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# THE OCTAGON NEWS

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Volume XXXVIII No.4

February 2004

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Reminder - Pub Run February 22!!

Feature Article - Cory Cooper's MGB Restoration

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## From the President

Sam Hodges

**E**l Presidente apparently must be very busy, because I didn't get a President's Column despite repeated e-mails and phone calls. I guess there's a lot of pressure with the job, most of which we are never aware of--things like running meetings, making sure events are being planned, making sure our finances stay healthy, keeping warring factions separated, and who knows what other demands, all to make sure the club survives and that we all have fun as members.

But, if El Presidente had sent his column, I'm sure he'd have commented on all the great MG and British car events coming up this summer, and encouraged each of us not only to do our best to attend as many as possible, but to get involved in the planning or operations for at least one event. I don't think anyone gets paid for running any of these events. They're all pulled together by volunteers that love British cars and love getting together with other British car enthusiasts.

I'm sure he's also happy to see a

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Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club

### 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.

### MG Car Club Monthly Meeting

The Southwestern Ohio Centre of the MG Car Club meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the K of C Hall, downtown Dayton, on Bainbridge Street, at 8:00pm. The next meeting will be:

**Wed February 25, 2004**

### MG Car Club Officers

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## Upcoming Events

**Feb:**

22 - Pub Run – Cold Beer & Cheeseburgers  
25 - Meeting (K of C hall)

**Mar:**

24 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

**Apr:**

28 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

**May:**

02 – British Car Day (Healey Meet)  
Northern Ohio  
15 – 16 – BCD XX, Easton, Columbus  
26 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

**Jun:**

06 – BCD – Ft. Meigs, Toledo  
23 – Meeting (K of C Hall)  
24 - 27 – MG2004, Parsippany NJ

**Jul:**

12-16 - NEMGTR GOF Central XXVI,  
Fairborn Holiday Inn & Dayton area  
28 – Meeting (K of C Hall)  
31 – All Ohio MG Picnic – Central Ohio

**Aug:**

07 – BCD, Dayton Metro Parks  
12 - 15 – University Motors Summer  
Party, Grand Rapids, MI  
25 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

feature article by one of our members. It takes a lot of work to keep a classic car running, and even more when you start with a car that hasn't run in a dozen years or more.

Based on his past columns, I'm sure El Presidente would had said this much more colorfully than I did, but it's getting late on Sunday night and I want to get this month's newsletter out. SRM

## More Upcoming Events For This Summer

Saturday, July 17<sup>th</sup>, London to Brighton Run, starts in London, Indiana, and ends near Cincinnati. Sponsored by Indiana British Car Union.

Sunday, Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>, Indy British Motor Days, Arbuckle Acres in Brownsburg, Indiana. Sponsored by Indiana British Car Union. For more information, contact Don Haynam, 317-887-3867 or mgdr@quicknet.net.

June 6, 2004, the Lake Erie British Car Club will sponsor the 6<sup>th</sup> annual "The British Return to Fort Meigs" British car show in Perrysburg, Ohio. The show is from 10 to 3. Come take a tour of a restored fort from the War of 1812 and enjoy some British cars, too. For more information, contact Tony Shoviak at 419-878-2041 or Tenntony@worldnet.att.net.

The British Car Show at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Market in May is on for sure. We need volunteers to help in setting this up. We do not have a whole lot of information yet, but here is what we have:

Date: May 22, 2004 (first day of National British Car Week)

Location: 2nd Street Market, Dayton, OH

Time: 9:00am to 3:00 pm

Cost: \$12 per entrant

## February Pub Run:

By Dick Smith

Date: Sunday, February 22

Place: Cold Beer & Cheese Burgers, 1060 Patterson Road, Dayton, OH (Shopping center at corner of Patterson Road and Wilmington Pike)

Time: 5:30 pm

It looks like we will have a nice area in a corner all to ourselves except for the large screen TV. We should be able to put tables together or what ever to seat everyone. You won't be disappointed with the Cheeseburgers; they are gooooooooooooooooood. Price is right good, too. Should be a great time.

