



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MGs of BALTIMORE MD

May 2020

www.mgsofbaltimore.org

DUE TO COVID-19 OUR MAY 2020 MEETING WILL BE VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM. PLEASE SEE PAGE 3 FOR DETAILS

From El Presidente:

With the Corona Virus/COVID-19 pandemic still taking its toll on us all, it looks like the spring and early summer car show season for 2020 is going to be a washout for most of us. We will not be having a May MGOB Meeting at this point and who knows about June.

I want to Thank Richard Jefferson for his daily PEU (Prisoner Entertainment Update) to those on the MGOB e-mail group; his suggestions of things to do whilst on house arrest are fantastic. He has also set up a Zoom video link for LEL (League of Extraordinary Loafers) with the only requirement being the wearing of pants. One day I will have to check it out myself. If you are not part of the MGOB e-mail group and want to be contact Randy Kegg at <u>Randell Kegg@msn.com</u> and if you want to take part in the MGOB Zoom sessions contact Richard Jefferson at <u>mgobjefferson@msn.com</u>

Here's a 2020 MGOB membership update, the club currently has 126 members in good standing. Now stay safe, cover your face, maintain social distancing and done drink alone unless you have too. Hopefully we will see each other at Brits by the Bay.

The 31st Annual "Get the Dust Off" Rallye has been **rescheduled for Sunday, July 12th**. This year's rallye will start and end at the Dejon Vineyards, located at 5300 Hydes Road, Hydes, MD 21082. Cars assemble starting at 10:30 a.m. for more information checkout the flier in this issue of the Octagram or on line at <u>www.mgsofbaltimore.org</u>

Monumental Brewing Company's British Invasion Festival has been canceled for now. Hopefully it will be rescheduled.

43rd Annual Original British Car Day has been canceled for 2020.

TRAC's Annual Brits By the Bay **is still** scheduled for June 28th, 2020 at the Harford Winery, Forest Hill MD. See the event flier in this issue or go to <u>https://www.tracltd.org/</u> for more info.

GT-45 – The North American MGA Register's Annual Convention has been canceled and refunds are being sent out.

MG 2020 the 29th Annual North American MGB Register Convention has been canceled and refunds will be going out to those that registered. Join the fun next June 14th-17th in Atlantic City at MG International 2021more info will be forthcoming in the future.

41st MGs "On the Rocks" British Car Show is set for Saturday, September 26th at Rocks state Park 4-H Camp. For a flier go to <u>www.mgsofbaltimore.org</u>

Safety Fast!

Richard

Update from the Editor

This month I am happy to bring articles to you from the following publications:

Safety Fast October 2019 – The MG Car Club LTD Abingdon-on-Thames Grand Strand British Car Club's Newsletter – April 2020 The Texas MG Register "BACKROADS" Newsletter – April 2020 The Roadster Factory via The AMGBA eOctagon – May 2020

While you are home catching up on your reading don't forget about your fellow club members. If you read something you think they would be interested in please send it to me to add to the newsletter.

I know that this staying home is getting old. Remember you can go for a drive in your MG. A great Saturday drive is to the Darlington/Dublin VFW Post 10146 for their drive through lunch specials. All proceeds go to keeping the hall running. Great food for great prices. Something new and delicious each week. Menu items and prices posted each Friday on their Facebook page.

ZOOM MEETING INFORMATION

Ken – Ski has set up A Zoom meeting for TUESDAY MAY 5TH 7:30 PM for anyone in MGOB to get on line and just chat.

If you already have a ZOOM.US apt just click on and hit "JOIN MEETING" using ID and PW listed below if needed.

If you need to GET zoom. go to <u>WWW.Zoom.us</u> and download.

At bottom of Zoom page hit DOWNLOAD and follow directions.

It is best to use a DESK TOP, IPAD, or LAP TOP. An I PHONE is OK but the pictures will be very small.

SOME RULES...... MUTE yourself if not talking (Keeps back round noise down). No foul language and PLEASE dress appropriately !!!

If you need help with getting or using ZOOM call Kenny O. (HOME) 443-299-6591 or (CELL) 41-459-9202 and he will try to help.

Join Zoom Meeting https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3144212676

Meeting ID: 314 421 2676

Pass word: 836565.

The MGs of Baltimore, Ltd. Car club was established in 1977. The club represents over 150 members in the Metro Baltimore area. As the name implies, the club centers its activities around the preservation and enjoyment of the cars that bear the classic MG marque. The club is affiliated with the following national organizations: The North American MGA Register, The North American MGB Register, and The American MGB association. Internationally, the club is affiliated with the MG Car Club and The MG Owners Club. The club's activities include sponsorship of the nationally known "MGs on the Rocks" car show, a series of challenging (and FUN) historic car rallies, as well as numerous fun gatherings all through the year.

Origins of the MG - The Evolution of the MG and Old Number One by Karen Border, TRF Publications

Cecil Kimber (1888 - 1945) was born in Dulwich, South London, and he is credited with being the driving force behind the creation of the MG sports car. In 1921, he became the Sales Manager for Morris Garages in Queen Street in Oxford. Morris Garages was a sales and service center for Morris Motors, Limited, and included the main sales facility in Queen Street, a repair garage at Longwall Street and Holywell, and workshops in Cornmarket Street. William Morris also owned a manufacturing facility in Cowley where the Morris Oxford and Cowley cars were made. In 1922, Kimber became the general manager of Morris Motors after the resignation of Edward Armstead, and was then responsible for managing the sales office, the repair garage, and the workshops.

