The Can Am CONNECTION

Vol. 32, No. 8 - Newsletter of the Windsor-Detroit MG Club September 2010

Another Terrific Twisty Bits Tour

By Philip Wiltshire

Considering the “mixed” weather we have been experiencing in Michigan this summer, I was concerned, as always that this tour of 100 miles with a picnic in between could easily be marred by wet weather. In fact, during my last path finding trip to assure the route was still intact, I got drowned although I was in my regular Detroit car.

Our day dawned perfect. Not a cloud in the sky, plus it was 20 degrees warmer than the previous year. We also had a huge turnout of MGs, most of which were sporting picnic baskets on their boot racks complementing the classic look of our MGs.

We handed out the tulip instructions to each car that describe the route and the turns in the form of easy-to-understand tulip images. This mighty convoy of MGs then departed from the Meijer parking lot just south of I94 at Ann Arbor and proceeded to blast around the southern Michigan countryside through many of the little farm communities with German roots. The first portion of the tour is 50 miles long and stops at the restored Ford Sharon Mills Water Mill for a classic picnic. This year, as before, we had the whole place to ourselves and so took over the pavilion and the parking lot with food, drink and MGs. Looking around the well kept site, I think we were lucky that another inch of rain had not fallen, as the flood plane and river were brimming at the very edge of the picnic site and some areas were a little soggy underfoot.

We then repacked the picnic baskets and headed off on the second 50 mile leg heading further west. The tour is laid out as a large figure of eight, so after 10 miles we began our return leg and used one center road twice to make the figure of eight.

We all returned safely to the Meijer parking lot and the group split up to return to homes all across the greater Detroit area. I will see if we can modify the route for next year and change it from a figure eight into another fun configuration. ■

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The Windsor-Detroit MG Club
The International Local Club

Lise Brown - Editor

I'm happy to say that August's Photo Caption Contest image has already generated some very inspired entries. The deadline is September 3 so you still have time to email your submissions if you haven't done so already. I can't wait to share the results with you at the September meeting and in the next issue of the newsletter. Which reminds me, I need to find a new image for next month so if you have one you think might be a good candidate for the contest be sure to email it to me by September 15.

September! I've written it four times now but still can't believe it's upon us. Why do summer months go by so quickly? Unfortunately Dale and I didn't attend nearly as many events as we had hoped to this summer, especially considering we were in Windsor the whole time. It seemed there was always something getting in the way. While we missed most major events in June and July we fared much better in August. On Sunday August 8 we drove to Greenfield Village in Dearborn for "MGs at the Village", an event organized by Mike Harris. I was quite looking forward to this since I had never been to the Village; what a treat it was. I hope we can get some pictures and perhaps a short write-up in a future edition of the newsletter. On Saturday August 14 we attended the "Club BBQ" hosted by Steve and Donna Finch at their home in White Lake. What a difference a year makes! I still remember last year's pictures of guests huddled around a campfire wrapped in blankets. That certainly wasn't the case this year as guests cooled off in the pool or sat around the bar and patio sporting cool summer fashions. Speaking of which, I hope someone took a picture of Colin Stafford's pants… Again, I hope a story and pictures will follow in an upcoming issue. As I write this, the "Essex County Wine Tour" is next on our agenda and we look forward to experiencing some of the region's great wines and perhaps dinner at Ducks on the Roof in Amherstburg. As for this month, I am crossing my fingers hoping we can attend every event on the calendar.

As we move into fall you will notice that the calendar is rather short on events. Yet, the weather is usually ideal for driving during these months; it's not too hot and the air is clean and crisp. If you think you might be interested in leading a simple driving event or perhaps take on the challenge of organizing a Lucas Night Rally, please contact us and we'll help you make it happen. Also remember to log onto our Facebook group page for impromptu driving events or get-togethers.

I want to thank this month's contributors: Ailene Butcher, Philip Wiltshire, Rich Wagner and of course, Rick Astley. I know you'll enjoy reading their articles as much as I did.

Keep the submissions coming; they are what Can-Am Connection is all about.
See you in September!

