The Can Am CONNECTION

Vol. 29, No. 10 - Newsletter of the Windsor-Detroit MG Club November—December 2007

2007 FALL COLOUR TOUR

Since many club members were off attending the Mid-Ohio races, or out of town on the day of the club's scheduled "Fall Colour Tour," the last thing I expected to worry about was parking, since perhaps only ten cars might be showing up. But the sunshine and pleasant "Fall" temperature lured a grand total of 23 British cars as well as Ed Fleming's VW "WESTY" Bus.

In addition to the sisters, Shari Pelic & Sandra Kuivenhoven (in her) red 51 'TD,' were John & Sheila Marsh in their 52 'TD' and non-member Richard Axford, who came along in his 53 'TD'. Jim Kozlowicz had the sole MGA in attendance, with his 1962, Mark II.

Also joining us for part of the drive, were two members from the 'DTSC' (both driving a Triumph TR-6), and Neil Reichard, in his most unusual 1968 Riley 'Elf'.

The rest of the cars were later model MGs, some of them GTs, including Fran Lewis' MGC-GT. Attending their first event were new members, Gina Harder & friend Sue, in Gina's 75 MGB, and Bob & Gloria Bobrowski in their 74½ MGB. Taking it's first real drive on American soil was David & Wendy Clements 'Right-Hand' 1966 MGB, that had only recently arrived from England.

The rest of the group included Colin & Jan Stafford, Tom & Marcia Greiner, Steve & Donna Finch, Guy St. John, Rod & Kathy Vitovich, Gene & Joan Johnson, Elvin & Janet Davis, and Kevin & Cheryl Wolfe (who caught up with the group at the Dexter Cider Mill).

On time, but last to arrive (thanks to U.S. Customs) were Canadians, Mike & Miki Abrosimoff, Ralph & Kathi Poupard, who came along with Dale Brown.

Getting started shortly after 1 PM, the group was routed through a local subdivision where Philip Wiltshire was there to photograph many of the group as they got under way.

As we drove past Jenny's Farm and saw the huge crowd that gathered there for the cider and fall activities, I wondered what it would be like in town? When we arrived, I was glad that Neil Reichard was already there, arranging to have the cars park further up the road, just out of sight of the Mill. Because he lives nearby, Neil took charge of parking and really helped things go smoothly for everyone. As we walked towards the Mill, the "Cider" line was already into the parking area with no available parking, either in the lot or on the street.

Waiting in the cool sunshine wasn't difficult to do, and many (including myself) took advantage of the "Free" wine tasting, returning to the line with their purchases to wait their turn to buy cider & donuts and even caramel candied apples. Thanks to the cooler weather, only the hardiest of the bees (actually they're really wasps), had come out looking to share in our treats.

From there, it was off to the gas station to regroup for the next leg of the drive, minus about six cars who had other plans. Because there was little traffic, our group was able to at least begin the drive together, before making our way through Dexter. Less than an hour later, 18 cars arrived at the "Litehouse" in Stockbridge for the second stop. BEER!

Since I had called ahead, the dinning area was all set up when we arrived. Some members decided to order dinner, while most of us just ordered drinks and snacks like onion rings, fried mushrooms, french fries or even sweet potato fries. The folks at the "Litehouse" have always been good to us, even knowing that I had arranged for dinner elsewhere. But when Dale Brown got his order of Fish & Chips, it really caused quite a commotion when everyone saw the huge serving (perhaps 10 pieces)! Perhaps the "Litehouse" wanted to show us what we were missing out on by eating someplace else?

More than thirty 'cruisers' were present, but the two waitresses quickly got both our drinks & food, and somehow managed to keep the bills straight.

From there, it was off on the dinner run to "Aleko's," a fine dining restaurant in Hamburg. When we arrived, the group (now numbering about 24) were promptly seated at three booths and a large round table.

The restaurant was also just beginning to fill with the local school kids, all dressed up for their homecoming night out, but we all enjoyed a dinner and conversation without the need to shout over the noise in the room. Food was good, as was the service, and one by one, the cars pretty much left on their own for the final drive back home in the dark.

Adrienne and I really enjoyed hosting an event where finally; I didn't miss a turn, or run into construction. I combined the best of previous drives, to take the group where we had found the best service, and thanks to everyone's cooperation, this years "Fall Colour Tour" was our most enjoyable, if not the most unforgettable.

Missing a turn (as I've often done), or leading the group into town, not knowing we'd be driving right into a festival..... Those are the kind of memories that are unforgettable. This time, the drive was a pleasant experience.

By Rich Wagner

Photos on Page 2

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2007 FALL COLOUR TOUR

ROCK STAR * PARTY HARD * DRIVING WITH YOUR BONNET DOWN KIDS!

