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# THE OCTAGON NEWS

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Volume XXX No. 3

FEBRUARY 1997

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## TRAILER FAME

### Pulling my Little Red Wagon

By John Zeno

Any of you who drive an MGA on trips that require you to take luggage, are well aware that it has to be the soft-sided kind so that it can be crammed into the trunk (luggage boot). If there are two of you and if your companion happens to be a woman, as mine is, lookout! For some reason she needs more clothes and things than I do, so I end up jamming things in every little hole I can find. I find some of these things weeks later, long after returning home from the trip.

For me the only answer was to build or buy a trailer in which to carry spare parts and other necessary items. I first looked at a trailer designed to be pulled behind a motorcycle. I thought they were a bit small and very expensive for what you got. I started looking around for a back end of wrecked MGA or a parts car. Most of them I found, needed a considerable amount of body work, not to mention finding a frame on which to mount it.

## CHILDHOOD MG RECOLLECTIONS



*Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club*

### MG Car Club Monthly Meeting

The Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the Lithuanian Social Club, 922 Valley Street, Dayton, at 8:00pm. The next meeting will be:

**February 19, 1997**

### MG Car Club Officers

President.....Skip Peterson 293-2819  
vice-president..Karl Sparklin 426-6068  
Secretary.....Ellen Sparklin 426-6068  
Treasurer.....Dick Smith 434-1750  
Member at Large.....Matt Schneider  
427-0074  
Pres. Emeritus..Dan Wagner 667-6286  
Activities Chair..Tim Oricko 434-5928  
Membership Chair.....Linda Wolfe  
429-0847  
Octagon News Editor.....Ron Parks  
322-0717  
Librarian.....John Wolfe 429-0847  
Historian & DIXMYTH.....Dick Smith  
434-1750  
MG News Hotline.....434-1287  
British Car BBS.....434-1655  
Web Page -  
<http://www.car-list.com/carclub/mgbskip.html>  
**Club Membership Information**  
Membership dues of 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 Linda Wolfe for further membership information.

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After a couple of years of toying with the idea I was at a car show and a woman came up to me and asked me if I knew of anyone interested in buying a trailer that was made out of an MG. This peaked my curiosity and I started to ask her a lot of questions. She did not know much about it, but said she would send me a picture of it. A few days later I got the pictures, called her right away, went to look at it and bought it.

It is made from the back ends of two chrome bumper MGB's welded together. It is painted red and has wire wheels. A British flag is painted on the front trunk lid. All the lights were working, which meant there were four tail lights, four license plate lights, and four side marker lights. I disconnected the front lights because I did not think the old generator on the MGA could handle it and also feared that at night people might mistake it for a car backing up in the wrong lane.

It was necessary to modify a few things. The tongue had to be bent so the trailer would ride level and the channel that the body was bolted to had to be cut to allow room so the banjo (differential) housing would not hit when going over a bump. I also added two beer spigots, non-functioning, to the front of the trailer just for fun. They made good conversation



hole in the floor of the rear trunk to accept a galvanized box big

bumper brackets and extends under the body to the tubular cross

## MG AUTOMOTIVE

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topics at car shows. Everybody wanted to know if they were hooked up, which started me thinking of ways to carry and hook up a quarter barrel of beer.

As a member of the Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club in Dayton Ohio, I discussed it my compatriots. We engineered a solution to our dilemma. I cut a

enough to contain a quarter barrel of beer, two inches of foam all around and a sufficient quantity of ice. I had the box built and mounted it low so the trunk lid would close. The MG Car Club members helped by donating some of the hardware necessary for dispensing beer and I purchased the rest. Times when we could not obtain a replacement barrel, like at

MG '96' in Indy, the box made a fine cooler for canned beer and other refreshments.

On all MG Car Club functions where liquid refreshments are required, I pull the trailer. We have great fun and do a lot of socializing. I might add that nobody in the club has ever over indulged which speaks well for the character of the people we have in our club.

A trailer hitch had to be designed and built.

