

# THE SQUARE RIGGER



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF  
THE CHESAPEAKE CHAPTER OF THE NEW ENGLAND MG-T REGISTER

[www.chesapeakechaptermgclub.com](http://www.chesapeakechaptermgclub.com)

## SUMMER 2012

### Chairman's Message

During the first weekend in May, Yorktown, Virginia was invaded for the second time in a decade by our Chapter's annual Mini-GOF. The weather was perfect and the attendance impressive. Mike and Jennifer Ash hosted it and put together activities that were enjoyed by all. The Club is thankful for members like Mike and Jennifer; otherwise nothing would happen. We need someone to volunteer for the 2013 Mini-GOF, so don't wait too long to let your name be known.



This past Sunday, our Chesapeake Chapter of the New England MG-T Register sponsored its 35<sup>th</sup> Original British Car Day. We not only had great weather for the event, but there was a total of 265 cars registered for it, about 10% more than last year. I know that John Tokar who chaired the event is grateful to all those who volunteered on Saturday to set things up as well as those who volunteered Sunday to carry out John's master plan. Members of the Nation's Capital Jaguar Owners Club, who have always supported OBCDay, were very complimentary about the success of the event.

We have two more events this year that I encourage you to read about in this issue and put on your schedule to attend. They are the Internet Tech Session in August and the Fall Ramble in October. I have been to past ones and can attest to the fact that you will not be disappointed.

It may sound premature, but as I mentioned in the last TSR, there have been requests and suggestions for additional locations for the Spring EatOut. John Hambleton has volunteered to work on this, so if you have any thoughts on a venue let him know.

One final note -- we're going to need a new editor for TSR, as Tom Carolan has told me he will be obliged to step down by the end of this year. I encourage anyone who is interested to contact Tom so he can work with you on transition.

Safety Fast!

Shaun English

## Chapter Officers

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## Editor's Corner

June 7, 2012

The Chesapeake Chapter of the New England MG-T Register was organized during the summer of 1971 by NEMGTRegister members in the Baltimore-Washington-Northern Virginia area where local interest in classic MGs was high. Its purpose was and still is to encourage the maintenance, preservation and enjoyment of T-Series and other vintage MGs. We welcome new members who share our interest in these unique cars. Membership in our parent organization, the New England MG-T Register, Ltd., and payment of modest annual dues are the only requirements. Membership application forms can be found, along with previous issues of this Newsletter dating back to the year 2000, on our Chapter's website: [www.chesapeakechaptermgclub.com](http://www.chesapeakechaptermgclub.com)

Our Newsletter is circulated electronically on a quarterly basis to Members who possess email capability, and by regular mail to Members who do not. The electronic version contains color photos, etc., whereas the regular-mail version is in black & white. In any event, the full color version is always available for subsequent viewing on and downloading from our website.

We're always on the lookout for stories, technical submissions, anecdotes, jokes, cartoons, photographs and other contributions of interest to MG fans. In addition, we seek to encourage fullest possible participation by Members in Chapter events, mention of which can be found in further pages of this Newsletter.

## Membership News

Milton Babirak, Membership Chairman

### We welcome:

Rick Stewart  
8949 Gue Road,  
Damascus, MD 20872  
Tel. (301) 253-3569  
[rsstewart@verizon.net](mailto:rsstewart@verizon.net)  
1953 MGTD

Bill and Norma Grovermann  
721 Howard's Loop  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
TeL. (410) 266-7123  
[billnorma1@verizon.net](mailto:billnorma1@verizon.net)  
1955 MGTF 1500

### And we welcome back!

Dick and Deborah Shepherd  
2115 Benomi Drive  
Williamsburg, VA 23185  
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[DLSRES@yahoo.com](mailto:DLSRES@yahoo.com)



## In Memoriam

Chairman Emeritus Len Renkenberger has drawn our attention to the passing of **Ron Holmlund** on June 4: "As some of you know, Ron was one of our founding members. I'm sure we all remember this kind, quiet man. Ron suffered from Alzheimer's in the last years of his life and was not able to attend many functions. I'm sure wife, Gwenn, and his three sons will appreciate your remembrance."

