The Can Am CONNECTION

Vol. 18, No. 8- Newsletter of the Windsor-Detroit MG Club - August, 1998

## Put Some Adventure Back Into Your Life!

So you've been talking about how boring your life has become, just sitting in front of the television, or standing in front of the refrigerator. Well here is your chance to put some adventure back in your life.

Maybe you don't have an expensive sailboat so you can't run in the Port Huron to Mackinaw race, but you do have an MG don't you? And you were planning to take a few vacation days to go up to the University Motors Summer Party weren't you? Well there you have it. A chance to experience High Adventure.

High adventure that's as close as Grand Rapids (you don't have to travel to Pamplona Spain).

It's a trip you can tell your grandchildren about (as in "back in '98 your Grandpa and Grandma drove our old MG clear 'round Lake Michigan in 22 hours)

Adventuring is what owning and driving an MG is all about and this is the ultimate MG adventure. And you get to share it with several dozen other MG enthusiasts!

You have no excuses. I'm a 50 something diabetic with a bad back and Dan Kirby and I have run four of these with no problems. OK there was that washed out bridge in Missouri, and that "short cut" in Indiana, and that washed out road that forced us to drive through a farmers field, and the frogs in Wisconsin, but those are the things that make this such an adventure. Four great adventures.

I often say that you regret the things you **DIDN'T** do more than the things you did. So "Just Do It". You'll thank me later and so will your MG.

It starts on Thursday, August 13th at 10:30 in front of the Hilton Hotel. Bring good maps of Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin etc. clip board(s), flashlights, etc.

If you want to know more, call me, Ed Fleming at (248) 349-3799 evenings or page me during the day and leave a message at (810) 617-1273.

## University Motors Summer Party, MGs, Friends, Vendors, Ralleyes, Food, Contests. It Doesn't Get Much Better Than This!

I'm sure you already have the dates August 13, 14, 15, and 16 blocked off on your calendar. If you don't, do it right now! It's time for John Twist's Summer Party

You say you've been there before, so why go back again. Because you haven't done everything there is to do there, that's why.

Have you done the Saturday morning rally? Or the valve cover races, or helped John put on this great event? You can help at registration and meet new friends, you can help get the field ready for Saturday's show (as John says "real work for real men") You can enter one of the many contests, with a favorite photo or model or craft.

There's the Awards Banquet on Saturday night and the breakfast Sunday morning at Gratton Racetrack. The vintage racing at the track.

Then there are all the vendors with all those parts, probably one with that unique part you've been looking for, for years.

The Windsor-Detroit Club will have our tent set up in the club area and provide food and pop for members on Saturday.

So send your entry form in now.

The Can-Am Connection is published 12 times a year by the Windsor-Detroit MG Club, Inc.,

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**SEND YOUR CHECK FOR $25 (U. S.) OR $30 (CANADIAN) (Made out to "Windsor-Detroit MG Club") TO: MIKE DERDERIAN, 2698 BALSAM WAY, STERLING HEIGHTS, MI 48314**

# Safety Fast!

**Ed Fleming, Editor**

**"Glorious, stirring sight," murmured Toad, "the poetry of motion!...O bliss, O poop-poop! O my, O my!...I might never have heard that enticing sound, or smelt that bewitching smell."** Mr. Toad decribing his first encounter with a motorcar, "The Wind In The Willows"

What is it with cars? Why do they hold so much interest for so many people? I think I have found the reason. Cars have all the bases covered when it comes to stimulating your senses. They grab **all** our senses.

What brought this to my attention was the smell of gear lube that wafted up from the Midget as I changed the fluid in the differential. Gear lube is the only substance that smells like gear lube, and it's a car smell. The smell of metal parts doing heavy duty car work. Kind of a sweaty car smell.

Everyone's familiar with the "new car smell", but there is also the musty smell of an old 1940's or 30's car. The smell of something wrong with the electrics, or hot brakes.

