order?" Dave Gribler. "How about 100?" Ron, "I want to amend Terry's motion to buy 100 and sell them at \$2/each." Skip, "Seconded. Motion approved." Eddie both seconded the motion and then opposed it at the same time. Dave Jr. "You can't do that!"

Kathy Barnes, "There is a classic car show in Sharonville on April 24th."

John Scocozzo, "Did we want to have a discussion about moving the meeting place from here to Bennett's Pubical? It was nice, and bigger." Terry Looft, "It was only 7 miles west from Rusty Bucket." Skip, "They're a nice place, they're local owned, we questioned them twice about minimums and they said that if you want a beer or Coke you're fine." Eddie, "Can you take a 17 y.o.?" Steve Veris, "You can't take him anywhere." Skip, "I suggest that we consider it." Terry, "I'd suggest another Pub Run so that more people can come and see it. See what we're considering. The Muddy Buddy Jeep club goes there a

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couple times of year. The Miata club has a Polar Bear run there in the winter." Eddie, "How about April 17th? It's after the Tune-Up clinic." Ron P., "It's only one week after the clinic so the cars should still be running." Sam H. & Eddie, "Meh... Maybe they will, maybe they won't." After some discussion it's decided that we'll have a Pub Run on April 17th so we can make a more informed decision.

British Car Day. Skip, "Nothing new. We just informed Steve Veris that he's the Grand Marshal since Lotus Europa is one of the featured marques." Steve, "Do I have to wear pants?" Skip, "It'd be nice."

Nothing new on Louisville.

Tech Tips. Bob Farrell, "Park on a hill so that you can coast down the hill to bump start your car."

Skip, "Always tighten the fittings on your brake cylinders. Ron & I were working on the MGA and the puddles kept following us around for the car. Turns out the the fittings were loose. They were tight 8 years ago when I put them, on the car... Who knew."

Next Meeting will be here... for now...

Gumball Rallye was won by Rachel Johnson.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32.



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