

# THE OCTAGON NEWS



Volume XLIX No. 4

February 2023

The Looft's MGF  
Cars the Beatles Drove



## Presidential Musings

Dave Johnson

What draws your eye to a particular car? Is it the model or style that catches your eye, or is it the color? For me, a little of both, but the color sure makes me sometimes stop and stare.

I am amazed at our visual capabilities. The human eye can see a million or so different colors. That is a lot of options when it comes to car paint. And don't get me started on all the fancy color changing specialized paints that are available. They are rather cool, but I don't think I would like it on one of my cars.

When I was a kid, I got the hand me down 1967 Ford Station wagon. It was blue with a good bit of underlying red primer. Remember when there was a couple of years where the manufacturers had problems with the primer paint turning to powder and causing the paint to flake



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 **twenty-five (\$25.00)** 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 **Bennett's Pubical Family Sports Grill**, 67 South Main St, Miamisburg 45342, at 7:30pm. The next meeting will be:

**Next meeting February 22<sup>nd</sup>**

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And special thanks to Ron Parks for proofreading.

### Inside This Issue

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## Upcoming MGCC Events

### Feb:

9 – Bagel and Lox Day  
22 – Meeting at Bennett's Pubical

### Mar:

8 – Proofreading Day  
22 – Meeting at Bennett's Pubical

### Apr:

5 – Read a Roadmap Day  
26 – Meeting at Bennett's Pubical

*See meeting minutes for other area activities!!*

off? Well that is what I was driving around.

I did make a small change. I found some stick-on vinyl that had a prism built into it. It would "rainbow" as the Sun shone on it. Here is what I did to make my run-of-the-mill car look different. I grabbed a hole punch and turned that sheet into a couple hundred "dots". I then stuck them on to the back window of the wagon. They were spread out enough that I was able to see through the window as I drove. Which I had to prove to a few cops when I was pulled over for it. What happened was that the Sun turned my whole back window into a flashy rainbow as the view changed depending on your perspective. It looked rather cool if I could boast a bit. To be honest, it probably was really annoying to the drivers behind me, but I was a kid and didn't care.

So, how does your eye perceive colors? How does the Sunlight reflect off an object and bounce back into your eyes at just the right wavelength so you see blue or red or green?

We all have known or know people who are "color blind". The shift in frequency of the color that they see compared to what a normal individual sees is probably a very small difference, but that difference makes all the difference in the world. Depending on the individual issues or level of color blindness, one could either see red, for instance, as brown, or gray. Their world could appear to be black & white all the time.

I once bought one of those special glasses that "correct" color blindness for a close friend. The glasses "worked" for him, in that it gave him somewhat corrected color vision. But he was so used to his view of the world, that the "new" view was not one that he wanted to see all the time.

I guess I have to understand that I may like a particular color, and someone else may hate it. And that is OK. We like what we like. We see what we see. At least when it comes to painting your own car, you can ultimately get what you want, and that is what is important in the end. If you don't like the color of your car, I know a guy with a pair of glasses that might fix that problem.

## Club Embroidery Available

Dave McCann Sr

**I** had several items embroidered at H&H Embroidery located at 1220 Wyoming St, Dayton, OH 45410 (937-253-7520). If any members aren't aware, you can take blank sweaters and hats there. They have this design on hand, there is no set up charge. They may have to leave the writing off of the hat due to space. If you have just one item the cost will be about \$8.00, four pieces cost me \$24.00.

P.S. My wife says I look like a grump in the picture.



The following article is reprinted from The Classic MG Magazine, with permission, for a change.

## A Worthy Wait

Terry Looft

**T**erry Looft first laid eyes on an MGF in the 1990s when traveling to England. Launched at the 1995 Geneva Motor Show, the all-new MGF saw MG return to sports car manufacturing after a 15-year break.

The MGF was a huge departure, not to mention an incredibly modern departure, from the MG cars that preceded it.