Then there is the sound a car makes. I'm convinced the real reason Indy car officials banned the gas turbine cars was because they didn't make racing noises. Cars were meant to make noise. From the throaty purr of a 12 cylinder Ferrari to the whistle of a VW Beetle, the character of a car is determined in part by the way it sounds.

The sound a starter motor makes when you crank it up and the whine of reverse gear. The hiss of the intake and the wail of the tires in a corner all add to the pleasures of driving a car. As Vic Elford, winner of Le Mans, once told me at a driver's school, "A singing tire is a happy tire" and I get a certain pleasure form getting the tires to sing the right notes.

In the feely - touchy area cars provide many pleasures. The snick-snick of the gear shift lever, the smoothness of a polished fender as you caress the compound curves.

A 911 Porsche I owned had (and still do) beautiful lines. One night Edna came out to the garage to find me caressing the hind quarter-panel of the 911. She could tell I really enjoyed that car and this led to her statement that "Ann Landers will advise you on what to do if your husband is in love with another woman, but not if he's in love with his car".

The looks of a car can please the eye (the flowing curves of a Ferrari 250 GTO or Alfa Romeo B.A.T) or make your stomach want to make its presence known (AMC Pacer or '61 Plymouth).

That leaves taste as the last sense that a car stimulates. For many it's the only one of the senses that automobiles ignore. For some of us there's the surprise taste of gasoline after you've sucked on the siphoning tube for awhile. Or the taste of rusty metal you get when lying under your car fixing the muffler. Or the taste of oily electrical insulation when you have to use your teeth as wire strippers to expose the end of the hot lead to the fuel pump in the middle of the night on the side of the road when you forgot to pack the tool kit. Did I mention that cars taste terrible?

There is also the sense of joy and pain that cars can bring. The pain when your knuckle hits the sharp edge of the carburetor when the rusty manifold bolt suddenly snaps. The jolt when your brother turns the engine over while you're holding the coil wire. The pleasure when the car starts up immediately and purrs smoothly after you've finished your carb rebuild. or the satisfaction you get from matching the revs perfectly when down shifting.

Hope you can get out there and enjoy those sensations while the weather lets us drive our cars for a few more weeks.

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# MGing

By Dave Doolin, President

What a beautiful motoring summer this has been. Jeff Zorn and Dale Brown have been having the Battle of the Wednesday Night Drives. At each of their drives we always have a few new faces show up. This has been a really great idea to allow everyone a chance to get out and drive their MG with other club members.

I talked with Jeff Zorn tonight, he and Jan having just returned from the NAMGAR GT in Chattanooga. 2700 miles of pure driving bliss. NAMGAR had a very good turnout for this event which is loaded with non-stop MG events.

My daughter Alison and I went out to Rocket Eddy's two weeks ago. That was a wonderful drive up through an area that we had never been through before. Jeff and Jan know every back road in the area. They must have done many miles of touring on this scenic route.

We also had a chance to take in the Novi 50's Festival this past weekend. Of the 700 cars at their car show there was one lonely MG-TD being displayed. I had a chance to invite the owners to join our club. I just happened to have a membership application with me when I walked over to look at their MG. The Bartons and Heights, I may have found some new cruising buddies for you both.

We're gearing up right now for a trip to the eastern seaboard. Our plans are to visit with family in Massachusetts and upstate New York, then wonder south to North Carolina. The unfortunate part of the trip is we'll be doing it in the family sedan. I've always thought that it would be fun to do something like this in the MG with the kids in tow in a trailer. Walkie talkies would be a great way to communicate, with a clothes line strung between the two to pass the cooler back and forth.

I hate the thought of missing the Tour d'Elegance this weekend. It is my favorite weekend in Michigan with the Concours in the Park, races the following day at Waterford Hills and then the Concours d'Elegance at Meadowbrook Hall. I hope someone in the club will bring their pictures to the September monthly meeting so that those of us who miss it can get a chance to see the vintage Porsche line up. Hope I don't get excommunicated talking about Porsches in our MG Club newsletter. I have to admit I have a soft spot in my heart for those old Speedsters.

