The Can-Am Connection

1980 WINDSOR-DETROIT 1995 15th Anniversary

vol. 15 no. 10 | Newsletter of the Windsor-Detroit MG Club | December 1995

Welcome to a Special Year-End Issue!

This is a special issue to commemorate the end of our fifteenth year. The first thing you'll notice is the lack of advertising *(Editor's note: They only paid for nine issues, they only get nine issues!)* This just gives me more space to run some of the larger articles I've received, not to mention some photos that never seemed to make it into my hands before deadline.

I hope you enjoy this issue; perhaps it will become a seasonal tradition, just like "It's a Wonderful Life".

(Editor's note: This is my last Editor's note!)

Has it been a year already? At any rate, this is my last Can-Am Connection. As I did before, I leave you in the capable hands of **Ed Fleming**, who will do the same bang-up job as before.

First and foremost, I want to thank **Marla** for her support, encouragement, and patience. Putting up with me ain't easy. Putting up with me while being the club's "everything person" is almost impossible, but she made it look easy. Whatever will we do with all that spare time? *(Editor's wife's note: Work on my car, chucklehead!)*

Thanks also go out to Ed Fleming, who actually volunteered to do the newsletter and be president.

I need to thank the board for their continuing support. These are the people that make things happen!

And most of all, I want to thank YOU (Yeah, you there. The one reading this newsletter). You are the reason I took this on. You are the reason I had fun doing this. And you are the reason this organization is the one of the best clubs around. Keep up the good work and I'll see you in the "Driver"!

Hibernation Party Ushers Out Old Year; Ushers in New Officers

Once again, another driving season came to a close with our annual hibernation party, held November 4, at Roseland Golf & Curling club in Windsor. Although the evening was unseasonably cold, 64 members and traveling companions came out for an evening of food, conversations, friendship, music, and dancing.

The evening started with dinner, followed by our annual raffle. The winner of the Autographics jacket was **Brian Collicott**. The second place prize, an Autographics lap robe was won by **Dennis Mefferd**. The "door prize" was won by **Marshall Coulter** (lucky him). Special thanks go out to **Ann St. John**, who (as usual) sold a ton of tickets.

Afterwards came the awards. The Founders Award for the club's most valuable members was given to **Dan & Marla Zebarah**. The Rookie Members of the year was awarded to **Marshall & Fran Coulter**. Navigator of the Year honours went to **Dave Snyder**.

The most unusual award came in the form of the Lucky Lucas trophy for the most (or most unusual) electrical problems. It seems that everybody participating in the Lucas rally had some sort of problem, so everyone who participated got a piece of the award.

Next year's officers were also announced:

President: Ed Fleming
Vice President: Chuck Wiley
Secretary: Marcia Greiner
Treasurer: Philip Wiltshire
Membership: Fran Coulter
Spares & Parts: Frank Lucente
Newsletter Editor: Ed Fleming *(this is not a typo; Ed is actually going to do both jobs).*
Regalia: Roli Sylvestre (Canada), Jay Kollin (U.S.)
Video Librarian: Brett Altman

Congratulations go out to all the winners and to next year's board of directors.

After all the applause had subsided, everyone settled down for an evening of revelry, comaraderie, and beer. Special thanks go out to **Roli Sylvestre**, who coordinated the event, **Larry Hammond, Jay Kollin, Tom Newton, Chuck Wiley, Ed Fleming, Ozzie Pillon, Toni & Dale Brown,** and **Jim & Diane Zielinski**, who assisted Marla in contacting club members.

The club would also like to thank **Mini Mania, Motorhead, Moss Motors, Eastwood, British Wire Wheel, Apple Hydraulics, The MG Car Club (UK), T & W Auto Body, Castrol, English Motors,** and **White Post Restorations** for their generous donations of merchandise for our door prize table.

Coming up . . .December

6 (Wed)	***NOTE DATE CHANGE!*** **General Meeting & Holiday Gift Exchange, 7 p.m., La Trattoria, Dearborn**
25 (Mon)	Merry Christmas! Regalia makes a wonderful gift!
26 (Tue)	Boxing Day (Canada)
31 (Sun)	New Year's Eve! Please don't drink and drive!

For the latest information on club meetings and events, call the Club Hotline at (810) 305-9364

Safety Fast!

by Ed Fleming, President

The older you get the faster time seems to fly. Another year is coming to a close and it seems like it just started. Your club has had another banner year.

We've added a couple of new events to our already full calendar. The Pinewood Derby was a big success, involving both parents and a few unlicensed drivers (and it's not too early to start building your little wooden race cars for next year's races). And speaking of racing, our new Funkana/ Picnic was also enjoyed by the members who attended.

New Club Secretary **Marcia Greiner** has already volunteered to put on a Rally/ Picnic next year and a few other members have made suggestions of other new events. Is it my imagination or are our club events involving more food lately? At any rate, check the January newsletter for the 1996 Club Events and mark them on your calendar.

We also have a "new" board of directors, with a few new faces, and a few faces in new positions.

I'll be your President for another year. **Chuck Wiley**, formerly Spares & Parts Chairman will become Vice President and **Frank Lucente** is moving from V.P. to Spares and Parts. **Ann St. John** will be turning over the club's Secretary job to **Marcia Greiner** (who until now has been the club's unofficial photographer and birthday cake baker).

Marla Zebarah will finally take a break, turning over her duties as Treasurer to **Phil Whiltshire** and her Membership Chairperson's duties to **Fran Coulter.** Her Social Secretary duties will be shared by the rest of the board.

Roli Sylvestre, Jay Kollin, Gary Howe, & Brett Altman will all be returning in their former positions on the board.

So what do this all mean? Well, for starters it means your club is in good hands again. You'll see all your favorite events and a few new ones next year. Be prepared for another Banner Year of MGing.

The Litter Bag

by Dan Zebarah, Editor

The holidays are upon us. The Thanksgiving turkey has been reduced to a stack of bones (from which a vulture couldn't find sustenance) and 1,245 bags of leftovers which are either residing in your freezer in the very spot that last year's Thanksgiving leftovers were until you threw them out to make space for these, or have been distributed to your dinner guests to displace last year's leftovers in THEIR freezers. This is the time for children to wonder what Santa will bring them, for adults to wonder how they are going to pay for everything, and for MG owners to wonder why they own a car which they only use for six or so months. What do you do with all that time that the car is laid up?

