

THE OCTAGON NEWS

Volume XXXIV No. 1

October 2004

New Officers Elected Steve's TD Finally Fixed?

From the President

Ryan Looft

If you missed the last meeting, you sure missed out! It seemed like there was a time when club members would avoid the September meeting just so they would not get elected. That ended recently when members got elected for positions without being at the meeting. Our last meeting had the most people that I can recall attending the elections. During the beer break, I also counted the most cars in the parking lot that I can recall. We had 17 MG's and 3 Jaguars. To my surprise, I was elected President. I knew Ron Parks was not going to let me skate through too many more elections without being nominated for something. Thanks in advance for everyone's support. I look forward to my position as President and will do the best

job possible.

We could not have had better weather for the Fall Drive which took place on October 10th along the Little Miami

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River. Thanks to John and Linda Wolfe for taking the



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 *Carole Looft* for further membership information.

MG Car Club Monthly Meeting

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

Wed October 27, 2004

MG Car Club Officers

President.....**Ryan Looft**
phone.....513-752-3952
email.....ryan@looft.net

Vice President.....**Skip Peterson**
phone.....937-293-2819
email.....mgbskip@aol.com

Secretary.....**Linda Wolfe**
phone.....937-429-3292
email.....linda.wolfe@beavercreek.k12.oh.us

Treasurer.....**Dave Estell**
phone.....513-459-0155
email.....destell1@cinci.rr.com

Member at Large.....**Louie DiPasquale**
phone.....937-299-4089

President Emeritus.....**Sam Hodges**
phone.....937-835-5527
email.....sammgb@earthlink.net

Activities Chair.....**Tim Oricko**
phone.....434-5928

Membership Chair.....**Carole Looft**
phone.....937-382-1520
email.....carole@looft.net

Octagon News Editors:
Steve
Markman.stevemarkman@earthlink.net....434-2908
Joe Hooker.twocoloradokids@aol.com....426-1128

Librarian.....**John Wolfe**
phone.....429-3292

Historian & DIXMYTH.....**Dick Smith**
phone.....434-1750
email.....rsmithomo@aol.com

MG News Hotline.....434-1287

British Car BBS.....434-1655

WebPage.....www.mgcars.org.uk/mgccswoc

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Upcoming Events

Oct:

27 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

Nov:

5 – Fish Fry (K of C Hall)

17 – Meeting (K of C Hall – **note date change**)

Dec:

11 – Holiday Party at Sam & Diana's
- Note – no December meeting

Jan:

26 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

Feb:

23 – Meeting (K of C Hall)

time to put on this event. They did an excellent job of choosing the roads that we took, not to mention, it was on a peak weekend for viewing the fall colors. The Wolfe's were really creative on this drive in competing in several different categories. The drive was timed with trivia questions, and a poker run. Everyone left the parking lot from the K-Mart in Beaver Creek in about 3 minute intervals. Then, in the driving directions, you had to average a certain speed for that road. At the rest room break, at Caesars Creek State Park, you had to allow yourself exactly 15 minutes for the break. The 13 cars that competed ended up at Valley Vineyard in Morrow. Terry & Carole Looft received first place, second place went to me, along with Emily Patton, and Dave & Carol Estell came in third. This was a fun drive! Thanks again to the Wolfe's.

Coming up at the next MGCC meeting on October 27th, we will be setting the date for the November pub run. The Knights of Columbus will be looking for volunteers for the Fish Fry set for November 5th. Also, keep in mind that the November meeting will be the third Wednesday of the month on November 17th, due to the Thanksgiving

holiday. The Annual Holiday Party will take place on December 11th at Sam Hodges' home. Are you ready for us Sam?

Finally, on somewhat of a sad note, the club has had two MG's injured in the past month. Both drivers were at fault as they rear ended the vehicle in front of them. What happened to Safety Fast?

Hope To see everyone at the next meeting!!!

Ryan

New Officers Elected

In case you missed the last meeting, the following members were elected to office: Ryan Looft, President, Skip Peterson, Vice President, Dave Estell, Treasurer, Linda Wolfe, Secretary, and Louie DiPasquale, Member at Large. Congratulations to all our new officers, and thanks to all our outgoing officers for their hard work over the last year.

Membership Renewal Time

Carole Looft

Just a reminder that it is time to renew your membership. Annual dues are \$18, which can be paid at our monthly meeting or sent to P.O. Box 20032 Dabel Branch, Dayton, Ohio 45420-0032.

Welcome to Our New Members

Carole Loft

John and Flo Larabee, along with their two children Ashley and AJ, attended our September meeting and decided to join our group as the meeting was winding down. John, a Product Engineering Manager for Siemens Energy & Automation, enjoys woodworking and backpacking. The Larabees live in Amelia, which will make for a bit of a drive for them to come to our meetings. They own a 1969 BRG MGB GT that was purchased from a retiree in Bardstown, Kentucky. They've had their car for 2 ½ years.