Kimber was aware that many people wanted cars that looked and performed more like sports cars than the cars that Morris offered, and he knew that people would pay a premium for them, thus increasing the profit for the business. He began promoting sales by producing his own special versions of Morris cars to appeal to people who wanted a custom or sporting car. In addition to being a sales manager and general manager, Kimber was also a visionary, and he and his wife, Irene, drew and designed custom body coaches. To build the cars that would eventually become the MG, Kimber first used the Morris Bullnose Cowley chassis and running gear from the Morris factory, and then he added his custom coachwork which he had produced by Carbodies of Coventry. The suspension was lowered and the high steering components were modified and lowered (raked). The car colours were pastel and they were two-seaters with leather seats and with the "Dicky Seat" (occasional seat) behind. The hood was unique because it covered the front seats as well as the occasional seat at the back. The car was nicknamed a "Chummy" which might have been because the hood covered all of the passengers and not just the two in front. One source called these cars "Kimber Specials".

The cars were originally assembled at the Longwall Street repair garage, but in 1923, they needed more room. They moved to an old stabling yard in Alfred Lane which Morris had used to store used vehicles. The assembly staff consisted of Cecil Cousins and his assistant, Stan Saunders, Jack Lowndes and George Morris.

Eager to prove that his cars were true sport cars, Kimber entered a Chummy with a race-tuned engine in a road race. In March 1923, Kimber won a gold medal in the London-to-Land's End-Trial. He celebrated his win by designing and ordering six two-seater coaches from Raworth of Oxford. These bodies featured yacht-like scuttle ventilators and rakishly slanted windscreens braced on the sides by triangular glass supports. These 11.9 hp Raworth Chummies were probably the first cars to be referred

to as an M.G. However, sales were slow because the cars were twice as expensive as a Morris Cowley.

William Morris, seeing an opportunity for profit, created his own version of a "Chummy," called the "Occasional Four", and priced it lower than Kimber's Chummies. Knowing that he had to make a distinction between his Chummies and the Occasional Four, Kimber next tried the Chummy coach on the Morris Oxford chassis and added a more powerful 14 hp engine later in 1923. Sales of this car were not too successful, so in 1924, Kimber tried a more elegant saloon body, designed by G.S. (Jack) Gardiner who was one of Kimber's sales team, on the Morris 14/28 Bullnose radiator, Oxford chassis. This car body was of polished aluminum and may have been fabricated by Clary Hughes of Birmingham. Gardiner's car was so distinctive that Kimber created a similar one with a coach from Carbodies for Billy Cooper who was a timekeeper at the Brooklands track. His car attracted a lot of attention when drivers and spectators saw it parked at the track entrance.

Morris Motors made some changes to the Oxford chassis in September 1924, which included a nine-foot long wheelbase. Kimber took the longer chassis and designed an all aluminum, four-seater open tourer with optional two colour paint on the bonnet, boot, and wings to go with the polished aluminium side panels. He dropped the Morris Motor name and advertised them as the M.G. 14/28 Super Sports, "our popular M.G. Saloon". At least four different versions of the 14/28 Super Sport were offered at the 1924 Motor Show, including an open two-seater, open 4-seater tourer, and a vee-front saloon. The car badge was still the Morris Oxford badge that was used on all of the Morris cars, but a separate MG octagon badge, "MG Super Sports", was added to the last of the 14/28 cars built. The cars featured artillery-style wheels in 1924-1925, and then in 1925-1926 they had bolt on wire wheels. Some experts feel that the 1924 Morris 14/28 was the first car to be called the M.G. instead of the 11.9 hp Raworth Chummy.

In 1925, Morris Garages moved from Alfred Lane, Oxford to a larger place on Bainton Road, which shared space with the Morris radiator works. Also in 1925, Hubert Charles, a Morris engineer, began working in his spare time fitting the MG bodies to the new Bullnose Morris Oxford chassis, and he also worked with Kimber on engine tuning and experimental work. He officially joined MG in 1928 as Chief Draughtsman. Continuing expansion meant another move in 1927 to a separate factory in Edmund Road, Cowley, Oxford, near the main Morris factory and for the first time it was possible to include a production line.

There are several points of view about the MG octagon badge and the official registration date of the M.G. Car Company. The logo appeared in Oxford newspaper ads as early as November 1923, and some sources say it was registered as a Morris

Garages trademark on May 1, 1924. Other sources say that it was not a registered trademark until 1925. The exact date when the M.G. Car Company was officially formed also varies between sources. Most sources say it formed in March 1928, and they had their very own stand at the London Motor Show in October 1928.

Kimber was still interested in garnering racing credentials for his cars. In 1924, he had a special racing car built on a modified Bullnose Cowley chassis and fitted with the Hotchkiss (now owned by Morris) 11.9 hp, 1548cc overhead valve engine. The lightweight, two-seater body was built by Carbodies of Coventry, and had a boat-shaped tail. The rear was modified by cutting the chassis frame and welding new rails which curved up and over the rear axle to secure the rear springs. The engine was tuned and it had a standard Morris 3-speed gearbox. As with all the Kimber Chummies, the high Cowley steering column was lowered. The dash was fitted with a tachometer, fuel and oil gauges, in addition to the standard speedometer and ammeter. Lighting was provided by two small sidelights on each side of the scuttle and a single headlight. The headlight was removed at some unspecified time and is not on the car at the present time. The car was originally painted in plain grey primer, but its current color is red. It was originally registered FC 7900 on March 27, 1925. In March 1950, it was registered under a new number—FMO 842 after a restoration, however in 1959 the car was given back its original registration number.

Kimber drove this car and won a gold medal in the Light Car Class in the 1925 Londonto-Land's End-Trial. The car was then sold to one of Cecil Kimber's friends. It was offered back to Kimber but he did not purchase it at the time. It was used to haul food for pigs for a while, and then it was purchased in 1932 by a MG employee after he recognized it in a scrap yard in Manchester. He bought the car for £15. The car was restored in the Abingdon factory in 1933 and was used for sales promotions. The Nuffield Organization (formerly Morris Motors) officially christened the car "Old Number One". It was described as being, "The First M.G., Built in 1923," even though it was built in 1924. Many people feel it was not the very first MG car as that honor should go to either one of the 11.9 hp Raworth Chummies or one of the 1924 Morris 14/28 cars. It has been exhibited at many events and shows in England and it was sent to the United States for the 50th anniversary celebration of the MG. Old Number One is currently on permanent display in the Historic Vehicle Collection at the British Motor Museum at Gaydon and is still kept drivable.