Now, your spouse probably has lots of things around the house for you to do while you wait until spring, but (fortunately) most of the hard work can only be done when it's warm, like painting, yard work, putting on a new roof, etc. Unfortunately, there are always projects around the house that can be done indoors, and your spouse can probably rattle off quite a few without even thinking about it. Your spouse understands that you want to rebuild your fuel pump or reupholster your seats, and that you can actually do this inside. But she also knows you've put off fixing the dishwasher all summer because you've been working on your car, telling her that you'll do it as soon as you finish your MG.

I am offering some handy excuses and ideas that should allow you to perform your MG-related projects without any interruption.

Appliance repair: Remove a major component and inform your spouse that you have ordered parts from the manufacturer in Japan. Tell her these will arrive in six to eight weeks. When the new parts arrive, "lose" them on your workbench. This should buy you as much as seven months until your spouse gets fed up and buys a new one (which is what you suggested in the first place). Warning: Do not try this with your refrigerator. If you do, you will either get food poisoning or your spouse will insist on eating out every day. In any case, you will either be too sick or too broke to get anything accomplished.

Cleaning the basement: This can be a lot of fun if you do it right. Tell your children that you are looking for buried treasure somewhere and that you need help. Your kids will help you for as long as it takes until the basement is spotless.

(continued on page 11)

The Can-Am Connection is published nine times a year by the Windsor-Detroit MG Club, Inc. Deadlines are the 15th of the month. Contributions are welcome in either written or typed form, or on computer disk using an IBM compatable word processor.

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Affiliated

In the Headlights

by Maria Zebarah,
Treasurer and Gossip Columnist

We want to wish a HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the following people:

Heather Jolly	**Dec. 16**
Mandy Dibbs-Kovacic	**Dec. 17**
Mark Truman	**Dec. 18**
Lee Pyper	**Dec. 19**
Jim Hine	**Dec. 20**
Meghan O'Brien	**Dec. 20**
Krystyna Fionda	**Dec. 21**
Suzanne Folz	**Dec. 21**
Ed Haslock	**Dec. 21**
Krista Meister	**Dec. 21**
Aaron Pillon	**Dec. 21**
Lynda Zahm	**Dec. 21**
Stephanie Connor	**Dec. 22**
Jim Stockbridge	**Dec. 23**
Anothony Adamowicz	**Dec. 24**
Vince McQueen	**Dec. 24**
Beth Kaufmann	**Dec. 27**
Tom Chiaravalli	**Dec. 27**
Marshall Stern	**Dec. 29**
Lauren Hunt	**Dec. 30**
Holly Orlowski	**Dec. 30**
Erica Rogers	**Dec. 30**
Dan Zebarah	**Dec. 31**
Adam Burley	**Jan. 1**
Mo Mellor	**Jan. 1**
Troy Thompson	**Jan. 1**
Bob Kogelschatz	**Jan. 2**
Jackie Owens	**Jan. 3**
Tina Jensen	**Jan. 4**
Josh Bennett	**Jan. 5**
Susanna Rori	**Jan. 5**
Terry Blauwaert	**Jan. 8**
Owen Darr	**Jan. 8**
Beverly Thomas	**Jan. 8**
Laura Rutherford	**Jan. 9**
Pat Werderitsch	**Jan. 10**
Deanna Hammond	**Jan. 12**
Emily Meleg	**Jan. 12**
David Connor	**Jan. 13**
Dawn Johnston	**Jan. 13**
Diana Jolly	**Jan. 13**
Beth Kirby	**Jan. 13**
Jackie Wright	**Jan. 14**

Correction:

An article in last month's newsletter on the history of MG was incorrectly attributed to **Philip Wiltshire** (mainly because he supplied it to me and I assumed that he was the author). Philip has assured me that he did NOT write the article so those of you who pointed out all the inaccuracies to him were barking up the wrong tree, and please would you leave him alone.

Calendar of Events—1995

Note: Events in **boldface** type are WDMGC or BSCC events!
Events, dates and times subject to change without notice! For the latest information, call the club hotline, **(810) 305-WDMG**

DECEMBER

6 (Wed) ***NOTE DATE CHANGE!*** **General Meeting & Holiday Gift Exchange, 7 p.m., La Trattoria, Dearborn**
25 (Mon) Merry Christmas! Regalia makes a wonderful gift!
26 (Tue) Boxing Day (Canada)
31 (Sun) New Year's Eve! Please don't drink and drive!

1996

JANUARY

10 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., Roseland Golf & Curling Club, Windsor**
?? (???) University Motors Birthday Party, Grand Rapids.

FEBRUARY

14 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., La Trattoria, Dearborn**
?? (???) **Club Luau at the home of Chris and Vince McQueen, Lincoln Park. Details TBA.**

MARCH

13 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., Roseland Golf & Curling Club, Windsor**

APRIL

10 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., La Trattoria, Dearborn**

MAY

8 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., Roseland Golf & Curling Club, Windsor**
?? (???) University Motors Early Summer Picnic, Grand Rapids.

JUNE

12 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., La Trattoria, Dearborn**
27-30(Thur-Sun) Indy '96, All MG National Meet, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Indianapolis, Indiana. The official hotel, The Holiday Inn South, is booked up. See September's newsletter for a list of hotels in the area.

JULY

10 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., Roseland Golf & Curling Club, Windsor**
?? (???) **Family Picnic at the home of Suzanne & Dave Snyder**

AUGUST

2-4 (Fri-Sun) *Concours d'Elegance* at Meadowbrook. Featured sportscar: **MG!**
14 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., La Trattoria, Dearborn**
?? (???) University Motors 20th annual Summer Party, Grand Rapids. Featured Car: MG V8 models.

SEPTEMBER

11 (Wed) **General Meeting, 7 p.m., Roseland Golf & Curling Club, Windsor**

Welcome New Members!

We would like to welcome the following new members to our club:

David and Nancy Doolin live in Novi with their children, **Alison, Ross** and **Mark**. They own a 1957 MGA, which they describe the color as "Not running - rust". (A lot of us have been there with you!) They found out about the club from **Guy St. John**. David is a Buyer.