As a young driver in high school, John often drove his family's 1970 MGB GT. He continued driving it as he courted Flo, and it was with that car that she mastered the standard shift. Like all of us, the Larabees enjoy weekend drives in their car and dream of a TD sitting in their garage along side their MGB someday also. We welcome the Larabees and look forward to seeing the whole family at many of our upcoming events!!



John and Flow Larabee made their first MG Car Club meeting a family event, bringing kids AJ and Ashley, who hopefully will be our next generation of MG drivers.

Watching the Master at Work

Steve Markman

I'm sure most of you have heard me gripe about how poorly my TD has been running the last few seasons: idling rough and way too fast, poor power, and fouling spark plugs. Many of you also have seen me angrily swapping plugs when the car outright refused to start. It then would run great, but start to degrade until it again ran poorly or just refused to start, usually with little more than a hundred miles on the plugs. I always kept a set of cleaned plugs in the glove box where they'd be handy. This problem gave me the chance to watch a real MG master, Steve Miller, at work.

I knew that the engine was running excessively rich, which was causing the plugs to foul. I could smell the raw gas in the exhaust and see the black smoke. I gradually adjusted the carbs to full lean, but the problem persisted. In fact, I usually could start the car without pulling the choke.

Two summers ago, after this problem started, I took the car to MG Automotive several times. Steve Miller knew that I watch how much money I put into the car, but am patient when it comes to trial-and-error troubleshooting. Steve always tweaked a few things, showing me what he did, then sent me on my way. It always seemed to run better after an adjustment, but then quickly degraded again. My comment to Steve always was that somehow gas getting into the engine regardless what we did to the carbs. Steve assured me that there was no other way for the gas to get there.

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This summer I decided it was time to have a closer look at the carbs, maybe even put some money into them. Steve pulled the vacuum chambers and saw that both needles had wear marks at the position where the needle would be in the jet at idle. He assumed that whoever last worked on the carbs hadn't centered the jets properly, causing the needles to rub against them, leading to wear that allowed excessive gas to enter the engine at idle. The excess gas fouled the plugs, which couldn't clean themselves even as the engine ran faster and heated up. This seemed reasonable. I watched closely as Steve replaced the needles and jets, and again the car ran great...for a few weeks, when the symptoms again gradually returned.

By this time, many people were giving me suggestions. They all seemed to focus on the plugs, such as using a hotter plug, increasing the gap to get a hotter spark, or going to a multi-electrode plug. I again stopped by to see Steve, who has been most patient with me, to see if he could recommend another plug to use. Steve said that while one of these suggestions might stop the fouling, a properly adjusted engine that doesn't have any other mechanical issues shouldn't foul plugs in the first place. Different plugs might not foul, but something else still was not right.

Steve looked around again, starting with the distributor. He removed the cap and noticed oil inside. He jiggled the shaft and observed an excessive amount of play. This was doing two things. First, oil probably was working its way up the shaft from inside the engine and getting on the electrical contacts, possibly affecting the distributor's ability to get a good jolt of electricity to each plug. Second, the amount of play affected the size of the gap between the points. He cleaned the oil, replaced the points, and recommended that I look into replacing the distributor, or at least replacing the bearings. Looks like another project for this winter.

We then started the engine and lifted the right side of the bonnet. Steve again looked around. The engine still was warm, and Steve's experienced eyes must have caught something. He jiggled the linkage under the carbs, and they jumped about an eighth of an inch. Instantly, the engine smoothed out to pleasing hum. He had me pull the choke, and the engine again became rough. Pushing the choke back in had little effect. He called me over to his side and had me watch as he again touched the linkage, and we saw it again pop up and the engine again smoothen.

There was the problem! The jets were not returning to the fully retracted position. Something in the linkage must have been binding, making the jets stick open just a little, allowing extra gas to enter the engine. This explained all the problems. Steve said that the return spring on each carb *should* provide enough force to fully retract each jet, especially with the vibration when the engine was running. The springs possibly might be weak. I now had another project, to disassemble the linkage and see where it was binding.

Over the next week or so, I drove the car every chance I had. I'd drive for a mile or so then pull off the road, pop the bonnet, and push the carbs closed that last eighth of an inch. The car then would run great. While this procedure took only a few seconds, several times people stopped and offered their assistance.

After several such test drives in which I assured myself that the chokes were sticking, I partly disassembled the linkage for a quick look. The linkage didn't seem to be the problem, but the jets themselves seemed snug. I thought that maybe they just take a while to wear in, so I'd give it more time.