Here is a link to the British Motor Museum: <u>https://www.britishmotormuseum.co.uk/</u>. You can view a video about Old Number One at this YouTube link: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfZKfbfMviw</u>.

Sources Used: The websites listed here provide more in-depth information and are worth the time to read! https://www.mgownersclub.co.uk/mg-guides/pre-war/old-number-one https://www.namgar.com/articles/article/mga history/mg - early days/ https://www.mgownersclub.co.uk/mg-guides/pre-war/1440-tourer https://www.namgar.com/articles/article/mga history/mg - early days/ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morris Oxford bullnose https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morris Cowley https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William Morris, 1st Viscount Nuffield https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MG Cars https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MG 14/28 http://www.bullnose.org.uk/ Video about the Bullnose 14/28: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8TCxKrr-gw Video about Old Number One: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfZKfbfMviw</u> Great Marques M.G., by Chris Harvey, 1983 MG Past & Present, by Rivers Fletcher, 1985 MG by McComb, by F. Wilson McComb, Revised Edition by Jonathan Wood, 2004

Lights, Camera.... Wait! What? No Lights?!? Article and Images by Saverio Pota, MG Car Club of Toronto as printed in the MG Driver March/April 2020

On our trek in my 78B to Colorado a few years back I stopped off for gas before heading to a hotel for an overnight stay. After filling up, I started her up and turned on the lights and headed out. I noticed as I pulled away from the glow of the service station, I had no lights. So, I pulled into a parking lot thinking this is going to be a tough diagnosis as its dark out and I have no lights. As I pulled over flicked my switch, I had lights. Better take a look at this when I can see better.

A cursory review the next morning and I was dumbfounded, not un- common for any LBC owner just look at some of the posts on The MG Experience website, lights were working did a wire jiggle test but nothing stood out and the lights stayed on. Kind of like fixing a hole in the roof when it's not raining. I continued on and no light problems for the rest of the journey.

Fast forward to the following year on our trek to Altoona, Pennsylvania. While taking a scenic drive along the "Horse Shoe Curve" we veered off this pass and entered into a dark tunnel, flicked on the lights and again no lights. Fortunately, it wasn't a long tunnel and we were back in daylight again. I did a quick diagnosis and same results as before, nothing standing out, and lights are working fine. Although a second time means there is something going on and not being able to replicate it makes it a challenge. I would have to dig deeper when I got home. Of course, the lights worked, other stuff happens, and I would rather drive my LBC than spend a lot of time trying to resolve an elusive electrical problem. I'd say this can be a winter project, but my garage only has enough room to park my B for its winter hibernation so not much work gets done.

I can't recall for sure, but most likely happened last year as well. This year a bit of different story. The first encounter was early in the season, just leaving a friend's place and no lights. So, I drive a bit flicking the switch nothing, turn the car off and on voila lights. Just a coincidence or a connection? And that was it until last week. This time Lori and I were leaving a movie theater and no lights. I tried my same rote procedure and nothing. Drove around the parking lot, over a few bumps, turn car on and off, switch on and off. I pulled under a light standard next to the Lowes lift the hood and maybe I can figure this out.

Of course, out of the woodwork a tow truck pulls into the parking lot and parks a distance away and waits. Lori suggests we call CAA and get a tow home and deal with it in the daytime. But I figured by the time CAA gets here and I get home the lights would be working, and I'd be where I was before, a leaky roof with no rain to show me the light.

I got out my manual and trouble light, but with my age and the poor lighting, the wiring diagram in my manual is difficult to read. So, I figure I'd start from the beginning. The light switch, I never considered it before because the symptom wasn't conducive MGs of Baltimore – Octagram

with my past experience. I think this is the third switch I've installed. With the previous two switch failures it was basically the switch falling apart; kind of like hazard switches on these things. I guess that's one of the advantages of Lucas, you know when it fails because it just falls apart. I pulled the light switch and find out there is no power to the switch. Ok now what. Even with a flashlight I can't see much under the dash so all I can do is the jiggle test. But no luck.

By this time the tow truck driver figures I'm not going to call him over, so he leaves. And I'm thinking I will have to take my chances and work on this during the day. Fortunately, we weren't too far from home and it is city driving on well-lit streets. My turn signals work as do my brake lights, hazards, this switch hasn't fallen apart yet, and my high beams flicker so I'm driving home.

I flicked the switch several times along my journey and sure enough halfway home my lights come on. But this time I'm going find that leak even if it isn't raining! Early the next day go to The MG Experience, <u>www.mgexp.com</u> my first stop for online help. Highly recommended site and if possible, make a donation to keep it going. Although I didn't find a similar problem as I was experiencing it did lead me to Advance Auto-Wire, <u>www.advanceautowire.com</u> and colour coded schematics. A lot easier to read than the one in my shop manual and it can be blown up to zoom into the area of concern.

I expanded around the light switch and screenshot what I needed: The colouring is a big help, thanks Advance Auto-Wire, follow the wires and try and figure what goes where and what do those funny symbols mean. Actually, not that difficult: Battery goes to the starter and then feeds out from there. Two Brown wires, live power, go from the starter to something that may be a connector and two wires coming out one goes to what I think is the fuse box and the other in the direction of the headlight switch. But before it goes to the switch it goes to a box with an X, another connector(?), and from there a brown wire goes to the ignition switch. Huh? Ok a take-off. So, I draw upon some of the things I learned in an Analytical Trouble Shooting course I had taken 40 years ago.

