



# A-Antics



*Rowdie Kimber Meet*

Diaper Change

*Antifreeze Facts*

MGA Road Test



**MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER**

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**History:** The Chapter was established August 14, 1976. It was NAMGAR's first chapter. We are a low-key club, dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our MGA's/ Anyone is welcome to join our chapter and they are asked to join NAMGAR as well.

**Chapter Dues:** \$25 annually (\$40 for printed newsletter)

**Nickname:** Rowdies

**Motto:** People First!

**Rowdies Site:**

<http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

**MG Car Council Site:** <http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/mgcouncil/>

**NAMGAR Web Site:** [www.namgar.com](http://www.namgar.com)

**Past Chapter Chairpersons:**

1976-1980	Bruce Nichols
1981-1982	Tom Latta
1983-1984	Dick Feight
1985-1988	Dave Smith
1989-1990	Dave Quinn
1991-1994	Mark Barnhart
1995-1995	Herb Maier
1996-1996	Tom Knoy
1997-1998	Neil Griffin
1999-2002	Bruce Nichols
2003-2004	Bob Sutton
2005-2008	Gordie Bird
2009-2015	Dave Quinn



# MEMBERS PAGE

**Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman,  
Webmaster**

<http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

Larry Pitman's Database Report: 52 Active and Paid-Up Members

**Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: June 20, 2018**

**Classified Ads**

**Letters**

## ***Come One, Come All to GT-43***

As co-hosts of GT-43, the Central Virginia British Car Club & the Mid Atlantic Chapter of NAMGAR invite you to join us in Richmond, Virginia, June 13 through June 17, for what we hope will be an exciting and memorable GT event.

Our venue will be the Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center - a member of the Tapestry Collection by Hilton. Virginia Crossings is located at 1000 Virginia Center Parkway in Glen Allen, Virginia. The hotel complex sits on 20 acres of manicured grounds, overlooking The Crossings championship-level golf course. We have reserved 150 of the 220 rooms for GT participants which will be available at the NAMGAR rate once GT registration formally begins in early January 2018. Breakfast for two is included at The Glen Restaurant with the room reservation and the hotel also features a less-formal Tavern Bar & Grill for additional on-site dining options. Virginia Crossing is also convenient to local shopping and restaurants as well as the historic district in downtown Richmond.

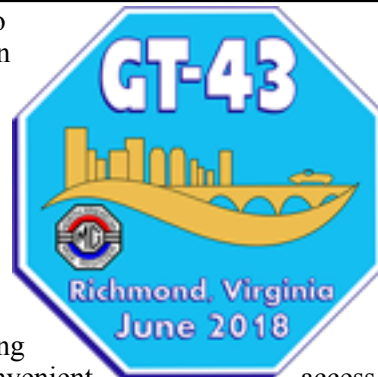
Visit the Virginia Crossings Hotel website. Their telephone number is 804-727-1400.

GT-43 will host a full slate of traditional GT events such as Tech Sessions, events tailored for the ladies attending, Valve Cover racing, a First Timer's reception, Tour of Richmond Road Rallye as well as on-your-own drives to explore the historical flavors of the greater Richmond area. The Awards Banquet will be held Saturday evening with a Sunday morning departure for those wishing to head 185 miles north to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania to continue their MG experience with the NAMGBR MG-2018 national event.

The MGA Coupe is the featured body style for GT-43 – and we expect the largest gathering of Coupes in recent memory. A special drive and luncheon will be offered

at the nearby Richmond Auto Museum for coupe owners on Thursday.

A feature of Virginia Crossings is the large courtyard area between the hotel and the conference center complex – which will be the setting for the car show held on Saturday morning. The courtyard setting for the show will provide convenient access to both the guest rooms and restaurant areas, making the car show accessible to everyone attending the GT.



Online registration is now open thru the GT43 website, and mail-in registration forms will be available online and in the MGA! magazine. We expect GT-43 to be one of the largest-attended GT events to date and we encourage everyone to Rallye to Richmond!

[NAMGAR Get Together GT-43 June 13-17, 2018](#)

## ***Join The Party***

So far many Rowdies have signed up to attend GT-43 in Richmond, and the list keeps growing day by day. Some of the illustrious members who will be there include: John Alexander & Carolyn King, Allen and Flossie Bachelder, Todd and Connie Binsz, Tom Fant, Lloyd and Janice Herring, Forrest and Leslie Johnson, Bruce and Willie Mann, Diane and Steve Mazurek, Ken and Kathy Nelson, Larry and Mitzi Pittman, Bill and Mary Ellen Weakley, Dave and Chari Smith, Steve Holliday, and a cast of thousands. Don't miss out on the fun, sign up now!

## ***What's The Best Motor Oil?***

Enquiring minds ponder the answer to the question above, and there are many diverse thoughts among car aficionados, but Dave Quinn wrote in with advice from the Honda S2000 Club. His friend has logged 150,000 miles on his Honda S2000 and from time to time had his oil analyzed. He received this email from the company he uses which Dave found very interesting. And he thought we might as well. Check out the link at: [https://gallery.mailchimp.com/f641390cba42169db49e0cd6e/files/95d3f8e6-44ac-42f3-bf55-9dcaa234d223/Aug\\_17\\_ENG.pdf](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/f641390cba42169db49e0cd6e/files/95d3f8e6-44ac-42f3-bf55-9dcaa234d223/Aug_17_ENG.pdf)

*(Ed note: Holy Crap, Batman, that's one long complicated article! I use Rotella-T or Valvoline Racing oil lately, based on hopefully higher Zinc levels. But, hey, what*

do I know. All my engines smoke and drip-aren't they supposed to? Ken Nelson)

### Little Known Riley Facts

Unbeknownst to many, a Riley automobile was being considered for Steve McQueen's use in the famous high speed chase scene through San Francisco streets in the movie "Bullitt". It was later rejected in favor of the Ford Mustang when Steve realized he was unaccustomed to handling such a high powered performance European automobile within the confines of city streets. Steve is quoted as saying, "Geez, they don't even have the steering wheel on the correct side."



submitted by **Sir Cecil Sedgewicke** as part of his ongoing series of "Famous Performance Sports Cars In America".

### Helpful Tips For Car Restorations

I recently found a shop in England that does fine restorations of old English cars. I was especially intrigued to discover that they provide an additional service for a small fee that will help greatly with marital relations within the home. It's worth considering

taking them up on this valuable item. It could save your marriage.

**Ann Landers**



### Automotive Artwork From Bruce Mann



"The MGA in the hubcap"



"Power In The Raw!"