Those of us who knew Ron as a friend and fellow MG enthusiast will miss him sorely, and they along with the rest of us will honor his many contributions and his legacy as a charter member of our club. Our thoughts and prayers are with his loved ones.

A memorial service will be held on June 23 at 11:30 a.m. at the Redeemer Lutheran Church, located at the corner of Chain Bridge Road and West Moreland Street, McLean, VA 22101. □



We join Barbara Van Over, her family, and veteran Chapter members in celebrating the life of **John Van Over**, who passed away on March 24 in Matthews, Virginia.

The Van Overs have been active members of our club for almost 35 years, during which John pursued a successful career as an executive in the pharmaceutical industry. In addition to restoring and maintaining his two beloved MGs, he was also a dedicated member of his church and an Air Force veteran, as well as an active boater, fisherman, golfer, skeet enthusiast, and American Legionnaire.

We are grateful to Steve Woodall for his personal recollections (below) of what it meant to know and love the Van Overs, sentiments which we feel sure are echoed in the hearts of those of us who knew John best. □

### Reflections on Wonderful Friends, John and Barb Van Over

Nancy and I first met John and Barbara Van Over 31 years ago, in 1981, on the day we joined the Chesapeake Chapter of the New England MG-T Register.

At our very first Chesapeake Chapter function, a champagne brunch at the home of a club member who lived in Washington, DC, the Van Overs immediately made a point of welcoming us to the group in their very special and hospitable way, making us feel totally at home.



Over all the intervening years since that day in 1981, the Van Overs have been special friends, with whom we have shared many laughs and adventures: from ship cruises to Bermuda, where we laughed, sang and totally annoyed the servers every evening in the dining room, to our most recent camp-out adventure last fall at Misty Mountain with our fellow trouble-makers John and Barb, along with Hank and Stevie Giffin, where we repeated our usual patterns of behavior — wine tasting, drinking cold beer, telling jokes, much laughter, and singing rugby songs. As always, with this group of amigos, all good things — in excess! *(Cont'd on next page)*

In every respect, John Van Over, whose fruitful life we celebrate and fondly remember, was a true gentleman and a very special friend to the Woodalls and to everyone who met and knew him — always generous, always thoughtful, always kind, and always attentive to the thoughts and concerns of others.

We will deeply miss his smiling face, and his unique sense of humor, but we will always cherish the memories of the many wonderful times we had together — both with and without operational MG's. □

— Steve Woodall, May 2012

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## Recent Chapter Events

### Twist Tutelage Tune-Up

*Over the weekend of April 21-22, a bunch of us turned out at Steve Woodall's place in Fairfax Station, VA, for a very worthwhile series of hands-on tech sessions devoted to engine-tuning, conducted by our redoubtable friend, John Twist. We thank Bob Rourke and Steve Mefferd for documenting the proceedings with copious photographs, a selection of which appears below. Steve Mefferd also submitted the following commentary:*

We are a fortunate group of people to possess such lovely, vintage British automobiles. Those of us who gathered at the welcoming garage of Steve Woodall's home on Saturday and Sunday were mostly interested in gaining some detailed insights into the maintenance and repair of our classic cars. None of us was disappointed with the session.

Four of us brought their cars, including myself, Steve Woodall, Jim Bradley, and John Williams, and we were joined *sans* cars by Shaun English, Brian Sieling, Dan Howard, Milton Babirak, and a visitor, Philip Ege. We all enjoyed the great coffee and food provided during the tune-up session. As the weekend approached, so did increasing notices from the weather service and even NOAA that rain, wind and thunderstorms were in the forecast.

As we know, in spite of the description of our cars as having "Full Weather Equipment" — as is stated in the old advertisements — that is really not the type of equipment we want to have when we face a significant rainstorm. Kindly, Steve opened his garage/workshop early and was willing to let us drop off our cars the night before. Those of us who hesitated, or found it impossible to sneak out of work early, were greeted with a beautiful Saturday morning drive, but Mother Nature did have a trick up her cumulonimbus sleeve.