It is mounted to the bumper brackets and extends under the body to the tubular cross

member of the frame. I have pulled the trailer to Niagara Falls, Winston Salem NC, over the Blue Ridge Park Way, Lansing and Grand Rapids MI, as well as many club functions and have had no problems. The trailer pulls very well without much strain on the MGA. Some of the MGB people are not to happy to see a trailer made from MGB's, but I tell them, "after all, that is about all they're good for!", (Ha!). And you know, they never turn down a cold glass of draft beer. When I take it to a car show more people are interested in the trailer than my car, which makes it a bit frustrating at times. I think using an MGB rear end gives you more room inside than using an MGA rear end would. One of our club members is considering using the rear of two MG Midgets which might be interesting and a different solution.

## From the President

Skip Peterson

**W**e had a strong turnout for the January meeting, in spite of the lousy weather.

We also settled on some dates to remember, so get out the calendar right now, and get ready to mark down lots of club activities.

We'll meet in February, and please bring in some of your favorite MG photos. We want to get moving on producing that calendar so we can have it ready to sell at BCD 97. Bring in your 4 or 5 favorite photos and give them to me. I promise to take good care of them. If you also have the negative, that will help

but we can work from snapshot size photos easily.

In March we'll honor St. Patrick's day at the Gribblers on March 15th. More details on that to follow, including the map on how to get there. The Gribbler's are also handling the highway clean up program, so Dave will report some dates to us. We need to keep that portion of I-75 looking good and we'll need volunteers to get it done efficiently. We only have to clean it 4 times this year, but the first clean up in the spring is usually the hardest. The more help we have, the easier it is to do. We do it on Saturday mornings and if we have enough help, we can clean all 4 miles in about 2-3 hours. Wear boots, and be sure to bring gloves. Dave will clue us in on the dates soon.

April is spring tune-up time. Matt Schneider will be hosting us at his garage on April 27. Make a list of what needs to be done on your car, get the parts, and join us at Matt's. If you have a Haynes shop manual, and special tools that might be needed, be sure to bring them. If things work out well, you'll be

ready for a summer of driving pleasure. If not, we'll tow your car back home(just kidding, we've never had to do that before.)

With all of our cars running smoothly, we'll embark on the first cruise of summer on May 4. Ron Parks and Bill Hammond are going to take us on a day long historic cruise. They are working on the route, planning to include a stop for lunch and dinner. You can start early and leave if necessary, or join us late and finish the day. Should be a good time. Bill and Ron will keep us posted on the plans for that.

June 14th will find us following The Two John's(Zeno and Wolfe) for a weekend getaway. We'll start on Saturday and head south with a stop at the Grand Victoria Casino in Rising Sun, IN. After we win thousands of dollars on the slot machines, we'll cruise on to Madison IN. where we'll spend the night. I'm sure we'll all be tired and want to get to bed early so we won't be hanging out near the Zeno beer trailer, telling car stories or just having fun(yeah, right.) On Sunday we'll wind our way back to

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**Upcoming Events****February**19 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club

*28th FISH FRY*  
**March** 11 **St. Patrick's Day Party** at Gribler's  
*BCD at Gribler's TUE? 7:30 MANAWA TOUR & DINNER*

19 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club *HILLIARD***April**12 **Highway Clean-up** Mc-D's in Vandalia16 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club27 **Tune-up Clinic** at Matt Schneider's**May**4 **Historical Tour** Clark, Green Champaign, Logan Counties.21 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club**June**13-14 **London Ind. to Brighton, Ohio** In conjunction with Indiana British Car Union

~~14-15~~ **Grand Victoria River Boat Tour** Gambling & overnight  
*21-22* stay in Madison Indiana

18 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club

*7-16 LAKE ERIE BICYCLE TOUR*  
**July** 7-16 **Highway Clean-up** Mc-D's in Vandalia

12 **Highway Clean-up** Mc-D's in Vandalia13 **Cincinnati British Car Show** at Edgewater Park16 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club

*premium Courthouse St*  
**August** 2 **BCD '97** at Eastwood Park

2 **BCD '97** at Eastwood Park20 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club**September**13 **Highway Clean-up** Mc-D's in Vandalia14 **Concourse Car Show** at Natural History Museum (Museum of Discovery)17 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club**October**15 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club**November**1 **Highway Clean-up** Mc-D's in Vandalia19 **MGCC Meeting** in Lithuania Club

Dayton.