AND PETS

HALLOWEEN HAT CONTEST

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Submissions must arrive by the 15th of the month to ensure publication in the next issue.

The Windsor-Detroit MG Club

Presidentially Speaking

By Jeff Zorn — Club President

A chill is in the air and leaves are falling around us as we wind down the driving season and start to think about storing our little beauties. Hard to believe only a few short weeks ago it was hot and humid outside.

Jan and I have been traveling south this month for a few more shows in Tennessee, Georgia, Florida and the last one the first weekend of November in North Carolina. I also will take our MGB (since EmmieB vacations now in Florida) to a show in St. Pete on November 11th just for fun.

We still have the Northville Downs event now scheduled for November 17th. Jan and I attended last year and it was a blast and even a bit lucrative for us. If you can make it I highly recommend you don't miss this one. See page 10 for more information about it.

We are also busy working on the Hibernation Party for 2008. It will be at the Windsor Yacht Club again with a date to be announced. Don't forget the November/December and January/February Issues of the Can-Am Connection are combined so keep an eye on the website for any updates and also the broadcast emails that Rick sends out. You won't want to miss this party!

At our last board meeting we adjusted the dues to be equal on both sides of the border. With the US dollar (actually a bit lower than the Loonie) it was something we had to do immediately and will keep a close eye on it at each board meeting. he rates for both US and Canadian members are $25 for an emailed newsletter and $30 which includes a mailed copy of the Can-Am Connection. We still request that you pay in US dollars to help the club with the bank charges which can amount to about 5-7% when we have to deposit a Canadian check or cash. Don't forget that the club also takes Paypal on our website for renewals. This allows us to handle the exchange much easier and the money is deposited directly into our bank account. We are also investigating using Paypal for new memberships as well and having an online application that can be filled out and emailed in. This will be great and will allow interested people to join our growing club very quickly.

Phil and Jan Wiltshire will be donating an annual award to the club to be presented at the Hibernation Party. The award will be the Dan Zebarah memorial Can-Am Connection Trophy. The annual winner will be selected based on the most entertaining newsletter article submitted by an individual each year. The board and editors will review the articles along with the Wiltshire's and the winner will be announced at the party. Thanks Jan and Phil for offering to sponsor this award each year.

Elections are almost upon us again. As always each position is up for grabs and we really would like some new people to step forward and put their names on the ballot. The offices up for election are President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. Each term is a one year term and can be extended up to two more times via election. Any of your current officers will be very happy to have some new members step forward. Our Treasurer Matt Bade who has been doing a fantastic job is now at term limit according to our bylaws. We do need someone to step forward for this position, preferably on the US side of the border since the banking is done over here. I am sure if no one steps forward Matt would be happy to do it again but it would be in violation of our by-laws.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

NEW MEMBERS

Greg & Karen Dunn
4759 Pickwick Dr
Sterling Heights, MI 48310
586-977-2386
1965 MGB Green

Alex & Sherry Taylor
2571 Robbins Ct
Port Huron, MI 48060
810-982-3780
1951 MG TD Red
1979 MGB Brown

David Clements & Wendy Gilroy-Clements
6058 Mission Drive
West Bloomfield, MI 48324
248-366-7981
1966 MGB Old English White
2007 Land Rover LR3

CLUB MEETINGS

November Meeting
Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2007

The Dominion House Tavern
3140 Sandwich Street
Windsor, Ontario

December Meeting
Wednesday, December 12, 2007

Brass Pointe Restaurant
24234 Orchard Lake Road
Farmington Hills, Michigan

Due to space restrictions,
see the Windsor/Detroit MG Club website:
www.mgcars.org.uk/wdmgcc/ for detailed directions.

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER CLUB MEMBERS ANNIVERSARIES

NOVEMBER	
Harriet West & Keith Nelson	17 years
Rick & Julie Green	16 years
Dave Doolin	12 years
Alice Ginter	9 years
Tom & Gloria Burke	8 years
Paul Foster	6 years
Rosalind & Phil Peck	6 years
John & Rosanne Brown	5 years
Bob Fougere & Courtney	4 years
Bill & Lois Fairman	3 years
Richard Winterburn	3 years
Tom & Nicole Robinson	2 years
Tim & Jan Rollin	2 years
Karol & Dolores Dycha	1 year

DECEMBER	
Harry & Aileen Mueller	26 years
Garey Knop	17 years
Bill & Hilda Larson	14 years
Ron, Jane & Aaron Bodrie	12 years
Albert & Judith Finch	8 years
Scott & Lyn Turner	8 years
Jim & Laurie MacArthur	5 years
Thomas Rollison	5 years
Sandy & Larry Kuivenhoven	5 years
Bill, Danny & Matthew Reeves	3 years
Dan & Elaine Beyer	2 years
Reinold Koscluw & Lyn Cunninghan	2 years
Al & Evie Kozleski	2 years
Bob & Susan Reaume	2 years
Bob & Suzie Matthews	1 year

Vice-Presidentially Speaking

By Cathy Holliday — Club Vice-President

Boy what a great fall driving season. The Indian summer sure did extend the wonderful days for a leisure drive or a fun filled event.