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I also decided to fix another chronic problem I'd been having. The knob on the choke cable was always working itself loose from the dash. The reason was that the nut on the back side kept popping out of position. The standard nut was very thin, and only grabbed on the first few threads, which had become worn. I bought a standard size ½-20 nut that is about three times thicker than the original nut and the cable now holds firmly to the dash. I then pulled the knob and inner cable out of the housing. At this point, I noted that the end was badly frayed, with several broken wires that rubbed the outer cable housing as the choke cable moved. I cut about two inches off the end, greased the cable, then reinstalled it with the new nut.

I started the car and took it out for a test drive. After a mile, I pulled off the road for my usual carb adjustment. Here is where the surprise came in; the jets were fully retracted. I drove back home and let the engine cool for several hours. When I repeated the test drive, the jets again were fully retracted when I checked. I concluded from this that when the choke is pushed in, it does more than just allow the spring to pull the linkage: the cable itself helps push on the linkage. Apparently, when the end of the cable was badly frayed, it lacked enough stiffness to push on the linkage.

Problem solved? Stay tuned.



Steve Miller of MG Automotive in Kettering does a little “fine tuning” on my SU carburetors.

Special thanks to Steve Miller of MG Automotive for being so patient with me, letting me watch over his shoulder as he worked, and always being willing to explain what he was doing.

Classifieds

For Sale: 61' MGA Roadster & a 76' MGB Roadster. The MGA is a basket case (fully dis-assembled), and is very rough. However, many parts are in good condition. This car could make a good project for the serious collector. I would be willing to part out the car or sell it as a whole. The car has been in my family for over 30 years. Unfortunately, rust caused the frame to break, but I do have a solid frame for replacement. The 76' MGB is also pretty rough, but it is solid, and could be restored easily. Contact Charles Falletta at cfalletta@sbcglobal.net

For sale: 1979 MGB, 98k, stainless steel exhaust, Weber carb, good and reliable running, but needs both front wings, door rocker panels, painting etc. etc. to make it look nice. \$1400 obo. 513-266-6407 or deckel@emag.de

Wanted: Pair of seat frames for MGB MkI (1962-68). Dieter Eckel, deckel@emag.de Tel. 01149-1727341572 (I will call you back!)

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For Sale: Red 1970 MGB chrome bumper w/ wire wheels, toneau cover, and new clutch. Runs well. 90,000 miles. \$3800 firm. 426-2257.

For Sale: Beautiful 1957 MGA 1500. Body and interior completely restored (both red). Spoke wheels with a white soft-top. Runs great, but if going to be a daily car I would suggest a good tune-up. Needs new left-front spring, speedometer tune-up, and an owner who can truly appreciate this car. Asking \$10,000. Rob Zimmerman (Delaware, OH) 740-368-9260.

For Sale: 1951 MG TD. Interior needs a little work, but otherwise in great shape. Runs well. Yellow with dark brown interior. New top. Located in Centerville. \$15,000. Dave Westbrook, 885-7492.

For Sale: Beautifully restored MG TD. Originally a California car that I had shipped here years ago. Also lots of parts that have been in boxes for years. Call Stewart A. Smetts, 513-608-2890, or sasmetts@fuse.net

For Sale: 1977 MGB, wine color, vintage racing wheels, Weber carb & header, new dashboard, new carpet and seats, Grant Wood steering wheel, AM/FM cassette, no rust, hard top (needs refinishing), overdrive, all original spare parts (wheels, carb, steering wheel), convertible top has some tears. \$5995 OBO. 937-672-0736.

For Sale: 1953 MGTD, partially restored by late husband. Large supply of new Moss replacement parts, including new seat covers, new bumper and a new convertible top in Moss Motors boxes and other new things that I don't know what they are. There are two grills in addition to the new one on the car, the original grill, and a 2nd grill that looks pretty new to me. Tires are now flat from sitting for so long. I have the spare tire for back rack also. The engine was rebuilt and the frame stripped and painted and partially reassembled. The fenders, doors and back rack look like they've been stripped / sanded but are not repainted. He repainted the car red (the color of the car when he bought it) although it looks like it might have originally been yellow. Nuts and bolts etc. are in labeled baggies. I have a picture journal of the teardown/restoration; most are Polaroids and are too dark to scan. Asking \$8000. Linda Waymire, Lafayette Indiana, Lwaygirl@aol.com, phone: 765-447-6084 (evenings/weekends)

For Sale: 1976 MGB with hardtop, new engine and fuel tank, \$2500, call Terry 1-937-286-9255

Wanted: MGCGT, contact Mike Hirschman at mhirsch1@fairview.org or 763-391-5769

For Sale: 1962 MGA 1600 Mark II roadster, red with black leather interior and red leather trim. Cincinnati area. Digital photos available. \$7000. thunderm3@yahoo.com.