Last month we had a wonderful turn out at out meeting at the Nisbet Inn. I drove over with Ed Pavella in his beautiful MGB. I had the opportunity to introduce at least 5 new members at this meeting. I had all our new members names written down with the hope that I could introduce them again but on the way home the little piece of paper that I had their names on blew out of the roadster, and I haven't seen it since. Hope you can wait until next month and my apologies to our new members.

The other big event that is on the horizon is the Summer Party at Grand Rapids, August 13-16. I received my registration form in the mail early this week (one was also in last month's newsletter). I hope we have a big turn out for this great annual affair. The 22nd Annual Summer Party. John Twist expects over 400 MG's to attend. How would you like to try to put on a party for 600-800 people?! Hope we see you out there. I know we'll have a large group that


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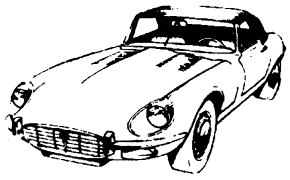

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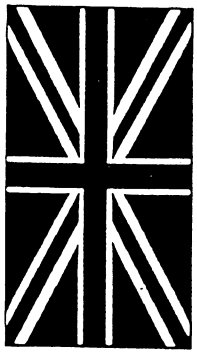

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# Space Station MGir

by John Zajac

*My circuit's dead, there's something wrong. Can you hear me Major Tom? Can you hear me Major Tom?...David Bowie - 2001 A Space Oddity*

Well, it seemed like a good idea. Our daughter Katie was off to France to see the Pope for World Youth Day and Nancy & I thought John Twist's Summer Party would be a great start for a week long vacation. It also worked out that my brother, Ron, was planning t visit his siblings in Michigan on his way back home after fishing in International Falls. The plan was to take BOTH MGs to Grand Rapids, visit the western shore of Michigan, pick Ron up at the airport and hike up to Traverse City for some winery tours.

Even before we left, I felt like the caption of the space station Mir. After much ado, I had finally gotten an overdrive transmission installed in my GT, but it had developed a leak. I noticed it leaked a lot less with the overdrive off, so I decided to press on . It also didn't help that the car died on the day before we were to leave. Just as AAA arrived, I found that a wire in my distributor was rubbing against the distributor housing. I moved the wire and the car started right up. Here we were, about to depart on a week long mission in two "obsolete spacecraft" with the GT's transmission and ignition suspect.

Trouble did not take long to arrive. It started innocently enough as we were motoring on M-36 east of Mason when Nancy, in the roadster, pulled over. She reported "rough running". Well, a quick check under the hood indicated everything shipshape. I asked her to start it up, and everything seemed fine, so we pressed on. A couple of miles west of Mason, it stopped - dead. Another check and OUCH!! that coil was hot! Now this was a brand new coil, so that shouldn't be it (although it was a Lucas), but I hooked up the old coil which had just started to go bad that I kept in the trunk and viola! We started right up. I thought it would last at least until it heated up. It conked out in about 100 yards.

We used the car phone to find help. I had brought along the NAMGBR membership directory, and we were about a mile from Jai Deagan's house, but predictably there was no answer. We checked with the Hotel in Grand Rapids , but again "there's no one in Mr. Twist's room". So we called AAA for a tow.

While waiting, I checked things under the hood. Finally I saw that a white lead was out of its pin connection up near the fuse box. I inserted it into its female connection and double checked the connection vs. the GT. The car started right up! Hmmmmm, I checked the wiring diagram in my Haynes manual, and guess what? The white lead was in the circuit between the coil and distributor. Right then, the tow truck arrived and I had to decide between taking advantage of a free AAA Plus ride to G. R. or chancing whether or not I actually "cured" the car .

We took the "free" ride.

