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Mid-Atlantic Chapter, North American MGA Register

December 2007

▲ November Tech Session ▲

Butch Smith reporting: On Saturday, November 17th Butch Smith, Ken Lawrence and Bill Wemhoff met at Dick Farwell's garage for a mini tech session. The task was to rebuild his pretty black car's leaking master cylinder. After some in-depth discussions, primarily to consume the coffee & doughnuts provided by Cheryl, and naturally looking for the easiest way to get it done, it was decided to do a "mini" rebuild. Meaning we did not pull the master cylinder nor did we replace everything inside. Dick was convinced that pesky leak was coming from the front cork gasket. We all agreed it was his call and we would not assume any blame if it was not just that.

So, after checking for pitting on the cylinder walls we installed (on both the brake and clutch side) a new forward cup, convex washer and front gasket. We then adjusted the push rods, bled the system and NO LEAKS!

Later, Dick took her for a test drive and ... no problems *Mon*. We also noticed that the clutch pedal had a lot of side-to-side play in it, making it very difficult to align the pedal hole to the push rod hole. Again, the excellent MG minds present agreed that it was most likely the brass bushing. Is there another mini tech session for the future in the works? It must be replaced Dickie!

Now, if I can only get you guys over to my garage to work on putting my Mark II back together

Editor's Note: Dick reports he has had the car out twice since the Three Musketeers performed their magic and all systems are working fine. We hope to see Dick & Cheryl back on the road at our next driving event.

Happy Holidays to All

▲ November Pub Night ▲

Our first post-season **Pub Night** of 2007 was held Sunday afternoon, November 18th at the home of Toby & Helen Fitzkee in Fairfax Station, VA.

Our in-home **Pub Nights** are designed to allow for more socializing among members than we were accustomed to when battling the noise and ruckus of local restaurants, giving members an opportunity to move about and talk to more than just those sitting nearby. To underscore this informal setting, we all ended up gathered about the kitchen once the pizza arrived, forsaking the plush comforts of Toby & Helen's family room!

We had a good turnout of members with Butch & Judy driving the lone MGA to grace the driveway. Bill & Karen arrived in their recently acquired 1967 MGB GT and Ruth was pleased to unveil the new engine in Brigitte, her original-owner 1974 MGB GT daily driver. Liz reports her new garage is in its final stages of construction and she hopes once her cars are "back home" and under her watchful eye it will be easier to wrangle one to drive to our events. Keith was showing off a recently painted body panel with his final choice of British Racing Green that will grace his restoration project. His goal is to have his MGA back together by next July so Kathy and he can join us in Seven Springs for GT33. Bill & Kathy and Ken & Joyce completed our group with Bill & Ken (along with Butch) pulling the weekend double-header of Saturday's Tech Session at Dick Farwell's and Sunday's **Pub Night** social.

Our next **Pub Night** will be scheduled for the late-January, early-February time frame. We are looking for a volunteer to host this event.

▲ MGs on the Internet ▲

As many of us prepare to tuck our cars away for the winter, we may find ourselves itching to see our beloved MGs in action. Ken Lawrence reports there are many videos featuring the MG marque on *YouTube*. *YouTube* is an Internet hosting site for all manners of short video clips ranging from political stumbles, music videos, celebrity sightings and apparently, a large number of clips featuring the MG. To view these clips, simply visit www.youtube.com and locate the search engine. Type in variations of MG such as MGA cars, MGB, MGTC, MGTD, MGTF and MG Midget and you will get a listing of what's available. Most of the clips are short – in the 60 to 90 second range – but many run as long as 5 minutes.

John Twist of University Motors fame has submitted a number of clips ranging from how to start an MGA to how to properly lower and stow a convertible top. John has about 35 clips posted and these can be found by entering "university motors" in the search engine.

Other topics range from folks selecting a paint color for the restoration project to 90 seconds of driving an A down a back country road. Some clips are interesting, some are boring, but all may help pass the doldrums of winter!

▲ Midwest MG Report ▲

This Midwest MG Report was submitted by Chapter Members Joe & Roseann Mercer. Joe and Roseann are among those members who have “drifted away” from the Mid-Atlantic area but still stay in touch and remain active in the MG world. We welcome local reports from other Chapter Members that have also “drifted away”.