I would imagine we'll head south again on July 13th for the Cincinnati British Car Show. The

Cincy crew puts on a nice show, and we always have a good time there. We leave lots of flyers for BCD 97 in their cars, and we also

usually take home a few of their awards. More on that later.

August 2nd is number 13 in the BCD series. Eastwood MetroPark, 9-4, rain or shine, you know the drill. We work hard, have a great time, and when it's over, we feel a little sad that we have to wait a year to do it all over again. We had a BCD meeting last week, and had a strong turnout. It seems we are pretty well under control for the time being, but as always, we're counting on our members to volunteer to make sure the day is a success.

I've heard a rumor that the Indy British Motor Days held in September will be held at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. That might make a nice day trip. As we learn more, we'll keep you posted.

That gives us quite a few dates to plan for this summer, and I would hope we'll have another fall leaf tour this year.

I look forward to seeing you all on February 19th. Same time, same place. Be there, or be square.

## An MG Through the Eyes of a Child

By Ellen Sparkin

Very few of us as children have the opportunity to grow up in Europe. It was my fortune to be able to do so. It was there that later in life, I would not only meet someone who owned one, but have

the long anticipated privilege of riding in one!

As children we learn about different things. Brits have a deep appreciation and love for the MG. There are a few of us Americans who feel the same.

Let me go back. As a young child, my parents took me to Germany. It was interesting meeting people on a daily basis who spoke another language. My first words were not English, but German...bitta, bitta, bitta (please).

My parents owned a car that looked like a VW bug, however the front of the car opened up, and you got into the seats that way. I would later learn this was a BMW Isetta! This is my first memory of the uniqueness of an automobile that was NOT made in America.

My parents would take my sister and me on long drives through the countryside, along the Rhine, from Heidelberg to Dusseldorf. I was amazed at the number of MG's we saw along the way. I can remember asking my parents what those little cars were. "Oh", they would say, "Those are little English cars". It was such fun riding through the countryside, seeing an MGTD or an MGTF. It became a common occurrence on our Sunday drives. There was little else to do in those days, so our Sunday outings became a regular event. My sister and I would count the number of MG's we would see along the way. Hence, I fell in love with the MG.

During the summer months, my parents would take us on short holidays up into Scotland, Wales or England. We would drive among the rolling hills, through the back farmlands, admiring the

lovely scenery and the gardens the Europeans are so well known for. It was here that I encountered my first British sports car, a Morgan. I was hooked. How graceful she looked. All shiny dark green, with the beautiful white tire on the back. We stopped along the road to admire the heather. I just looked at the beautiful car parked at the cottage nearby. It was on this particular trip, we came up to a long line of MG's winding along the beautiful country roads. Each car was a masterpiece in itself. The people who were driving the MG's would honk and wave at us silly Americans. As life went on, and our family returned to the United States, so my days of seeing MG's on a regular basis had passed.

Very few Americans appreciated the beauty of the MG. I found that Americans preferred American cars...however, my love for the Morgan and the MG's remained with me. Now back in the United States, every now and again I would hear of an MG car show here or there, and would once again be able to gaze upon their beauty. I still longed to ride in one, to feel the wind blow through my hair, to be one of those lucky people who enjoyed life in their little MG.

Well, as most of you know, God works in really strange ways. When Karl and I met, I did not know that my life-long dream of riding in an MG was about to be fulfilled. Karl owned an MG! Not only was I surprised and shocked, Karl was also, to meet a woman who knew what an MG is, but loves them too?! My wonderful childhood memories came full circle! My experiences as a child,

and the exposure to the MG has brought a special appreciation for our beloved little car. Oh, you might say it has rust here and needs a lot of body work there. To me, our MGB is the most beautiful car in the world. Riding along in it, seeing others now wave as we pass by, just as I once did as a child, brought back the beautiful memories of my first encounters with these lovely British cars.