Naturally, an MG arriving at the MG Party on a flatbed attracted some attention, even more when it started right up when dropped off. The next morning our first order of business was obtaining a new coil, so off to the vendors. We were in luck, purchasing a new one from Chuck Wiley (and a Bosch one at that!).

Saturday night we took the GT to downtown Grand Rapids, to San Chez, a tapas (no, not topless) bar for those Spanish and Mediterranean delicacies and dry, fine sherry. I did notice a bit of a miss on the drive downtown though and resolved to address the this prior to the next leg of the journey.

Sunday dawned damp and chilly . We took the roadster to the vintage races at Gratton where it rained. Naturally, I had left the "magic rain stick" (umbrella) in the GT.

So, back at the hotel it was time to tackle the GT's rough running. The points were actually in good shape, but the cap and rotor contacts were badly corroded and were replaced. Everything was buttoned up, the car started (and hummed) at one twist of the key and we were off to Saugatuck

Nancy picked a nice two lane blacktop route and we were motoring along when I noticed her put the emergency flashers on. I ran over to her car and Nancy said, "The car's running fine but get this bug out of it!!!", We shoo'ed the huge honkin' grasshopper away and continued without incident to Saugatuck.

Saugatuck is a quaint artists' community with a good sized downtown, where Nancy indulged in shopping. Luckily we couldn't cart anything too expensive in the MG's. We had one of our better dinners on the trip at Cheddar's, a proper English pub. I had an exquisite mushroom beef barley soup, stuffed quail and Nancy a sea bass, all for a very reasonable price.

Monday night brother Ron arrived (early) so I made a sprint back to the Grand Rapids airport in the GT. It scurried across the late night landscape without so much as a miss.

Tuesday dawned bright and beautiful, and we all decided to take the "scenic route" up the coast. Up to Manistee with a stop for burgers, beer and beef barley soup, then turned off onto M-22. Now that's an MG road! Lots of corners, lots to see, and it was a perfect day. Ron considered the chance to drive the distance in the roadster his "birthday present" for this year. Soon we were in Traverse City.

After an excellent barbecue style dinner at the Mackinaw Brewing micro-brewery, we strolled down Front St. Most of the shops were closed, but we just cruised and rested, looking forward to winery hopping the next day. When we got to the hotel, Ron had thought the belts were squealing, so we popped the hood and discovered the air pump hanging by the adjusting bolt! So.....

The next day, Wednesday, we headed to the Ace Hardware in Acme for some nuts and bolts. It was cold and raining, but since we were to be in the cars most of the day, our spirits weren't dampened.

Thursday morning the rain had cleared. I stopped by the shop of Lou Johnson and had my transmission oil checked and topped off (it only needed a quart). Lou comes very highly recommended. He was rebuilding a T series engine when we were there.

After topping up the dashpots and checking all the fluids we said good-bye to Ron. He was taking the roadster to visit my other 2 brothers' families in Pinckney that evening.

Friday was our "get home" day. But first we took a little trip up Mission Peninsula, which splits Traverse Bay. Following that, we had an uneventful trip home, marred only by a stop at Birch Run for some outlet shopping (sorry Nancy).

Would we do it again? Was there a sense of adventure? Well, I guess it was unreasonable to expect to drive two 25 year old cars 500 miles without a few "bumps in the road". We were shortchanged a little by getting into Grand Rapids later than we planned, On the other hand, there wasn't anything handed to us that we couldn't handle, and we were prepared for most eventualities. I guess if we did this again, other than a few more parts and tools, I'd take along a slightly more flexible attitude to help over those bumpy stretchers.

The key to that attitude is the realization that driving MGs for a week long sojourn was simply participating in a kind of rolling rebuild. Just driving these cars on a continuous basis is only the first step in a maintenance program which never really stops. So here's to our MGs! Our works in progress Vehicles which combine the reliability curves of old, fatiguing components, with the infant mortality of new parts which have yet to sort themselves out, with a dash of previous owner neglect and abuse tossed in, just for spice!