## Welcome New Members

Jerry & Nancy Nowak  
2488 Stewart Rd.  
Xenia OH 45385  
(937) 376-1126

Jerry and Nancy own a 1939 MG WA Saloon. That's all the info we have on them at this time. Hope to run a bio and picture soon. Welcome to the Club!.

## Michelle's Makeover

Cory "Coop" Cooper



Greetings and salutations from one of the club's newest members. In lieu of organizing a pub run or a rally for gumball rally tickets and at the request of Ron Parks, I thought I would give an update on "Michelle." This is the name that I have given my '66 MGB (coincidentally, it is also my wife's middle name, to be a small reminder that I need to come in from the garage occasionally).

I bought the 'B in Okemah, Oklahoma while I was stationed at Tinker Air Force Base last spring. My father had a '69 B and the price I thought was

just about right for this car, so I got permission from the "house commander" and rented the U-haul. From maintenance records, the car apparently was bought new in Okinawa, Japan by another service member and traveled with them back to the East Coast and various other areas of the country before settling in OK. The car came with all necessary parts, as well as enough extra parts to fit two more cars (two transmissions, two rear axles, two complete front suspensions, two hoods, a trunk lid, four doors, a fender, four wire wheels, a windshield, a rubber bumper, and a large box of miscellaneous small parts). None of the parts were in great condition, and some were from a later Mark, but they were functional at least and I was able to rob a few smaller parts from them.



When I bought the car, I got the typical "Well, it ran when we parked it...(12 years ago)," but I was in no hurry to have a Concours car, so I decided to have a go at it. I was about to install the starter and try cranking it a bit, when I noticed about 6 inches of teeth were badly damaged on the flywheel, so I decided to pull the engine to replace the ring gear and do a minor overhaul of the engine. (Note: this is the first I had done any of this, so my learning curve has been rather steep).



I pulled the engine with the transmission, and replaced the ring gear on the flywheel. While I had the engine out, I cranked it a few times and checked the compression of the cylinders – bad news! With the cylinders dry I registered 0 psi on all but one cylinder which was about 20 psi, and with a bit of oil, it went up to 20 psi on three and 40 psi on one cylinder. I even tried soaking the cylinders and rings in Marvel Mystery Oil for a week, but only gained a few psi all around.

I began the cautious and very deliberate tear-down of the block. It seemed that in each new area I looked, a little bit more needed to

be done, but I figured I would go as far as needed within my budget and time I had until my impending move to Ohio. I replaced the rings, had the head reworked, and re-honed the cylinders (I couldn't detect any endplay in the main crank/bearings so I did not touch them). Also, while awaiting parts, I overhauled the front wheel bearings, front and rear brakes, clutch and brake master and slave cylinders, heater box, radiator, and removed the old gas tank.



While I had the engine and transmission out, I decided to go ahead and refinish the engine bay and remove the layers of Waxoyl that the previous owners had put in there (let me just say that there is no

Pulling the Engine

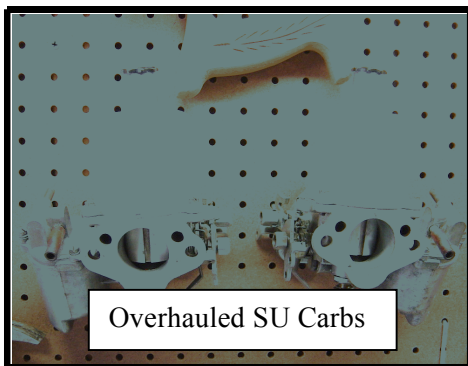
Engine Bay Before Clean-Up



tip, trick, or easy way what-so-ever of removing that stuff!).

The time soon came to load up the “sooner schooner” and head to Ohio with the Air Force, and as luck would have it, I was re-installing the engine and transmission the weekend before the movers came to take away all my tools! My initial thoughts of selling the spare parts on e-bay or to other owners slipped away when I simply ran out of time and space on the moving truck. So I now know a former co-worker in OK that has quite the stock of MG spare parts!