We came for the information; we were also rewarded with great snacks as we participated in a classroom session on the primary elements of a tune-up. We received a great overview from John on the tune-up elements of emissions (yes, our old cars may not have emissions as we know with our computer-controlled automobiles, but they have emissions), the engine, ignition and the fuel. Then, we began to get our hands dirty, with John either looking over our shoulders, or giving hands-on guidance.

The insights spanned the range of looking at spark plugs, learning how to test compression so the results are as consistent as possible, adjusting the valves in easy steps, learning why the number 9 is useful when working on the valves, returning our distributors to their original orientation, timing our engines, and cleaning and adjusting the carburetors. Some of us discovered that delicate adjustments can move our cars from "just running" to running like the jewels they were meant to be. Some of us came with cars that ran, but following discovery of vari-

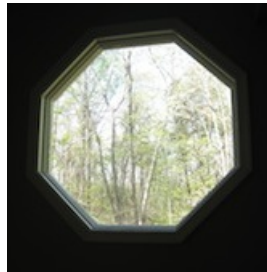
*(Cont'd on next page)*



ous major problems, were still able to leave in jewel-like condition. While most of us took the components apart, cleaned, adjusted and reassembled them, there were a couple of substantial rebuilds, plus the remarkable advantage of finding needed spare parts when problems were discovered — just another advantage of our car club.

And yes, back to Mother Nature and her weather choices. She must have realized that we had been working on our cars for two days, and with the oil that splashed from our valve adjustment session and the drops of fuel from our carburetor adjustments, our cars needed a good wash. So what could be better than fresh rainwater? As our taillights were exiting the Woodall driveway, our weather equipment, windshield wipers and, most dependably, those towels we keep in our cars for situations like this got a great workout.

All in all, we came for the insight; we left with better running cars. □



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## MiniGOF 2012

Some two dozen of us were kept pretty busy over the May 3-6 weekend at MiniGOF 2012 at Yorktown, VA, thanks to excellent planning and thoughtful arrangements made by Mike and Jennifer Ash. On Friday, some chose to visit the Williamsburg Pottery Factory and Premier Outlets, while others explored the sights and museum of historic Yorktown, with some more adventurous members learning to operate Segways in the process.

In the evening everyone took a Sunset Cruise in the York River and lower Chesapeake Bay on the Schooner Serenity. They then repaired for dinner to Yorktown Riverfront Restaurant. Later, almost everyone wandered down to the Riverwalk Restaurant for dinner, while at the High Tide Bar & Grill next door, a school reunion with a very loud band and lively dancing provided some interesting diversions.

On Saturday morning our group took in a car show at the Yorktown Memorial, followed by a ramble along the Colonial Parkway to lunch at Nazar's in Jamestown. Some stayed in Jamestown to tour the Fort Site and Archeological Digs, some returned to visit the Yorktown Battlefield, while others chose simply to relax by the waterfront or in our hospitality room. A festive Awards Dinner took place Saturday evening in the Riverwalk Restaurant's Banquet Room.

Members made their goodbyes and went their separate ways after an optional Sunday morning brunch at the River's Inn Restaurant across the York River on Gloucester Point. As the accompanying photo display will attest most everyone appeared to have enjoyed MiniGOF 2012 at Yorktown, VA.

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Mike and Jennifer deserve tremendous credit for having masterminded what all will certainly agree was a highly memorable weekend. We are also grateful to Louise Tucker for her impressions and photographs taken throughout the event. □