The pleasure and trials of owning an MG can only be understood by another with this same crazy passion for these delightful little cars. As I wait with eager anticipation for spring weather to arrive, I longingly and lovingly look at our beautiful little MGB. All tucked away for the winter, quietly waiting for the first spring day to arrive so once again, she may display her beauty for all the world to see. Oh, the love of an MG. A love that was born through the eyes of a child.

Each of us finds our own way to the MG. An oil leak here, a little tinkering there, and the MG is off once again. Have you ever thought of exposing your children to the love of your little car? The impression the MG makes on them as a child, may well last them a lifetime. It is this writer's belief that God was well pleased when the MG was created!

As a parent or grandparent, you can pass along your love for your little car, and allow children to see the world of the MG through the eyes of a child.

## Member Featured Car of the Month

By Ed Hill

I bought my '71' MGB in 1976 at Travis AFB in California. My first big trip in it was to visit my brother in Denver Colorado. I drove non-stop California to Denver solo, parked it in my brother's driveway and the next morning it wouldn't start. The fuel pump had pumped it's last. I almost bought a Fiat Wagon, but no, as a single GI I said to myself, "I don't need no wagon". So, instead, I bought the MG from an Air Force Captain.

Somewhere around 1979 I rebuilt the Master brake cylinder. I came up from the basement with the master cylinder in hand and the lady giving sewing lessons to my mother said, "I know what that is, it's a MG Master cylinder. It was Janet Richel, a former member.

I parked it in my garage in about 1980. Got it out and rebuilt it in 1994 at the urging of my bride to either fix it up or get rid of it.

## Minutes of January Meeting

By Ellen Sparklin

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 by our President Skip Peterson, with a wink of his eye and the click of his gavel. Skip stated he had little to say as of yet,



and quickly passed the meeting onto the Vice-President, Karl Sparklin. Karl commented the weather sucked. Skip then moved the meeting onto the reading of the minutes by Ellen Sparklin. The minutes were approved by Mike Oricko and Ed Hill. Skip then called for the Member at Large, who wasn't present, and passed the meeting onto Ron Parks. Ron told the club he had mailed out 96 newsletters, with additional issues going to all those who had entered MG's in the British Car Days, but were not members of the MG Car Club. Skip suggested we wait a couple of months to mail out again (end of March), using a postcard. We could mention the tune-up clinic. A suggestion was also made to use the MG register on the web that lists all of the names and addresses of MG owners in the area. Ron also asked for story submissions for the upcoming newsletters. Ron told the club his goal is to feature a member's car each month, as well as any story submissions from the members. Examples he gave: When and where did you buy your first MG,

your first trip in your MG, what happened, where did you go? Has anything ever happened to you or a friend in your MG? If so, please write and tell us about it.

Skip then asked Dick Smith for the Treasurer's Report. Dick informed the club we started the month off with \$1226.06 and ended the month with \$1183.87 after expenses. The Treasurer's Report was approved by Ron Parks and Seconded by Mike Oricko.

Skip then talked with the club about our web site. The web address is:

[HTTP://www.mgcars.org](http://www.mgcars.org)

Skip also let everyone know he sent the "Home" Club in England our address, and club information, and we should now be on their list. There has been no reply to Skip as of this date. However, as efficient as the British are, we are surely on their list by this time.

The upcoming Highway Clean-up date is to be announced.

The St. Patrick's Day Party is going to be at Dave & Lois Gribler's home on March 15th.

Cocktails and appetizers to be served at 6:30. A map is to be included in the February newsletter.

The Calendar. It has been considered and pretty much approved that the club calendar is to be a 15-month calendar, starting in September 1997 going through December of 1998. The club plans on having the calendars done in July to sell at our car show. The club is asking everyone to please bring 3-5 of your favorite photo's (of MG's!!) to the February meeting. Skip stated he knew of someone who might print the calendars for us in exchange for allowing them to advertise their business on the back page.