Lise

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

Presidentially speaking

Rick Astley - Club President

For my sins, I've committed to producing the *On the Borderline* cartoon for this newsletter each month, an endeavor that has given me a new appreciation for those who have to create the strips we read in our newspapers' funny pages each morning. It's hard enough for me to think of something mildly amusing to publish 10 times a year, let alone daily! Even though its title is an intentional *double entendre*, meaning that it not only deals with being part of a car club on an international border but also that its humor may also be "edgy", I still have to be careful not to be offensive. That borderline can be a tricky one to walk so I'm not surprised when I find that from time to time I get a little negative feedback, as I did last month when one lady member described the cartoon as being "mean and somewhat bitter." I'll take that one on the chin, it was, but it's probably a cultural difference between my British sense for what is acceptable and her American one that made me judge it appropriate, whereas she did not. I note, and think it related to this cultural difference, that two of the most popular competitive entertainment shows on American TV, *American Idol* and *Dancing with the Stars*, have British lead judges who speak as they think rather than sugar coat their opinions, something their audience finds refreshing and new.

The first position I had in North America was located in Montreal, where I found myself not only doing the job I was hired in for, but also doing one I really disliked: managing a large number of people. I was soon whisked off to our California headquarters to take part in a regular management course on completing annual staff assessments. In reviewing the performance of an individual that has not done well, I was told, I should find something positive to say before following with the "but" or "however" which would then address the bad stuff. To me it was like potty training a child — "Great job but next time try doing it in the pot!" In fact "Great job!" is something children hear a lot these days, however bad their real effort may have been. No wonder young people entering the workplace are finding it hard when for perhaps the first time in their lives they get told, "Lousy job, do it again!"

I wonder if the "great job" syndrome contributed to the bad workmanship I saw on the back-up lamp switch, which I described in this newsletter a few years ago. It had its wires twisted on and no doubt would have initially worked and received the "great job" accolade, although, when it failed later, as it was destined to do, it could not possible be fixed without removing the engine and transmission.

Oops! I'm now a grandfather, and I know who I sound like in these ramblings — my own grandfather who called a spade a spade and didn't think young people like me would amount to anything unless we abandoned our long hair and drain-pipe trousers, (I've met him half-way, I know longer wear narrow legged pants). By the way, if you're are interested in more drivel from British old men talking about the way things used to be, go to YouTube and enter "Four Yorkshiremen" in the search box. I can assure you it won't offend anyone.

———————————

Last month I mentioned that after keeping my speedometer cable a full 5 weeks, the Pennsylvania firm supposedly fitting a ratio-box to it declared they couldn't do it, and I thought it was being returned to me. A day or two after sending the article to Lise I received my first call from them (I'd always had to call them in the past). They wanted my credit card number so that they could ship the cable back. I exploded; I'd sent it to them at my cost and in good faith based on their assurance that they could do what I needed, why should I now have to pay for their weeks of inaction?" The person on the phone just said that it was up to me, they had the cable and they were keeping it until I paid the return shipping. I responded with. "We'll see what the Better Business Bureau has to say about that!" Before my dander had a chance to subside, I filed my complaint with the Eastern PA BBB. What I didn't realize is the power the threat of the BBB has, no doubt the person who'd phoned me told his boss my intentions because they actually shipped the cable the very same day. As soon as I received it I canceled my complaint on-line, but not before the company had received the complaint and responded to the BBB about what a liar I am! I guess it's fair to say that I won't be doing business with them anymore!

Safety MG Fast

Rick

Tea for Twenty Four at the Holly Hotel

By Ailene Butcher

This year's "Tea Run" took place on Sunday August 1st. A convoy of 13 cars and 24 members departed our meeting place at the McDonald's parking lot at the intersection of Milford Road and M59 to enjoy a 50 mile drive around the northwest railroad towns of Fenton and Linden before ending with tea at the Holly Hotel. Our group consisted of Steve & Ruth Swarin, Steve & Donna Finch, Philip & Jan Wiltshire, George & Helen Barton, Fran Lewis, Gordie & Tracy Bird, Bob & Mary Elliot, Mike and Lorraine Gedeon, Harry & Dorothy Maclean, Bob Hauser, Dan & Mimi Sokolowski, Russ & Marlis LaFevre and Doug & Ailene Butcher.