What I know is (I wonder if Wiki is an acronym for this or is it really based on the Hawaiian Train Story?):

- 1) Lights don't turn on intermittently;
- 2) They have never gone off when they are on, even while traveling on bumpy roads.
- 3) The jiggle test has never replicated the problem. 2 and 3 lead me to believe it is not a loose connection
- 4) I can always start the car when the lights don't come on.

- 5) Sometimes when I have turned the car on and off the lights would turn on. 4 and 5 tell me I have power to the ignition switch and the surge from the starting the car may (coincidence or actual) have an impact on the problem.
- 6) The wiring diagram tells me the light switch and the ignition are connected which leads me to the connector before the switch.

So that's where I'm going to start my search. Although I don't see a white box with and X in it the wires from the light switch lead me to a connector under that dash. Red, Blue, and Brown coming from the connector to the light switch and two Browns and two Reds and Blue going into the connector. Turn on the lights and yes, I have lights, jiggle the connector, tug on the wires and lights stay on. The connector is tight but I notice some discolouration. I'm able to pull the connector apart and see more discolouration, well as best as I can see lying on my back under the dash.

My conclusion is that it is either corrosion and/or overheating which could lead to a bigger problem, so I have to get rid of this connector. Fortunately, I know brown is always hot so better disconnect the battery before I go cutting any live wires. I'm always reluctant to start something I can't finish. Just means I won't be able to drive the car until I have all the parts I need or figure out a solution. So I looked at my options:

- 1) Try and clean the terminals which are well shrouded by the connector, and if I did this would it only be a temporary solution which would run the risk of overheating and...or;
- 2) Replace the connector, might be some time before I can get a replacement, or;
- 3) Jump the wires.

Ideally you don't want any connections in a wire. Always best to run a complete length. But quick connectors are primarily used to facilitate the assembly line. I am not planning on taking the car apart so I'm jumping the wires. I have connectors that I can crimp a bullet and socket to, but removing the connector gives me less wire to work with so I'd need a jumper wire as well, that's 12 connections and a bullet connector is what caused the problem in the first place.

I opted for marrettes and 14-gauge household wire as a jumper. The same connections we would use in our houses at 15 or 20 Amps with 120/240V, considerably more voltage than my car. I figured this would give me a more robust solution than making twelve crimped connections, with a jumper wire of the same gauge for the connections. Also, the 14-gauge wire would draw any potential heat from the connections. I took the same approach when I removed the dash dimmer switch. (My dimmer switch, and its replacement, were getting fairly hot to the touch – you may want to reach back there and see if you burn a finger – and MG dash lights aren't very bright

to begin with, so best to be removed.) Of course, another option would be crimping and soldering. But not a very conducive working space to ensure good bonds.

I think I'm good with marrettes, make sure I have the right size to accommodate the wires I'm dealing with and apply a short strip of electrical tape at the bottom to make sure nothing pokes inside the back. Probably not necessary but gives me a better sense of security. Use some tie straps and secure the wires to the support bar behind the dash and I'm good to go! With the connector out a closer look tells me I'm lucky I got to it when I did. Considerably more discolouration inside the connector.

Connect the battery, flick the switch and the lights come on and now let's fire 'er up. Maybe not! Ok what the @#%\$! Did I misread the wiring diagram? Did I cross some wires? Back to another component of Analytical Trouble Shooting: What's changed? And, what's not working? Double check the wiring to the wiring diagram and this leads me to one spot. The power side. So, disconnect the battery, separate the marrette and sure enough there's my problem. Although I cut the wire with my wire strippers, I didn't pull off the insulation. I guess with the poor lighting and brown insulation not a sharp contrast with the copper wire I didn't notice I didn't complete the job, also had a bit of distraction at the time as my daughter was wondering when we could go for a ride. I guess in my haste I didn't do as thorough a check as I should have. But at least it was a minor issue, not like I crossed a live wire with a ground wire, ooh that would have been sparky!

Aside from the starter your head lights are probably the largest single draw on your system. So, any bad connections would most likely heat up. I don't have an infrared thermal gun but did the touch test. Drove with the lights on for a few hours and felt the connections. No heat buildup so I think I'm good. I will check it periodically just to make sure.

In some ways I think I am fortunate that I tackled it when I did. Probably would have been a wiser thing to spend some time on it when I first encountered the problem. A lot less hassle if I nipped it in the bud. But now I'm ready forAction!



How To Measure Voltage Drop

To configure a multimeter to measure voltage drop, you set it up the same way as you would any other voltage measurement.

- Put the black probe in the socket labeled "COM" for common, meaning it's common to all measurements. Once it's there, it'll n ever need to be moved.
- 2. Put the red probe in the socket with the V. It's almost certainly the one that's also labeled with the omega symbol for resistance.
- Turn the big rotary dial to the setting for DC voltage, which is a V with solid lines over it. It's not the one with a wavy line over it – that's for AC voltage (house electrical current). If you don't have an autoranging meter, select the voltage range to measure a small voltage such as 2V.

Then, hold the probes across the connection where you're trying to measure the voltage drop, and energize the circuit.

So, what's different from a regular voltage measurement? What's different is that, instead of pulling the red probe lead on the + side of the circuit and the black probe lead on the negative (ground) side, you put the red and black probe leads at two different points on the same side of the circuit, between two positives or two negatives. That's the secret.

For example, if your starter is engaging slowly when you crank it, to measure voltage drop in the positive battery cable, hold the red probe lead on the positive battery post, hold the black probe lead on the post on the starter solenoid that the positive batter cable connects to, then have someone try to start the car while you watch the meter.