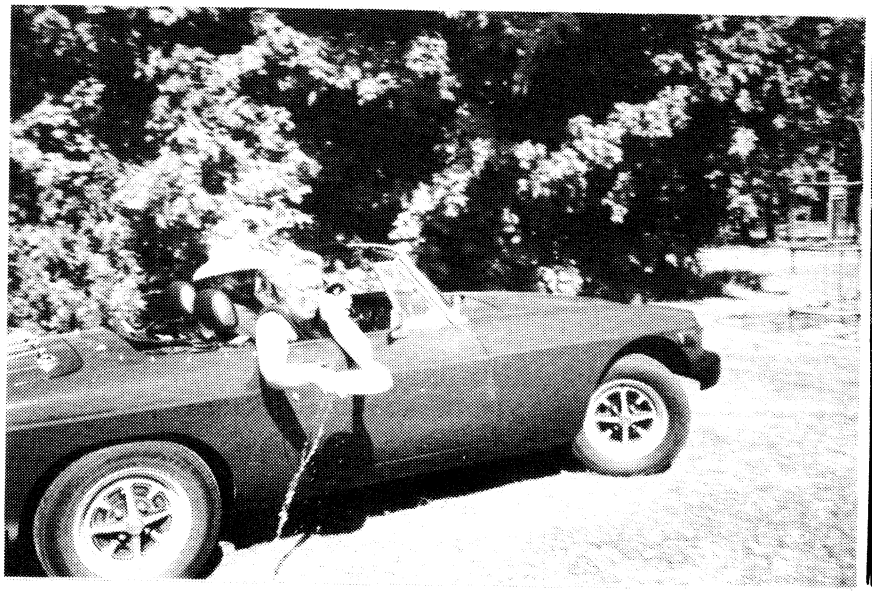
Larry and Debbie Dudek live in Livonia with their children, **Christina** and **Stephen**. They own a 1980 Leyland White MGB. Larry and Debbie were members of the club until the end of 1983, and just decided to rejoin. Welcome Back!

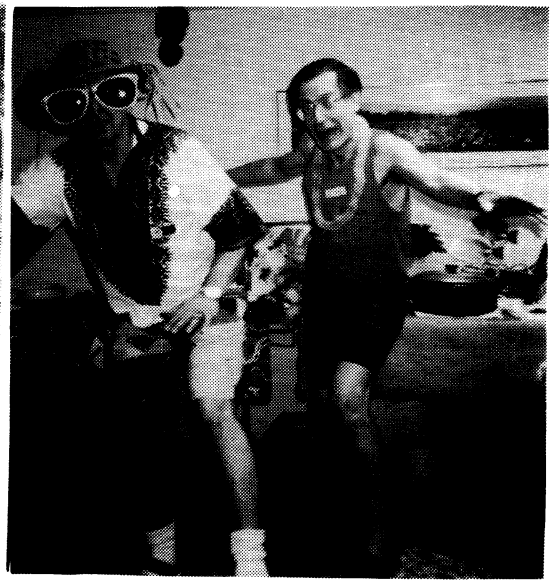
Steve and Leslie Stephenson live in Windsor. They own a 1969 BRG MGB. They have one child. Steve is the Director of CAW. They found out about the club from **Frank Lucente**.

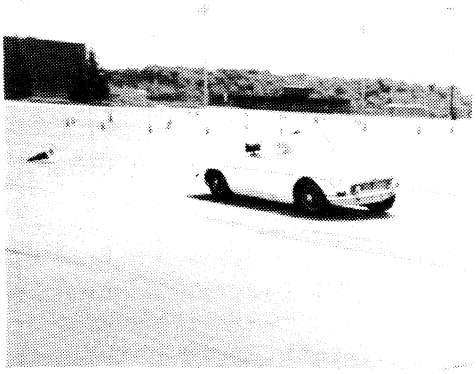
Hope you enjoy being a part of the club!

As of the day I'm writing this (November 27), we have 180 member families in the club.

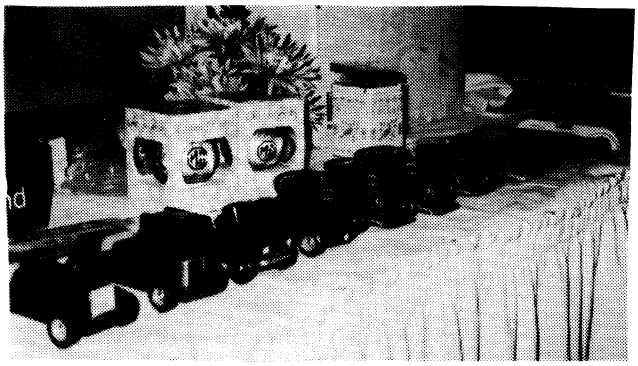
1995 in Review

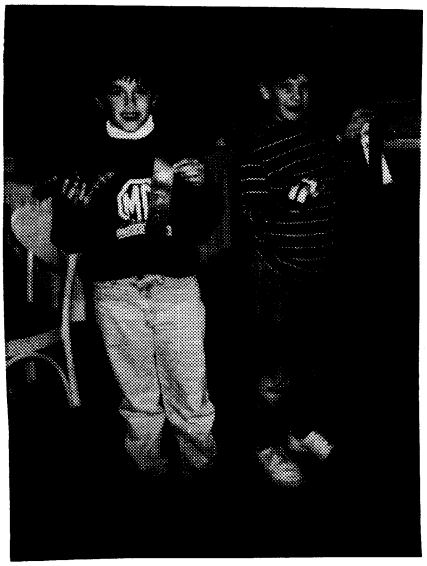






1995 in Review





There and Back Again

Press on Regardless: Not Your Typical Drive in the Country

by Dan Kirby

There we were, discussing the potential lack of a sequel to last year's Rally of the Small Pines event, when Phil Smith came up with the brilliant conclusion that since Jim Pesta was delaying the next running of the event, we should collectively run the Press On Regardless.

I ran my first Time Speed distance (TSD) event last fall in Toronto. I had an excellent time, and was looking forward to Jim's next event, which has been postponed until next spring. The TSD part of the event didn't concern me at all, in fact, that was *exactly* what I wanted to do. However . . .

