

THE OCTAGON NEWS



Volume XLX No. 5

March 2024

Advertising Prices

The Long Ride to an MGA (Member Featured Car)



From the President

Dave McCann Jr.

Welcome to March. Hope everyone enjoyed the Pub Runs in February and March. Those of you who joined us can attest to a good time had by all. I think we had about 20 each time. We've got a club meeting coming up in a couple of weeks, on 27 March. More info on coming events can be found elsewhere in this missive and updates should be available at the meeting, for those who attend.

I've spent the last several articles waxing poetic (or something) on the state of my cars and details on where they came from and where they have been. I've gone through what needs to be done and what I've been working on. And I've gone through details on recent travels and plans for the coming year. And I've not made much progress on things



North American MGB Register

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

Club Membership Information

Membership dues of 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:

Wed, March 27, 2024

MG Car Club Officers

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to form much material for an update. So, I need to come up with some new subjects.

For those who might be looking for an excuse to go to Richmond in early June, the Richmond region of the AACA has been putting on a pretty nice car show. The Central Virginia British Car Club helps them out (and there's more than a passing overlap in membership between the two clubs). The event this year is Saturday, June 8, 2024, and a good time will surely be had by all.

There are a couple long distance meets coming up in April, although I'm not planning on going to either. The GOF South meet will be April 18-21 in Crystal River, FL this year. I went to this last year when it was in Gainesville, FL and it was a nice weekend-plus event. Crystal River is just a bit further than Gainesville, and on the Gulf. The other event is the NAMGBR event in Katy, TX which will be April 21-24 this year. As there is 900 miles between the two events, there's probably not many people doing both of them. But maybe you are up for a challenge?

I've driven 900 miles in a 24 hour period, but it's not something I do on a regular basis. Just last year I drove about 875 miles home from Gainesville in one day, in an attempt to catch the weather when it was not too cold as I didn't want to put the top up on the MGA. Going down, I think I left after work and seem to recall spending the night at some cheap motel somewhere in Georgia as that was what was available when I ran out of gas (me, not the car). The other occasions that come to mind when I've driven that far are one year on the way to Key West I drove the first day from home to Ocala, which is just a bit beyond Gainesville. My recollection is that was done in 12 hours, but that would be an average of 75 mph including stops, so it might have been a bit more. (That was definitely nearly non-stop, two or three gas stops and gas station food, but 12 hours still does not add up.) I also drove from Portland, Oregon to Solvang in a relatively continuous trip. That's about 925 miles, but I switched cars in South San Francisco, CA and also stopped for a few hours sleep on the side of the road somewhere between Salinas, CA and Paso Robles, CA. I should have stopped after swapping cars, but the hotel web sites don't let you reserve a room after midnight and I didn't want to take the time to call around looking for a conveniently located vacancy.

The first time I drove that far was when I was driving across the country and ended up leaving eastern South Dakota (Mitchell, home of the Corn Palace) late in the afternoon. The car was acting up and I didn't want to get into Indianapolis later than the next day for Indy British Motor Days, so I ended up driving all night in case the car quit on me. It never did and I ended up getting into Speedway mid-morning. I recall that being 900 miles, but I do not recall where I started that day. Mitchell to Speedway would only be about 840 miles, and I do recall stopping near the IL/IN line for a couple hours sleep. So maybe that doesn't even end up qualifying. I had also stopped around 2am in south central Minnesota. I had noticed what I initially had thought was lights from an upcoming town, but eventually realized was the northern lights. I pulled off the highway and stared into the sky for about half an hour watching it. A definite serendipitous benefit of driving all night. That's right up there with when I saw the Milky Way while driving (again, late at night) through Maine to the Northern end of US 1.

No shortage of ways to make future memories in our little cars. See y'all at the meeting and Safety Fast.