If there is no voltage drop in the cable, the voltage at the terminal on the starter solenoid will be same as it is at the positive battery terminal, and the meter will read zero. But if there is a measurable voltage drop, the meter will tell you what it is. You then can use the meter to hone in on where the drop is (e.g. position the probes between the positive battery post and the positive battery terminal and the ring connector on the other end of the cable, then between the ring connector and the battery post.) If you don't find a drop on the positive side, you can conduct the same test on the negative side, checking between the negative battery post and the case of the starter, then honing in on the individual connections.

If you need to do this by yourself, you can use clip leads to hold the probes in place while you crank the starter and watch the meter. Better still, if your meter has a min/max function, you can capture a few seconds of data and then have the meter tell you what the maximum voltage was.

So, how much of a voltage drop is acceptable? $\ensuremath{\operatorname{It}}$

helps to develop a feel by measuring voltage drop across healthy well-performing connections. On my cars, I typically see less than a 300mV (0.3 volt) end-toend drop between the positive battery post and the starter post (or the negative battery post and the case of the starter). You can find published tables that claim that, for a starter motor, an end-to-end drop of as much as 800mV (0.8 volts) is acceptable, but that for any individual connection (for example, between the positive battery post and the positive battery terminal), it shouldn't exceed 100mV. This last point is crucial. I can't tell you how many times I've turned the key on a vintage car and had it go RRRRRrrrr or just click, cleaned the positive battery post, and had the car start right up. This happens so often that I usually forego the voltage drop measurement and head straight for the post cleaner, but if I were to measure, I'd see a big voltage drop between the positive battery post and the positive battery terminal.

There. You now know how to perform a voltage drop measurement. You may now swagger forth among car people. Heck – send the Illuminati home. Tell them you've gotten the lights working without them. –end-

Tech Tips!

TECH TIP... From Steve Budra: MGB (and other LBCs) Engine Removal

Here's a tech tip for removing the engine or engine/transmission combo on an MGB. Despite recommendations to use the MGBs protruding valve cover studs as fixing points for an engine hoist, I've never really been comfortable doing it - the studs just seem to flimsy. Recently, I rented a hoist locally but the brackets on the supplied chain were sort of J-shaped. When I attached them to the studs and began to lift the engine/transmission as a unit, the studs bent and finally snapped. *Luckily, the engine was only a couple inches off its mounts at the time. Other than the studs (which I later replaced), there was no damage from the fall.*

Looking for a better solution, I found two more substantial fixing points: one is the top mounting bolt on the alternator bracket - tapped into the right side of the engine block. The other is the left engine plate bolt which is tapped into the top rear of the block.

These are 3/8" diameter bolts. I recommend substituting the original bolts with longer ones to give you enough space for the hoist bracket and washers, replacing them with the originals when you are done. The rest of the operation went smoothly and I felt much more comfortable with 600-700 pounds relying on these bolts. The only drawback is the engine is tilted a little to one side when lifted, but one person working the hoist and another rotating the engine a little will make it work. You could also install an adjustable tilt lift between the hoist and engine which allows you to fine-tune the angles.

Removing Light Scratches

An easy way to remove light scratches from plastic is using tooth-paste, the kind recommended for smokers. It is a very mild abrasive. Use a bit on a piece of soft cloth (an old t-shirt is a good idea) and in a few minutes of effort, the tooth-paste rubbing will polish out most scuffs. It not only works on car plastic bits, but will also polish out scratches on watch crystals. Since it is a very mild abrasive, you might be able to give your LBC a 'Dentine Smile'. All joking aside, it works. Give it a try.

Distributor Condenser Surprise; by Doug Pelton / From the Frame Up

A few years ago, there was a quality issue with replacement condensers. So I was pleased to have sourced a lot of NOS (new old stock) Lucas condensers. I always prefer NOS over replacement items, but they still have to be checked for serviceability. So I had this lot checked, and to my surprise, nearly all of them failed! No Good!

The condenser is made up of tiny thin layers of foil wrapped in a coil that has a greasy substance integral to the wrapping. On the end of the roll is a contact plate that bridges across the end roll of foil. What I conclude is that the condenser actually has a shelf life. With the passage of time and unknown storage conditions, this NOS item does not have the guaranteed quality of an original. In this case, a new replacement is highly recommended. You may want to check your spares and get another spare.

The Journal of Loose Nuts and Broken Spokes April 2020

GSBCC's NEWSLETTER

Roll in the British Bikes

by Rod Smith, President



My step-father took all of us to the self-car wash, probably to give my mother a break, as he had never done this before. This was circa 1962 in Los Angeles, California where we lived for a few years due to a transfer. I was 8 and anything mechanical, but in particular, things with wheels, was interesting to me so the car wash provided some interesting stuff to check out. I was busy looking at the hoses and sprayers when a loud roar got my attention. About 6 choppers rolled into the parking lot. They had tall handlebars, wore vests and jeans with boots. Whoa, what's this all about?

I ran over to see what they were and was fascinated by all of the cool stuff spread out in front of me. Wheels, chains, shiny paint and chrome oh my! I was in awe and probably had my mouth hanging wide open. I was about to start asking questions when I was ordered to "get back over here!" Yes Sir! But it was too late, I was hooked.

A few months later we visited some friends of my parents and I was thrilled to discover that they had two motorcycles. They were Honda 50's which were nowhere near what I had recently seen but I got to ride on the back of one! They were pretty wimpy, with a "buzz" compared to the roar of the Harleys and Triumphs but the thrill of being in the saddle was like no other experience I had ever had. All of this set-in motion a lifetime interest in motorcycles. (see **Roll In** next page)



(roll In continued)

As I grew up, there were mini-bikes, motorized bicycles and go-karts. Throughout my teens and beyond, I had a variety of bikes of various sizes and designs. From dirt bikes to street bikes, 90 cc's to 1200 cc's, American to Japanese, they all fed my appetite for the speed and freedom you get. In the mid-70's I worked at Yamaha of Columbia in Columbia, S.C. and as a salesperson, handled a huge variety of bikes and rode everyone I touched. But as time went on, life got in the way and there was a hiatus from always having two wheels close by. I stumbled across a Harley in the 80's that was too good to pass up. I immediately tore it down and rebuilt it so everything would work properly. When my Dad saw it, he said: "You and your brother are the only ones I know that will tear down a motah-sickle as soon as you get it".