The problem I had with immediately embracing Phil's idea was the reputation of the POR. This event, in years past, was billed as the "Baddest, Meanest, Toughest, Nastiest Rally in North America". With a course through the upper lower peninsula's logging trails, advertised as "60% offroad, with a few miles of very soft high-centered sand". Not exactly the kind of billing that can be interpreted as "come party with us in your MG".

Well, my first response was that I couldn't bring the GT on the event, because, er, I had a funeral to go to that weekend. Seriously, I did see the potential to take the Midget on the POR, to which Phil and Dallas laughed and bought me a beer for use in rationalizing the earlier statement. Meanwhile, they convinced Eric Jones, a former ProRally National Champion, to take his vintage '64 MGB roadster (you may have seen "DBL 7" at Summer Party), and Jim Pesta had planned to take his MG-TF.

Determined to run the event in the Midget and not be embarrassed by any potential shortcomings, I started making the necessary car modifications in my mind: We'd need lots o' ground clearance, so I'd put in taller springs, front and rear. Skid pans to protect the vulnerable areas, like the oil pan. Good lights, 'cause it ain't a rally car without good HUGE HONKIN' LIGHTS!!! And a big tow hook on the front of the car, because, let's face it, who am I going to rescue with my car, but at least I can be courteous and make it easy for the nice guy who comes to pull me out of the swamp. And a roll bar, just so I won't feel inhibited to drive the car like I mean it! And maybe I can get Marlboro to sponsor me.

Well, first things first. I'd have to swear Phil and Dallas to secrecy regarding the reputation of the event, so Beth would let me go. All highway driving, honey! I think once a few years back they included a short gravel road, but people complained. The big, nasty 4x4 look is there purely for effect, we won't actually need any of this stuff! Trust me! Well, Phil and Dallas wanted me to go, I guess because they didn't want to have the most out of place car there, so they played along.

Soon enough, my visions of a ProRally racer came to miniature reality! I think the only full scale things in the picture were the lights, the ground clearance,m and the driver! Maybe some were actually larger than full scale, but that's another story!

The original concept to run the POR was born at the UML Summer Party, and yet the POR was scheduled for September 14-16. This left only four weeks to prepare the car, driver, and find a willing navigator.

(continued on next page)

Press on Regardless

(from page 6)

Unfortunately, the dates coincided with the Funkhana event, so my first choice, Ed Fleming, was otherwise occupied. I had a tough time thinking of someone who would be willing to run such an event at all, much less in a Midget, when I thought of Jon Depentu, a friend from work.

Jon is a sports car nut, and will occasionally drive his Caterham Seven (lotus Super Seven) to work. This car has about half of everything on the Midget, including size and weight, with the exception of horsepower and handling. I knew he wouldn't have a space problem, and didn't suspect he'd have a gumption problem.

Jon was apprehensive at first, but I wore him down. We prepared the car and ourselves, and were looking forward to a challenging event.

In the weeks leading up to the event, Jim Pesta had to cancel due to his busy schedule. I hated to hear that, because Jim is a tough competitor and I always learn something from him.

Time drew closer and closer, until the night to leave for Alma arrived. We had prepared the car and ourselves as well as we knew how, and headed to Max and Emily's Deli, the gathering place for lunatics willing to take toe Michigan back woods. We arrived to find Phil and Dallas, along with Eric and Bill Potvin, his navigator. We lined up "Team MG" three-wide for photos. Finish or not, we had already made history.

A close look at Eric's car would reveal a great deal of attention to detail. This car is a faithful copy of the original factory works car raced at Le Mans, etc. A closer look revealed his wry sense of humor. Above the driver's door he had written "Driver: REX KARRS", and over the navigator's door, "Navigator: TERRI FIDE", all in a very convincing period style lettering.

Our cars were in sharp contrast to most of the others. There were two BMW 325 IX (4WD) cars, numerous Subaru Legacies, Toyota Celica Turbo All-Tracs, 4WD Jeeps, Suburbans, Mitsubishi Eclipses, an Audi Quattro, and even an old off-road VW Beetle. One license plate read "ON TIME", which put into focus for me just how serious these guys are about this sport.

Now for the philosophical part. Many of you have read the MG history books, and realize the one detail that many people forget about our cars. In their day, they were very durable, tough-as-nails transportation. If you snicker at this comment, take another look at the terrain in all the University Motors Trials events. Not exactly a ride in the country. The POR has exactly the type of terrain our cars were proven on years ago. They really come alive in their environment, I've found, and build a confidence in the driver that can't be achieved in any other way. You don't have to take your car four-wheeling to find out--I did that for you. Trust me, they're impressive little machines!

I think there are lots of times in our lives when we would really like to know what people are saying behind the whispering hand. We knew it would be a challenge, and that's why we were there. We wanted to TSD together, and I wanted to prove a point about our cars. I don't think many of the competition thought we'd have much of a chance of finishing the event, but we were driven. Once I get into my mind that something is going to happen, if I have control over it, it'll happen. That's why I prepared well for the event. That part was in my control. I didn't have control over the course route or conditions, or the competition, but Jon and I could do our best against ourselves and the course, and that was why we were in business!

Because Jon had never navigated a TSD before, and I had only driven one, we were classed Novice. Both Phil and Dallas and Eric and Bill were classed Vintage, meaning mechanical computing devices and older cars.

The bottom line on the event is that the terrain was as advertised: The meanest route you could ever hope to not take your MG down. It isn't fair to call most of the route "roads", because that would imply some sort of maintenance. It was the perfect environment to prove the point that MG motorcars are meant to be driven, and they're up to the challenge!

Mechanically, Team MG suffered a few problems. I had an overheat due to a stuck thermostat, which caused a stream of ten (I think) MAX scores on the rally (points are bad, like golf) on Friday. We fixed it Friday night, and continued on the route after having lost about an hour. We didn't have any other mechanical problems to speak of. Phil smashed his backup fog light (added for this rally) when backing up at one point, and Eric had a speedometer concern early (before the first checkpoint) which he was able to correct without hindering his performance.

At the end of the event, of the 28 entered cars, three didn't finish. The MGs were resting proudly three wide under the finish line, all having proven the success of Syd Enever and the determination of their drivers and navigators. The post results indicated that Eric won the Vintage class, Phil and Dallas won the Press On Regardless Award, and Jon and I won the Novice class!