"But it was just a passing wish to even drive one," Looft said, "let alone to buy one." Still he yearned for this incredible roadster, hoping to add it to his expansive collection of classic MGs.

It wasn't until a year ago that the Ohio man was able to buy an MGF -- and it was here in the US. Under a federal rule, the Imported Vehicle Safety Compliance Act, MGFs were prohibited from being imported to this country until 25 years after production.

***"But it was just a passing wish to even drive one," Looft said, "let alone to buy one."***

Instead, the vast majority of them were exported directly to Japan, like the one he acquired. "It only lived there for a year or so before finding its way back to England."

The MGF spent 25 years with an English gentleman who spent his winters in southern Florida. Last winter, he brought

the MGF with him.

One thing led to another and he decided to sell the groovy roadster. An eagle-eyed Carole Looft, Terry's wife, discovered an advertisement for the car.

"After lots of pictures and phone calls, we came to a deal. So, off to Florida with the trailer to bring it home to Ohio," Terry Looft recounted.

Interestingly, having to wait so many years for the MGF was nothing new for him. "I had been through this waiting process once before after getting a ride in an MGB GT V8 during another trip to England."

It took a decade before he located one in Scotland, bought it and had it shipped





home. He has driven the car some 20,000 miles since then.

"It had been my favorite MG, at least until now," Looft said.

"The MGF is my V8 times 10. It has equal power, and all the enjoyment of an open roadster or the feel of a GT if the hard top is installed."

"It is equipped with a real heater... Sub-freezing temps are no problem. It is tight and quiet. Even with the top down there is little air turbulence inside. It has great power and outstanding handling."

There's also a long list of other amenities, like electric power steering, anti-lock brakes, power locks, power windows,

and what Looft likes to call "the big plus" -- air conditioning."

The list doesn't stop there, the car has a factory hard top, heated glass

rear window and the convertible top folds and unfolds "pretty much with one hand."

The longtime MG owner has trouble containing his excitement when he describes the heart of this revolutionary MG -- its transverse, mid-mounted 1800cc, variable valve control, dual-overhead cam engine.

The engine benefits from fuel injection and an

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array of computer controls so “hot or cold, it takes just a flick of the key to start, and it shifts very nicely with its 5 speed gear box.”

“Suspension is a blend of old and new,” the longtime MG enthusiast and collector said.

“Taken from the MG 1100 days, the MGF has gas/hydro spears at each corner with dampers. The optional MG 16-inch wheels and 215/40 ZR 16 tires finish off it’s great handling package.”

As you may have guessed, the MGF is a right-hand drive car, but that poses

no problem for this owner considering he has both an MGA and MGB in the same configuration.

***“The MGF is my V8 times 10. It has equal power, and all the enjoyment of an open roadster or the feel of a GT if the hard top is installed.”***

mileage to about 47,000.

But that doesn’t prevent Terry and Carole from driving their other MGs. “I call the MGF mine, but all our MGs are ours. Carole has her cars and I have mine,” Terry Looft said.

Since acquiring the MGF in February 2022, he and Carole have driven the roadster some 3,000 miles bringing its total

Of the 77,269 MGFs produced, he figures there are between 35 and 40 in the US. “And they seem to be coming in steadily now since the MGF is at the legal age of 25 years for import.”

The Imported Vehicle Safety Compliance Act, which states that certain makes and models of cars that would have previously not been certified for import or use in America can now be imported as antiques.

The MGF, which was designed and built by the Rover Group, is one of a number of vehicles that fall under this rule. ○

WORDS: LARRY SANATA  
PHOTOS: TERRY LOOFT



# Cars the Beatles Owned

Steve Markman

**W**ith all the gazillions of dollars the Beatles made over the years, it's expected that they easily could buy anything they wanted... and they did. And, that included cars. All the Beatles members came from lower/middle-class families and naturally, an automobile was something way too expensive for young guys trying to make some cash playing music in small pubs.