Steve and I started with a trip to Indianapolis for the Indy British Union Days. We have enjoyed this event many times over the several years. They are a great group of folks and always plan a fun filled weekend. This year, the event returned to the Brickyard Inn again. It was a special weekend in Speedway, Indianapolis. They were hosting the kickoff of the renovation project to completely change the look of the famous International raceway. On Friday evening we arrived and joined in rekindling many old friendships. We updated all our latest stories and events over dinner at the Union Jack Pub. By the time we returned to the Brickyard, the hospitality room was open. The boys all grabbed a beverage and roamed the parking lot to inspect the latest changes they had made to their LBC.

Saturday morning was their Rally. This has always been a challenging event, truly testing driver and navigator relationships. At the introduction session, there were a few lone drivers and the director asked if anyone needed a navigator, half of the men raised their hands. The driving directions and answer sheets were distributed and everyone was off for a delightful drive.

After the rally, we lined up for the lap of the track. This year the lap was the traditional Indy direction- counter clockwise. The Formula One track- clockwise - was torn up for repairs and modifications. Following the lap of the track, it was off to the parade through the streets of Speedway and festival to kick-off their renovation projects.

Many cheering fans waved and cheered as if we had just actually ran the Indy 500 race. It was exciting.

The banquet on Saturday night celebrated the rally winners and the events of the day. The guest speaker Pete Hylton, engineering professor, author, and SCCA historian presented a humorous review of racecar history.

Sunday, it was off to the car show. Across the street from the track at the American Legion over 130 cars were displayed. The marquees for the event were the MGT and the MGA. Beautiful displays of meticulously preserved classics were on hand.

The drive home Sunday went very smooth. This was the first year Indiana has changed to daylight savings time so there was no time difference between the two states. But we made it back by 9 PM, record time for the run – but it was Indy weekend. Yes it was a great weekend with great friends and great weather.

The monthly meeting at the Brass Pointe hosted the annual Halloween Party. Sandy and Shari dished up wonderful decorations, contests and prizes to brighten the evening. The Halloween Hat Contest challenged many members' creative abilities. Many resourceful designs topped the evening. I spent the previous two weeks thinking and researching for a clever creation. I had almost given up when I spotted an auto air freshener at one store. The light bulb went on. That is my main job on the MG's – detailing. I created a detailing hat. I collected some of my usual tools, sponge, and microfiber towel, chrome cleaner, detail spray and brushes and attached them to my favorite camo hat. I completed the project only minutes before Steve said let's go. The whole evening was a load of fun for everyone.

The fall color tour also had great weather for their drive. We were unable to make that event due to other obligations but I am sure there was a beautiful display of natures fall colors.

So enjoy these last few weeks of driving. Soon, it will be time to park these little beauties for the winter.

Don't forget some of the other events the club has planned for the coming months. The Northville Downs Horse Racing event is scheduled for November17th (see page 10 for more details). The $25 per person, includes a buffet dinner and whole evening of fun. And the Hibernation party in February is always an elegant event. Watch the newsletter and the website for updates.