### Drive Your MG Day Coming Soon

Put down that Snow Shovel! Get fresh petrol into the MGA's tank. Air up the tyres. Don't forget to check the oil. In less than three weeks (**May 5th**) the country will be on the move as it will be the National Drive Your MGA Day!

On this National Holiday, the Rowdies, thanks to Curt and Stephanie Smith, will want to be congregating at the Inverness Inn at 12:30 pm for lunch. Afterwards, a caravan to Hell may be attempted for a little cooling ice cream.

The weather will be perfect - 70's and balmy, a great day for an outing. See everyone there! (see page 8)

**John Alexander, Rowdies Meets Chairman**

**Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!**

Join over 2,000 enthusiastic owners in the restoration, preservation, and sheer enjoyment of driving an MGA, Midgette, or variant of this noble breed. You'll receive six bi-monthly issues of *MAGAZ*, our full-color, award winning magazine, invitations to National and Regional Get-Togethers throughout the U.S. and Canada, plus a knowledge base and support group second to none. All this for just \$37.50 per year (North America), or \$52.50 (International). Get more information at <http://www.namgar.com>, or contact [registrar@namgar.com](mailto:registrar@namgar.com).

***New Converts? More From John***

Got my "A" out of hiding a few days ago and went to the petrol station for fresh fuel. A fellow customer - a fresh faced youth - excitedly approached us to inquire about the make of the MG. "MG" I replied. He thought it was a new brand from Japan and that the car was an "awesome prototype"! I swelled with pride and told him the truth - that it was indeed new but you can't buy them new since the last one was built in 1962! "Gee, that was before my Dad was born." Then I lectured him on the history of the MGA and jolly old England and all, wot, wot. He thought the only cars built in England were Rovers, oh my. He's going to "Google" the MG Car Company. I gave him one of the Rowdie business cards. A new convert perhaps! He and his friend were really drooling.

***John Alexander***

**PS** And don't forget **Sunday, May 20th, 11:00 - 4:00 pm.** The Windsor-Detroit MG Club wants us all to share our cars and friendly conversation at **Camp Dearborn (1700 General Motors Road, Milford, MI).** This is a picnic format under the shade trees and is very laid back. Bring those hot dogs and whatever beverages you think might go well on another beautiful late spring Sunday with your friends. (see page 7)



In September **The Orphan Car Show** in Ypsilanti is a 1-day event being held on **16th September 2018.** This event features cars from manufacturers who are now long gone (but not forgotten) and is really a must see. They feature the remaining cars of manufacturers that have gone belly up. You'll see 'never heard of' rolling stock. There will be Hudsons, Singers and the rare MGA, to name a few.

The event is held in the Riverside Park, along the Huron River - grass and lots of shade trees.



***Until later, John***

***Originality Anyone?***

I have owned an 1960 1600 MGA since 2002. It is painted dark British Racing Green, a color not offered at the time. I noticed on the cover of **MGA!** magazine recently that the artistic picture shows an MGA engine compartment with period harnesses and wiring. It looks like someone went for the full nut and bolt restoration. I want to get a feeling out there what the present feeling is about restoring our MGAs to exact nut and bolt original standards. Is there a big move to put original style wires and braided harnesses on the vehicle? I've been through this with a different British brand and it is crazy. I was at a meet and I got nicked because I should have had a flat head screw instead of a philips head. It ruined my day mumbling about philips head screws. I am really curious about the opinion of the owners of the cars because the braided wires on the cover of the MGA! magazine struck me. ***Matthew Wigent, West Bloomfield, MI***

**Two owners replied to Matt:**

It always comes down to personal choice. Very early on you need to ask yourself what is my goal? Why did I buy this car? Do I want a near perfect 100-point car? How much am I willing to spend to get what I want? Do I want a near perfect reliable car that stays within the spirit of the original MGA but offers the benefits of nearly 70 years hindsight? There is no right answer; just the one that makes you content.

Does a screw head matter when you are enjoying a great top down drive? Not a one bit. Does it matter if you are in competition for a judged best in show trophy? You bet it does. That's just the way it is.

Heck I have braided wires and all I care about is they hold the Lucas smoke in. And by the way, someone will always find something wrong, as John Twist commented when he saw that same picture, "Hey, where are the choke and throttle cables?" ***Dave Quinn***

I echo everything Dave said. Many car owners have veered from original factory practices for personal reasons. Paint, oil filter, engine and transmission are common differences but it doesn't seem to devalue the car. It does make a difference in how the car is judged but only in the high end shows. I have seen many cars win top awards that are not truly correct. I did a 100% restoration on mine a couple of years ago (also a 1960 1600 Roadster) and stayed true to factory parts and practices but just because, for me, it is important to honor and show the history. Shows are fun but I get the most fun out of just driving it. ***Bob Shafto***

## ROWDIES 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### 2018

#### May

- 5 **Drive Your MG Day**  
Host: Curt & Stephanie Smith
- 20 **WDMGC Spring Brit Picnic** 11am-4pm  
Camp Dearborn Host:TBD

#### June

- 13-17 **GT-43 Richmond, VA**  
Host: NAMGAR
- 24 **Michiana Brits Car Show**  
Notre Dame, IN
- 27-30 **GOF Central-Lake Delavan, WI**  
Host: Vintage MG Club of Chicago

#### July

- 8 **Gilmore British Auto Faire**  
**Host: Mad Dogs Chapter**  
Tom Fant to Arrange Caravan
- 13 **Rolling Sculpture, Ann Arbor**  
Host: RSCS
- 27-30 **Waterford Hills Vintage Racing**  
Host: Dave Quinn to arrange

#### August

- 4 **Rowdie Birthday Party**  
Host: Todd & Connie Binsz
- 11 **Glider Rides (Alt. Weather Date 8-25)**  
Host: Larry & Mitzi Pittman (with Adrian Soaring Club)
- 12 **Alden Classic Sports Car Show**  
Host: Twin Bay British Car Club
- 12 **Victory Car Show-Willow Run Airport**  
Belleville, MI

#### September

- 9 **Battle of the Brits Camp Dearborn**  
Host: Detroit Triumph SCC
- 16 **Orphan Car Show**  
Ypsilanti Riverside Park
- 24-27 **Put-In-Bay Road Races**  
Host: pibroadrace.com

#### October

- TBD **Rowdie Color Tour**  
Host: Bruce and Willy Mann

#### December

- 2 **Rowdie Christmas Party**  
Hosts: John & Carolyn; Kevin & Norma

### 2019

#### Feb

- TBD **Rowdie Business Meeting**  
Host: Dave & Chari Smith

*See the Rowdies calendar page also for details about meets:*

<http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/calendar.htm>

### Michigan Rowdies

The first chapter of  
NAMGAR, the North  
American MGA Register.