In their struggling days in the early 60s, they certainly started out like most other rock bands, traveling from gig to gig in whatever their minimum budget allowed. As their fortunes changed, so did their selection of cars. Over the years, each Beatle owned a variety of exotic, not so exotic, and just plain fun cars. This list certainly isn't all-inclusive, but a sampling of what one can own when money isn't a factor.



The Beatles, with Paul's Ford Consul Classic in September 1962

## Ringo

When Ringo joined The Beatles, in 1962, he already was a well-regarded drummer in the Liverpool area. He also was the oldest and was the only Beatle earning enough to own a nice car, a 1960 Ford Zephyr Zodiac. As Paul McCartney recalls: "Ringo had a car when the rest of us didn't even dream about it. When we saw him driving that Zodiac we thought he had stolen it."



In 1964, less than two years later and with Beatlemania in full swing, Ringo upgraded to 'the world's fastest four-seater', a Facel II, a French luxury car. On the way home one day in 1968, it suffered a blowout. Thankfully the coupe came safely to a halt on the shoulder. After the incident in the Facel, his bandmates persuaded Ringo to sell the car.

Ringo, loved to drive his two-tone

Mini Cooper that he acquired in 1966 (more on these later). He sold it in 1968, and it eventually was used in several BBC television programs.

In 1980, Ringo lost control of the Mercedes-Benz he was driving on the Robin Hood roundabout in Kingston. It clipped





a curb, somersaulted, and landed on its back. He and passenger Barbara Bach, a former Bond girl and future wife, escaped with minor cuts and bruises. They later had the car crushed to a cube and placed in their home.

### Paul

Paul's early cars were less exotic, but by the summer of 1964, with the Beatles now international rock stars, Paul ordered an Aston Martin DB5, that was delivered at the end of that year. (In 1964, the James Bond movie *Goldfinger* debuted in theatres around the world, and just about everyone fell in love with the Aston Martin DB5. Perhaps Paul's choice was influenced by James Bond's DB5?) Paul owned it for 6 years.



Paul then bought a DB6 when it came out in late 1965.

Paul used his Astons as daily drivers. He added a reel-to-reel tape recorder fitted under the dashboard of the DB6 to be able to capture song ideas during eureka moments while on the road. While driving the DB6 in 1968, with band mate John Lennon's first marriage failing, Paul used the tape recorder to begin constructing one of his greatest solo hits, a song to cheer up John's young son Julian. For you non-Beatle fans, 'Hey Julian' just didn't fit, nor did 'Hey Jules,' his nickname, so it eventually became 'Hey Jude.'

Some of Paul's other cars include a Hispano-Suiza Limousine, a 1967 Lamborghini 400GT, a 1972 Espada S2 (which is rumored to have had a full restoration after it rolled into a lake when wife Linda failed to set the handbrake), and an Austin-Healey 3000. This car was involved in the '69 'Paul is dead' hoax. Conspiracy theorists allege that Paul stormed out of a studio session, was killed in the ensuing crash, and then was replaced with a look-alike.

### John



Cars were among John Lennon's biggest indulgences, which first wife Cynthia found bizarre because she said that his driving skills were on the scary side of appalling: "Passengers had to suffer a hideous rollercoaster ride as violent swerves caused the car to hit the curb or mount the pavement, all while at breathtaking speed."

John's bought his 1965 Rolls-Royce Phantom V in 1964, when he was only 25, before he'd even obtained his drivers license. It originally was black with

black-out windows, and featured a microphone and external speaker, a TV, fridge, phone and rear seats that folded to form a bed. It was in this car that the group visited Buckingham Palace on October 26, 1965, at the invitation of Queen Elizabeth II. It became famous when John had it repainted in a psychedelic makeover in 1967. The car traded hands over the years and has been in Canada at the Royal British Columbia Museum for



more than 20 years.