Cathy

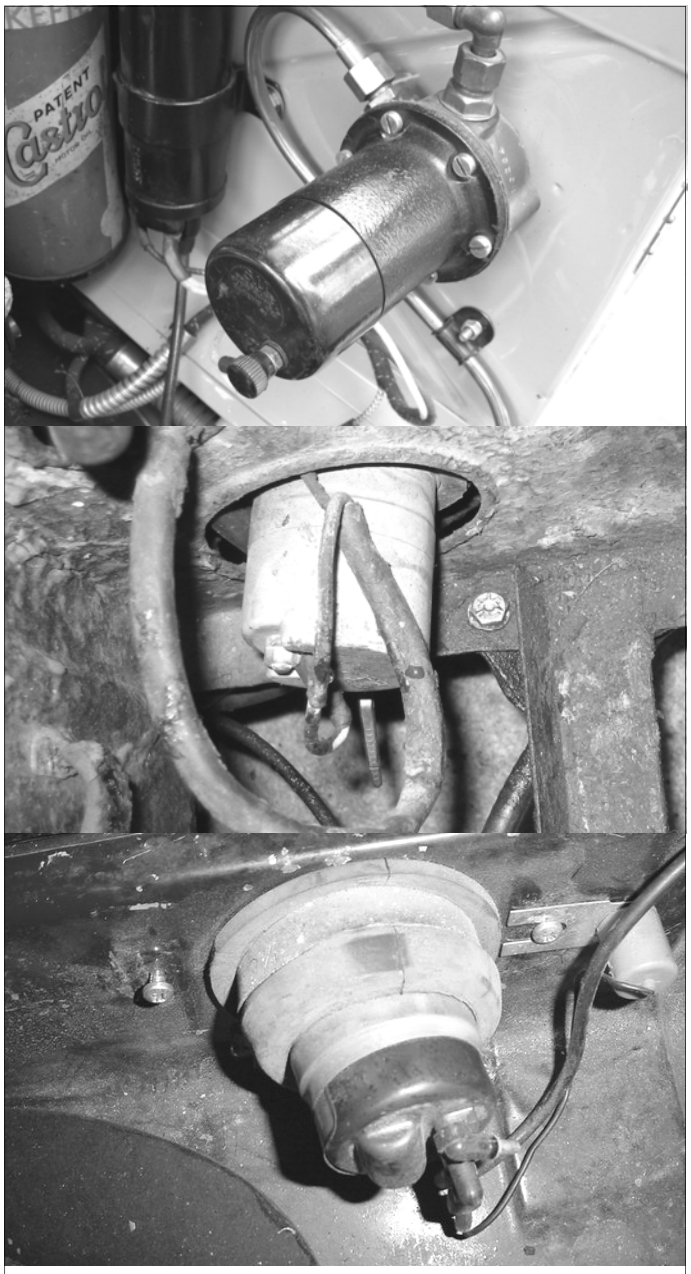
Fuel For Thought

The July 2007 issue of the British Magazine *Enjoying MG* included an article by Roger Parker called “Petrol for the Classic MG”. Roger cites a number of design changes on modern cars that have required modifications to fuel and concludes that, “This has produced a widening gulf between the classic engine design and the fuels available, leading to a number of running problems”. Roger’s observations reflect mine in the book *MGB Electrical Systems*, in which, because of the difference in modern gasoline characteristics compared to those for which the car was designed, I recommend using ‘book’ distributor timing data only as a starting point. Proper setting of the ignition can now only be done, I contend, by using premium fuel and test driving to establish the point where knock occurs, and then retarding the timing only just enough to eliminate it.

Care has to be taken not to fully transfer statements about British fuels over to those sold in North America, factors such as emission standards, vehicle type, climate and even taxation affecting gasoline formulation. However, recent experiences lead me to believe that our fuel, like that Roger describes as being sold in Britain, is becoming more volatile and contains more agents that tend to gum and eventually solidify after it has more quickly evaporated. I first noticed this last spring when my normally easy-to-start lawn mower just refused to fire up. Looking in the carburetor reservoir I found the float glued to the chamber and the fuel needle firmly stuck in the upward position, preventing fuel entry. Amazingly, the fuel residue that forms this glue doesn’t readily dissolve in the gasoline in which it was borne but it does seem to succumb carburetor cleaner.

In a few weeks, when I get the lawn mower ready for winter storage, I’ll remember to switch the fuel tap off and then run the engine until it stops, that is until all the fuel in the carb has been exhausted. I’ll do a similar thing with the MGs too. I’ll disconnect the fuel pumps and again run the engines until all the fuel in the carburetors is used up. Discussing the lawn mower problem with fellow club member Andrew Turner, he tells me that he adds stabilizer to his lawn mower fuel, and that precaution has proved a great problem preventative for him. I’ll follow his advice in both my mower and my MGs, but I’ll still make sure the carbs are empty. I can see that stabilizer may stop the gas going ‘sour’ but those gummy additives are still going to be in it and left behind after the fuel evaporates.

I mentioned earlier that only premium fuel should be used in an MGB. That’s because MGs as well as Midgets made after the Mk 1, were designed for 97 or 98 RON. Note that “RON’, which means Research Octane Number, is one method of rating the octane or anti-knock capability of a fuel. There are several other ways in which octane can be measured but the most common alternative system is the MON or ‘Motor Octane Number”. MON yields a number 8 to 10 points below that of the RON method and because both systems were at one time simultaneously used in North America, sometimes for purposeful deception, regulatory authorities decided that the system here



Disconnecting the electrical connections to a fuel pump is easier on some cars than others.
Top: The TC’s is under the bonnet,
Middle: The early MGB’s pokes into the battery well,
Bottom: On late MGBs the pump is partly in the boot.