"It's the cars that get you  
there, but the people keep  
you coming back."

Learn more at [www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/](http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/)



**Windsor-Detroit MG Club  
Spring Gathering & Picnic  
2018-Sunday May 20,  
2018-11am-4pm  
Sixth Annual Spring British  
Car Gathering & Picnic**

**We have the site at Camp Dearborn reserved! This is all set to go!**

**Camp Dearborn-1700 General Motors Rd, Milford, MI.**

No registration - No formal car show - No class parking - No awards!

Just an opportunity to share our passion with fellow British car owners and clubs, and to get to know one another.

We have reserved a large grassy area at Camp Dearborn in Milford.

Once again this year, we will have a **BOOT SALE!**

Have some spare parts, tools, etc. that are cluttering your garage? Bring them along and offer them for sale from the boot of your car. We are not looking to host a full blown swap meet, so please no trailers full of stuff. Whatever you can get in your car or bring pictures of larger items that you want to sell. Admission into the park is \$8.00.



The *Michiana Brits British Car Enthusiasts Club* invites you to their **Michiana Brits 31st Annual British Car Show**. This highly popular all-marque show is on the beautiful campus of Saint Mary's College on the north side of South Bend, IN, across the street from the University of Notre Dame. **June 24, 2018** 10am-3pm.

The featured marque is MGA. Judging will be by popular vote, with awards given for each class and Best in Show. The entry fee is \$23 per vehicle, and for club members who have their Michiana Brits membership affiliated with their NAMGBR membership, the fee is \$10 per vehicle. Vehicles may arrive after 8:30 AM, judging from 11 AM - 2 PM, awards shortly thereafter.

Goody bags and collector show pins for the first 100 vehicles. Food sales (credit cards accepted) rain or shine, by Saint Mary's

College, air-conditioned indoors area. Open to the general public 10 AM - 3 PM, free admission & parking, indoor restrooms. Entrants may register at the show or pre-register at the Michiana Brits website, [www.michianabrits.com](http://www.michianabrits.com).



## *Drive Your MGA Day-May 5, 2018*

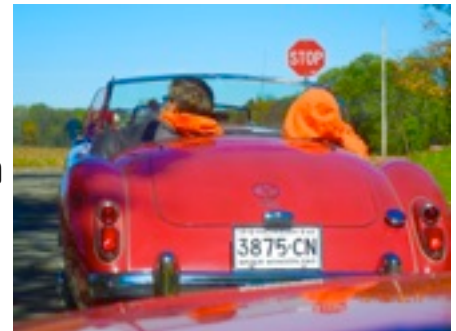


We have arranged to meet in Gregory, MI on May 5 at the Inverness Inn at 12:30 p.m. The address is 13996 N. Territorial Road, Gregory, MI 48137. Their phone number is 734-475-1515. They are aware we will be stopping in and they have a room to accommodate our crowd. If the day and the weather permits, we may include a drive to Hell for dessert. Let's hope Mother Nature starts to spread some warmth in our direction for some beautiful driving conditions.

Hope to see many Rowdies driving their MGs on May 5.

Thanks, Curt and Stephanie

*"Run What Ya' Brung and Drive It Like Ya' Stole It"*



## **NAMGAR GT-43** Join Members of the North American MGA Register for the forty-third annual Get-Together in historic Richmond, Virginia June 13-17, 2018!





**CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER**

by Bill Weakley



Spring is coming. It's late, but it surely will come soon. We woke today (4/15) to a covering of ice over everything. It is less than three weeks to Drive Your MGA Day, so we need a real change in the weather soon. We did manage to drive our MGC to the Kimber Party, but that was a

mistake. There was salt on the roads in several places. It was dry and mostly blown away, but the C needs a good rinse anyway. There is a report and photos of the party elsewhere in this issue.

I am still on track to get my MGA on the road soon. At the time of the last column, I was expecting my front fenders in a few days. It actually took six more weeks to get them. It was frustrating, but it wasn't as if I ran out of things to work on. I actually drove the car up and down our driveway under its own power last week. It was pretty exciting to try it out. There is still a lot to do, but I was able to test all the lights and instruments with success.

The only thing that didn't work was the heater fan. I had tested it on the bench, so I knew the motor was good. I also was very careful about the wiring connections, so I checked and confirmed that there was power to the switch lead and continuity from the other switch connection to the fan and then to ground. It appeared that the brand new, out-of-the-box switch assembly was bad when I checked between the bullet connectors on the wires attached to the switch. But when I checked the wires at the switch end, the switch worked fine. I found that neither wire had continuity between the switch and the bullet connector. The connectors were solidly attached and appeared to be properly soldered. So I cut the connectors off and soldered on new ones. Then everything was good. I tried to dissect the original bullet connectors but couldn't discover how it was possible to solder the connector to the wire without making an electrical connection. I guess it's just another case of the aftermarket parts blues. We can certainly find fault with the original MG engineering designs and build quality, but many of the components were made of much better stuff than we get now.

Speaking of aftermarket parts, I decided to pass on my experience with the Moss under-dash pad set (241-980). It seemed to be very accurately made as far as the overall shape and location of the various holes. However, it seems they allowed a little too much material to make the bend between the vertical and horizontal sections, so it was not possible to get a tight fit around the bend. Also, most of the holes for fasteners were just big

enough for the bolt but not the washer, so cutting was required in several places, which was messy and not easy. So I can't recommend using the pad. Instead, I would recommend the Hush Mat or similar products if you want to insulate the firewall.

I'm going to take a few days off from the A to change the water pump on Mary Ellen's PT Cruiser. While changing a water pump on an MG is an easy afternoon job, the engine on the Cruiser is packed so tightly that you basically have to dig your way down to it by removing components with almost no clearance for tools or hands. A local repair shop wanted \$1700 to do the job. As much as I would like to avoid it, doing this job can save me at least \$1500. I would rather spend that money on the A. I hope it doesn't take me all week.

Our son is visiting from Montreal this week. As I was ferrying him around in the C, it occurred to me that I never taught him to drive a stick. He didn't drive until he was in his twenties because of epilepsy. He doesn't own a car, which is more of a liability than a help in Montreal. On second thought, I wonder if anyone other than a collector of old cars really needs to know how to use a manual transmission these days. Even the super cars are eliminating manually shifted transmissions. Of course, automatics are much better than they were 50 years ago when the term slush box was applicable. Still, I like the feel of selecting the gear and deciding when to shift. Here's hoping we see a lot of Rowdies on May 5th.