May the road and adventure never end.

# Wednesday Night Fun Runs Continue in August

**Jeff Zorn and Dale Brown are putting together some Wednesday Night Fun Runs where club members can just head out for a relaxing evening drive or rendezvous with fellow MG enthusiasts. Here's a list of the next few events.**

**August 5th.** An East Side Journey. We'll depart at 7:30 from the First State Bank parking lot at 9 Mile and Mack (Northeast corner). From there we will take a tour of the Pointes and Shores, ending for some ice cream at a local fattery.

**August 19th.** So many members had so much fun at the Old Fashioned A & W Root Beer and Go Karts in Farmington, we're going to do it again. Meet at the usual Meijer's parking lot at 8 Mile and Haggerty, just west of I-275. We'll leave the parking lot promptly at 7:00 PM.

**August 26th, Old Fashioned Root Beer and Ice Cream in Windsor.** We'll meet at the usual McDonald's just south of the bridge at 7:30 PM and head out to the city of Cottom and some good old fashioned root beer and ice cream at an A & W type place.

If you have any more suggestions (or need last minute Fun Run information) for a Wednesday Fun Run for July, August or September please give Jeff Zorn at (248) 489-1855 or e-mail at fcjeff@aol.com or Dale Brown (519) 258-5987 or e-mail at dbrownmg@MNSi.Net a call. We would love to hear from you.

Washing a car is a simple task, but like everything else there is a right and wrong way. Here are some tips to a perfectionist's car wash.

**1. Always wash a cool car.** No this doesn't mean only a '45 TC or a 250 GTO Ferrari. Only wash your car after the surface has cooled off. Never wash in direct sunlight. The water tends to dry and leave mineral deposits on the surface while you are busy washing another part.

**2. Let the car soak for awhile.** Flood the surface of the car with cold water. Don't use a high pressure nozzle. Repeat the soaking cycle after about 5 minutes, then the dirt will float off the surface and less abrasive action will be necessary. High pressure nozzles will force the dirt and grit across the surface and could put fine scratches in the paint.

**3. Don't use detergent, or use only a detergent made for washing cars.** Never use dish detergent or a powder detergent. Soaps will strip the oils from the paint and over the years cause it to become brittle and crack.

**4. Wash from top to bottom.** After the car has been soaked, wash the roof first (if you have one), using a soft sponge or horses hair brush. Wash in the direction of the normal airflow over the car. After the roof, continue down to the major flat surfaces, the hood (bonnet) and trunk (boot) and fenders (wings) and doors. Continue to flood the surface as you wash.

**5. Don't forget the wheels and tires.** Wheels and tires are the pots and pans of your dishwasher. Always do them last because os the dirt and heavy road grit that can easily be transferred to the surface if done our of sequence. Disc brake dust is highly corrosive and will rust steel wheels and pit alloys. Make sure you clean them well and don't forget to wax the wheels and hubcaps when you do the rest of the car.

**6. Occasionally wash the bottom of the car and engine compartment.** When you do this, it should be done first. On this step, a high pressure nozzle **is** recommended. Look for places where dirt and water tend to get trapped on the underside of the car. This is where the rust will start first. If you clean it out often, you'll decrease the chance of a rusted-out car after a few years. When you wash the engine compartment, be sure to cover the ignition parts and air cleaner, and on really dirty engines use one of the spray degreasers in a spray can. A clean engine not only looks better but also runs cooler.and it's much easier to spot an oil leak on a clean engine.

**7. Always dry off the car after washing.** Water will leave mineral deposits on the painted surface that can damage the paint and leave stains or permanent scars on the surface. Dry the car with a chamois a dry terry cloth can scratch the surface). Dry the areas that tend to trap and hold water. This will help decrease the rust potential and will prevent all that trapped water form sneaking out when you move the car.