Engine Bay After Clean-Up



Overhauled SU Carbs

Now that we're here in Ohio, my workshop has decreased in size a bit, so it is fortunate that my project car is British! With the heavy lifting part of the power train accomplished, I've set to the rest of the systems necessary to make the car go. I took the carburetors that I'd previously removed and dumped in a box, and slowly worked my way through their “initially complicated, but ultimately simple design.” I should thank Dave Gribbler for wearing his informative SU t-shirt to meetings!

I've also been tinkering with the wiring and overhauled the driveshaft U-joints. Since the original asbestos heat shield material deteriorated from the carburetor heat pan I did a little creative fabrication with

some aluminum, ceramic heat shield blanket material, and rivets.

At this point, I'm awaiting warmer temperatures to install the carburetors, the new gas tank, the distributor, brake and clutch



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cylinders, and check the wiring to give "Michelle" a test run. I plan on spreading the body and finish work out over the next 5 years, but I hope to have it to a club rally at least once before the Air Force moves us again in about a year.

All in all, I've learned a lot, dreamed a lot, and stayed out of my wife's hair the rest of the time!

Re-Fabricated Heat Shield for Carbs

## Recommended Reading for MG Club Members

Linda Wolfe

Our club library recently received a book that was donated by Richard Cutright. The book is "Mr. MG, a biography of John William Yates Thornley O.B.E. (1909-1994)" by Peter J.H. Thornley.

This is a recounting of his life, his involvement with M.G. and the MG Car Club. Cecil Kimber invented the M.G. but John Thornily was the leader in the development of the post war MG's. He was also one of the founders of our Mother Club and was its first director. He also developed the dealer network in the United States.

This also is the story of the mergers and the resulting political problems of the MG Car Company. One does get the odd feeling that history is repeating itself all over again when you read the daily newspapers. I have never understood why a company would buy a very successful company and then turn around and change everything that made the company successful in the first place.

I found the book to be very interesting and easy to read. It is available in the club's library if you would like to check it out to read yourself.

## MG Brake Light Relay

By David DuBois  
Bremerton, Washington

The replacement brake light switches sold today are extremely light duty and don't hold up to the 3 amps drawn by the brake lights for very long before the contacts burn again (I have had them burn in just two weeks). Adding a relay to the brake light circuit will remove the heavy current from the brake light switch.

The relay to use is a general purpose 30 Amp automotive relay, sometimes known as a Bosch relay. They are available from Radio Shack and most auto parts stores. The relay can be mounted anywhere that is convenient. I mounted mine close to the original brake light switch, but it can just as well be mounted in the trunk (for the MGAs or MGBs), close to one of the tail light/brake light assemblies (if you do this, you will need to bring a source of 12 volts, other than the 12 volts that is switched by the brake light switch, back to where the relay is mounted). In the accompanying diagrams, I show a 0.47 microfarad capacitor across the contacts of the brake light switch and a diode across the coil of the relay. These are optional parts and can be left out if you wish. I added them as additional protection for the brake light switch. The capacitor is just soldered across the switch terminals. The diode can be soldered across terminals 85 and 86 of the relay. The advantage of the capacitor is that the capacitor acts as an arc suppressor and the diode collapses the field of the relay coil, eliminating any inductive surge across the brake light switch when it opens.

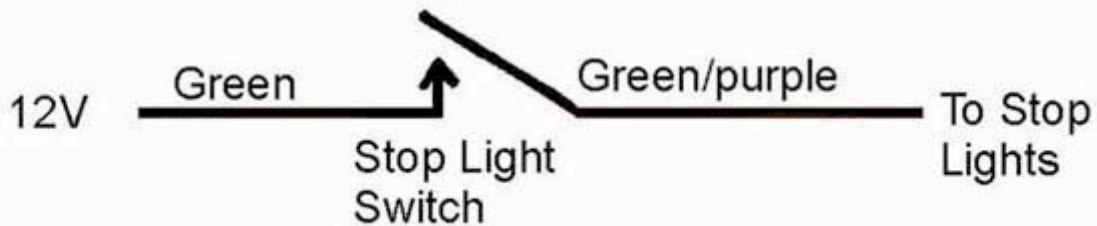
I have relays in which I have already installed the diode internally. If you would like to purchase one of these relays and a capacitor, the price is \$10.00US (in July 2003). I will ship the parts upon receipt of your check on a US bank, or your money order. Send me an email at [ddubois@sinclair.net](mailto:ddubois@sinclair.net) to confirm current price, availability and shipping costs to your location.