*Pictured above: Making progress step by step. But will it be ready for GT-43?"*

*Pictured at left: "Is the MGA ready to drive to the Kimber party, dear?"*

*(Picture sent by Dave Quinn)*

# Kimber Birthday Meet Report - by Dave Smith

## Cecil's Story

Cecil Kimber was born in London on April 12, 1888 to Henry & Fanny Kimber.

His First job was with his father's Printing Business and at 23 he bought a REX motorcycle, but had a leg injury on a Friends cycle.

At age 25 he bought a Singer car and left his Dad's business to become a designer at Sheffield-Simplex. During WWI he went to AC cars and later to a vendor, EG Wrigley.

EG Wrigley was also a vendor to Morris Motors and thru contacts, Cecil was hired by Morris Garages in 1921 as Sales Manager at the age of 33. He continued to design special bodies for Morris Cars, which lead to the creation of MG, for *Morris Garages*, in 1928 as a separate marque.

MG moved from Oxford to Abingdon in 1929 and Cecil became the Managing Director in 1930 at the age of 42.

William Morris was the principal stock holder of MG and in 1935, sold MG to Morris Motors. That put Cecil under the Head office, which did not always go smoothly. In WWII MG quit producing cars, but Cecil landed a good contract to build aircraft components for the war effort. The Head office resented his decision and asked him to resign in 1941 at the age of 53.

Cecil found employment with other companies. During his career he was elected to the Presidency of the Automobile Division of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. He married Irene Hunt and had two daughters Lisa & Jean. After Irene passed away in 1938 he married Muriel Dewar.

Cecil was killed on February 4, 1945 in a railway accident when his railcar derailed and was crushed by a steel signal Gantry. He was the only fatality.

## Kimber Party Report 2018

The 27th annual Kimber Birthday party was again hosted by the LAMGA MG club of Lansing on Saturday 4-7-18. All Michigan MG clubs are invited to this first driving event of the year. The day dawned clear but cold, however we were a bit lucky this year as it snowed on both Friday and Sunday. The attendance was down slightly, at about 50 persons, but we did have five first timers.

Chari and I were asked to host as LAMGA President Jai Deagan and VP Jim Neal were out of town. Final arrangements were made with the Michigan clubs and the restaurant. As this was Cecil's

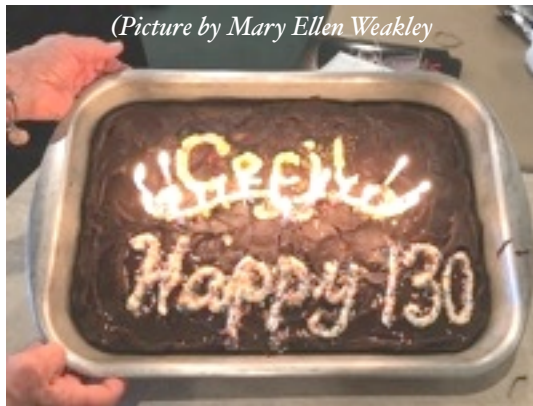
130th birthday, a short biography was shared with the guests. After the Bio was given, Guy St. John added one piece of MG lore. Noting that Cecil was born in 1888, Guy mentioned that Cecil had a life Long interest in the 8-sided octagon, which we all know and love as the main feature of the MG logo.

One highlight of the event was the free book table sponsored by Dave Quinn. Dave has great taste in literature, and several of the books found a new home. The birthday cake was again provided by Marcia Greiner of the Windsor Detroit Club. I believe she has brought the cake for every Kimber Party. After the group sang Happy Birthday to Cecil and Dave Quinn blew out the Candles, the cake was served to all.

Each Club Chairperson was asked to introduce their attendees and tell a bit about their upcoming events for 2018. Much interesting information was traded. Curt Smith is hosting the Drive Your MG day event on May 5th and shared some of his plans with the guests.

**Dave Smith**

*(Pictures below and next page)*



*(Picture by Mary Ellen Weakley)*



*The White Stuff Was Snow*



*Dave and Donna*



*Chari and Dave*



*Leslie and Forrest*



*Smilin' Steve*



*John and Kevin*



*Bruce and Grandson,  
Cowan*



*Catching Up On The Latest News*



*Mitzi and Larry*



*Ken and Kathy*



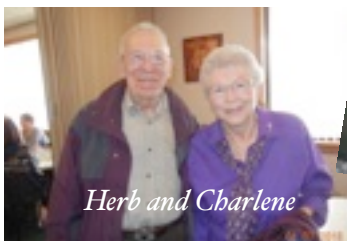
*Mark and Curt*



*Kathy and Mitzi*



*Donna and Forrest*



*Herb and Charlene*



*Jan, Mary Ellen, Bill, Kathy*

*Pictures by Ken Nelson*

# Road Test-MGA

January 1957

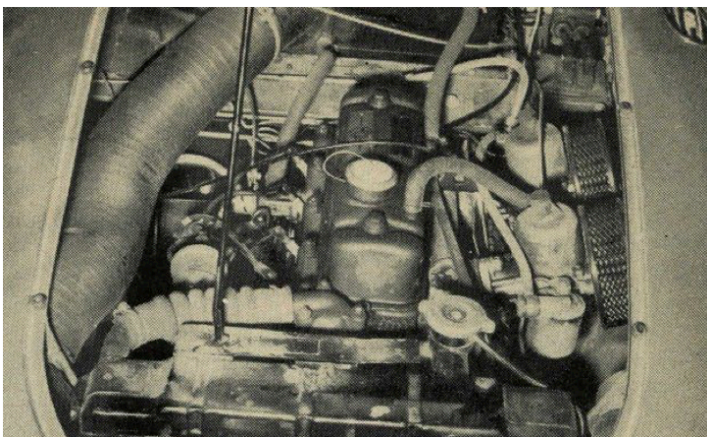
# SPORTS CARS ILLUSTRATED'S CAR and DRIVER

The controversial "aerodynamic" MG is a true 100- mph sports car. Our best one-way speed of 101.1 mph was, to be sure, achieved with the help of a gentle zephyr at the rear, but off-setting this is the fact that we reached the full-century speed in only one mile. With a two-mile approach to the measured quarter, undoubtedly,

we would have had a few more revs on the tach and a slightly quicker passage through the traps. What counts is that the "A" is an easy 15 mph faster than the TD, 10 mph faster than the TF1500, and stiff competition for such performance rivals as the Alfa Giulietta Sprint and the Porsche 1600 Speedster.

For most of us, nothing induces a friendly, responsive attitude toward a car—a willingness to be prejudiced in its favor—like a modest price. The "A" is a lot of sports car for its base price of \$2195. It's almost entirely new mechanically; the only parts interchangeable with the TF are the steering rack and some front suspension components. Its body is sleek and suave and it has perhaps the first really stiff frame in the long evolution of the little hot rods from Abingdon-on-Thames.