A label typical of those found on Michigan gasoline

would be standardized as an average of the two measurement methods. Next time you are bored standing by the gas-station pump, look for the notice declaring that the octane rating is (R + M)/2. The result is that North American octane ratings are 4 to 5 points lower than those declared in Europe so about 93 octane fuel should be used in MGBs and most Midgets. Earlier cars designed for 91 RON fuel can get away with the 87 octane sold here. Failure to use a high enough octane fuel can cause running-on (dieseling) after the ignition is switched off and pinging, a tinkling noise, caused by pre-ignition when the engine is under stress. Both phenomena can be very damaging, perhaps burning a hole in a piston. Note, however, that using too high an octane fuel only burns a hole in your pocket! Late MGBs had a decompression valve to thwart running-on, not even the highest octane fuel available always preventing it. If you have a running-on problem, try using an octane booster. At the very least stop the engine as soon as possible after key-off by stalling the car in gear.

Of course all our MGs were designed for leaded fuel. Unless your car has had the cylinder head modified to be a 'leaded head' by having hardened valve seats installed, then you should remember to use a lead substitute additive with each fill-up. Various brands of lead substitute claim that their particular alchemy is best but virtually all the products sold in the US, such as *Bardahl Insted O'Led* and *CD-2 Lead Substitute*, are based on sodium, the EPA expressing concerns about the active ingredients found elsewhere. In other countries, including perhaps Canada, other primary agents such as phosphorous or potassium can be found. All work by depositing a soft cushion of material in the valve seats to protect it from heat and mechanical stress in much the same way lead used to. Tests published in the British magazine *Classic & Sports Car*, June 1999 on lead substitutes found that manganese, a product found in some octane boosters, was as effective as any lead substitute in reducing valve seat recession (VSR). In the USA, Bardahl Octane Booster and CD Octane Booster are both based on manganese, but neither company makes any specific claims regarding their booster's efficacy in reducing VSR.

A further problem arising from modern gasoline formulation – and due to its greater volatility – is vapor lock. Gary Odor's Midget kept misbehaving on the hot drive back from Mad Dogs this year and, although it could not be proven, the consensus of the assembled WDMGC brains there was that the cause was vapor lock. Vapor lock occurs when the gasoline gets so hot as it nears the carburetor that it changes from liquid to vapor and won't pump. Gary's 1975 Midget had (he's now sold the car) a mechanical fuel pump that, for most of the fuel pipe length, sucks the fuel up and this type pump finds it very hard to move vapor. MGBs and earlier Midgets with electric pumps at the rear of the car that push the fuel through are much less susceptible to the problem. Our MGs do not have cross-flow cylinder heads and that means that the inlet and exhaust are on the same side of the engine. The hot exhaust heats the incoming fuel and, unless precautions are taken, can cause fuel vaporization. Those precautions are usually careful fuel pipe routing and a heat shield for thermal: blocking, reflecting and insulating, reducing: convected, radiated and conducted heat. Unfortunately, most heat shields in our cars have lost their insulation, seen as a white mat on the under-surface, and are no longer shiny and so are much less effective than they should be. Vapor lock can often be recognized because it usually occurs when the car slows down after having been driven hard. The hot engine and lower air-flow cause the under-bonnet temperature to rise rapidly while at the same time the fuel moves less quickly in the supply pipe and has more time to rise above its vaporization temperature.

Another problem I have seen this year, this time on an MGB fitted with HIF carburetors, is engine misfire due, apparently, to the mixture being very lean when the car is driven hard in hot conditions. I wonder if in this case too, modern fuel characteristics are the cause. The HIFs rely on a bimetal beam (a device that bends in proportion to the temperature it sees) to weaken the fuel/air mixture as the temperature increases. Could it be that a device designed to compensate for 1970's fuel mixtures just won't work properly with those available today?

Next time your MG hiccoughs or burps, instead of blaming Lucas or MG maybe you should think of it as a baby, and simply blame it on gas.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

1980 Triumph TR7

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1951 MG TD

unassembled (basket) car located in Plymouth, MI. Car has been in storage for last 20 years. Asking $4,750 OBO. Sal Cavallaro (734) 604-0378 cell or e-mail: salcavallaro@hotmail.com for further information.