David DuBois  
1913 South Marine Dr.  
Bremerton, WA 98312

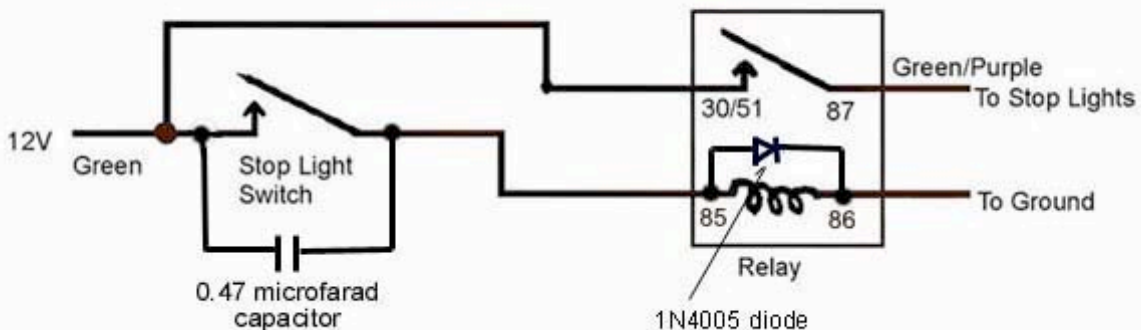
**Note: In the following two diagrams the only difference is the orientation of the diode.**

## Positive Ground Vehicle:

# ORIGINAL WIRING

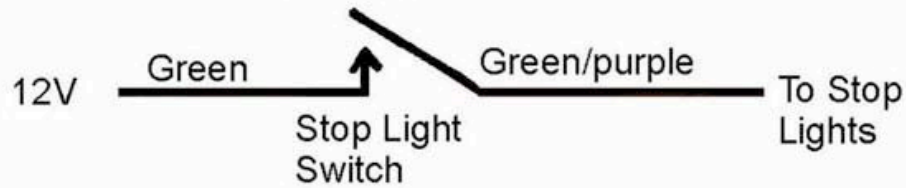


# RELAY ADDED

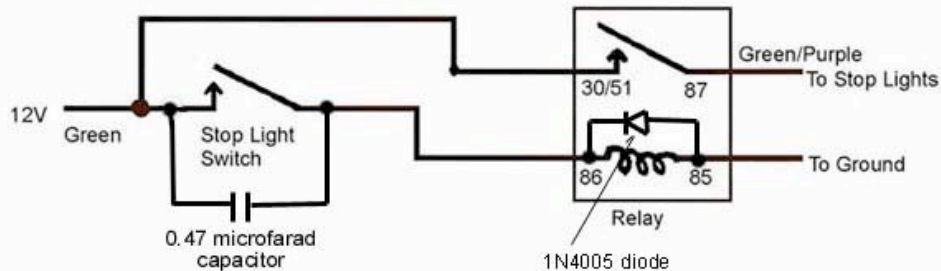


## Negative Ground Vehicle:

# ORIGINAL WIRING



# RELAY ADDED



Editor's Note – Many thanks to Dave DuBois of Bremerton Washington. Dave has been around MGs for most of his life, and knows them in and out pretty well. He is an active member of the Northwest MGT Register, a frequent contributor to their newsletter, which his wife, Liz, edits, and also a frequent contributor to the MG Bulletin Board. Many thanks to Dave for giving us permission to reprint several of his article, which I'll run as space permits.