Not a bad weekend's work for a few old relics. The MGs did pretty well, too!

Pick of the Litter

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times (Wrong story, blockhead!)

by Dan Zebarah

(Editor's note: I have received many requests to run some of my older "Litter Bag" columns. As space permits, I will be happy to oblige. This one has been reprinted in no less than four other clubs' newsletters since it first appeared in November, 1991. If I had to choose a favorite, it would be this one.)

The car was dead. Dead as a doornail. Whitworth Screw slammed the bonnet and stalked back into the office.

"Ratchet!" he screamed.

Bob Ratchet looked up from his paperwork. "Oh, Mr. Screw," he said, "I thought you left."

"Just shut up and give me your car keys," Screw said.

"But how will I get home? The buses aren't running, with it bein' Christmas Eve and all."

"YOU can walk! Don't forget who loaned you the money to buy that rattletrap." Screw took the keys and went into his office.

"At least MY rattletrap runs," thought Ratchet.

Ratchet punched out and headed for home. "Merry Christmas, Mr. Screw!" he shouted. The resounding "Humbug!" let him know that Screw heard him. Outside, there had to be at least a foot of snow on the ground and there was no sign that the blizzard was going to end soon. He looked at Screw's car in the parking lot. "The old skinflint probably was too cheap to put antifreeze in it," he chuckled.

The streets bustled with people doing their last-minute shopping. At least Ratchet didn't have to worry about that. Screw didn't pay him enough to live, let alone to buy presents.

Screw pulled into his driveway and parked the car. "I'm not going to put THIS car in the garage; it's not worth sheltering." As he walked into the house, he had the feeling that someone was watching him.

As he got ready for bed, he looked out his window at the hustle and bustle on the street below. "Suckers! You're all fools," he said. "Wasting your money on presents for other people. 'Merry Christmas', they say. 'Season's Greetings' they say. I'm the richest man in the city, and I didn't get that way by throwing my money away on presents just because it's Christmas! Of course, the money I inherited from my deceased partner didn't hurt either, but he couldn't take it with him."

All at once, an icy wind enveloped the room. An eerie voice called out: "Whitworth Screw! Whitworth Screw!"

Screw dived into his bed and hid under the blanket. "That sounds like my old partner Joseph Lucas, but he's been dead ten years!"

The lights went out. "I was Joseph Lucas," the voice said, "but now I'm a disembodied spirit, doomed to wander the earth as a penance for all the bad things I did while I was alive. I have come to warn you, Whitworth Screw."

Screw pulled the blanket over his head. "The Dickens you say! A warning? About what? Hey, did you have anything to do with my car today?"

A mist filled the room and a ghost appeared. "You always were nosy," Lucas said. "I'LL do the talking! You will be visited by three spirits tonight—"

"They better not want anything to eat!" Screw interrupted, "I'm not running a boarding house for wayward ghosts!"

"Will you shut up?", Lucas continued, "These spirits will try to get you to mend your ways, become a good citizen, and change your oil every three months or 3,000 miles, whichever comes first."

"Lotsa luck," thought Screw, "Not at $1.50 a quart."

With that, the mist cleared and the lights went back on. Screw decided to leave the light on and tried to go to sleep.

As Screw started to nod off, he heard a tremendous crash, as if a tray of silverware had been upset. He looked and saw a rotund man picking up a tray of silverware off his bedroom floor. "Who are you? What are you doing here? Where did that silverware come from? I don't own any silverware."

The man looked up. "I am the ghost of Christmas Present."

"Is that my present?" Screw asked, pointing to the pile of flatware scattered on the floor, "You shouldn't have."

"I said Christmas Present, not presents, stupid!" said the ghost. "The silverware is for me. You can't be too careful with germs these days, so I bring my own. Let's go." He took Screw's hand and headed out the window.

They flew out the window and circled the city. "We can fly, we can fly, we can fly!", sang Screw.

"Wrong story, blockhead," said the Ghost.

They landed outside a small house. The ghost pointed to the window. Screw looked inside. There was Bob Ratchet sitting with his feet in a tub of hot water. On his lap was a small child. Screw could hear Ratchet's wife talking as she walked into the room. "That cheapskate Screw has no right to take your car, Bob. If you had a brain, you would have stood up for your rights."

"But dear, it's Christmas," Bob replied. "Anyway, he DID give me tomorrow off."

"Big deal. You have to go in early for the next month, wash his windows, and make his lunch," she said. "Anyway, look at Tiny Tim here. He needs another operation."

Ratchet put the child on the floor. "Run, er, limp along now," he told Tim. He looked at his wife. "What exactly is wrong with him? He needs all those operations, but I don't know what for."

"Neither do I," said Mrs. Ratchet, "But the doctors said he'll keep needing them as long as we have any money. Well, it's time to open our presents. Tim!" Tim came into the room.

"Oh, wow! Presents!" Tim opened the first one up. "A pencil! A NEW pencil!!"

"He stole that pencil from the company!" Screw told the ghost.

"No he didn't. You SOLD it to him. At LIST price!"

"Oh, yeah."

"Let's go," said the ghost.

When they got back to Screw's house, the ghost disappeared in a cloud of smoke. As the smoke cleared, another figure appeared. "I am the Ghost of Christmas Past."

Screw looked at him. "That was fast."

"Look, it's a short story, not a novel," the ghost replied, "Let's go."

They flew out the window and landed at another house. "This is my childhood house and—and—THAT'S ME!!!" Screw pointed at a teenage boy working on a car. "I never did get that car running. Everybody wanted money to fix it."

"So you sold it and invested in Joseph Lucas' automotive firm. You two were made for each other; ambitious, ruthless,

penny-pinching scoundrels who would sell their own mother if the price was right," said the Ghost.

"Flattery will get you nowhere."

"In fact, when Lucas made you a partner, the papers said, 'God save the Queen, Lucas picks up a loose Screw', and you took it as a compliment."

"Frankly, my dear ghost, I don't give a damn," said Screw.

"Wrong story, blockhead," said the Ghost. "Let's go back."

Back at Screw's house, the Ghost vanished, saying, "Just wait until the third ghost gets here."

Screw watched the ghost vanish. "I can hardly wait."

A voice boomed from the darkness. "Well, I won't keep you waiting." The ghost appeared, looking like a cross between the Grim Reaper and Darth Vader. He rode a black horse whose red eyes lit up the room. "Let's go."