Upcoming Events

March:

27 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

April:

21 – 24 MG 2024 Katy Texas

24 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

May:

22 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

June:

17 – 21 Octagonal Time in the Heart of Ohio

26 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

July:

15 – 19 - GT-49 Welches, Oregon

24 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

August:

3 – British Car Day, Dayton

28 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

September:

15 – Concours d’Elegance, Dayton

25 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

October:

23 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

November:

20 – Meeting (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

December:

7 Holiday Party (Bennett’s Publical Family Sports Grill,)

From the Editor

Ron Parks

Remember any and all contributions to the newsletter are always welcome. You can mail them to me at 4101 Grossepoint Street, Springfield, OH 45502, or E-Mail to: MGDRIVER@woh.rr.com. Either of those methods will work fine or you can call me at ((937) 322-0717 and we can arrange to meet and transfer materials or conduct an interview.

MGB Miracle



From “So what did you do with your MGA today?”

Sat in the garage with the last Old Speckled Hen and admired my "little car"! Then I cooked the old bird for dinner!

The Long Ride to an MGA

Art Barnes

It has a magical sound to me — Nineteen Sixty-Two MGA Morris Garages Sixteen-Hundred Mark-Two. But driving a speedy British racing green MGA 1600 Mk II wasn't a speedy process. It started back about 1964 as I was graduating high school in Vandalia.

My first car was a 1957 Studebaker Scotsman 2-door station wagon, a \$15 sale from my dad. He gave me a break on the \$20 he would have netted at the junk yard. Of course, it wasn't very cool for a high school senior to be driving a Studebaker wagon. I'm not sure it was wise to trade that drivable car for a more manly 1953 Ford convertible that barely rolled away from the filling station ... and stalled. The car never ran again, and I gave it to a friend who needed a transmission.

I fared better with a 1955 Plymouth coupe for \$120, good running and dependable until I tried drag racing and ruined its crankshaft. There were other short-lived auto selections, but meanwhile, a younger friend in Vandalia was working toward college and the Navy. His dad wouldn't agree to a Sunbeam Tiger that could reach 60 miles per hour in 7.5 seconds and a top speed of 122 mph! Dad and son settled for a calmer deep blue 1962 MGA sports car with smoother body lines and needed 20 seconds to reach a sensible 60 mph and a more lawful top speed.

He drove his MGA through college and then parked it in his high school English teacher's garage when he joined the Navy. He planned to retrieve his sports car after he was through training as an aircraft combat navigator. The Navy, however, sent him to Washington state, Japan and back to Washington ... where he bought an MGB, which was twice as speedy as the MGA wasting away in his Ohio garage.

The blue beauty also waned as he bought a house on picturesque Whidbey Island, Washington, got married and raised a son as the family of three rotated to military assignments for 20 years and settled for good on Whidbey. When "the captain" retired from the Navy, he reached his dream to team with his son and restore that MGA. When they moved to Ohio, he moved his 1962 sports car to his barn-size garage and began taking the car apart, screw by screw and body parts by parts. The teen son, however, didn't have the same mechanical interests as his dad. Sonny preferred to drive



dad's "operating" 1972 MGB in the other garage ... so the 1962 MGA restoration project became a dust gatherer.

The desire to restore the half-disarmed 1962 MGA eased when a friend said he had admired MGAs since his high school years. Yes, Art Barnes qualified to collect Social Security and no longer was supporting two daughters in college. So, he could afford \$3,000 to buy an old friend's MGA in 2013 and move it to the garage of his home on the shores of Lake Loramie, Ohio.



My happy beginning was to dismantle the car that had barely existed beyond my mind. Off came the fenders, bumpers, hood, trunk and doors. The garage floor was strewn with the body parts that had been sand-blasted of their blue color. A worse fate, however, was eight inches of lake flood water covering the garage floor. Fortunately, our house was a foot higher than the detached garage. Unfortunately, the overflowing drench ruined the priming paint on the car parts. -blasting would have been expensive. So I sold the entire project to a restoration garage in Kentucky.



Meanwhile, I had joined the MG Car Club Southwestern Ohio Centre and met member Steve Powell at a club picnic. After I'd sold the flooded blue MGA, Steve pointed me toward a fiery red 1959 MGA restored by Gary Moore, a former club member who had powered the car with an 1800 MGB engine with a single Weber carburetor. Gary may have had a chuckle that, as I drove from his former garage toward mine ... the carburetor stopped pumping and the car didn't look so fiery. Steve quickly said he had a British manifold and a pair of Skinner Union carburetors in his garage. I'd never heard of an SU carb but certainly couldn't out-guess him, seeing as how he owned three MGs at the time!