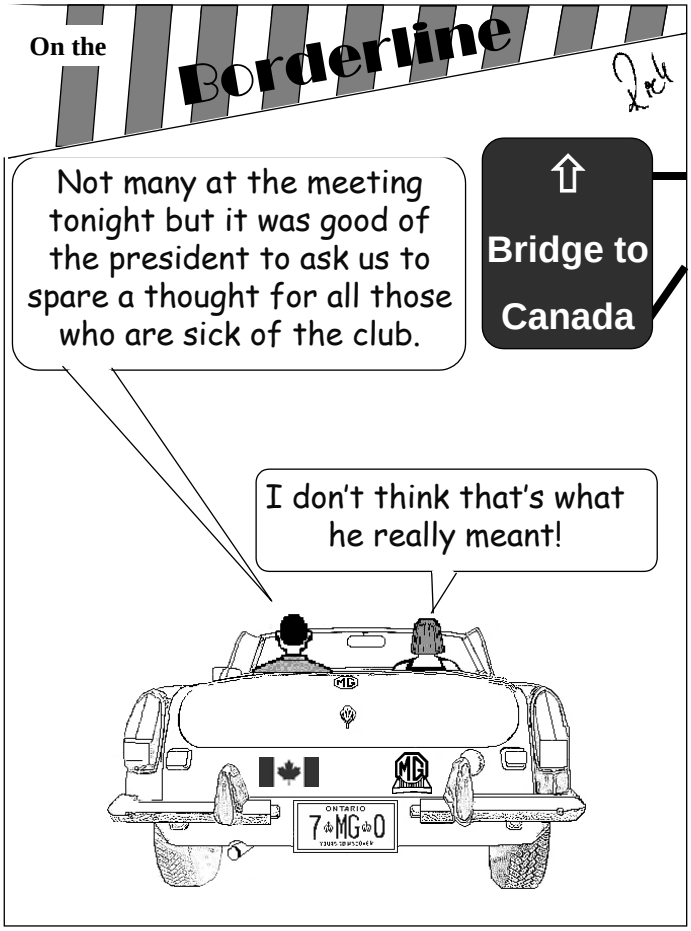
For Sale:

Tandem Axle Open Trailer. Great for LBC. $800. Also, will sell 1958 ZB Magnette "Maggie" for $7,500. Package price? Ted Hight (248) 682-8408

1980 MBG, Red with tan interior, wonderful shape. Purchased from original owner, 30,100 mile. All original, comes with original window stickers and documentation on parts and repairs, also two tops. Needs carpeting on drivers side and glove box lock. You can have this vehicle for the same price it was purchased for back in 1980—$8100.00. Contact Chuck Ghawi at (734) 668-6659 for more details.

WANTED: New editor for the CanAm Connection. Starting in 2008, the club newsletter will need a new editor to publish all important events to WDMGC members. If interested, please contact Jeff Zorn, club president at (248) 489-1855 for further information, including salary and benefits, sorry no 401K plan.

Classified ads run for three months. If you wish the ad to continue longer, or want it removed, please contact the editor.



WDMGC member Guy St. John, owner of Guy's Garage in Northville, would like to remind you that, along with usual fall hibernation ritual for your LBC*, it's a good time to consider taking care of some of those annoying little, (sometimes big), problems that developed over the driving season. It's really no fun to wait all winter for that first top down spring day, only to find out she won't start, stay running, shift, stop, well you get the picture…..

If you are considering major work, i.e. Engine Rebuild, Clutch, Suspension, Electrical, Seats & Interiors, you need to call early for scheduling, as garage space is limited. A quick oil and filter change, fluid check, lube, and once over can usually be done in one day. So call anytime (248) 349-3649 for your appointment.

- **Oil and Filter Change**
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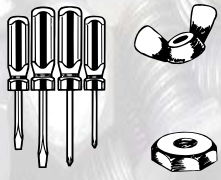
- **Battery Disconnect or Removal**
- **Stra-Bil in a full gas tank**



EnjoyClassicCars.com

A Regional Website for the Classic Car Enthusiast

If you have access to the Internet, check out this web site and become part of the circle. The site is run by MG and Italian car enthusiast Peter Pleitner who is a professor in the vehicle restoration portion of Washtenaw Community College and who facilitates our annual trip to Rivertech

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ROAD TO CLUB EVENTS

NOVEMBER

14th—Wednesday, Monthly Meeting. Dominion House—Windsor, ON
.Page 4

17th—Saturday, A Night at the Races, Northville Downs Harness Racing Track
Page 10

DECEMBER

12TH—Wednesday, Monthly Meeting, Brass Pointe, Farmington Hills, MI Page 4
Holiday Gift Exchange

JANUARY

9th—Wednesday, Monthly Meeting, Dominion House, Windsor, ON

A NIGHT AT THE RACES

NOVEMBER 17TH, 6:00 P.M.

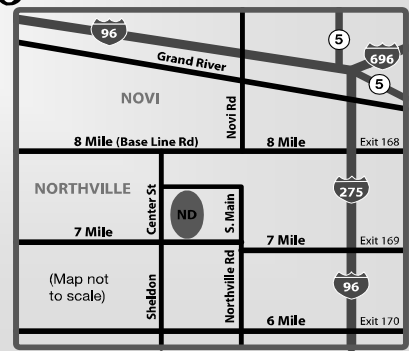
Treat yourself to a Saturday night of fun at Northville Downs harness racing track.
For $25.00 (US) per person you can enjoy:

- Entrance to the track
- Live harness racing.
- Our own reserved table in the club house.
- All you can eat buffet. (Carved top round of beef, 3 hot entrées, potato & vegetable, full salad bar, cheese tray, relish tray, rolls & butter, dessert table, coffee or tea).
- A race named in honor of the Windsor-Detroit MG Club.
- Salute and welcome by the track announcer.
- Our club name up in lights on the infield matrix display.
- All taxes and gratuities included. (Drinks and bets extra).