The club adjourned at 8:29 for a beer break.

Our meeting reconvened at 8:46. Skip introduced our visitor, Dave McCamn from Springfield. He owns a 1970 MGB and is in the process of restoring it. With a hearty chuckle, Dave stated his MG used to be white, but now it is two-toned: WHITE AND PRIMER! Dave came to the meeting because of the newsletter he had received in the mail!

ROAD TRIPS.....May 4th has been selected for the one-day Historical road trip. The Historical Road Trip will have a couple of different spots where members and others could hook up with the group. Please watch in future newsletters for additional details on this fantastic trip! June 14th & 15th were selected for the

overnight in Madison. The club would leave early Saturday morning, arriving at the Grand Victoria Casino in time for the 11:30 boarding. The Grand Victoria offers Slots, Blackjack, Roulette. It is a paddlewheel boat that gently sails along at approximately two miles per hour. The trip on the Grand Victoria is three hours, at which time the members would resume their trip to Madison, Indiana. Madison, Indiana is about 150 miles from Dayton. Watch for more information in an upcoming issue about cash deposits and reservations that must be made ahead of time.

July 13th is the date for the Cincinnati British Car Show at Edgewater Park in Cincinnati.

Our most illustrious and energetic President, Skip Peterson, has become involved with the Concourse Car show, which is to be held on September 14th at the Museum of Natural History, which is to be renamed that weekend, The Museum of Discovery. Skip is needing club members to volunteer to assist in parking cars, registering people, etc. Skip explained they were expecting about 150 some cars, and the main sponsor of the Concourse Car Show is the Lexis Of Dayton dealership. Skip is asking everyone to please consider volunteering for a few hours on the evening of the 14th.

At 9:23 Skip moved to close the January meeting, and Dick Smith seconded.

## MG Dad's

By Ron Parks

I had an interesting experience two weekends ago, while attending a hockey game at Ohio University, a "Dad's Weekend activity." I was walking back to my seat after a necessary break and felt this tapping on my shoulder. I turned around and this man says you're Ron Parks aren't you? I said, "Denny!" It was someone I hadn't seen in 23 years. He was down for Dad's weekend too. His daughter was working the concession stand at the hockey game.. He had been a hockey player himself at OU in his day. Anyway, we were standing there talking, he and his wife and I, and he looked down at the MG on my jacket and said, "What's that?" I said, "I have a '74' MGB." He says, "I do too, a 74 1/2 GT." Turns out his car is the same color, Olive Drabbed or Tundra, that mine was originally.

OK, this is quite a coincidence, but then while we're standing there talking, I'm telling him all about BCD '97', another man, who probably heard us talking MG's or maybe saw the MG on my jacket, steps up and says whaddaya got, I said, a '74' MGB roadster." He said, "I've got a '75' or '76', I don't remember which (rubber bumper in any case) MGB. He's from Akron.

Well, I finally got back to my seat, my daughter had begun to wonder what had happened to me, and I'm telling her about all this when the guy in front of me turns around and says, "Whaddaya got?" His name is Thomas Hazwlbaker from

Middletown. He has an MG and knows Bob Mason and Steve Miller.

I know it's too late to make a long story short, but the bottom line is, just because I wore my MG jacket to a hockey game, three more people may be attending BCD '97' I'm sending them entry forms.