**8. Don't allow dead bugs or bird droppings to remain on the surface.** After you've spent all this time cleaning your car, it always seems that some bird is the first to "spot" your handyword. Bird droppings are high in acid and can literally eat your paint, and dead bugs are almost as bad. Clean the bugs and bird droppings off as soon as possible, even if you don't have time to do the entire car.

**9. Park in the shade.** The ultraviolet rays of the sun will break down the pigments in the paint, especially if your car is red, blue, BRG or any dark colour. Avoid parking under trees, since the sap drops on the car and makes a sticky surface that attracts dirt and is very hard to clean off.

**10. Avoid automatic carwashes.** The spinning brushes cut fine scratches into the paint.

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**To Purchase Any Of These Items Contact Your Regalia Chairman**

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***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 Indycar 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
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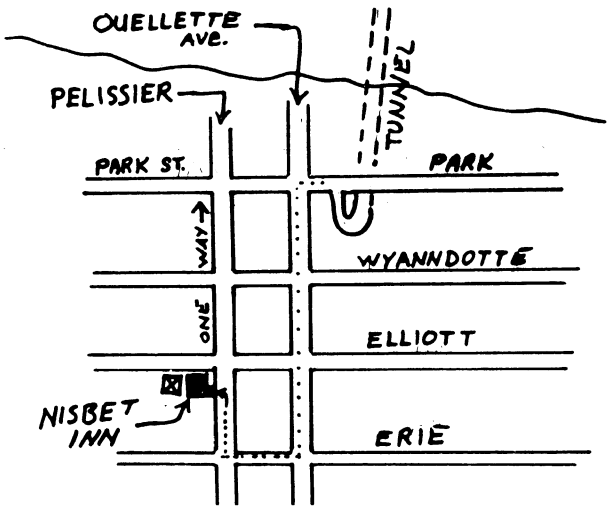


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NOTE: For June, July, August and September, 1998 Monthly Meetings will be held at the Nisbet Inn!!!

**The Windsor-Detroit MG Club meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM. Even numbered months at Rio Bravo Restaurant on Hubbard Drive just west of the Southfield Expressway, and odd numbered months at the Nisbet Inn, 131 Elliott, West, just west of Ouellette, south of the tunnel. See maps.**

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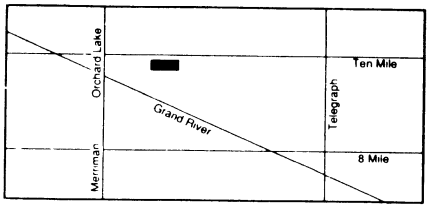

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**'74 MGB Rdstr,** Excellent Cond. 45K , $9500. Bob Gibbs (248) 647--8513 (8)

**'59 MGA Side Curtains,** black, spring loaded VG $50 Canadian. One MGA wire wheel with w/w tire, VG $25 Canadian. (519) 948-9704 (8)

**'50 Singer 4A Roadster.** Mint Cond., shown at Meadowbrook in 1996, maroon body, black fenders, car cover, tools, original sales documents and service records etc. $15,000 OBO. Pat Bremner (248) 540-9503 (7)

**Electronic Ignition** for MGB or Midget. Everything fits inside distributor. New, in box, $50 Otto Pope days, (313) 845-0987, eves, (248) 437-7386 (6)

**SU Carb change over for MGB.** Intake and exhaust manifolds, rebuilt carbs, new heat shield, K&N air cleaners, fuel lines. Just bolt it on. $300.00 Otto Pope days (313) 845-0987, eves (248) 437-7386 (6)

**Project Cars:** '79 Mini, '63 MGB, '74 MGB-GT, '76 MGB. Mostly disassembled. Call for details, Brett Shelley (519) 736-2301 (6)

**'63 MGB** wire wheels, restoration, project, all there, fairly solid runs, $1500 Wyatt, (517) 645-2637 (6)

**'67 MGB-GT,** Blue, original Spec. Ed., no rust, new interior, rebuilt OD/close ratio transmission, rebuilt wire wheels, new tires and hubs, good driver. $6500. Peter Pleitner (734) 662-3487 (6)