## Minutes Report January 28, 2004

Rick Cutright

8:02pm Meeting called to order by El Presidente.

**President's Report** - Members were encouraged to make sure their email information is updated in the club records.

**Vice President's report** – No report submitted at this time.

**Treasurer's Report** – Steve Veris reported an account balance of \$3079.81 at the end of December 2003.

**Membership Report** – Carole Looft reports the club now has 89 paid members. New members include Jerry and Nancy Nowak and their 1939 MG WA.

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**Sunshine Committee** - Linda Wolfe reports Joanne Zeno at home. All thoughts and prayers are with the Zeno's. Mary Oriko is recovering well from her surgery. Reuben Wasserman was in the hospital for observation. Cards were sent to all.

**Activities** – Ron and Linda were huzzahed for their very successful Christmas Part. Bill Hammond will be responsible for planning the Spring Tune-up. Reminders of the NAMGBR event in New Joysey. A Road Trip for this needs to be planned.

**Old Business** – Ron and Linda were huzzahed for their very successful Christmas Party. Again. But that's ok, it was worth 2 huzzuhs.

**Beer Break** – called at 8:19pm, meeting reconvenes at 8:36pm.

**Old Business, continued** – Dick Smith wants to remind people the British Museum of Transportation needs used toner cartridges and sells recycled toner carts. Proceeds benefit the museum. Discussion was had regarding the insensitivity of refer to the Christmas Party as such, and for those concerned the next one will be called a Holiday Party. NAMGAR wants a census taken of all MGA owners and NAMGAR members in our Centre. The KofC Fish Fry will receive 10 MGCC volunteers, sign up list was circulated.

**Newsletter report** - Steve Markman would like ti have more pictures submitted. Discussion was held regarding sending out the newsletter via email. Dick Goodman would need his via carrier pigeon.

**New Business** – BCD meetings are starting with the first one on 2/10 at Poelking Lanes at the Dayton Maul. It also was mentioned that something is going to happen somewhere, but details will follow. Guess I'll find out at the next meeting. Pub Runs need to get planned, first one is 2/22 at Cold Cheese and Beerburgers on Wilmington at Patterson. Details to be emailed out with correct name noted.

**Tech Tips** - none provided.

**For Sale** - Matt Snyder is selling his MGB GT.

**Guest of Honor** - Jim Cooley's son, Jimmy, was the noted guest. He owns a '79 Jeep, '74 Midget, '57 XK140, and a Spitfire hat.

**Gumball** – won by Dick Goodman who will use the \$5 to buy pigeon food.

**Meeting Adjourned** – 9:11pm

## Classifieds -

Complete '75 MG Midget rubber bumper in near excellent shape. Excellent interiors, good rust free body & fenders, excellent hood. Needs convertible top but good rails. 1500cc engine has blown rod. Comes with complete 1275cc engine and transmission with newly rebuilt carbs. Seller was going to convert it but lost interest. Currently asking \$500.00! For more information, contact John Howard @ 513-312-8799 (Bethel, Ohio)

Bill Hammond has decided to sell his rare 1969 MGC GT. He has full maintenance records, and ownership history (he even has the title!). (937)434-9967.

1979 MG Midget, excellent condition, no rust, 36,000 miles, Inca yellow, black top and bumpers, Weber carburetor, new tires and top, garaged last 16



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years, driven only sporadically last 12 months. \$7,500, 937-566-6532.

1971 MG Midget, engine rebuilt at 80,000 miles, 180 miles on rebuilt engine. New top, no rust, complete going over in 2002. Good rubber, good interior, possible trans problem (2nd gear), \$4,000 OBO, (419) 683-1726. Ask for Joe.

1967 MGB GT HARDTOP, new dark green paint, new upholstery, new brakes, new front end, \$6500, call Joe Antrim, 937-277-4798.

Looking for AMCO style luggage rack for MGTD. Call Ron Froess, 814-899-5076, or write at 2313 Saltman Rd., Erie PA 16510.