The Holly Hotel is listed in the United States Register of historic places. We once again had the wonderfully named Battle Alley next to the hotel coned-off for our parking. The convoy of cars fitted the alley almost perfectly in an angled formation and looked great in the antique setting. However, the formation parking was a little bit more awkward this year thanks to the Holly beautification society placing potted plants either side of the alley making some of the manoeuvres rather tight. Philip Wiltshire's MBG BT V8 wasn't too happy waiting around for his turn to park and started to overheat causing Philip to pull to one side to find out the cause. After the scratching of several heads the culprit was found to be a faulty fuse in the circuit controlling the cooling fans, the connector had actually pulled away from the body; something for us all to watch out for with aging fuses. Of course, once the cause was found it was easily fixed and Philip took his parking place in Battle Alley and was able to join everyone for tea and contemplate the possibility of claiming the Lucky Lucas award for the second year in succession!

(Continued on page 6)

New Members

The WDMGC welcomes
its newest members

Phillip and Nancy Sweeten - Dryden, Michigan
1979 MGB, Primrose

Rich and Elaine Guinta - Onsted, Michigan
1979 MGB-LE, Black

Larry and Deborah Williams - Southfield, Michigan
1980 MGB-LE, Black

Is Your MG Comfortable?

By Rich Wagner

Recently, I rode shotgun in Rick Astley's 70 MGB and found myself feeling a bit like BIG BIRD (the Sesame Street Character) sitting there looking above the windscreen of his car. No, there wasn't something wrong with his car, it was his passenger. I was much too big!

Most of us are driving the same car, but lots can be done to change how you sit, making your car the perfect fit, or at least as perfect as possible. In addition to improving how you look, there are many ideas that can make your long distance driving a joy and not that difficult journey I so often hear others talk about. You bought the car to enjoy didn't you? If it isn't comfortable, what can to be done by you to fix that? Things can de done, and they can be as simple as lowering the car's tire pressure (for a smoother ride), or placing a small towel over an area that might irritate your leg while driving. For me, this is where my knee rests on the center console. While it doesn't bother me usually, it can on longer drives.

Speaking of towels and the summer heat; we always carry two full size towels should we want to cover our seats for a cooler ride on a really hot day. Should there be an unexpected downpour, these towels can also keep the water leaking into the car from getting us all wet.

Comfort should be Job #1. If you're not comfortable driving the car you can never really enjoy using it. I don't find much comfort in freeway driving, but I really enjoy driving down tree covered country roads. Here in Michigan (and the surrounding States), we can take them most anywhere. I've never felt relieved that the drive was finally over. The reason for this is Driving Comfort.

Driving Comfort

Exactly how comfortable are you sitting in your car? It's important to have sufficient room and this can be a problem for many of us. At 6' 3", I'm much too tall to fit

properly in most of the smaller British cars, but there can be enough room for me to fit comfortably into my MGB. I would never replace the worn seat cushion when recovering my seats, because it would raise my height. The picture above shows how I looked sitting in my MG until only recently.

While that's an improvement over how I fit in Rick's passenger seat (photo above left) I was never really that comfortable getting in or out of the car when the top was raised. Then, I remembered something I had written years ago:

> *"It's not easy to increase the space within the car, but with some effort, seats can be moved further back and even lowered slightly. If you are the only driver, an option would be to remove the seat tracks and mount it directly to the floor for added headroom. Done carefully, the removed parts could be replaced in the future."*

After talking for years about doing this, I finally lowered my driver seat, removing the tracks that attached the seat to the floor. This may seem like a futile effort (it didn't quite lower the seat by an inch), but in the photo on the next page you can see how it greatly improved my line of sight as well as overall comfort while driving. With this change, my line of sight is now level with the rear view mirror, a major difference from when I was sitting in Rick's

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(Continued from page 4)

The hotel provided an excellent setting for us to enjoy afternoon tea consisting of three elegant courses, served on traditional English china and steaming hot imported tea served from fancy ceramic pots. After a very pleasant hour and a half in the Hotel's coolness we regrouped in the Alley to head off home in our wide variety of MG models. Special thanks to Jan Tucker for helping with the organization and to Philip Wiltshire for taking the photographs. ■