Last year, a 1967 Triumph Tiger was added to Gasoline Alley. This is an all original bike with low miles and aside from a little oil that leaks occasionally, is in really great shape. A few months later, a 1969 Triumph Bonneville was added to the collection. The Bonneville as most everyone knows, was the quintessential bike of the 60's and this one has been completely restored. The motor was rebuilt from the sludge trap out, new paint and all hardware was restored to its original patina. I call it "Woodstock" since it was born the same year as the iconic concert in upstate New York and the SC license plate reads WDSTOK. Incidentally, Warren Bender and Lou Hipp both attended Woodstock so ask them about it the next time you see them! If they were there, they probably don't remember it.



The two Triumphs don't get near the exercise they should, but I get them out as often as I can. When I head off down the road, I can feel that grin creep across my face and all of life's troubles just melt away. The wind, the sound and the feeling take me back, back to that place that started in 1962 where the seed was planted. It's a feeling that some of you probably get too and I hope this article kindles a spark in you that further ignites your passion.

I'm hoping to see more bikes at our club meetings and shows so if you've got a bike tucked away, please bring it out for all of us to see! You just might light a spark for a young kid standing a few yards away that gets hooked.

his year marks the 60th anniversary of the final outing of what is possibly the most famous of the MG record breakers, EX181, widely known as 'The Roaring Raindrop'. EX181 was in fact commissioned in 1954 at the suggestion of well-known record breaker Major G E T 'George' Eyston. It was in fact Eyston who had persuaded MG to go record breaking in the first instance, way back in 1930. Driving EX120, he became the first man in history to achieve the 'magic' 100mph in a 750cc motor car. Having garnered yet more records for MG over the following years with both EX120 and its successors EX127 (Magic Midget) and EX135 (based on the K3), he decided to move on to greater things in the shape of the outright land speed record. At this juncture he handed

the MG portfolio over to another talented driver in the shape of Col. Goldie Gardner, who continued to gather records for MG on a more or less annual basis up to 1952 with of course the obvious exception of the war years. An enforced retirement for Goldie on health grounds catapulted George Eyston back into the frame at Abingdon once more. Now a director of the massive Castrol Oil Company, George was in the happy position of being able to provide funding towards the building of a new record car that would more readily represent the current thinking of the MG Car Company. The result of this co-operation was a brand new record breaker utilising the prototype MGA LH drive chassis fitted with a bespoke body similar in many ways to the old EX135.

Syd Enever, MG's chief engineer, was, at that time, very much a one man band, particularly as his one and only (trainee) draughtsman, Roy Brocklehurst, had been called up to do his National Service. Syd appealed to Cowley for assistance and was allocated the services of a young and enthusiastic designer by the name of Terry Mitchell for a couple of months. Terry was guickly into his stride and designed the body shell for the new car now designated EX179, using the templates for EX135 and modifying them accordingly to suit the new chassis. Works carpenter Harry Herring soon turned these drawings into a full size 'egg-box' pattern which was then shipped to Midland Sheet Metal to have the aluminium body made. These boys really knew their stuff and very soon the

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MG RECORD BREAKING — THE FINAL YEARS **By Peter Neal**





George and EX127 ready for a Record Run



Kim and Goldie Gardner comparing notes prior to Goldies 200mph run on the German Autobahn in 1939

well-proportioned bodyshell emerged from their workshops. This was quickly riveted to the lightweight tubular steel frame and shipped back to Abingdon to be painted and fitted to the running chassis.

In an attempt to give a boost to MG sales in the US, the 1466cc XPEG TF1500 engine was chosen to power the new car.

It's doubtful whether this fooled anybody but it was a good excuse to go record breaking again and it did help to keep the Company's name in lights. After a brief workout at the MIRA test track at Nuneaton, the car was shipped to the Utah Salt Flats in America where George

George Eyston piloting EX120

Eyston was waiting with a small team to ready the car for its first run. Eyston would share the driving with Ken Miles, a young Englishman now domiciled in California. The idea was to emphasise the reliability of the engine rather than its out and out performance, coming away with a haul of National and International class F records between 10 miles and 12 hours, plus a raft of even longer distance records with the Austin Healey 100S. Whilst Eyston was pleased with this success, what pleased him even more was the fact that he'd got MG back into record breaking. At that time George Eyston was the only man alive who had driven a car in excess of 350mph. His stint in EX179 must have seemed like a Sunday afternoon drive by comparison!

Using Terry's design skills on EX179 was to prove opportune. When MG's General Manager, John Thornley, was given the go-ahead to open a small design office at Abingdon to engineer the MGA for production, Terry was one of three designers invited to transfer from Cowley to MG to join Syd Enever's team.

As soon as he had returned from the USA, George was back at Abingdon



lobbying for yet another new record breaker. Although EX179 had proved itself on the salt, it wouldn't be suitable for the kind of speeds now envisaged.

Reid Railton, who had designed the body of Goldie Gardner's car with which he reached a speed of 204.28mph on the German autobahn in 1939, was called in as a consultant. He suggested the midengine layout which was adopted by the Abingdon team. This would enable the car to have the lowest profile with the smallest possible frontal area. Terry was immediately co-opted onto the project and, finding some RAF aerofoils in a book, started to draw up some possible body shapes. From this Harry Herring began making 1/8 scale models which could be tried out in the Armstrong Whitworth wind tunnel in Coventry. The final layout had the engine sitting amidships driving the rear wheels, with the driver sitting in a semi-prone position at the very front of the car, very much in the style of the modern Formula One car.