The day after getting his license on Feb 15, 1965, a number of dealers reputedly traveled to Lennon's Surrey home with a selection of high end autos for him to consider. Lennon selected a Ferrari 330 GT Series 1 painted blue with a blue interior, to which he later added a sunroof.



In addition to his Radford Mini, Ferrari and Rolls, in 1965 John also acquired the first of several Mercedes-Benz he would own. The blue on grey 230 SL was delivered in August 1965. John also owned a 1968 Iso Fidia (pictured at left).

John reportedly was not a good driver and had poor eyesight. In the summer of 1969, he crashed an Austin Maxi into a ditch while on holiday in the Scottish Highlands. He needed 17 stitches. Towards the end of the year, he placed an order for a

Mercedes-Benz 600 Pullman which at the time supposedly was the most expensive car in the world. The white Mercedes was delivered in February 1970. It featured black velvet upholstery, front and rear Becker Grand Prix radios and a Philips Mignon EP in-car record player. After the Beatles broke up, he sold it to George when he left to join Yoko Ono in the United States. While in the US, Lennon acquired a green Chrysler Town and Country Station Wagon that allowed him to get around town relatively unnoticed.

By 1975, John had almost completely disengaged from the music business to focus on family life. He replaced the Chrysler in 1979 with a Mercedes 300 TD Estate.

### George



George Harrison was an enthusiastic car guy. His passion started very early in his life, pretty much at the same time that he also became passionate about rock and roll. In 1955 when George was only 12 years old, his father took the whole family to see the British Grand Prix, which happened that year at the Aintree race track, located only 6 miles away from downtown Liverpool.

George got his drivers license in 1962, and naturally he was looking for his first car. With the Beatles already becoming popular in England, manager Brian Epstein worked a deal with a friend who was a car dealer. George got a big discount on a blue, 1955 two-door Ford

Anglia Deluxe in exchange for a couple of advertising photos with his new vehicle. George agreed with the deal, and Ringo drove him to pick it up. After photos were taken, the two musicians raced each other home on the highway. Within a couple of months of buying the Anglia, George already had collected 2 warning tickets for speeding.

The Anglia was a nice first car but with a 997cc engine and 40 HP, it was nowhere near to George's expectations. By 1963, The Beatles were sensations in the UK and across Europe, and George finally could







afford to buy a real car, a brand new Jaguar Mk2 (picture on previous page).

George then acquired a second Jaguar. As the rumor goes, Brian Epstein, the Beatles manager, bought this 1964 E-Type as a gift for Harrison's 21st birthday (left)



With Aston-Martin being to the car world what the Beatles were to music, George just couldn't resist. Early in 1965 he got his own DB5 (right).



In 1965, each Beatle won an Austin-Cooper as a publicity event for the British Motor Company. (Some sources claim that Brian Epstein bought one for each Beatle. Maybe each received two different ones. I couldn't figure it out.) George's car initially was painted in metallic black, but in early 1967 he had it repainted with psychedelic art motifs (I don't know if this was before or after John had his Rolls similarly painted.) It appeared in the movie *The Magical Mystery Tour* in 1967.

At some point, it was given to Eric Clapton, but later returned to the Harrison family. Its last notable appearance was at the 1998 Goodwood Festival of Speed, where some noted celebrities, including Ringo, took the car for a spin.



George was a British car lover, but in 1967 he bought a "600", the top of the line Mercedes-Benz, the car Mercedes called the "personal luxury sedan." Beatles fans may recall that in this car George drove to the Apple headquarters, on January 30th, 1969, for the famous rooftop concert.



In 1971, George bought John's Mercedes 600 Pullman Limousine, as John was about to move to the United States. Later, in 1975, George sold the limo to the American group The Supremes and it was used by the Motown group for a few years during their tours.

George owned many Mercedes-Benz autos over the years. In 1972, he and his wife Patty almost lost their lives inside a white 300SEL, when George hit a lamp pole while in route to a party in London (left).