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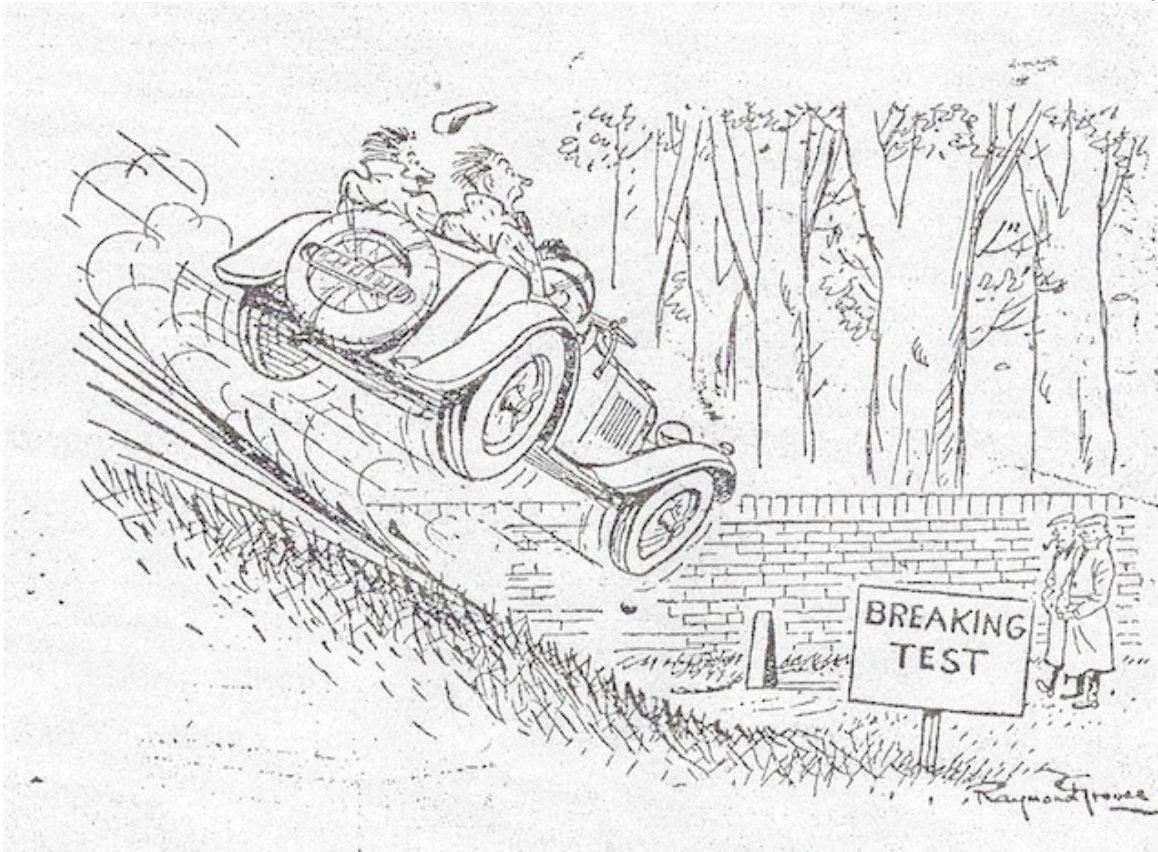




### **The 35th Original British Car Day**

We're happy to report that our traditional flagship event took place bathed in glorious sunshine and cool breezes on June 3. Thanks to the efforts of Event Chairman John Tokar and the members of his planning committee, the Day was a resounding success, with volunteer turnout appreciably larger than that of recent years. We attracted 125 pre-registered cars, augmented by another 140 entrants who registered their cars at the gate. As in past years, we will circulate a full account of the Day shortly in a Special Photographic Supplement to this Newsletter. □





**Hey, John, Maybe We Should Try This Next Year!**

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## **Upcoming Chapter & Chapter-Related Events**

### **International Interactive Internet Tech Session**

Our Chapter will hold his event on Saturday, August 11, starting at 9:30am. It will feature presentations by top-notch European and American T-Series experts speaking to us from their respective locations in Sweden, England and the USA. All presentations will be viewed on a large-screen TV monitor.

Ake Ramstrom, a well-known Swedish TF enthusiast, will address us from 10:00 to 11:00 am from a vintage car show in Stockholm. From 11:00am to noon, technicians at the Hutson Motor Company, Ltd. in West Yorkshire, England, will take us on a tour of their facility, which specializes in body-shell (tub) restoration work on MG T-Series and Jaguar E-type cars. Following an hour's break for lunch at

### ***The Hutson Motor Company Limited***

***MG 'T' Series, Jaguar E-Type Parts & Panels Specialists. Tel: 01274-669052.***

In 1988 to fulfill market demand for quality body shells for the vintage MG 'T' series a range of five complete paneled assemblies was introduced

These units were built to the same production standards as the Hutson TF's, ensuring restorers and hobbyists alike a trouble free restoration.

We have assembled a large range of quality parts for the original MG T-Series using suppliers and tooling common to our new car production.