Since moving to Dublin, a suburb of Columbus Ohio, we have become active in the Central Ohio MG Owners (COMGO) club. It is very active with up to 40 activities on the calendar throughout the year. These include tech sessions, one day and weekend drives, and winter “retreats” to escape the doldrums at a resort within a few hours driving distance. Membership, which numbers around 200, spans all forms of MGs. In October we participated in our Fall Colours Tour which encompassed the Mansfield, Ohio area including Mid-Ohio Race Track where we met up with Bob Schoeplein and Jim Byers from the DC area. We took a very interesting tour of “Safety Fast” Restorations in Mansfield which concentrates on the T series and Pre-War MGs. This was followed by a 70 mile tour through hills and valleys of the area (yes, Ohio does have something other than flat farmland!).

Joe spent the spring rebuilding the front suspension and entire brake system of his brother-in-law’s Midget which had sat idle for about 7 years. It became a regular driver for his brother-in-law during the summer. A painful experience was bleeding the clutch after rebuilding the hydraulics. After 4 days of conventional bleeding, bleeding each individual fitting, tilting the car front-up, then back-up, and reversing filling using an oiling can through the slave cylinder bleeder, we finally went out and bought a pressure bleeder and got the job done in a matter of minutes.

During the spring and summer there are two local shows in the Columbus area in addition to others throughout the state. In May, there is a British car show and in July there is a two-day event sponsored by the Arthritis Foundation. The first day is a cruise-in for hot rods of all types, and the second day is a classic car show. Each day brings in about 1,000 cars and includes evening entertainment by local entertainers. We also went to John Twist’s summer party in Grand Rapids, Michigan in August – a fun but hot time.

Roseann “volunteered” me to become the club newsletter editor while on a recent outing with club members. Since I am presently retired, I had no excuse but to take the job. My first issue went to the presses on 1 November.

The annual COMGO Christmas Party is around the corner and includes donations to the Marine Corps *Toys for Tots* program.

Happy Holidays!

Joe and Roseann

▲ Middleburg Christmas Parade ▲

Our *Drive to Lunch* for December was once again with our friends at the MG Car Club of DC. Each year, the MGCC participates in the Middleburg Christmas Parade and this year parade spectators were entertained by 13 MGs fully dressed in holiday decoration.

As can be expected in the Hunt Country of Virginia, the event begins with a ceremonial Horse & Hounds parade with riders in full hunting regalia in the morning to start off the day. Many of Middleburg's quaint shops are open and volunteer organizations set up fundraising booths to serve coffee, hot chocolate and tasty treats to the parade spectators who begin to line up for the 3:00 pm start as early as 1:00 pm.

Thanks to the able planning of event coordinators Jim & Jane Byers of the MGCC, we had lunch reservations at the Coach Stop Restaurant and enjoyed great conversation with our fellow MG enthusiasts.

We are required to be in our staging area at the American Legion Hall by 2:00 pm as the main streets of Middleburg are closed to traffic at that time. Arriving in MGAs were Bill & Karen Marshall and Bill & Kathy Wemhoff, doubling the number of MGAs in the event from last year. Ruth Arnold, with Brigitte now running smoothly and eager to participate and Bob & Jane Schoeplein in Jane's MGB rounded out our Mid-Atlantic Chapter members.

This is a fun event with time spent in the staging area lasting far longer than the parade itself! This time allows each to decorate their MG in proper holiday fashion, ranging from simple wreaths on the grille to bundles of nicely wrapped packages on luggage racks. Top-down driving in December can be quite invigorating and Santa hats are fashion *du jour*! Once on the parade route, our contingent of MGTDs, MGAs, MGBs and a lone (but warm) Magnette were cheered and applauded by the hundreds of spectators as we claimed our 15 minutes of fame traveling the 6 blocks of Washington Street to the parade's end.

This is a truly enjoyable event and provides a wonderful start to the holiday season. Post a reminder note on your calendar for the first Saturday in December 2008 and make plans to join us next year.

▲ Dues are Due ▲

We will once again send out membership applications in our January newsletter, with a goal to have all dues collected by our March Annual Meeting – which of course is also our annual Chili Party. We will have mailing information and membership forms in next month's *Distributor*. As a part of our association with NAMGAR as an affiliated chapter, we are required to provide NAMGAR with our membership numbers as well as the number of chapter members that also hold NAMGAR membership. Please help our Treasurer Martha Ludtke by returning your dues promptly. Martha had to chase an unnamed member (Michael Eaton) all the way to November this year to get his dues!