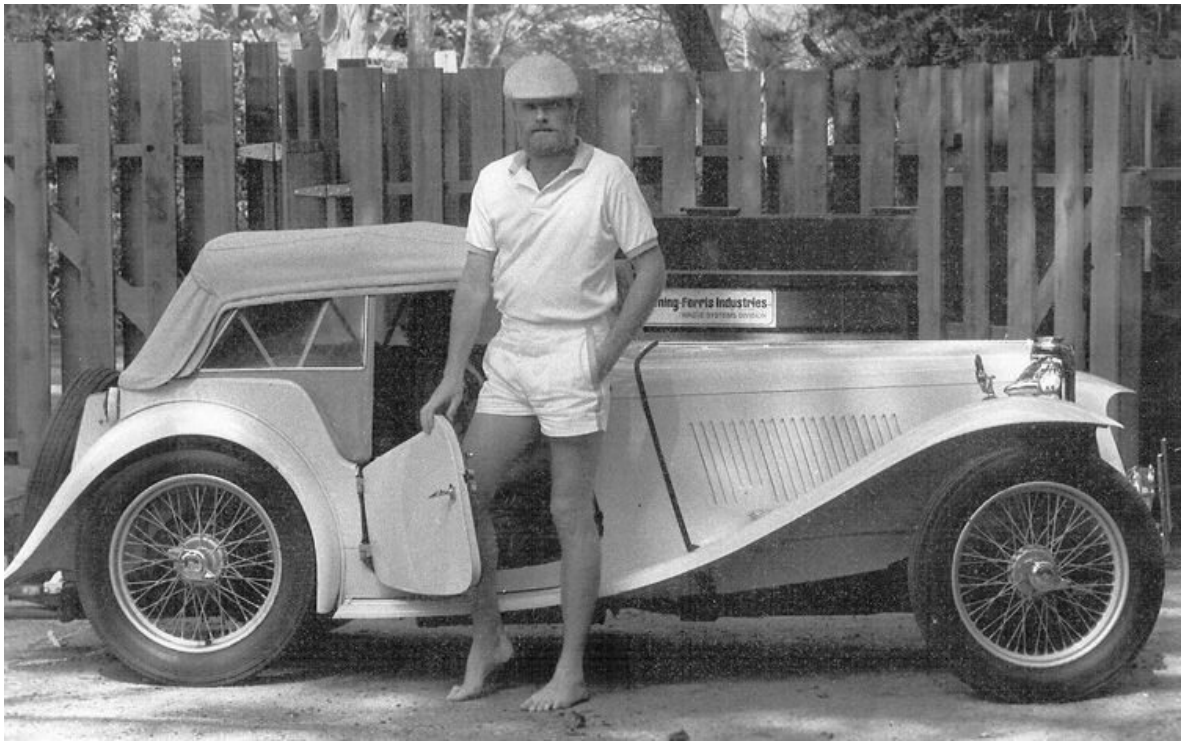
(Continued from page 5)

car. When I removed the seat tracks I was able to use one of the front track mounting holes to bolt the front of the seat to the floor and drilled a second to attach the other side. In the rear I used a 'U-bolt' to secure the back of the seat to the floor after drilling two holes so it could be attached (see photo at right.)

Today's automobiles have features that were never imagined 40 years ago, giving drivers more comfort behind the wheel than anywhere else. Many features can be adapted to even the oldest car. Your old bucket seat can be made better than new simply by adding a lumbar support into the seat's padding. Suspensions can either be modernized, or worn parts can be renewed to restore the car's handling ability.

Does your car have one of those big, skinny steering wheels, or does the wheel rub against your leg while driving or shifting? Is your foot comfortable operating the gas pedal? Every car is different, but improvements can usually be made. Smaller steering wheels, leather wheel covers and/or driving gloves can help, and the gas pedal position can be adjusted. In my MGB, I've modified the gas pedal position because I always felt I was holding my leg in an uncomfortable position. After doing this, my MGB has much the same feel as modern American cars do. ■

BLAST From The PAST



The Beach Boys' Mike Love with his 1948 MG-TC

All English **Battle of the Brits** Car & Motorcycle Show

Sunday September 12 2010

Campus of Orchard Lake St Mary's at the corner of Orchard Lake and Commerce Roads in West Bloomfield Township.