In addition to our in-house produced items of ash frames and steel work, we have invested heavily in tooling for previously obsolete items which are now available to the owners of original MGs.

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noon, Joe Curto, from his shop in College Point, NY, will devote an hour to discussing his specialty, SU carburetors. And finally, from 2:00 to 3:00pm our friend John Twist, in Grand Rapids, MI, will expound on Lucas electrics, including the MG distributor, coil and ignition circuits. Interactive question and answer periods will follow some of these presentations.

We plan to invite the nearly 30 Chapters of the NEMGTR the opportunity to join us electronically in viewing this live technical session. We hope a goodly number of them will take advantage of this opportunity.

The registration fee for the event is \$25 per person, plus \$10 for lunch, making a total of \$35. Please make checks payable to the "Chesapeake Chapter, NEMGTR" and mail them to: Bob Rourke, 4609 N. 32nd Street, Arlington, VA 22207.

To seek additional information, members should contact Bob Rourke at [rjrourke@erols.com](mailto:rjrourke@erols.com) (703-534-6136) or Milton Babirak at [mbabirak@babirakcarr.com](mailto:mbabirak@babirakcarr.com) or (703) 501-7924. Please sign up early to help us select a location that will accommodate all those who wish to attend. □



Joe Curto



John Twist



Body by Hutson

## Fall Ramble 2012

This annual event has been re-scheduled for Friday-Sunday, October 12-14. Our planning committee has been focusing on interesting routes through scenic areas in Northern Virginia and perhaps Pennsylvania. We had originally set aside a dozen or so rooms for participants at the James Gettys Hotel in Gettysburg, and members reserved them more quickly than we anticipated. Additional members wishing to attend this event should contact Milton Babirak at [mbabirak@babirakcarr.com](mailto:mbabirak@babirakcarr.com) or (703) 501-7924. We will try to help them find rooms at another hotel nearby. □

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## Upcoming Events Sponsored by Others

(For details, click on the blue links)

### 19th Annual British Motorcar Gathering

Hosted by the Keystone Regional MG Club and Lanco MG Club at the Fritchman Reservoir Park, Hellertown, PA on Saturday, June 10. [www.keystonemg.com](http://www.keystonemg.com)

### British Invade Gettysburg

Sponsored by the Lancaster County (PA) MG Club, this show will take place at Gettysburg on Sunday, July 15. [www.lancomgclub.com](http://www.lancomgclub.com)

### 22nd Annual Taste of Britain British Car Show

Also supported by the Lancaster County (PA) MG Club, this show will again take place at Rothsville, PA, on Sunday, August 28. [www.lancomgclub.com](http://www.lancomgclub.com)  
[Virginia Scottish Games](http://www.vascottishgames.org/)

To be held at the Great Meadow, The Plains, VA, on Sunday, September 2, this festival customarily includes an antique and British car show. [www.vascottishgames.org/](http://www.vascottishgames.org/)

(Cont'd on next page)



### [Hagley Museum Car Show](#)

On Sunday, September 6, an impressive display, selected by invitation only, of more than 600 antique and restored cars dating from the early 1900s to the 1980s. Venue: the Museum grounds near Wilmington, DE. [www.hagley.lib.de.us/events.html](http://www.hagley.lib.de.us/events.html)

### [28th Annual Classics on the Green](#)

A show and wine festival sponsored by the Central Virginia British Car Club on Saturday-Saturday, September 15-16, for the 3d year in a row at The New Kent Winery, New Kent, VA. Info at [www.classicsonthegreen.com](http://www.classicsonthegreen.com)

### [MGs on The Rocks](#)

Mounted by MGs of Baltimore at its usual venue, The Rocks State Park near Jarrettsville, MD, on Saturday, September 22. [www.mgsofbaltimore.com](http://www.mgsofbaltimore.com)

### [Fall Carlisle Collector Car Exhibition & Swap Meet](#)

To be held at Carlisle, PA, over four days beginning on Thursday, October 7. Info at: [www.carlisleevents.com/ce/events/fall-carlisle/](http://www.carlisleevents.com/ce/events/fall-carlisle/)