The one car that can be considered George's daily driver is this all-black 1984 AMG 500SEL (next page). George drove it for almost 50,000 Km during the course of 18 years. The car was sold at auction in 2018.



George never stopped buying and selling great cars throughout his life. He also owned Porsches, Ferraris, Formula One race cars, and McClarens.

Most of these cars eventually were sold or auctioned off, certainly at a premium price because of their connection to one or more of the Beatles. Sadly, I could find no mention of any of the Beatles ever owning an MG. They missed a great driving opportunity and certainly a lot of fun, especially if there was a local MG club they could have joined.

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## Classifieds

**For Sale:** Miata seats, about 2002 vintage, recovered to put in my MG Midget, but I found it too hard climbing into the car. However, these will fit nicely into a MGB. Each has a red MG in an octagon logo embroidered into the headrest. Asking \$300, and I'm taking a big loss on them. Contact Brian Hellwig at [toni-brian@ameritech.net](mailto:toni-brian@ameritech.net). (11/22)

**For Sale:** 1968 MGB. Beautifully restored and maintained. Salsa red (VW color). Starts, runs, drives, and stops as a new MG should. Driven less than 10,000 miles since 2010 restoration. New factory-style tubeless wire wheels and new tires, both approximately two years old. Multi-year winner Best in Class, British Car Day, Dayton, Ohio. Must see to appreciate. Asking \$18,500. [stephen.ramsey68@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.ramsey68@gmail.com). (10/22)

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# Minutes from January Club Meeting

Diana Hodges

President Dave Johnson called the January 2023 meeting of the MGCC SWOC to order precisely at 7:31. “Dave’s not here.” President Dave, “I guess it’s official, we’re here. We lucked out on the weather. It wasn’t as bad as it could have been. (*Weather forecasts were calling for snowmageddon and we got an inch of slush.*) Do we have any way to notify people of this sort of thing?” Eddie Hill, “Smoke signals?” Skip Peterson, “When I was President, we used to do a phone tree, but that was back when we had a rotary phone. I can also tell you that if you sign up with the local TV stations, you can get notifications in the crawl. But you have to sign up before the start of the season.” President Dave, “We used to do a recall list when I worked at the base. I’d call two people and they’d call 5 and those five would call the rest.” Lois Gribler, “That’s 70’s technology. Email.” Skip, “I think we should do a phone tree.” Dar Planeaux, “You could just come and put a sign on the door.”

Dave J., “(*To Terry Looft*) I’m interested about the trip that you made.” Terry Looft. “Everyone knows John Twist. In 1975 he started University Motors. This was the birthday party for the shop, even though it’s closed now. About 200 people were there. This Aug. 18-19, 2023 is going to be the Summer Party Reunion.” Stay tuned for more details.

Vice President Ron Parks, “I started changing my fuel tank on the MG. The last time I did this, was working with Bill Hammond to fix my fuel tank. Ever since that fix, I’ve had a problem with the fuel gauge only going to halfway when full. I’m thinking the voltage stabilizer might be impacting that.” Dave Gribler, “That will do it.” Eddie Hill, “It’s a simple fix.” Terry Looft, “You can test it by shorting it to ground.” Skip, “God rest his soul, but Bill Hammond might have had something to do with this problem.” Ron continued, “We’re also looking for paint for the MGA (at the British Transportation Museum). We’re looking for paint codes.” Dave Gribler, “Latex?” Skip, “Home Depot spray cans.”

Minutes were next on the agenda. Ron Parks motioned to accept the Minutes as reported. Dave Gribler seconded. MGCC voted and approved the Minutes.