Featured marque: "The Wedge" - TR7 / TR8

Quick link to DTSC registration form:
On-line registration: wdmgc.com/bobr

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For more info contact Wayne at
Bordercityminis@cogeco.ca

Club calendar

■ - WDMGC event
☐ - Organized participation by WDMGC members

September

☐	Sun. 5	Annual Fall Fun on Wheels - Essex, ON
■	Wed. 8	**Monthly meeting, Dominion House** - Windsor, ON
☐	Sun. 12	Battle of the Brits - Orchard Lake, MI *see p. 7*
☐	Sun. 18	British Car Day at Bronte Creek Provincial Park - Oakville ON
☐	Sat. 25	British Car Day, Waterford Hills Race Track - Waterford Hills, MI
☐	Mon. 27	British Only Cruise Night - Windsor, ON *see p. 7*

October

■	Wed. 13	**Monthly meeting, Brass Pointe** - Farmington Hills, MI
■	Sat. 16	**WDMGC Fall Colour Tour** - Northville, MI

November

■	Wed. 10	**Monthly meeting, Dominion House** - Windsor, ON

December

■	Wed. 8	**Monthly meeting, Brass Pointe** - Farmington Hills, MI

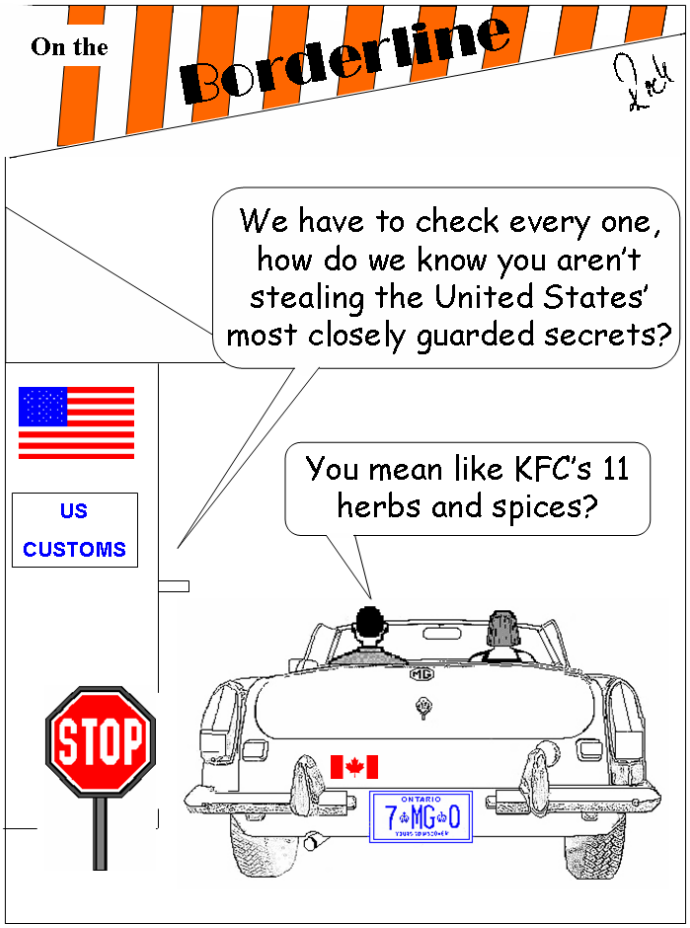
Do you have an idea for an activity or event other members may also enjoy?

Let us know … and if you're unsure as to how to organize an event , contact us. Collectively we have loads of experience, tips and hints to share.

Remember, the off season offers great opportunities for get-togethers: let your imagination be your guide.

September Meeting at the DH

Our next club meeting will be Wednesday September 8 at the DH in Windsor, Ontario. The meeting starts at around 7:30 pm but join us earlier if you plan on having dinner. Most people start arriving at around 6:00 pm.