Pre booking is necessary. Deadline is November 10th.
Please get checks, payable the Windsor-Detroit MG Club to either:

Anne Astley, 28404 South Harwich Drive, Farmington Hills, MI 48334 (248-737-1978)
or
Scott Turner, 2348 Gladstone Ave., Windsor, Ontario N8W 2P1 (519-254-9510)

Northville Downs is at: 301 South Center St, Northville. Phone 248-349-0600.
The location is on the NE corner of 7 mile Road and Center Street,
3.5 miles west of I-275.



6,000 miles in an MGA (With Altitude) *Part Three*

By Ralph Poupard

In the last episode we had just arrived in Grand Forks, located in south central BC. to visit my sister and her husband. When we arrived, Denise and Larry had a great dinner of salmon steaks waiting for us. We sat on one of the porches that surround their house with a bottle of wine, the full moon shining, and the sound of owls in the distance. Ah, it doesn't get a lot better than this. During our stay we visited Nelson BC, and on another day enjoyed a 3 hour ride through calm and white water down the Kettle River on inner tubes, with a refreshment cooler in tow. One of the highlights was a visit to a historic site that is under restoration from a semi ruined state. It is a former Doukhabor dorm. What is a Doukhabor? They were a pacifist religious sect in Russia in the latter part of the 19th century, who were exiled for defying the Czar, many of them settling in the Grand Forks area. The area of Grand Forks seems to be a haven for like minded people. Many former (and still subscribing) hippies live in the area as well as a large number of U.S draft dodgers from the Viet Nam era. We had a great dinner at the beautifully restored Grand Forks Railway Station, which is now a pub. We thought, boy, whata perfect place this would be for a club meeting, but maybe a little out of the way! The next morning I returned to take a few pictures of the MGA in front of the former station. On Thursday, August 2nd it was time to leave on our zig - zag course.

We decided to backtrack and drive through the Okanogan, planning on stopping in Kamloops for the night. This day was extremely hot reaching 108°F again. Despite the temperature the MGA was keeping its cool nicely. I would like to have said that we completed the trip without a significant problem, but it was not to be. As we were driving through Kamloops BC on Hwy #1, and we were about 1/2 mile from the exit we planned to take, the MGA began misfiring badly. It sounded like it had dropped to 2 cylinders. We made it through the exit ramp, and I pulled off on a side street where the car stalled and would not restart. I tried rapping the fuel pump but there was no reaction. We were able to push it a bit and coast downhill into a gas station. I still suspected fuel starvation, and sure enough there was no fuel at the carbs. The fuel pump had failed. It would cycle once every time the key was turned on, but not continue cycling. This was the rebuilt SU fuel pump I had bought and installed in Gatlinburg last year, and I wasn't impressed. Vowing never to be caught without a spare again, I had a new electronic SU fuel pump in the boot, so we had a 2 hour pit stop while I installed it. About 1/2 hour of that was unpacking the entire car and repacking it again! We found a nice motel nearby, and had a late evening dinner at a restaurant with a great patio, right on the river. It was a pleasant night with a warm breeze, and by the time we had dinner and a few beverages, we were feeling a lot better, and actually laughing about the fuel pump incident.

Friday, we drove up Hwy 5 through light rain, stopping at Mount Terry Fox, and then on to Hwy 16 through the Yellowhead Pass and on to Jasper. Our timing was not ideal since it was the Canadian Civic Holiday weekend, and all the campgrounds in Jasper were full. We ended up staying 2 nights in a motel, and the 3rd night found a campground. Our youngest daughter, Elise, was working in Edmonton, Alberta for the summer and met us in Jasper. This posed a problem with the 2 seat MGA, and some of our side trips required Elise and Kathi to be shuttled to the destination! The MGA was running fine again with its new fuel pump. We took the Tram and hiked the remainder of the way to the peak of Whistler's Mountain. While driving on the road near Whistler's campground a car going the other direction stopped and a girl jumped out waving at us. It was our niece, who was also working in Alberta, and was camping in Jasper. There could only be one white MGA in Jasper so it had to be us. Jasper is a beautiful area and town - highly recommended.