## St. Patrick's Day Party

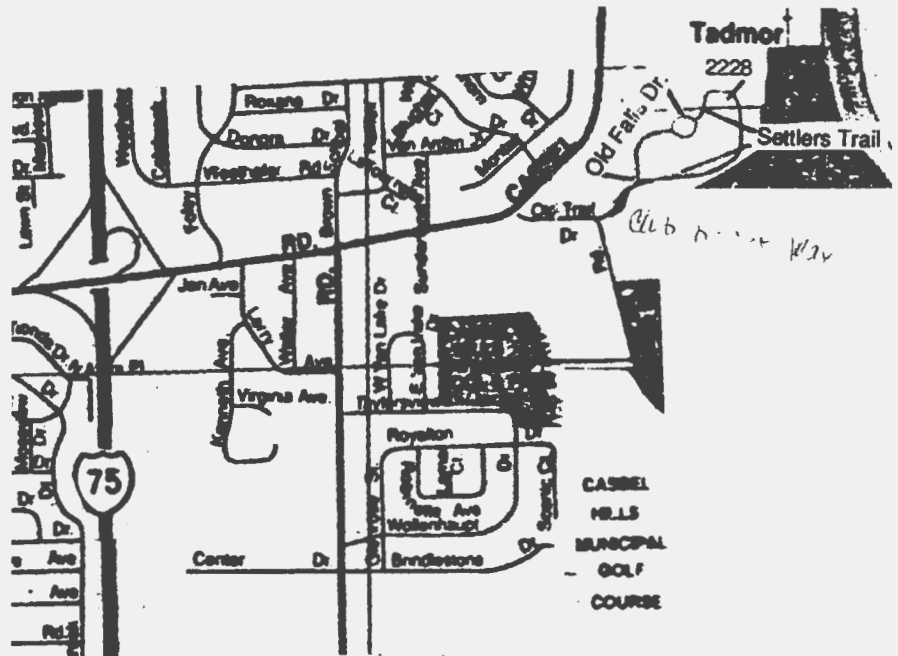
By Dave Gribler

**T**he map to the right shows you how to get to our house on March 15, 1997 at 6:30pm: 2228 Settlers Trail., Vandalia. Phone 898-9928.

## Rising Sun/Madison Indiana Trip Plans

By John Zeno & John Wolfe

**W**e're planning an overnight tour to Madison Indiana on the Ohio River the weekend of June 14-15, 1997. We are planning a stop at Rising Sun Grand Victoria River Boat Casino, overnight at Madison and return back through Metamora Indiana. More Information will be provided at a later date. If you have any suggestions let either of us know. So, plan for this trip as we will need to know the number of people planning to attend ahead of time in order to make reservations.



## Highway Clean-ups Scheduled for 1997

By Dave Gribler

**F**inally, I received my weekend work schedule for 1997 and thus, have set up a highway clean-up schedule that will work for me.

It's basically the same weekends we did it in '96'. It's hard to space them out evenly and get the Air Show weekend incorporated. Here goes: April 12, July 12, September 13 and November 1.

I haven't considered provisions for rain dates. We'll respond to that when the need arises

## From the Editor

Ron Parks

**T**hanks for the good response on submitting articles. I even have one left over for next month. It'll be in there next month Mike (Maloney)I promise.

Now I have to take care of some business. Some of you receiving this newsletter have not as yet paid your membership dues for 1997 according to Linda Wolfe's official membership list. Membership dues are payable in September and October. Members not in good standing as of January 1st are dropped from the mailing list. Because we know some of you may have just forgotten to pay your dues or you just haven't done it for whatever reason, we've given you a couple of extra months. In March, however, only members in good



standing will receive a newsletter. Thank you for your attention to this.

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 if you prefer the information super highway, my E-Mail address is: FKZS47A@prodigy.com I'm also on the British Cars BBS as Ron Parks. Any of those methods will work fine or you can call me at home (322-0717) or at work (445-4623) and we can arrange to meet and transfer materials or conduct an interview.

- Mother Club ASK for Door Prizes.
- Linda Safety First Address;
- Membership List.
- LIST WEED SITES

DMCCANN@BDM.COM

**\* Classified \***

'75' MGB, Body fair, motor runs, interior rough, Restoration car. Call Greg Mannix at (513) 277-7579

MG Engine, 1500 Head with 1600 Block. Cylinder bores in good shape, standard size pistons. Condition unknown. \$500 or Best offer. Also have other Misc parts for MGA. Call Kent Miller at (937) 299-3837 or 224-9400

SOLD  
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**\* Wanted \***

Left rear fender for MG-TD Call Ron or Cynthia Culbertson (513)325-9167

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