Steve was good to his word and had the fuel and air proportions singing again. The safety road

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entertainment was enjoyable in the car that was bright again ... give or take the task of shifting gears. Second gear sometimes was operable but only occasionally, meaning balking shifts from first to third gear and a smooth fourth. Even Dave Gribler, our MGA club expert, couldn't make the gearbox behave. Then to add melancholy to misery, some sort of front-end knock added grief to gloom. I was disturbed and defeated, so I sold the MGA-B to a guy in Columbus.

Several months later, in July, I stumbled onto an ad for an MG for sale — not just an MG, but a British racing green 1962 MGA 1600 Mk II with smooth tan upholstery. I asked the man why he was selling such a wonderful car. He said he wanted to buy an airplane. The MGA had been a daily driver for 20 years by his brother-in-law, a school teacher in Florida. That meant he could worry far less about rust than we fear in salty Ohio. However, after wasting away in a garage for some 22 years, it needed high-quality restoration attention, including a new coat of paint. My new friend (as he became when he sold the car to me) was a long-time hobbyist working mostly on "hot rods," so he knew what to do before he could sell the car.

When my wife, Cathy looked at the photo of the MGA, she immediately agreed to take a look at the car, just four miles away from our house. Meeting a friendly semi-pro and driving the car convinced me that I was making the right move. I had found the car I'd been looking for since high school. Two years of ownership and driving pleasure, has left no doubt!



Proper Use of the Manual Choke (Reprinted W/O permission, from MG Experience)

The manual choke, fitted in the upper right hand corner of the MGB dashboard, controls two distinct functions of the S.U. carburetors. First, one can feel the accelerator pedal being pulled away from the foot as the choke is pulled out. The first third of the travel of the choke cable works the fast idle only. The second two-thirds controls the mixture enrichment, as well as the fast idle.

The second function is the mixture enrichment. The colder the engine and surrounding air, the greater the need for more gasoline to be mixed with the air at the carburetor. As the engine warms, the need for a richer mixture lessens.

When starting the MG, always pull the choke completely out (unless the engine is still very warm from recent running). Once the engine has started, the driver must release the choke in small increments as the engine warms. The trick is to release the choke at the proper rate. If released too soon, the engine will cough and spit, especially under acceleration. If released too slowly, the engine will "load up" and run roughly, especially while idling. By the time the temperature gauge is halfway between cold and normal, the choke can usually be released completely. If the choke is left out too long, the extra gasoline can mix with the engine oil by "washing down" the cylinder walls. If your choke does not seem to be operating correctly, consult your workshop manual for adjustments.

GOF Central 2024

June 17-21

Newark, Ohio

The Ohio Chapters of the MGTs and the BuckAyes of NAMGAR invite ALL MGs and their owners to have an Octagonal Time in the Heart of Ohio at the [Cherry Valley Hotel](#) in Newark, Ohio

June 17th-21, 2024.

[HOME | gofcentral \(ohiomgt.wixsite.com\)](#)

Classifieds

For sale: 1 right & 1 left front latch pillar for the TD,.Moss catalog #450-820 & 450-825. Selling as a pair for 1/2 the catalog value - \$94. Brand new. Free shipping. Danny Mortensen 859-384-7821 or agsdanny@aol.com (2/24)

For Rent: Car storage in Wilmington, Ohio. \$30/mo for one car, \$50/mo for two cars for club members. Non-club members

\$35/mo per car. Indoor heated and . Electric for battery maintainers. Terry Looft 937-527-7353 or tlooft@earthlink.net. (9/23)

For Sale: MGB/GT. Rusty, possibly salvageable for parts. This GT has spent many a moon in a barn. It's been sitting outside for a while so the rain and weather actually have cleaned it up a bit. It has a lot of rust, and even the rust holes have rust holes. If you are brave enough to get your nose a little too close to where there used to be a passenger window, you will get a whiff of something horrible; it smells of either dead/rotting bodies or the human waste burn barrels I learned to dislike from my Vietnam experience. The car might be restorable by someone who has more money than brains! Hey, the sign says, "For Sale...make offer!" Go for it! It might make a heck of a project for someone. I hate to see any British car towed to the junkyard for crushing. Maybe it'd make a good home for some wild critters on your back 40. Phone number on the For Sale sign says "937-972-