**'73 Midget**, nice car for the money. Needs a little TLC & minor adjustments. Road worthy as it sits, new tires, $3700 invested, will sell for $3200 OBO Ted (313) 292-0818 (6)

**MGB & Midget Body parts,** made in England, Britannia Enterprises, James Savage (248) 689-7259 (5)

**50 British Cars and** tons of misc British car parts, V8 motors etc. Call for details-Lansing area. Wyatt (517) 645-2637 (5)

**'70 MGB Rdster,** newer top (2 years old), new gas tank, recent front end rebuild. $4200. Dennis Ferguson (734) 459-1309 (5)

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**Back Issues of the 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

# Calendar of Events

Note: Items listed in **Bold Type are Windsor-Detroit MG Club Events.** Those listed in *Italic Type are British Sports Car Council Events.*

For up to date information on club events call Chuck Wiley at (313) 586-2500, Ed Fleming at (248) 349-3799 or Roli Sylvestre at (519) 969-2739.

**August 1998**

**Aug 12 Monthly Meeting-Windsor (NOTE: NOT AT RIO BRAVO THIS MONTH)**
Aug 13-15 University Motors Summer Party-Grand Rapids
Aug 15 Woodward Dream Cruise (248) 548-3497
**Aug 19 Wed Nite Run-A&W in Farmington**
**Aug 26 Wed Nite Run-Ice Cream and Root Beer in Windsor**

**September 1998**

**Sep 9 Monthly Meeting-Windsor**
**Sep 11--13 Club Trip to 50th Watkin's Glen Grand Prix**
**Sep** 13 Battle of the Brits (810) 979-4875
Sep 25-27 Indy British Days (317) 887-3867
Sep 26 British Motoring Club Autocross, Lansing (517) 647-7204

**October 1998**

**Oct 14 Monthly Meeting-Dearborn**
**Oct 18 Fall Colour Tour**

**November 1998**

**Nov 11 Monthly Meeting-Windsor**

**December 1998**

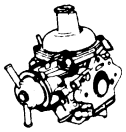
**Dec 9 Monthly Meeting-Dearborn (Gift Exchange Night)**

**Jan 1999**

**Jan 13 Monthly Meeting-Windsor**
**Jan 23 Hibernation Party-Dearborn Golf Club**


**1945 - 1980**

**SU/STROMBERG CARBURETTER RESTORATION**



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| MGB - MIDGET (HS) | $325/pr |
| MGB (HIF) | $350/pr |
| REBUSH ONLY | $ 75/pr |
| AUTOMATIC STROMBERGS | $250/ea |

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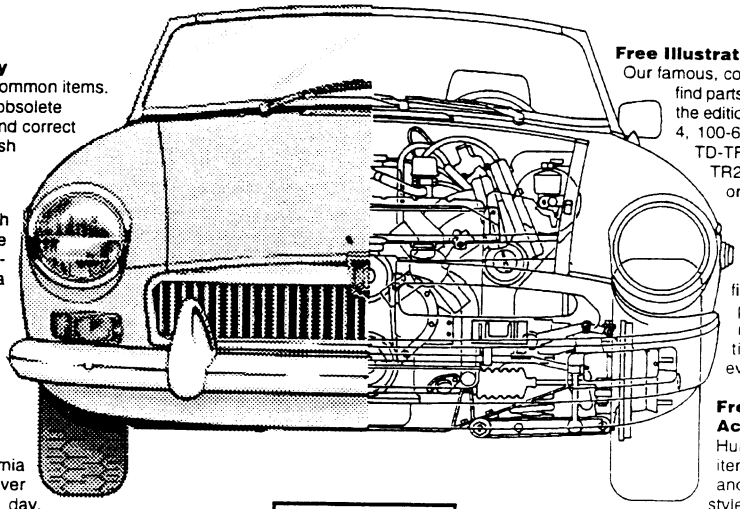

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