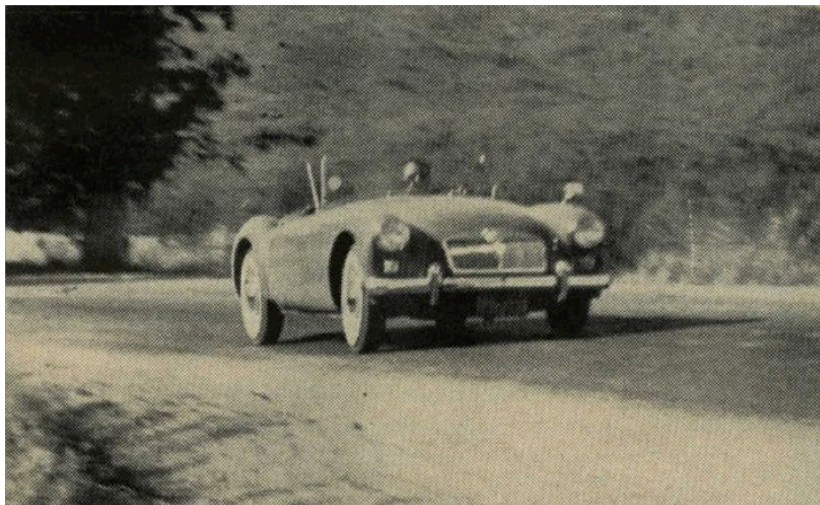
But in spite of all the visible and hidden changes



and improvements, you have only to drive the "A" around the block to recognize its old MG character. The engineer who designed the TC's noisy tappets, harsh ride, and loud

exhaust system is apparently still bending over the drawing board. In spite of its contemporary look, better handling and thrustier performance, the "A" is still pure old-line MG Midget.

Like its ancestors it's a whole lot of fun to drive in spite of—or maybe because of—its imperfections. The steering as always is very quick over a large lock, and Detroit-conditioned drivers look somewhat palsied at the wheel until they sharpen their responses. Once they do, though, the alert steering naturally makes for excellent control of the machine. This steering is light, has a fairly strong self-centering action and is devoid of play. Minor road shocks are not felt through the steering wheel, but big bumps definitely are.

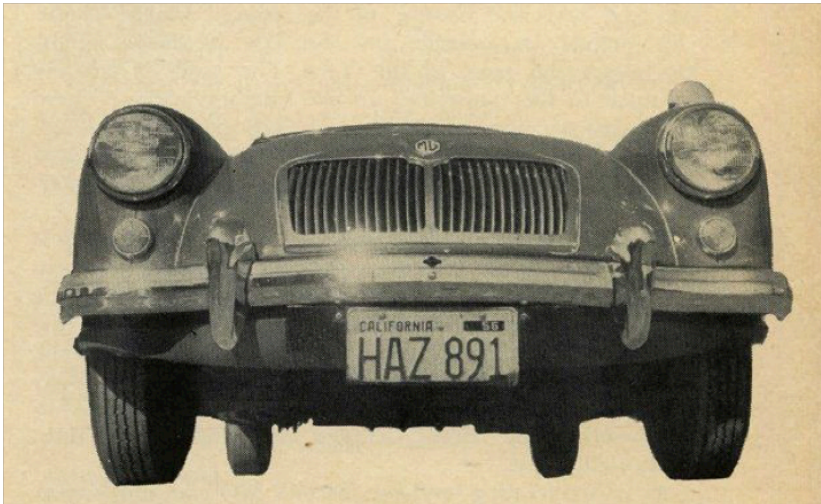


Another of the organs of the machine that retains the old MG's character is the gearbox. The remote shift lever is ideally at hand; stubby and short in travel, and the synchromesh is infallible. Pumping this lever through the cogs on our 5000 mile-old test car still took plenty of bicep power; but we understand that the transmission begins to limber up after seven or eight thousand miles.

The hydraulically-assisted clutch is light, strong and sure and upshifts can be made with lightning speed. Going down from third to second is slightly awkward and presents the possibility of crunching against reverse or even engaging it while moving forward at low speeds. Nevertheless, this is a good and very satisfying gearbox, despite the fact that low gear is overly low.

The "A's" ride is still another instance of blood telling. It's smooth on smooth pavement, and that's all. The rest of the time it's aggressively hard, in the spartan sports car tradition of the Thirties. Unlike a lot of modern light cars, which not only corner well but also absorb horrible bumps, the "A" and its occupants feel every surface ripple. Beyond about 80 or 85 mph, even on smooth pavement, the ride gets a little bouncy—this, in spite of the fact that a prototype of this chassis was run at better than 150 mph on the Bonneville Salt.

But up to this point the car cruises free and easy and still retains pretty good acceleration. It has a solid, substantial, all-of-a-piece feel that's largely due to the "A's" new frame. The big, box-section rails are tied together by cross-members at something like two-foot intervals and to these are added a box-section superstructure that gives added stiffness at the firewall line. This is a heavy frame but a very stiff one, and because of the reduced weight of the "A's" engine, transmission and rear axle, its chassis weighs just about the same as the TF's. The body is securely mounted to the frame and on the roughest surfaces there is no sign of frame twisting or of body panels "working" independently. The doors close with a solid sound and they stay closed, unlike those on some of the springier-framed MG's.



With a full tank of fuel the "A's" weight distribution is very close to 50-50, and this, combined with the stiff suspension and a close tread/wheelbase ratio helps give the car its well-balanced cornering qualities. Its bite in the turns is softer than the on-rails variety, but it sticks to the road very well—much better than its forebears did. Body roll and tire noise are slight. The rear tires begin to slide only when sorely tempted. and then in a slow, controllable way.

As an accelerating machine the new MG goes much more briskly than the TF, in spite of nearly equal displacement and a 1.2 percent reduction in final drive ratio. Since horsepower and torque have gone up just 4.6 and 1.8 percent respectively, most of the gain in both acceleration and top speed has to be caused by the lower wind drag of the "A's" streamlined body. The acceleration curves of the "A" and the TF show that there's a big difference in the way that these similarly endowed cars penetrate the air.

The modified BMC B-type engine is basically the same as the one that powers the four-cylinder Morris, Wolsley and Austin except for its more sporting camshaft and dual carbs. The compact gauze-type air cleaners do little or no silencing and the moan of air being dragged into the cylinders gets really loud at about 70 mph. On the whole this is a pleasant sound, suggestive of gobs of power, but when the weather equipment is up it can get tiresome.