In a break from tradition, the chassis was to be a brand new one-off design rather than utilising one from a production car. The responsibility of creating the new chassis was given to (who else but) Terry, with the instruction that it was not to interfere with his day job! This generally meant working on it after normal finishing time. Terry was an ardent 'special' builder in his spare time and was currently working on his own two-seater sports car. This featured a tubular chassis frame, with MGA style front suspension and a de Dion rear suspension. Terry felt that he could adopt the same basic idea for EX181, as the new venture was now called. Syd Enever's main requirement was that the frame should be as strong as possible so that should the car go out of control for any reason, the driver would stand a good chance of surviving in one piece. Terry opted for a frame consisting of two large diameter (3.5ins) longitudinal steel tubes with X-tubes forming a ladder construction with a square section tube welded to the frame forming a roll over bar just behind the driver's head. The chassis also had an MGA front X-member welded in position to carry the front suspension units.



George Eyston seated in the cockpit of EX179



Stirling Moss seated in EX181 cockpit with John Thornley and Syd Enever looking on at the 1957 Press Preview

One departure from normal was the use of 15ins wheels in order to keep them within the optimum body envelope. The wheels and tyres were specially developed by Dunlop to run safely at the kind of speeds envisaged by MG. The de Dion rear suspension that Terry designed for EX181 was probably not strictly necessary for the type of work that it would be doing. Nevertheless, he felt that it would be a good opportunity to try out a system that could perhaps be incorporated in a future MG. As most of the components could be made in-house, Syd Enever was happy to go down this route.

It was considered too dangerous to fit front wheel brakes and in fact only a single

disc was fitted to the rear axle, which it was recommended should only be used at speeds below 100mph to avoid overheating.

At the request of the nominated driver Stirling Moss, a fireproof fuel tank and fire extinguisher system were included in the design.

A basic four-speed manual gearbox was used with the following calculated change points:

1st to 2nd	59mph
2nd to 3rd	103mph
3rd to top	159mph

The engine of choice would of course be the new Twin-Cam unit that was in the process of being designed for the MGA by Morris Engines Branch.

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EX181 in unpainted form at the 1957 Press Preview

1955 was the year that MG took four special aluminium-bodied MGA prototypes to the Le Mans 24 Hour race. As a result, record breaking had to take a back seat. By the end of the year, however, BMC had put a blanket ban on all factory sponsored motor racing. This left the way clear to go record breaking again the following year. EX181 would not be ready for 1956 so George Eyston had no choice but to take EX179 back to Utah again, except that this time it would be fitted with an early unsupercharged version of the Twin Cam (1489cc) engine. The long-distance records that the team had set in 1954 had all been beaten by an OSCA the following year, so Abingdon opted to go for these same records again in 1956. This time, with the new engine and Ken Miles and Johnny Lockett sharing the driving, the plan was to go for larger margins to dissuade the



opposition from having another attempt for a while! This time the flying ten miles was recorded at a very respectable 170.15mph by Johnny Lockett.

Once back from the USA, there was no doubt that all the attention was now focused on the brand-new record car EX181. Unveiled to the press at the Abingdon factory in its unpainted form in the Spring of 1957, it was hailed as an immediate sensation. Amongst those gathered there that day it soon gained the soubriquet 'The Roaring Raindrop'! Although most of the attention that day was centred on Stirling Moss, John Thornley and Syd Enever, nobody could have been more proud on that occasion than Terry Mitchell, the man who had poured so many hours into its creation.

The main purpose of this preview was to cover the 'Stirling being fitted' angle which would be for immediate publication. Technical details would be released once the record attempt had taken place. This would subsequently reveal that the car was fitted with a new version of the 1489cc Twin Cam power unit having a strengthened crankcase to accommodate



Stirling Moss celebrates after his successful run on the salt in 1957 when he achieved 245.11mph

the massive Shorrock supercharger blowing at around 28lb pressure.

The car, now painted a pale metallic blue with a contrasting royal blue below the waistline, was to be shipped to New York on the liner 'Queen Mary' that July, ready for its debut on the Salt Flats in early August. EX179 was also included, fitted this time with an A-Series engine, which would be known as the 'Streamlined Morris Minor 1000', to be driven by David Ash and Tommy Wisdom. Fortunately,

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Phil Hill looking cool after his record run in 1959 pushing the flying mile up to 254.91mph

the name had been changed to 'BMC Development Project EX179' before appearing on the salt.

John Thornley had, as a matter of caution, engaged the American driver Phil Hill who would drive the car should Stirling Moss not be available. In preliminary testing Hill achieved a one-way speed of 250mph, thus proving what the little car was capable of. Thornley and Eyston agreed to keep this information under wraps until Moss had had a chance to drive the car, believing that Stirling's name would elicit the greater amount of publicity for the project.

Before Moss had a chance to even get in the car, the salt flats were hit by a severe storm which left the course waterlogged. After a long and anxious wait for the salt to dry out, at dusk on Friday August 23 with the conditions less than ideal, Stirling attempted a last ditch effort to make his attempt. His brave decision paid off when the timekeepers announced that he had achieved a two way average of 245.11mph for the flying mile. At this point George Eyston declared the mission a success and decided to call it a day.