### [30th Annual British Car Festival](#)

Sponsored by the Shenandoah Valley British Car Club at Ridgeview Park, Waynesboro, VA, on Friday to Sunday, October 5-7. [www.svbcc.net](http://www.svbcc.net)

### [Rockville Antique and Classic Car Show](#)

Will take place Saturday, October 20, at the Rockville, MD Civic Center Park. [www.rockvillemd.gov/events/carshow.htm](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/events/carshow.htm)

### [Hunt Country Classic](#)

Willoughby Farm near Middleburg, VA, remains the traditional venue for this show, put on by the MG Car Club (DC Centre) on Sunday, October 7. [www.mgcarclubdc.com](http://www.mgcarclubdc.com). ☐

### [Brits on the Beach 2012](#)

This, the 15th Annual British Car Day sponsored by the Positive Earth Drivers Club, will take place on Saturday, Sept. 15, in the Main Ave. Business District of Historic Ocean Grove, NJ. Judging of cars will be based on participants' choices, and dash plaques will be awarded to the first 130 pre-reg-istered cars. Walk the Ocean Boardwalk just two blocks from the show field. Have lunch at one of Ocean Grove's many cafés and restaurants. Stroll the Main Ave. business district and check out the town's antique dealers, gift shops, clothing stores and other businesses. Tour the area and see the historic Great Hall, quaint Tent City and the many Victorian Hotels, Inns and other buildings. This is one car show your wife will want to see! It will be held rain or shine. For full details, phone (732) 620-2378. Email: [show@pedc.org](mailto:show@pedc.org). Website: [www.pedc.org](http://www.pedc.org)

### [Car Talk Fun](#)

Tom and Ray Magliozzi love to have fun on Car Talk. Thanks to a tip from Bob Little, we can listen to a good example, which occurred in segment 1 of their show on February 4. They were discussing subject the legendary roadholding capabilities of the MGTD. To listen, click on:

<http://www.cartalk.com/content/1205-carla-come-home>

and then click on the red banner entitled SHOW OPEN TOPIC.

### [Wonders Never Cease Dept.](#)

**Did you ever see an operational V-12 diesel engine that fits in the palm of your hand?**

**Just click on the link to watch it being built and tested by its creator.**

**This is not CNC technology. This guy made everything at home on his lathe and drill press. It took him 1,220 hours to fabricate the 261 pieces. Note the end-loaded crankshaft into the block (like an Offy), 12 individual cylinder heads, tiny rods and pistons, and dual "underhead" cams with pushrods to rockers in the heads. Once he assembled it, he did break-in runs using an electric drill to drive the crankshaft!.**

**You don't have to be an engineer to appreciate this!**

<http://www.wimp.com/tini#913983>

*Our thanks to Paul Tucker for drawing this to our attention.* ☐

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## MG History

### **Rare Car Buried under a Gloucestershire Cowshed Wins an Award**

Source: BBC News, May 25, 2012. (Sent to us by our friends at [bbc.co.uk/news/england-gloucestershire](http://bbc.co.uk/news/england-gloucestershire).)

*A Rare two-seater car found buried under a cowshed in Gloucestershire has won a Best Vintage Car award.*

All the parts of the 1928 MG MK IV sports car were found in 1999 on a farm "carefully dismantled" and laid in the ground under two inches of concrete.

Fred Body, from Cheddar in Somerset, has spent over a year painstakingly rebuilding the early MG. He said: "It's weird really — most of it was there and most of it was as sound as a pound."



According to the Early MG Society, only 135 examples of this model were made in 1928 and this car is the sole survivor in the country that displays the correct coachwork. "When it was found it was completely taken apart, laid out flat and covered in gravel and one or two inches of concrete," said Mr Body, a car enthusiast who bought the parts when the owner put them up for sale.

#### **Wartime secret**

"I think what must have happened was the war was coming and someone thought 'they're not taking my car for scrap'. They carefully took it apart and buried it thinking they would come back and put it together again."



All the major parts of the car were found preserved under the concrete base of a cowshed. It was only when the shed was pulled down and the floor dug up that the car was discovered with all its identification including Guarantee plate and original number plates.