Screw cowered in a corner. "There's no place like home. There's no place like home," he whimpered.

The ghost took his arm. "Wrong story, blockhead," he said, leading him out the window. Screw felt like singing 'Ghost Riders in the Sky', but that pun was even too bad for him.

They alit in a dark alley. The police were carrying a body out of a boarding house. "This," said the Ghost, "is your destiny."

The policemen were talking. "Imagine that. Once he was the richest man in the city, and now he's going to be buried in a pauper's grave."

"Right," said the other cop, "It's hard to believe that somebody could lose that much money that quickly."

"Who is that?" Screw asked the Ghost.

"Shut up and watch."

The officers took the body and put it into a wagon. One of them started writing on a small piece of paper. "Whitworth—Hey, Bill, how did he spell his last name?"

"S-C-R-E-W. Just like it sounds."

Screw grabbed the Ghost's arm. "That—that—that's—"

"YOU." said the Ghost.

"What happened? How did I die penniless?"

"Watch." The Ghost took him to another place in town. A big crowd had gathered in the town square. There, in the middle, was none other than Bob Ratchet, and he was giving out packages to all the children.

"Ratchet? How did he get the money to give away presents?"

The ghost turned to Screw. "He sued you and a jury awarded him your entire company, your house, and all your money."

"What did he sue me for?"

"Remember that pencil he gave his son two ghosts ago? Well, Tiny Tim was limping with it, fell and put his eye out."

"My mother always told me that would happen," Screw interrupted.

"The jury found you responsible because you didn't pay him enough to buy him a real present."

This was too much for Screw. He buried his face in the Ghost's robe. "Please! Is there any way for me to alter this? I promise to change my ways! Honest!"

The ghost replied, "Honest? I didn't realize you even knew what that word means!"

"I do a lot of crossword puzzles," Screw replied, "I really, really, REALLY mean it, I'll change!"

"Oh quit your grovelling! All right, you get ONE more chance."

Screw opened his eyes and found himself in his bedroom.

He raced to the window and looked out. The snow had stopped and the morning sun glistened on the rooftops. He spotted a boy walking down the sidewalk.

"Hey, kid!" he called out.

"Who, me sir?"

"Yes. What day is this?"

"It's Christmas sir."

Screw's heart rose. "I haven't missed it!" He tossed a coin purse down to the boy. "You know that turkey down at the market?"

"You mean the one in the window that's as big as me, sir?"

"No, I mean the owner."

"Oh, THAT turkey."

"Remarkable boy! Intelligent boy! Tell him to send a complete dinner over to the Ratchet house."

"Right away, sir!" The boy turned and ran down the street.

"Oh, and keep the change!"

"Why thank you, sir! Merry Christmas, sir!"

Screw then dressed, went downstairs, and headed out the door. He went to the nearest toy store, bought some toys, and headed for the Ratchet house.

As he knocked, he thought to himself, "I might even get to like this Christmas thing." The door opened.

"Why Mr. Screw," Mrs. Ratchet said, "What are you doing here?"

"Merry Christmas!" Screw said, "May I come in?"

"I guess," said a puzzled Mrs. Ratchet, and she showed him in.

In the living room, Bob and Tiny Tim were playing on the floor. Bob looked up. "Why Mr. Screw! You gave me the day off, remember?"

Screw looked at Tim. "Here, boy! Merry Christmas!" He handed the bag over to him.

"Look, Daddy! Toys!" Tim's face lit up like a, well, a Christmas tree.

Screw smiled. It was the first time in many years he had something to smile about, and it made him feel good. "Ratchet," he said, "I've been thinking. You've been with me for what, twenty years?"

"No sir," he replied, "four months."

"Whatever. Anyway, I've decided to make you a partner."

"Really?"

"Not just that. I've decided to triple your salary."

"Why thank you, Mr. Screw!" said Bob.

"Why thank you, Mr. Screw!" said Mrs. Ratchet.

"God bless us, everyone!" said Tiny Tim.

"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!" said Screw.

"WRONG STORY, BLOCKHEAD!" said everybody.

THE END

EPILOGUE

Bob Ratchet became a partner in the company and worked twenty hours a day, seven days a week. Tiny Tim recovered from whatever it was he had, fell in with a bunch of punk rockers, and ran away from home. Whitworth Screw sold his share of the company to some big corporate conglomerate, took all his money, and moved to Bermuda with Mrs. Ratchet, who got tired of not seeing her husband for weeks on end. Bob sold all of his interest in the company and opened a macrobiotic restaurant in the trendy section of town. He has been seen at various nightclubs with Madonna. The ghost of Joseph Lucas is still haunting automobiles throughout the world, and the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future wrote a book about the experience and have appeared on "Oprah", "Geraldo", and "Donahue". AND THEY ALL LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

Technical Stuff

MGA Seat Foam Sculpture: Form Follows Function

by Tom Newton

Those weren't cookie crumbs on the carpet under my seat cushions. It was dried, disintegrating foam falling out of both of the seat cushion frames on my MGA. New seat cover kits had been installed by the previous owner. Replacing the seat cushion foams looked like a good winter project that could be tackled in a nice, warm basement.

I pulled the seat frames out just before storing the car for it's annual hibernation. Everything was there as described: The rusty metal pan, broken wood base, gooey seat tracks ant the tube frames in need of paint. When the new seat covers were removed, there were the original leather covers still in place. The last owner had done a fast and dirty job. Like most jobs, they seem to grow into something larger than first thought, kind of like an iceberg. If the seats were simply covered, it was likely that the seat backs were in the same condition. This was one of those times when I hated to be right: They were.

The next step was to pull out the catalogs and figure out what was needed to do the job properly. One supplier had the seat back rebuilding kits on sale as well as seat foams. When the foam arrived, it didn't have the contoured look of the original. It was just cut in a profile of the wood base outline with some taper from front to back and another block of foam glued to the bottom to fit into the pan. The previous owner had done half of the upholstery job and probably had a job at the seat foam factory doing half of that job as well. This presented another problem. How do you shape foam to match the original! Now I knew why it was on sale.