For Sale: 1960 MGA in process of frame-off restoration. Frame was chemically dipped, primed, rustproofed on the inside of the rails, correctly welded (such as with original battery trays), and painted in black hammerite paint. The body was braced, chemically dipped, and primed. The body will require the typical lower reconstruction. All other components are pretty much as removed. I have tons of new parts including most hardware, gaskets, and some interiors, and metal. Also, wire wheels with knock offs, and a few original lenses and goodies. Contact Joe Morgan, 724-457-2880 or joemorgan12345@cs.com

For Sale: Zenith-Stromberg carburetor off '79 MGB, including manual choke conversion, airfilter and manifold \$150.

For Sale: Red 1953 MGTD. It has a new top, new brakes front and rear, new steering wheel and recently tuned up. All work was done by Steve Miller of MG Automotive. Will sell for \$12,500.00. Also I have a 9 piece set of Whitworth Socket Set, 3/4, sale for \$95.00, Fender guards-2 for \$25.00, TD workshop manual with complete wiring diagram for TD's, \$25.00 and a Service Part list Book, \$20.00. John Carter., jabba8811@aol.com, Phone number is 1-937-947-1647

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1975(?) MG Midget - rubber bumper parts car. No title. Wheels, suspension, rack, engine (1500), trans, doors, windshield, fenders, trunk deck still on the car. Also has a good top frame but I heard rumors that Skip has first dibs on that item. Some rust in the usual spots...rockers, floors, lower fenders but not quite a total rust bucket yet. 1977(?) MG Midget - rubber bumper project car. Also no title. 1972 MG Midget. Make offer. Call Dan at 937-426-9839 for more details.

'75 MGB, overheated last summer, and hasn't run or been driven since. Original car except for repaint in non original green. Stored inside since overheating. Car is in Cincinnati Contact Dave Davis at 513-271-9413

'79 MGB, Orange with black top, 70,000 miles, runs and looks good, dependable driver, car located in Loveland. Contact Carol Colclasure 513-683-1920, ext 504 or colclaca@loveland.k12.oh.us

Minutes Report September 22, 2004

Rick Cutright

8:02pm - Meeting called to order. (audience laughter here)

President's Report – No official report, just teary goodbyes from Fidel.

Vice President's report – No official report, just an acknowledgment from Dick Smith of the fine job Sam Hodges did as El Presidente. Sam's well-publicized accomplishments have been noted here in the last newsletter. If you missed it contact Sam for reprints.

Treasurer's Report – Steve Veris sent an extremely talented double to present the report. Income: August dues \$116, dividend 71¢, sales \$10. Expenses: some. Balance: \$1643.85. Report accept by the membership.

Minutes – spelling was ok'd, minutes approved.

Membership Report – Dues are due, pay up or turn in your MG. The Centre has 102 active members, 27 of which attended the Pub Run at Fox & Hound.

Sunshine Committee - The committee is doing a good job of keeping up to date and sending out cards.

Newsletter Report – the finest publication in the land.

Activities – Tim Oriko was not available.

Old Business - The Fox & Hound Pub Run was discussed, Fast Eddie was the main topic. First Fryday of November is the Fish Fry. This would be November 5th and 10 volunteers will be needed.

Beer Break – called at 8:23pm, meeting reconvenes at 8:39pm.

New Business – Blank name tags need to be ordered, if this service is to be continued. Price is \$7.24 each with a minimum of 100 tags. Motion made to accept the expenditure, motion seconded, and approved unanimously. A suggestion was made that the 2005 Fall Tour be “The Covered Bridges of Ashtabula County” (this is not a joke). Bill Hammond is recommending the Toronto Meet in 2005, as this has brought together over 1000 in previous years.

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Election of Officers:

President – Ryan Looft (ain't yer mama proud!)

Vice Pres – Skip Peterson (intends to take the vice part seriously)

Treasurer – Dave Estell (did well and didn't leave the country. Thinks Grand Cayman is in Arizona)

Secretary – Linda Wolfe (now the spelling and grammar will be good)

At Large – Louie DiPasquale (sort of an oxymoron, like "business ethics")

Gumball – at the elections meeting the winner of the Gumball Rally not only wins \$5 but also a bonus of \$15 which used to pay for that members dues renewal. This year the winner is Carol Estell, which tends to make one think the Treasurer's Office is off to a bad start.

Meeting Adjourned – 9:14



I gave many warnings and no one submitted pictures of any individual or club activities. So here is this month's pet picture:
Steve Markman's two cats, Latka and Milo, await their ride in Steve's MG TD.