All the porting is on the left side of the engines. There are two intake ports and three for exhaust, feeding into a nicely contoured three-branch "header" type

manifold. This style of porting is practically immune to the more advanced forms of intake and exhaust "ram" tuning, but since nobody is more aware of this than the factory, a simple remedy is undoubtedly already on the drawing boards. The throttle linkage is devious.

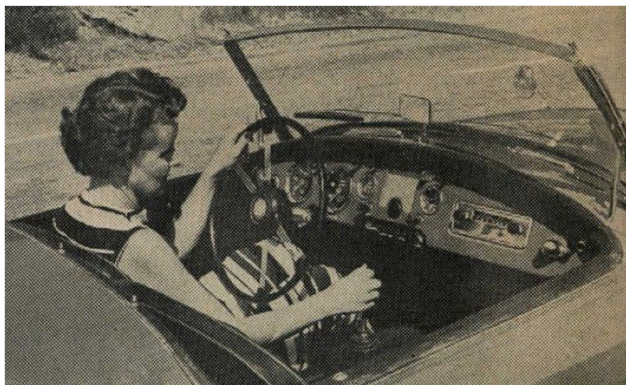
The throttle pedal is suspended from a shaft that extends to the right-hand side of the firewall. To a bracket on the far end of this shaft is attached a flexible cable that runs parallel to the right-hand side of the engine, then crosses over the top of it to connect with the throttle valves—which actually are no more than a few inches ahead of the foot pedal. Abingdon's engineers could have devised a more direct connection, but this one works very well.

During our warm-weather testing of the "A", the engine always fired up with no hesitation and quickly settled down to a somewhat rough idle at about 900 rpm. The engine revs willingly under load up about 4500 rpm, but at this point the tappets begin to chatter and you can feel the engine starting to work. The four-inch tachometer, now driven by the camshaft rather than the generator, has an orange pie-slice between 5500 and 6000. It also has a red warning slice from 6000 to 7000, but this is mainly decorative. The stock engine is wound very tight at 5500 in the indirect gears and the valve train protests politely but unmistakably. During acceleration runs we hit 5900 on a couple of occasions but retreated in haste. This is just about the limit. To venture into the red area on the tach is to invite the valves to come unglued. But at 5800 rpm in top gear (101.1 mph) the engine, though far from loafing, seems willing to sustain the pace indefinitely.

As it stands, this engine seems to be at the upper limit of its compression ratio. It continues to fire for several



revs after the ignition has been cut. But this is the only criticism we have to make of the "A's" power plant. It's a good combination of ruggedness, economy of operation and maintenance, and healthy output.



MG's old motto "Safety Fast" is highly appropriate for the "A". The machine's good steering, roadholding and acceleration are backed up by a set of genuinely outstanding brakes. The ten inch drums are heavy iron castings that show little tendency to expand. The retarding force of the brakes registered the unusual high of .86 g on our instruments, and over the ten-stop fade test they lost only 9.3 percent of their efficiency. (Some cars that Sports Cars Illustrated has tested have had fade losses of 25 percent and more.) From these figures it would seem that the "A's" perforated disc wheels do a good job of brake cooling which can be made still better if you use the optionally available wire wheels. For racing, the factory recommends the harder Ferodo BG95/1 lining, which gives even more fade-proof braking.

The body of the MG "A" is bound to be a controversial subject as long as there are still partisans of the old Thirties-styled models. The TC unquestionably deserves the much abused title of "classic" and the TD and TF proved to a lot of people that it was impossible to get a better looking car by "refining" the crisp, spidery TC.

As it is now, the "A" is a very attractive car from any angle, and downright beautiful from some. Its look and feel of quality, closely approach those of some cars that cost twice as much money. The body feels and is very substantial. The quality of the painted finish is good, there's no skimping on the instrument panel, and the reinforced bumpers are very adequate.

On the negative side, raising or lowering the top is a hassle, luggage space is minute, and the inside door panels are sub-standard compared to the quality of the rest of the machine. The 12-volt electrical system is fed by a pair of six-volt batteries in series, mounted behind the seats but accessible only if you haul the spare tire out of the luggage compartment!

In order to get the "A" 2-1/2 inches lower than the TF, the frame rails have been bowed out enough to permit

the occupants to ride between and alongside them. Sports Cars Illustrated's staff found the semi-reclining seating position perfectly comfortable, but criticized the seat-backs because they support only the shoulders. The driver sits with left leg extended to operate the clutch and right leg cocked to operate the throttle. This turns out to be a comfortable driving position, particularly since the high transmission tunnel provides good support.

On the "A" the headlight dip-switch, which in previous MG's was on the instrument panel, is mounted on the firewall, which is stepped and lies in two planes, the higher portion roughly one foot farther aft than the lower. This means that to operate the switch you have to pull your leg back from its normal, relaxed, clutch-operating position and raise it high enough to prod the switch. Foot pedal room is better in the "A" than in earlier MG's but it's still easy to hook throttle foot on brake pedal, or hit the throttle pedal when you want to brake. This happened to most of our testing crew and made an unforgettable impression; it happened only once per driver.

The air flow around the car at speed with the top down is such that there is very little turbulence in the cockpit—the occupants get little wind buffeting, and conversation in normal tones can be carried on with ease except at high rpm's. With the top up engine noise is magnified, of course. And like most fabric tops the "A" rattles and booms against the wind. The side-screens are well designed, their lower third being a separate panel that can be pivoted outward against a spring-loaded plunger.

But ventilation is either all-off or all-on; there are no openings in the screens to permit the entry of outside air. There are also no external door handles, and reaching in through the spring-loaded flap and down to grasp the door-latch pull-cord can be fairly awkward.

With all its little irritations, this is a basically safe, friendly, likeable car — a genuine, well-built sports machine at a price that can't be considered anything but reasonable and fair. We'd be much surprised if the "A" sales situation were anything but what it is: demand fantastically ahead of supply. It's a very desirable car that will give years of economical driving pleasure and then have the high resale value that MG's have earned.



## Tech Tip-In Praise Of Dry Pants

### A Simpler MGA Diaper by Dave Quinn

In the last issue of A-Antics John Alexander tossed out several ideas that involved taking accurate measurements, cutting metal, bending metal, brazing metal, welding metal, installing drains, and so forth. For several years I have used a much, much simpler approach that only requires drilling four holes in a cookie sheet.