On Monday Elise left for Edmonton and we left on Hwy 93, also called the Icefields Parkway, heading south. This road, passing through the glacier fields and mountains, has been called the most scenic drive in the world, and lived up to its reputation. We stopped at Athabasca Falls, where the icy waters of the Athabasca River pass on their way to the Arctic Ocean. We stopped at some of the many viewing areas on the Parkway, and at one stop we met up with four A's, only these were Ford Model A's! This group had driven from Trenton Ontario through Dawson City, Yukon, up the (gravel) Dempster Highway to the Arctic Circle, and were on their way home. On the long uphill climb to the Columbia icefield they were stopping at almost every viewing area to prevent the engines from overheating. We hiked up to the Athabasca lacier at the Columbia Icefield and then continued driving to Lake Louise. At that point we were going to join up with Hwy 1, but there was a massive traffic jam, so we headed down the Bow Valley Parkway instead. Because of the threat of animals on the road the speed limit was 60 km/hr, which seemed ridiculously low. A Chevy Cavalier flew past several cars behind us, and passed us like we were standing still. Over the next hill - you guessed it, a radar trap, and the Cavalier was nabbed! We managed to get lucky this time with the Cavalier running interference for us, and this was the only radar trap that we saw on the entire trip. We camped overnight at Tunnel Mountain in Banff National Park. Before dawn we awoke to the sound of wolves howling. They were quite close, and what an amazing sound it was!

Tuesday, we left for Drumheller, Alberta, home of the Royal Tyrrell Museum. Located in the badlands of Alberta, the museum and surrounding area are a hotbed of dinosaur fossils. We drove down local roads, and for about 20 miles Hwy. 9 was closed for reconstruction and replaced with a dirt surface detour. This road was terrible, with bone jarring bumps. Even at low speed, it felt like the MGA was going to break something as we bounced over the potholes. Clouds of dust were everywhere and unknown to me was plugging the air filters on our car. The world renowned museum is incredible, with full dinosaur skeleton displays, lab viewing areas, and countless displays of what life once was like in this region.

We spent the night in Drumheller, where we encountered our first thunderstorm of the trip. There was no hail in this storm, thankfully, and much of the dust got washed off the car. The next day we spent another hot day driving through the remainder of Alberta and most of the way through Saskatchewan and found a motel in Moose Jaw. We had been running through very large amounts of dragon flies, moths, and butterflies. The windshield and front of the car were just plastered with the insects. The large wings posed a problem when they hit the radiator, blocking large areas of it completely off. At every fuel stop and sometimes before that, I had to brush them off the rad to prevent overheating. They also began to get sucked into the carburetor air filters.

On Thursday we drove down to Portal again, and crossed into North Dakota. The large winged insect massacre continued, and on US 52 we hit another major road construction site. This time it was fresh tar and chips for 38 miles. 38 miles? Are you kidding? I considered backtracking but it was over 50 miles back to the next possible alternate road. So we crawled through the site, adding a layer of tar and dust to the layer of insects. We spent the night in Jamestown ND.

Friday we continued through Minnesota and into Wisconsin. By now the plugged air filters were causing the car to run rich. I hadn't brought any spares, and after a stop at an auto parts store was unable to find filters that would fit properly. After a large traffic jam in the heat in St. Paul MN, we stopped for dinner and I leaned the carbs out a bit in an attempt to overcome the rich mixture. At this point the heat was getting to us and the MGA needed some fresh air filters, so we decided to avoid the Chicago area and take the SS Badger ferry across Lake Michigan. We found a motel in Wausau and drove to the terminal Saturday morning. The ferry was expensive, but we think worth it, since it probably saved more than a tank of gas and we were able to rest during the 4 hour crossing instead of fighting traffic. It was a perfect, bright sunny day, and the temperature was more pleasant than it had been for days.

After disembarking in Luddington, MI the remainder of the drive home through Michigan and Essex County was uneventful, with light traffic except when passing through the Detroit Metro area. The MGA was idling as if the mixture was a bit rich, but was running well at speed. At about 10 pm, August 11th we pulled into our driveway after 6,086 miles, and about 23 million crankshaft revolutions.

It literally took me 3 weeks of evenings to change all the fluids, perform a full tune up, and clean the car. There was tar and filth everywhere. Oil that had leaked had blown back under the car. Like a fool I of course cleaned the underside of the car also. Would I consider doing a long trip like this again? Absolutely. There are memories from this odyssey that will last a lifetime, and we saw sights that were beyond our wildest dreams. There were a few minor problems but we were able to handle them on our own. The hot weather was a force to be reckoned with, but personally I can take it as long as I have plenty of water to keep hydrated and the car doesn't overheat. Kathi and I were still talking to each other at the end
of the trip, and I never once got "This is the last time I ever go along with one of your dumb ideas!" If you ever feel inclined to take a long road trip like this - do it.

We had a fantastic time, took our A out, got it dirty, and we made it back with the car running under its own power. And isn't that what MGs were made for?

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