I got a lot of interesting suggestions: "use an electric knife for shaping", "try using a hit wire to cut it," or just "order new pre-formed seat cushions" were the most tempting ones. But then came the one that sounded strange enough to work. This person had done prototype seat work and still does custom auto interiors. The foam can be sculptured using a disc sander/ polisher at low speed with coarse 60 grit paper. You must wear eye protection that encloses the eye. Foam burns and scratched the eye, causing a lot of damage not to mention discomfort.

The cushion has to be secured in some way. I used a couple of bungee cords that hooked over the edge of a chunk of plywood that was slightly larger than the cushion itself. A chunk of 2x4 can be used to support the outer edges. I was able to do a section, stop and move the cords and do another section. I'd suggest that the job be done in an area that is open. This can get real messy, it's a lot like wood sanding dust. You'll have to get a feel for how the sander cuts, what direction to move and what edge of the disc to use. It's definitely one of those gentle touch techniques. I managed a few gouges in the foam but nothing serious or damaging. If there's some scrap foam around, use it for practice.

Keep an original cushion close at hand for comparison during the process. It worked so well that I started to think about doing a life size MGA sculpture that I could have some fun with. It would be some kind of NerfGA. It wouldn't rust or dent, It would store easily and would absorb water just like the interior of an original MGA.

MGs in Cyberspace!

A few issues ago, I promised a list of MG features and organizations located on the World Wide Web. After hours of research (not to mention particularly large phone bills), here is a list of what I've found so far:

The MG Home Page: *http://www.ipl.co.uk/MG/MG2/mg4.html*

The AMGBA Home Page: *http://www.ipl.co.uk/MG/amgba.html*

Scions of Lucas: *http://www.team.net/sol/index.html*

Victoria MG Club: *http://IslandNet.com:80/~baker/homepage.html*

SCCA: *http://www.balltown.cma.com.scca/SCCAToC.html*

British car links: *http://www.ipl.co.uk/MG/MG2/mglinks.html*

If you like to receive e-mail (and lots of it!), you can subscribe to a mailing list. By subscribing, you will guarantee yourself at least a few hundred e-mails each month, all pertaining to MGs.

You need to send an E-mail message to *majordomo@autox.team.net*. Your message should contain: "subscribe mgs". To quit, send a message which states "unsubscribe mgs".

An Open Letter to the Members of the Windsor-Detroit MG Club:

Dear Friends (Yes, I consider all of you special people in this club friends),

Back in December, 1988, when Dan first agreed to be Newsletter Editor for the club, I never guessed that I would end up as Treasurer and Membership Chair for seven years *(Editor's note: you forgot den mother!).* They have been seven wonderful, hectic, fun, hair-pulling-out, great years.

The club has grown a lot from the 58 members that renewed in 1989, and I've learned a lot from all of it. I really couldn't list everyone who deserves my heartfelt "Thank you!" (Dan only gave me so much space, plus it would cost more than the club can afford to print and mail that list!). I've made a lot of good friends (both in this club and in other clubs) over the past seven years, and I'm grateful to everyone for the opportunity. I am now leaving you in the capable hands of Philip Wiltshire and Fran Coulter. It will be very strange (for all of us, probably!) for me not to be doing the job anymore. But don't worry, we're not moving away!

Finally, I would like to leave you with this story: Daughter Lisa (approximately age 3 1/2) and I were sitting under our umbrella at English Day on the Green car show at Domino's Farms. Lisa was looking around, saw someone wearing an MG shirt, and said "M.G. Ya wanna join a club?"

At that point I started wondering if I would have this job long enough for Lisa to take over from me!

Happy Holidays to everyone and Safety Fast!

Marla

Classified Ads

Classified ads will be run for three (3) consecutive issues unless notified otherwise. Deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to publication. Information may be sent to: Dan Zebarah, 1327 Austin, Lincoln Park, MI 48146-2002.

FOR SALE: British Car Brochures and Ads. Jay Kollin (313) 455-6949 (ufn)

FOR SALE: 1937 MG-TA. Original—in show condition. Red. Must see. Best offer around $25,000. Paul Thomas, (810) 725-0725. (3/3)

FOR SALE: 1974 1/2 MGB, complete car, engine runs, suspension good, would consider parting out but prefer to sell complete. $650 obo. David Burley, (810) 685-2591. (3/3)

FOR SALE: 1974 MGB-GT Needs restoration, 40,000 miles. $750 obo. Brian Eritano (313) 782-0126 (1/3)

FOR SALE: 1977 MGB V8. 3.5 Rover engine, SDI gearbox, leather interior, Factory hardtop. 49,000 miles, excellent condition. $12,500. Tom Hoagland, (517) 486-2268 (2/3)

FOR SALE: 1971 Midget, immaculate condition. Completely restored, dual carbs, Viper Red paint, new interior, brakes & front end. 34,000 miles. $4500. Jeff Leonard, (810) 332-0028. (3/3)

FOR SALE: 1968 MGB, completely stripped down undergoing restoration. Body sandblasted, primed with new rear fenders, sills, radiator panel. Front suspension blasted and painted with new bushings. Many extra parts including door skins, front fender, valance, seals, headlight rims and more. $1200 obo, may consider selling some parts. David Burley, (810) 685-2591 (3/3)

FOR SALE: Gas tank for 1972 MGB, boiled out and slushed, $60 Canadian obo. Joyce Cherwak, (519) 256-6165. (3/3)

FOR SALE: '77 MGB rebuilt head, $225. '72 Midget 1275cc rebuilt head, $150. '70 MGB rebuilt head, $150. '72 MGB short block, runs, $150. Wire wheel changeover, $300. Chuck Wiley, (313) 586-2500 (3/3)

FOR SALE: 1978 MGB, 8000 miles on rebuilt motor. Extra parts included. Harry MacLean, (810) 689-0851. (3/3)

FOR SALE: MGB, Midget body panels, made in England. Britannia Enterprises, James Savage, (810) 689-7259 (2/3)

WANTED: Steering wheel for 1966 MGB. Basil Palombo, (519) 735-7547. (3/3)

WANTED: Two wire wheels for MGB. Jim Zielinski, (810) 689-8567 (3/3)

WANTED: Midget parts. Darren Murphy, (313) 522-5622. (3/3)

WANTED: Back issues of Can-Am Connection to complete my collection. Jan/Feb '87, Nov. '87 Dec. '87, Sept. '86, June '85 and issues prior to Oct '81. Roli Sylvestre (519) 969-2739 (ufn)

WANTED: Emission control equipment; gulp valves, air pumps, Strombergs, etc. Dan Zebarah, (313) 382-6715 (ufn)

LOCAL CAR HAULING, reasonable rates, USA & Canada, Frank Lucente (519) 966-9146 (ufn)

INSIDE STORAGE SPACE in Carlton, MI. $30/month. Chuck Wiley, (313) 586-2500. (2/3)

SECURE, DRY STORAGE in Adrian, MI. $25/month. Tom Hoagland, (517) 486-2268

Looking for something? Selling something? Remember, these ads are FREE to all members! Contact the newsletter editor at (313) 382-6715 for details.