A set of three sheets sells for \$8.89 at the Target store; they can also be found at Dollar General, etc. You will only need one, so it is your chance to impress your wife with an unexpected gift or to find a garage use for the other two. Using the 12-1/2" x 18-1/2" sheet, drill two holes 3" from the edge at one end and two holes 4-1/4" from the edge at the other end. That's it. It is ready to install. Just like MG EX182 you now have an under tray giving you a driving edge over other MGAs. Attach the tray snugly to existing cross members using plastic ties.

Over the years I have experimented with various items to catch and retain the oil. I typically drive 5,000 miles each summer, giving it lots of opportunity to leak oil from the rear main. The clear winner is Quickie clean results jumbo Microfiber Floor Mop Refill sold at Lowes for \$7.78.. It catches and absorbs the oil with no splash flying around whatsoever no matter your speed or car tossing. At the end of the driving season when you change your oil, change your diaper by cutting the plastic ties and discarding the oil soaked one.



The mop refill is a perfect fit for the cookie sheet. Stay dry my friends.



I highly recommend one for our editor's MGA!



*Your Editor no longer has to sign his name, since he now simply leaves his unique identifying mark!*

**In defense of the seemingly indefensible, our Editor replies to Dave Quinn's recommendation for his car's oil leaks.** "Interestingly enough, I just recently changed the rocker cover gasket and bought a cast aluminum rocker cover hoping that would seal the cover better to prevent leaks. I also changed the tappet cover gaskets not too long ago for same reason. I also am planning to put a tech tip about an oil catcher under the main rear oil seal in this Antics (see March-April A-Antics). I purchased and added one for the TD a couple of weeks ago and one for the MGA is on my list for the future.

My car doesn't seem to leak that much oil on my driveway when sitting awhile-but when I pulled in your driveway it had been running on the highway for over 2 hours at speed, of course. And without a little midget sitting under the bonnet while driving, how can you tell where the oil is coming from?

I once tried running without any oil to stop the leaks, which worked. But then the radiator boiled over and I was right back where I started with a messy driveway. So in went the oil again. (OK that one might not be true) But when I rebuilt the engine I used a later MGB timing cover with a modern front oil seal-but that was about 60,000 miles ago now. No one was doing a proper kit for rear oil seals back then or I'd do it in a minute-but I'm not interested in pulling the engine to do that now unless something else makes me do so.

So all I can offer now is my Bart Simpson approach-"Hey man, I wasn't even there that day".

*Affectionately, Your Greasy Gringo, Senior Ken"*

**Dave answered back.** "Senior, I'm sure the multiple spots were due to the gradual slope of our driveway which allowed any buildup on flat surfaces to drip off.

My car leaks oil from the both the timing cover and the rear main but neither is bad enough to warrant pulling the engine.

I've been using a pan to catch oil for years. I attach a cookie tin with four plastic ties. At first I used sponge like foam to soak up the oil but that wasn't effective for a whole season of driving. I switched to a mop material I buy at Lowes that is a perfect fit for the cookie tin. I just pulled everything off before driving up to your house. That's why I asked if it was ok to park there. I figured I'd be leaking and had no idea how much. I pulled it off a

little early this year because I had the MG up on 4 stands while trying to figure out why the cruise control wasn't working. Here's a photo of my oil catcher and the material, now oil soaked, so I'll just replace it with a new one rather than wringing it out. **Dave Quinn**



**PS on Diaper piece** "I did an oil change today and a diaper change as well. Normally, I do not remove the entire tray but I wanted to inspect my cruise control wiring which runs along the inner frame rail. The two narrow holes go towards the back. Normally I would simply cut those two rear ties and remove the oil soaked mop

refill, do a quick wipe of the pan, and insert a new mop refill. I find using 14" ties make the job easy to route around the crossmember in the front and the back, they are strong, and can be pulled very tight. I took a couple pictures before snipping off the ends of the ties.





**Tech Tip**



**Let's consider antifreeze in our classic cars. Which one is the best? Better yet...what's cooling your antique car** ...IAT or OAT type antifreeze? What's the difference,

you ask? To be honest, most people don't realize there were different types of antifreeze compounds and just shop for brands and price. They figure it's all the same stuff just different colors.

Well, there IS a difference and it DOES matter to all of us that have water cooled antiques.

We need to avoid using OAT type antifreeze. Even though it is designed for a longer service life, we shouldn't use it. It includes an inhibitor that attacks silicone compounds that are frequently used in gasket sealants. In addition, this formula also goes after lead based products like solder and babbit (used in early bearings), some yellow metals that may be in cam bearings and radiators, and conventional gasket and seal type packing materials. Our old rides may contain some, or all, of these materials so using OAT formula antifreeze could result in an expensive headache down the road. We need to be looking for IAT type antifreeze to protect and preserve our investments. **Read the article below and you decide...**

**Which Antifreeze is Right for Your Vehicle?**

Posted on: June 6th, 2013 by ChiltonDIY

Story and Photography by Jim Marotta

Back in the day, no matter which brand you chose, antifreeze was green. The glycol-based formula contained silicates as corrosion inhibitors. You mixed the antifreeze 50/50 with water and poured it in the radiator. As the engine operated, the antifreeze performed its primary duties of carrying heat to the radiator, preventing freezing (hence the name) and protecting against corrosion in the cooling system. You simply changed the antifreeze at the prescribed service interval.

Today, with different types of antifreeze technology in a rainbow of colors, confusion abounds among automotive people and consumers alike as to what color antifreeze is best. The easy part is that most antifreeze manufacturers still make coolant with ethylene glycol (EG), a type of alcohol made from ethane. Manufacturers also make more environmentally friendly versions with less-toxic propylene glycol (PG), a similar compound made from propane.

**Evolving Antifreeze**

**Inorganic Acid Technology (IAT) is the chemical basis for the traditional green antifreeze.** IAT contains either EG or PG and is usually fortified with silicate or phosphate additives to make it compatible with metal cooling system components. The generally recommended replacement interval is every three years or 36,000 miles. The owner's manual or [maintenance chart](#) from [ChiltonPRO.com](#) and [ChiltonDIY.com](#) shows what

the vehicle manufacturer recommends for each specific vehicle.

Inorganic acid technology is the chemical composition for the traditional green or yellow antifreeze (right). Organic acid technology is the orange coolant on the left.



**Organic Acid Technology (OAT) is a Long Life Coolant (LLC) / Extended Life Coolant (ELC)** widely used in Europe before its introduction in North America. OAT is usually EG. The generally recommended replacement interval is five years or 150,000 miles; find out what the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations are for your car or truck.