Whilst all this had been going on, John Thornley had been busy establishing a BMC Competitions Department at Abingdon. It was therefore under this banner that EX179 (now named EX219 and called an Austin Healey Sprite!) and EX181 were, in 1959, again shipped off to the Bonneville Salt Flats to strut their stuff. This time Eyston and his crew would attempt to increase the speed above 250mph and also have a crack at the Class E (up to 2000cc) by taking a spare engine bored out to 1506cc. Once again Moss and Hill had been engaged to drive the car and once again the venue was plagued by heavy rain. Moss had no choice but to return to Europe for a prior commitment so the 1506 engine was fitted to the car. As soon as conditions allowed. Phil Hill took the car out on the still damp salt and recorded a remarkable speed of 254.91mph for the kilometre and 254.53 for the mile. There is little doubt that given ideal conditions a speed in excess of 260mph could have been achieved. However, we will never know as subsequent to this 1959 sortie, BMC decided that the company should rest



Detail of rear axle showing installation of single rear brake disc

on its laurels and consign these amazing record cars to history.

EX135, EX179 and EX181 can be seen to this day at the British Motor Museum at Gaydon where they stand testament to the skill and ingenuity of the men who designed and built them. Let us be sure that this important part of MG history will never be forgotten.



Tools Available for Club Members to Borrow Contact Randy Kegg

- Engine Stand (2)
- Engine lift with tilt device (2)
- Whitworth wrenches & sockets
- Whitworth thread file
- MGB Kingpin Reamer
- Sandblaster (Suction from a bucket type)
- Rostyle Wheel Paint Mask (MGB)
- Midget King pin reamer
- SU Carb throttle shaft reamer for MG T, A, B carbs
- SU Carb throttle shaft reamer
- Midget carbs
- Torque Wrench Click Type 0.150 ft lbs
- Standard 12" socket set
- Hub Puller
- Compression tester
- Harmonic balancer puller
- Camshaft Degree Wheel with TDC finder.
- Timing light
- Dwell/Tach Meter
- Differential flange removal tool
- Brake line bender tubing cutter, bubble type flaring tools
- Slide hammer for bushings, bearing caps and axle extraction tool
- Lift-A-Dot Upholstery Punch tool
- SU Carb Synchronizer
- Pickle Fork for Tie Rod Ends
- Mob Clutch Alignment tool
- Front Suspension Toe-In adj tool
- Rear Hub Sockets for MGA and early and late MGB.
- Cylinder Leak Down tester

CALENDAR

MAY

5th – Monthly meeting via Zoom

JUNE

2nd – Monthly meeting (location to be determined) 28th Brits by the Bay – Harford Winery – See flier

JULY

7th Club Meeting (location to be determined)
12th Get the Dust off Rallye



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Dedicated to the memory of Richard W. Murphy

\$30 per car to June 30th - \$35 per car afterwards

To register complete the entry form below and mail it with a check payable to "MGs of Baltimore, Ltd."

SEND TO: Eric Salminen, 12321 Jerusalem Road, Kingsville, MD 21087 (mgobrallymaster@gmail.com)

This will be a GTA (Game, Tour, Adventure) style rally of approximately 60 competitive miles. No unpaved sections. **All vehicles welcome**. Classes will be provided for Historic up to 1981 and modern 1982 and later.

START & FINISH: Dejon Vineyards, 5300 Hydes Rd., Hydes, MD. **www.dejonvineyard.com**. Bring along your picnic basket lunch and tailgating supplies. Food truck will be available on site. Wine tasting will be provided for entrants (MGOB hand stamp required).

REGISTRATION: Opens at 10:30 am. Drivers' meeting at 11:15. Please plan to arrive early.

Contact Rallymaster Eric Salminen at (443-463-3071) or mgobrallymaster@gmail.com for additional rally information

All vehicles must have no more than 2 people in the car. If a minor (less than 18 years old) is to participate you must contact us in advance to secure a minor release form which requires the signature of both parents.

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Address:	Address:		
City/St/Zip	City/St/Zip		
Phone:	Phone:		
e-mail:	e-mail:		
SCCA region: Member# S	CCA region	Member #	
Vehicle information: Make:]	Model:	Year:	Color:
Member: MGOB? TRAC? SCCA/Bran	ded Rally? Other:		
Class: Select oneHistoricMo	dern		

I hereby warrant that the entered vehicle is on the road legally, is being used by the entrant with the owner's permission and is covered by liability insurance of not less than \$20,000/\$40,000/\$15,000 or the minimum requirements in the state of registry, whichever is higher.

Driver Signature: _

The DVCMG Presents... The 16th Annual...



In Association With The Pennypacker Mills Historic Site "In The Good Old Summertime" Festival

Saturday, August 1st 2020

This year not only marks the 16th year of our car show, it also marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the DVCMG!

The Pennypacker Mills Historic Site, located aside the Perkiomen Creek just below Schwenksville, PA off of Route 73, is an ideal and picturesque location to display your British car. Plan also to attend and enjoy the sights and sounds of the Pennypacker Mills Historic Site's "*In The Good Old Summertime*" Festival adjacent to the car show field on the mansion's grounds. There's a lot to see and do for the whole family including vintage big wheel bicycles, live music, and Victorian lawn games. Refreshment service is available so you can relax under the stately trees and enjoy both the car show and the festival.

Car show registration opens up (rain or shine) at 10 AM with general admission starting at 11 AM Voting begins at 12 Noon. Trophies will be awarded by popular vote based on marque and there will also be "Best of Show", "Ladies Choice", "Diamond in the Rough" and "Club Participation" awards.

Entry fee is \$20/car and includes a dash plaque. Participants who preregister before July 25th receive a \$5 discount at the gate. (Please do not send payment with your preregistration.) Free entry to "In The Good Old Summertime" Festival and a tour of the mansion are included. The Pennypacker Mills' British Car Show pre-registration form is available at <u>www.DVCMG.com</u> or call 610-792-1158 for information. Don't delay, pre-register now. See you on the car show field!

NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 situation, we may be forced to cancel the show. Please watch our website for updates, changes, and any special requirements.

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Submit any changes to:

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