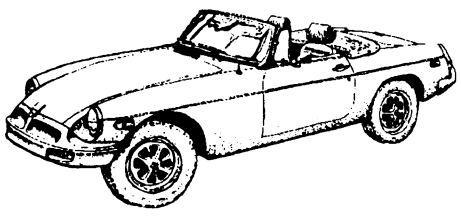
The Litter Bag

(from page 2)

Don't forget to put a few large trash cans around. If you play your cards right, the children will clean the entire basement and all you have to do is empty the trash. As for the treasure, the kids will inevitably find an old toy which either belonged to you or actually belongs to them (but it's been so long since they've seen it, they don't remember). Tell them that's the treasure and, since they did such a great job, they can keep it.

<u>Putting up Christmas decorations:</u> This is an easy one since you didn't take them down last year.

Note that these are only a few of the ways you can get work done on your car over the winter. There are more, but if I tell all of them to you, I won't get any work done on MY car!



Video Library

The following videos are available to club members. Contact our Video Librarian, Brett Altman at (313) 326-0764.

***La Carrera Panamerica.** (1987) Open road race across Mexico with music by Pink Floyd and **Silverstate Classic** - the fastest open road race in the world across Nevada.

***Winning** with Paul Newman. Fictional story of Indy car racing. The movie that got Newman interested in racing.

***The Italian Job** Michael Cain stars with several Minis in a big bank robbery.

***Drive to Win** with Mario Andretti

***Battle of the Bs.** Club racing MGBs in England.

***Le Mans.** Steve McQueen actually entered and raced a 917 Porsche while filming this classic. One of Car & Driver's 10 Best car films. Also includes Le Mans '87 and '88 races on same tape.

***SU Carb Rebuild**

***'66 and '69 Le Mans Races**

***Formula One 1979, 1980, 1982**

***Gran Turismo Jaguar.**

***The MGB Film Library**

***The MGB Video.** "Short but good"

***MGB Experience.**

***The Roadster Factory Summer Party 1993**

***The Roadster Factory Summer Party 1994**

***Behind the Wheel with Jackie Stewart.** Stewart shows you how to drive with finesse.

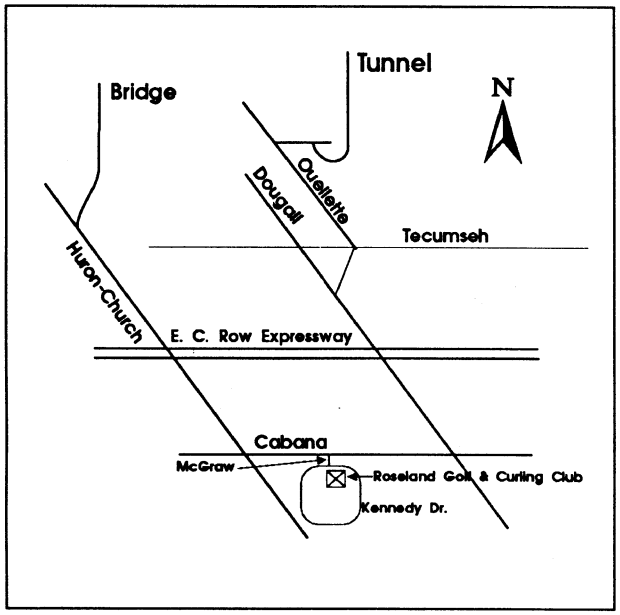
***Rendezvous.** A ride through the streets of Paris at 100 MPH plus. Short but great! A cult classic and one of Car & Driver's top 5 car films.

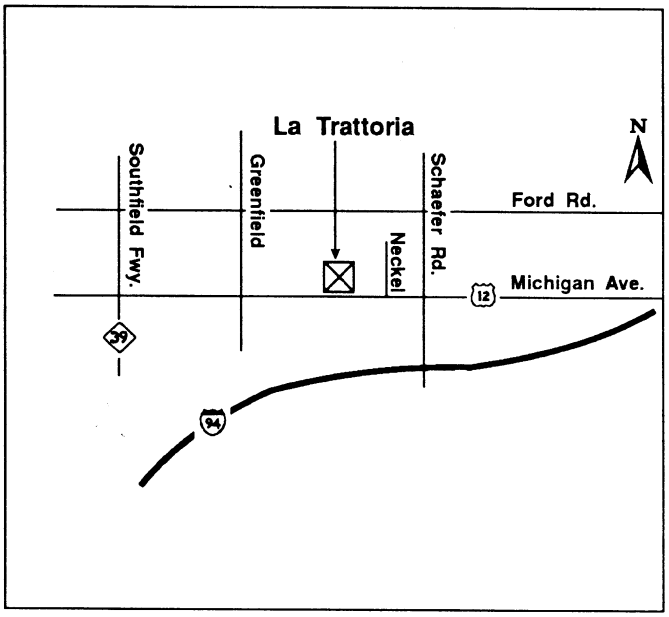
***History of the Indy 500** The story of the 500 from 1911 to 1989. Great footage of earlier races.

More titles being added all the time!

What's happening this month?
Call the club hotline at (810) 305-WDMG!

The Windsor-Detroit MG Club meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m.: Even months at the La Trattoria Restaurant, 13736 Michigan Avenue in Dearborn, west of Schaefer, and in odd months at the Roseland Golf and Curling Club in Windsor.





Find out the latest information on club meetings and events this month! Call the Windsor-Detroit MG Club Hotline at (810) 305-9364.

The Windsor-Detroit MG Club
1327 Austin
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