Treasurer’s report was next. Treasurer Sue Scocozzo, “The MGCC had gains of: Membership Dues (\$223.00 [Dec] and \$75.00 [Jan]) + BCD Revenue \$1,000 [Dec]. Total gain to the MGCC was \$1,298.00. We had total expenses of: Gumball Rallye cash (\$10.00) + Holiday Party expenses (977.00) + Annual Donations (\$300.) for a total expense to the MGCC of \$1,287.93. Monthly total losses when subtracted from the gains means a net gain to the MGCC of \$10.07. When added to our beginning balance of \$5,231.79, leaves the MGCC with an ending balance of \$5,241.86 in the primary checking account. The savings account now has \$382.08, with cash-on-hand of \$60.00. Total ending balance of all accounts was \$5,683.94.” Skip Peterson motioned to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented. Ron Parks seconded the motion to accept the report. MGCC voted. Treasurer’s Report approved.

New Business was next. Skip, “BCD. Five Rivers Metroparks has been a joy to work with. We did get our 501(c)(3) discount. The latest episode is ‘Supplemental Park Staff’ labor. His hourly rate is \$35. This year it will cost us \$1,131.00 to use the park and we still also need to rent two Porto-o-Johns and a dumpster. This year’s total cost is going to be something close to, but just shy of \$2,000. My gut feeling it to raise the cost to \$25 and let everyone know that the reason for the price hike is the Metroparks. At the same time, I’d like to start looking for another venue. We’ve semi-committed to Five-Rivers Eastwood but I think we should only give them a deposit in case something else should change.” Ron Parks, “I’ll look into the Greene County and Clark County fairgrounds and their car shows.” Dave Johnson, “The USAFM might be an option.” John Scocozzo, “Does anyone know anyone at Reynolds & Reynolds? The Italian Festival uses their parking lot.” Skip, “They also charge the Italian Festival and

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they make a lot more money than we do. I just feel like as the years go by there's always some new glitch or hitch that just makes it more complicated to do this." Dave McCann, Jr., "I think that \$2,000 is a steep price but it's a great spot compared to a lot of other places I've seen." Skip, "I agree. We had it good all those years that we didn't pay anything." Ed Wolf, "I think we need to get the park district as a premium sponsor and charge them \$2,000."

Membership was next on the list. Carole Looft, "As of now you have 63 members. We have new members Mike & Susan Smith.

December Birthdays: Larry's Youngblood, Art Barnes, Janet Shoviak, Joy Veris and Diana Cooper

January Birthdays: George Chase, Rick Shield, Gale Hirsch, Lois Gribler and Ed Wolf.

Sunshine Committee. Carol Looft continued, "Former member Clay White passed away. He was 81. Mary Planeaux is doing well and they're heading south sometime in February. She's in rehab and doing well. Jennifer?" Jennifer Peterson, "I got nothing." Lois Gribler, "She's got that down. She could be VP."

Activities with Eddie, "I got nothing. The University Motors party is coming up." Terry Looft, "Grand Rapids is Aug." Skip, "BCD is Aug 5th." Dave Gribler, "NAMGAR is June 12th-16th in Memphis. Registration is not open yet, but should be soon. The MGCs are in Pensacola April 10-16th."

President Dave J., "Has anyone thought more about the 100th anniversary and doing something?" Lois, "I think a 100-mile drive." Carole, "I agree." Eddie, "I'm looking at several options. Fort Ancient, Serpent Mound, etc. Ron, can we hit 100 covered bridges?" Ron, "There are that many around." Dave McCann, Sr., "I think we could do an over-nighter to Hocking Hills state park. Take 56 south of London. It's a wonderful ride. One day trip could be Ohio Caverns outside of West Liberty." Dave Gribler, "I didn't know you could get a car into the caverns."

Eddie, "I'll talk to Steve & Mimi about Tune-Up Clinic."

Beer Brake called 8:28. Skip, how much is left? Old business, Tech Tips? Let's push through."

President. Dave, "We covered old business. If no one has any new business, then lets have Gumball and then we can have as may side conversations as we need."

Nothing For Sale No Tech Tips

John Scocozzo won Gumball.

Meeting officially adjourned. 8:30.



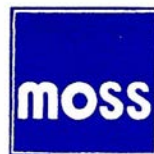
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