An example of an organic acid technology long life/extended life coolant



**Hybrid Organic Acid Technology (HOAT) combines IAT and OAT with nitrites.**

Antifreeze manufacturers often refer to it as "global," indicating on the bottle that it meets or exceeds the specification "G-05" for most vehicles newer than 2002 and "G-11" or "G-12" for Volkswagen and Audi. The generally recommended replacement interval is five years or 150,000 miles, always check your vehicle manufacturer's recommendations for your car or truck.

**Why All the Different Coolant Formulations?** In the early 1980's Ford was working with antifreeze

manufacturers to come up with a formulation to meet global needs. European countries had very hard water and since water is 50% of the antifreeze mix, water quality dramatically affects the overall mix. As European manufacturers were abandoning phosphate-based technology because phosphates tend to form scale, Japanese manufacturers were moving away from silicates, which tend to destroy water pump seals.

The first alternate coolants were hybrids combining carboxyl and silicate technologies. Ford started using them after extensive durability testing (more than 40 million fleet test miles on every vehicle platform that Ford had) in the early 1980s. At about the same time, Mercedes and VW were also using hybrid formulations.

In addition to better corrosion inhibitors for the global market, other issues precipitated formula change. Toxicity and environmental concerns are behind the use of PG rather than EG, while the promise of longer-lasting engine protection and less maintenance spur development of the newest formulations, such as [Nissan's blue coolant](#), which is designed to last ten years or 135,000 miles.

### Does Antifreeze Break Down?

Engine antifreeze does break down, forming corrosive organic degradation products. Antifreeze buffering agents inhibit this corrosion. Since most antifreeze leaks out of the vehicle, most systems are "topped off" with fresh antifreeze, extending its life somewhat. How much depends on the type of antifreeze added.

### Can You Mix Antifreeze Technologies?

The one universal coolant that all agree on is water. For best performance, water needs a little help. What happens when antifreezes are mixed? A lot of the confusion about mixing coolants stems from early work with carboxyl coolants. In an American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) test, mixing IAT and OAT coolants resulted in more corrosion than either antifreeze alone. Subsequent tests revealed a testing error: the corrosive environment occurred because the coolant was too dilute. It is best to use the same type of coolant originally used in your car or truck, or the [vehicle manufacturer's recommendations](#). According to industry experts, if you do not know what coolant is in the vehicle and you top off with another brand, nothing bad is going to happen. Only when dilution rates border 50% is the effectiveness of each coolant's inhibitor package compromised. However, when mixing coolants, the recommended coolant change interval will degrade to that of the shorter-life coolant.

### Proper Maintenance is Key

As with anything automotive, proper maintenance is the key to longevity. More important than the type of antifreeze you use is to maintain the cooling system properly by maintaining freeze point protection and proper

coolant level. Almost all coolants work best at the ideal freeze point mixture, which for most parts of the country means a 50/50 antifreeze-to-water mixture. At this level, antifreeze protects to -34°F and boil-over protection to 257°F. In addition, maintaining proper freeze point protection ensures corrosion inhibitors are present at intended levels.



Maintaining the cooling system properly by maintaining freeze point protection and proper coolant level is critical. Here a handy tool provides coolant concentrations.

Vehicle manufacturers design cooling systems to operate full of antifreeze. A system that is constantly low on coolant can create an extremely corrosive environment due to the aggressive nature of the vapors of a glycol/water mix. These steam vapors are more corrosive than either fluid by itself. To check your coolant system capacity, simply refer to your vehicle's [capacities chart](#) at [ChiltonDIY.com](#), [ChiltonPRO.com](#), or your owner's manual.

If you choose to maintain your cooling system yourself, keep in mind that all types of antifreeze are poisonous. Animals and humans can be attracted by its sweet taste. Always recycle antifreeze properly.

### Distilled Water is Best

In almost every part of the country, tap water contains minerals such as magnesium and calcium that can form deposits in a cooling system, especially on the engine's hottest parts. The water you use to mix the antifreeze is critical. Premixed coolants are mixed at the factory with distilled water. Use distilled water, not tap or filtered water, when you refill any cooling system.



A system that is constantly low on coolant can create an extremely corrosive engine environment

### Coolant Keeps Working After the Engine Quits

Having the proper coolant level is still important after shutting off the engine. As the coolant stops flowing and the engine temperature increases dramatically, areas of localized boiling can send large shock waves through the engine wreaking havoc on components, especially those made of aluminum.

**Tech Tip**

When balancing twin SU carbs many people will use an air flowmeter or carb-sync

*SU Carb-Sync Device*



*High Tech Alternative Device*

device to equalize the flow into both carburetors on our MGAs. However, many of us from the “old school” will simply use a tube or a mechanics’ stethoscope to place at the opening into the carburetor throat and listen for the level of “hiss” at each carb separately. With a rubber tube/hose about 2ft long, one end can be held in your good ear, and the other end held “just inside” the carburetor throat, to listen for this “hiss”. It is easily heard, and can be used to set the idle speed butterfly adjusting screw until an equal sound is heard at both carbs. This provides a “balanced” or equal fuel/air mix to each carburetor. The problem I find is that the sound level may vary simply because it may be difficult to hold the tube at precisely the same spot at each carburetor throat. By simply attaching a wood or plastic clothespin on the end of the tubing with two ties you can now clip it at the same exact location every time, as shown in the picture to the right. Much simpler, more accurate, and free!

**Save the Date: GT-44**



NAMGAR has announced the location and dates for GT-44. This annual event, which will be organized by the Minnesota MG Vintage Racers, will be held in the historic town of Dubuque, Iowa, from July 10-14, 2019. Located on the banks of the Mississippi River, Dubuque offers visitors breathtaking views, award-winning restaurants, charming shops, art and river history museum, elegant turn-of-the-century homes, etc.

Check [namgar.com](http://namgar.com) for updates on this event later this year.

**Renewal Info for A-Antics:** Just a reminder that the Rowdies membership renewal is available online. The renewal page for the club is at: <http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/renew.htm>.

As an alternative, go to the the Rowdies home page at: <http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/index.htm>, then choose 'Membership Renewal' from the left column.

If you're a member without email, you should have received a letter reminder about renewal. Fill out the form you received and return it to Jeff Zorn, our treasurer. His address is on the form.

Finally, here's a link to the current membership list which shows who has renewed for 2018 and who has not: [http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/holding/Membership\\_2018.pdf](http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/holding/Membership_2018.pdf)

THE NEW *airsmoothed*



1.3 LITRE



MAGNETTE  
(SERIES "ZA")

***MG Car Company Begins  
Prototype Testing With  
Their New Model Being  
Designed For Michigan  
And Other Climates With  
Extreme Temperatures!***

*This version is intended to  
be self-driving by actually  
seeing and smelling its  
way through snow and ice  
using special sensors at  
the front of the car.*