2633 MAKE OFFER!” , or you can call Larry Youngblood for more of his opinion, but he will have absolutely no part in the actual sale of this car, If you call, don't even mention that you heard about it from Larry. (8/23) *(Editor's note: I toned this down from what Larry sent me.)*

For Sale: Numerous MG-related items. MOSS MGB Roll around engine stand fits '62 - '80 MGB engines. Used, but in very good condition. \$65. Numerous framed MG posters, pictures and metal signs that need new homes. Wall hanging made from MGB wire wheel cut in half, washer welded to back side in order to hang on wall. \$65. 1/18 scale, factory-built '47 MGTC by Road Signature. Yellow with green interior and black removable top. No box. \$30. Several MGT & MGA books signed by author...\$30 - \$35 ea. Larry Youngblood, 937-689-6995. Leave a message if I don't answer. (6/23)

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. If you wish to continue the ad for an additional three months, contact Ron Parks MGdriver@woh.rr.com or 937-322-0717

Larger ads may be purchased for inclusion in the Octagon News for the following annual prices for 11 issues: full page ad - \$100, half page - \$ 75, quarter page - \$50, & Business card size - \$25.

Minutes from November Club Meeting

President Dave McCann, Jr. called the February 2024 meeting of the MGCC SWOC to order precisely at 7:30. Terry Looft, “Motion to go home.” President Dave, Jr., “The less you say, the quicker this meeting going to go.”

The President continued, “I don't see any Gribblers, so I don't think there is a Vice President report.

Minutes were next on the agenda. Skip Peterson motioned to accept the Minutes as reported. Eddie Hill seconded the motion. MGCC voted. Minutes approved.

Treasurer's Report was next. Treasurer John Scocozzo, “I transferred \$2,000 to the savings account, so we got \$.04 in interest.” Dave McCann, Jr., “Hopefully that doesn't take us out of the non-profit category.” Skip, “Should we get a financial adviser?”

The MGCC had gains of: December Membership Dues (\$309.00). Total gain to the MGCC was \$309.00. We had total expenses of: Website Fees (\$119.88) + Donation to the United States Air Force Museum (\$180.00) for a total expense to the MGCC of \$299.88. Monthly total losses when subtracted from the gains means a gain to the MGCC of \$9.12. When added to our beginning balance of \$5,029.66, leaves the MGCC with an ending balance of \$3,038.78 in the primary checking account. The savings account now has \$2,382.35, with cash-on-hand of \$40.00. Total ending balance of all accounts was \$5,461.13.” Skip, “The \$180 donation was to the Air Force Museum Foundation. Most of the restoration work is funded by the money from the Foundation.” Art Barnes motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report as read. Jennifer Peterson seconded. MGCC voted. Treasurer's Report Approved.

Membership was next. Carole Looft, “We have 62 members. The last time it was 52, so that's good. We have new members. Ron Watkins, owner of a 1969 Iris blue MGB from Cincinnati. He says that he knows nothing about cars *(that hasn't stopped any of us!)*

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Also joining the club is Norman McCord from Xenia who owns a 1969 MGB that's had a full restoration."

Birthdays in January were: George Chase, Ed Wolf, Rick Shields, Gayle Hirsch, Lois Gribler. February birthdays: Carole Estell, Andy Hein,

It was at this point that the Vice President came in. V.P. Dave Gribler. "It's nice to be back from Oregon. We were at the NAMGAR general meeting." Jennifer, "I love Oregon."

Activities with Eddie. "The last activity was the pub run to the Troll House. I think we had a gay ole time with that." Skip, "Why don't we go to one where they actually have a server for once?" Dave, Jr., "We can try the place in Oregonia that we couldn't get into the last time." Eddie, "St. Patricks is Sunday 17th." Skip, "Lets go to the Dublin Pub!" After some serious discussion, it's decided that the next Pub Run will be March 10th in Oregonia at the Little River Cafe in honor of daylight savings time start." Carole Looft, "Did we set it up that the Club buys the first round?" President Dave, "We set it up that we need a motion." Jennifer Peterson, (*wasting no time and almost simultaneously*) Terry Looft seconded. Skip, "The King & Queen of free drinks!" MGCC voted. Motion approved. First round on us.