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MGB luggage rack complete all parts included. Good condition $65.00 plus shipping. One ribcage trans with 948 engine hooked on up front. (pick-up only) running $75.00. Couple sets of SU carbs need work. $45.00 each No shipping. Tel: 1-800-743-1025 or thomasheckman@att.net

69 MGB-GT and 68' MGB Parts Cars. Call 519 -791-5502.

1979 White MGB I have owned it for the last 21 years and it has been kept in a garage it's entire lifetime. It has less than 50,000 actual miles on it. This is a project car and is located in Rochester Hills Michigan. It is currently not running but will take a small effort to change that. The fuel pump is the immediate issue and the contacts most likely just need to be cleaned. I did have it running last summer. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have. brant_veilleux@yahoo.com

1979 MGB carmine red, dual SU's, O/D, 83,000 miles. always pampered. $7000.00. mgbv8542@ yahoo.com

69 MGC GT Purchased in S.Carolina 1992 and all info logged since then. Rust-free and running well at 92k miles. Overdrive, SS exhaust, leather seats etc. No dents, scratches or other damage. Recent repaint in original Tartan Red. Lots of pics available. Contact Adrian 613 258 0234 near Ottawa. Adrian sawyer@cogeco.ca

MG midget hard top for $300 call scott 586-484-7173

1974 MGB Beautiful chrome bumper MGB. Restoration over 90% complete. Please contact Joe 734-658-9268

66 MGB-GT dark blue, 1.8 L, with overdrive, everything works fine, no rust, solid frame, good Michelin tires on new spoke wheels, been under John Swift's care once for a complete "overhaul". I drive it to work when weather is good, store it in winter, in my third (heated) garage. Asking $6,500 (been told it is worth more...), or best offer, for the right buyer. Contact Rodolfo rasche@med.umich.edu

1978 MGB $6,500 as is. Comes with hardtop. 98250 kms Call John at 519-796-2360

1973 MGB convertible teal blue original owner. Garage kept, 28,000 miles motor, body, interior, top, tires, stainless steel exhaust. In great condition $8,000 obo. Canton MI. Pictures available. Phone 734-981-5373

MGB parts new/never installed. Robbins Tonneau Cover w/ headrest pockets $125.00. Moss Motors Front & Rear Tube Shock Conversion Kit $150. Contact Terry 248-650-9507 or teschultz@comcast.net

1967 MGB Mark I Roadster with overdrive. White exterior and black leather interior with white piping. Chrome wire wheels, stainless exhaust system, stainless classic luggage rack, chrome badge bar, fog lamps, new top, top cover, and tonneau cover. Complete interior and exterior restoration 8,000 miles ago including the engine, transmission, and drivetrain. This car looks and drives great! Located in Rochester, MI. $14,900 USD. Call Terry 248-650-9507 or email: teschultz@comcast.net

Wanted

Hardtop for 1978 MGB. Would pay $500.00 in Canada. Please e-mail to nhbarnoff@sympatico.ca

1968 to 1973 MGB in great shape. I live in Windsor Ont. Contact jcunnin@cogeco.ca

Original MGA roadster or coupe (roadster preferred) restored or unrestored, in good to excellent condition to enjoy and show in the spring, summer and fall in Michigan. Please contact me if you (or someone you know) are looking for a good home for your MGA. Contact Barry bgrantadkins@yahoo.com

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WANTED

Dead or Driveable

Your Car Picture

Let us have a picture of your car and some anecdotal information so that we can feature it in *Can-Am Connection* and the club web-site gallery.

Also Wanted

Pictures of members with their "ride" in their childhood or as young adults for our **The Young and the Reckless** feature.

You will be Well Rewarded

Club Regalia

Do you want to look as good as your car this summer? If your club hat and shirt have seen better days, be sure to contact Elvin Davis or Roli Sylvestre, our regalia reps in the US and Canada respectively, for some new gear. And if you don't already have one, how about a grill badge for your car or a licence plate surround? Call them today or check out the stock at the next club meeting.

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28404 South Harwich Drive
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Car of the month, September 2010 - John Northup's 1973 MG Midget