▲ One Man's Trash ▲

Bill Marshall reporting: Al Alvarez, a former NAMGAR member now living in Alexandria discovered four boxes of salvaged original parts from his days as an MGA and MGZA owner. Al, lacking the heart to simply put the boxes out on the curb for the trash man, contacted the Chapter to see if there would be any interest in the boxes. Abiding by the old adage that one man's trash is another man's treasure, I arranged to meet Al at his home and take the boxes off his hands.

While the full treasure-trove has not been documented, Len Renkenberger was quick to claim two MGA air filter assemblies to replace those missing from his Deluxe for – oh – about 30 years! NAMGAR member and Magnette owner Doug Campbell of the MGCC claimed the Magnette Operation and Magnette Workshop Manuals. Being the current keeper of the treasure, I snatched the copy of the Michigan Chapter's highly regarded A-Antics Tech Tips. Also included amongst the parts is a 1500 crankshaft, intake and exhaust manifolds, fan blade and fan pulley. Various electric parts, cables and switches also appear to be included. I will spread the mass out on my garage floor and take a digital photograph of the bits and forward it via e-mail once taken. All parts will be available on a first-come first-serve basis.

Of course, we would be happy for Al to reclaim his parts and use them on a MGA project as an active member of our Chapter!

▲ From the Past! ▲

Reprinted from the EVENTS section of the October 1975 NAMGAR MGA newsletter, Vol. I, No. 2.

HARPER'S FERRY RALLYE By Mac Spears

A Sunday afternoon (August 24th) fun rallye was the most recent activity of the North American MGA Register. Scene of the MGA action was the picturesque setting of Harper's Ferry, W. VA. and the Antietam Battlefield. Cars, drivers, and navigators were put to the test of endurance when hot weather forced many entrants to seek out the final watering hole, The Bavarian Inn Rathskeller. Six MGAs and 5 other brands (mostly non-domestic varieties) competed for top awards. Top driver and navigator were Lou and Reid Willis driving a Datsun 240Z. The Willis's have one of those rare A's (Twin-Cam '59) under restoration at the family works. Runner-up for the awards went to the team of Susan and Ernie Betts. Ernie showed a great deal of dexterity driving his newly acquired MGB GT. (Susan and Ernie also have an A under restoration). Thirsty winners and participants availed themselves to the cool drinks in the Rathskeller followed by food aplenty.

The Register welcomed our long distance drive-in members, the Graves from Hagerstown, Maryland and the Caltriders from Reisterstown, Maryland. Other MGAs which made the scene belonged to the Spears, Fralicks, Harry Moore, the Leones, and Art Perry.

Those heading back to the D.C. area also attended a post-rally party at the home of Mike and Heather Pugh. It was a perfect way to end a beautiful day.

Editor's Note: This was from a time when NAMGAR was both the national organization and also acted as the local Washington DC chapter – prior to our Mid-Atlantic Chapter being formally organized in 1978.

▲ **Miscellaneous Information** ▲

CHAPTER WEBSITE: www.mga-midatlantic.org Don't forget to check out our website and send a picture of your car to Amy so it can be posted in the gallery. Check our website for recently posted pictures of past outings.

“TECH SESSIONS FROM MGA” book is available from NAMGAR, e-mail regalia contact Dennis Urick at: durick@hmausa.com. The price is \$45.00 plus shipping and handling. This is the real 'Bible' for MGA articles. This and other regalia can also be ordered directly from the NAMGAR website www.namgar.com.

“FOR SALE”

Various MGA parts available, call Tom Ford at (540-272-4264) or e-mail (tomowog@comcast.net) for information.

“FOR SALE”

Life's circumstances outpace life's ambitions. 1950 MGTD is Clipper blue, leather interior (biscuit), canvass top & side curtains, black carpet, body in very good condition. Car was restored in 1992 with all new wood, paint, interior and top at that time. Engine is apart and needs to be rebuilt, all machine work is complete and all new internals ready for rebuild. Asking \$10,000. Call Tom Ford at (540-272-4264) or e-mail (tomowog@comcast.net) for information.

“DRY STORAGE”

Dry garage storage facility for runners or future projects located on Route 50 in Middleburg, VA is available. Short, long term or just winter storage is available according to your needs. Current rates are \$85/month long term (4 months or more) or \$100/month short term (less than 4 months). For more information or to arrange a visit please contact Michael Eaton at 703-242-1768 or via e-mail at mg.carma@verizon.net

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