Skip Peterson... "Steve Miller suffered a stroke on Feb 8th. He's out of ICU and into rehab. He was in intensive care for a week-to-10 days. He still wants to host the Tune-Up Clinic but wants it to be late April." The date of the Tune-Up Clinic is therefore TBD.

Activities continued, the NAMGBR 2024 meet is in Katy TX, April 21-24. The Gathering of Faithful invite the Ohio Chapters of the MGTs and the BuckAyes of NAMGAR invite ALL MGs and their owners to have an Octagonal Time in the Heart of Ohio at the Cherry Valley Hotel in Newark, Ohio June 17th-21. Lois, G. "We're thinking about going up for the day, not even spending the night. Jeff Fields is a member of GoF and also an MGCC SWOC member." Dave Gribler, "July 15-19, is the NAMGAR GT in Oregon."

Sunshine Committee was next. "It'll take Don Lewis a while to heal. He's undergone some surgery and is on the road to recovery. And we just found out about Steve."

Newsletter was next. Dave McCann, J., "Ron Parks is in Inverness Florida on a bike trip. He called in and said that if he doesn't get stories for the newsletter, he's going to do photos of his Triumph. I don't think we've ever fired a newsletter editor before." Eddie, "I don't think we can." Terry Looft, "Then let's assassinate him."

Website Moderator John Scocozzo, "I've got some more pictures up. That's about it."

Beer Brake called 7:50

Back from Beer Break 8.04

Old Business. Skip, "I think that's you Steve (Powell)."

Lois Gribler, "We've been looking at hotels for the MG-C meet. We've been to 13 hotels looking for meeting rooms." Dave Gribler, "The real hang-up is finding one that'll allow us to bring in coolers, snacks and has breakfasts. Any suggestions welcome, but we've probably already tried most of them."

New Business. President Dave, "Pub Run's coming up. Ron's taking over the Newsletter and is enquiring about the price of advertising in the newsletter." John Scocozzo, "We looked through old newsletters and the only thing we found was Jeff Zorn." Dave, Jr., "Ron came up with a list of

different prices that he would recommend. Per Ron Email, \$100/year for full page, 1/2 page would be \$75, 1/4 page is \$50 for all 11 episodes.” John Scocozzo, “Currently, Giuseppe is the only person that’s advertising with the British Museum.” Skip, “We’re only mailing 9 copies, so in the grand scheme of things, I don’t think it’s that big of a deal.” Dave, “On the other hand, it’s less opportunity for Triumph pictures.”

Ron is in Florida and Dave McCann, Sr. is in Indiana, so planning for the possible Club run to the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg museum is on hold.

British Car Day. Skip, “Everything’s in place, but we’re looking to replace Greg Relue. I found a copy of the spreadsheet from last year that had all of the info from last year with all of the sponsors info. Claiborne Grille will return as the concessions. Sweet Pea may or may not return. They were friends with Greg, so that’s not set in stone. The Park has been very receptive and easy to deal with and they’re working to help us reduce some of the costs.” Lois, G., “If we’re going to do the sponsor sign again this year, we need a little more time to get it printed because we’re going to be busy with MG-C gathering in conjunction with BCD.”

Tech Tips. Ed Wolf, “If you’re working on a car that was partially restored and then sat for a long time, you might want to check that the fuel plug is in before you try filling the tank. I’ve heard that this could happen. I don’t want to name names.” Skip, “Oh he’s in Florida. Riding a bike. Probably going to run over an iguana.”

 www.BritishTransportationMuseum.org 321 Hopeland St., Dayton, OH 45417 Giuseppe Automotive Restoration (678) 269-3240 <small>Auto restoration, maintenance and mechanical repair</small>	  Parts, Service and Restoration for MG, Triumph, Austin Healey and Related Autos  Steve Miller 3733 Wilmington Pike Kettering, Ohio 45429 (937) 294-7623 e-mail: MgAutomotive@aol.com
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