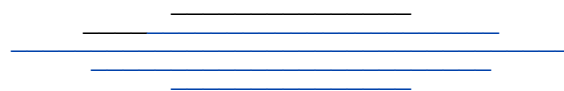
"Some of the original leather from the seats and paint work was there so we could colour match it as near as possible," said Mr Body. "But some of the aluminium had corroded where I think the concrete had cracked and urine from the cow

house had got in. And all the instruments were missing — they probably adorned someone's fireplace — so they were the most difficult to find."

At the end of April the resurrected car won the Best Vintage Car award at the Bristol Classic Car Show.

A spokesman for the Early MG Society said: "There is no history on this car until 1999 when it was miraculously 'discovered'. It is now one of the few genuine MGs that has come to light in the last 25 years — it's been a real "from the ground up" restoration."

*Our thanks to Shaun English for drawing this to our attention.□*





## “Stump the Chapter” Quiz

### Here’s Quiz Question No.9

MG racing history was illuminated in the years prior to World War II by the exploits of a group known as “The Three Musketeers.” Who among us can throw a little light on their exploits, on the drivers and other personnel involved, and on what became of the cars?



### Answer to Quiz Question No. 8

(Spring 2012 issue)

Charley Howard correctly identified overdrive as one of two special features on this Austin-Healey 100-4, a 1954 model BN1. It was a successful and highly popular device developed and manufactured in various versions from 1948 to 1988 (3.5 million units) by an English engineering firm, Laycock de Normanville, Ltd., and later by an American offshoot, GKN Laycock. The A-Type version appeared in many other sports car marques during the 1950s: Jaguars, Aston Martins, Jensens, AC Bristols, Armstrong Siddeleys, and TRs. Subsequent versions (D-, LH-, J- and P-Types) appeared in Volvos, Sunbeam Alpines, Rapiers, and Triumph Spitfires, as well as in certain MGB models (1962 to 1967). According to Wikipedia, a U.S. version of the J- and P-Type overdrives was still being produced by Gear Vendors, Inc., a California firm, as recently as 2008.

Another feature peculiar to the Austin-Healey 100-4, especially BN1 models produced for racing competition, was an all-aluminum body. The standard steel-bodied models, with 2/3 more power and 120% more torque than the MGTD, were able to exceed 100 mph and were thus considerably faster. The lighter racing versions were even quicker. Moreover, the ultra-clean



lines of the 100-4s made our T-Series cars look rather dowdy in comparison. All these factors gave great impetus to Abingdon’s development of the streamlined MGA, which made its first appearance in late 1955. □

## Technical Matters

### Quaker State Responds to Plight of Enthusiasts with a High-Zinc Motor Oil

*The Newest Addition to Quaker State's Product Line Designed for Auto Enthusiasts Needing High Levels of Zinc to Deal with Engine Wear Issues.*

Toronto, ONT – November 8, 2011 – Today, the makers of Quaker State motor oil announced the production of a new motor oil, Quaker State Defy. Featuring a high level of ZDDP, an anti-wear additive commonly referred to as zinc, Quaker State Defy addresses the needs of some automotive enthusiasts to combat friction and wear inside their engines. The formulation of new Quaker State Defy contains a proprietary zinc- booster that has dual attributes contributing to wear and oxidation control. Quaker State Defy is intended to provide enthusiasts with a quality, brand name oil that will provide both the protection and performance required in high-output, flat-tappet engines.

"We as an industry have seen the levels of zinc in motor oil consistently reduced in each successive gasoline engine specification implemented by ILSAC in the past few years, said Jeff Hsu, Quaker State Technology Specialist. This reduction of zinc is fine for drivers of newer vehicles, but is leaving classic car owners, enthusiasts and those with flat-tappet cams and followers with fewer and fewer options in the motor oil category."

The proprietary low-volatility ZDDP technology used in Quaker State Defy motor oil significantly reduces the amount of volatile phosphorus, while retaining its anti-wear protective behavior and antioxidant performance. Quaker State Defy has a ZDDP composition of 1200ppm, a more than sufficient amount to stand up to the most aggressive engine profiles.

"We have repeatedly heard enthusiasts and engine builders ask for more zinc or other solutions to their aggressive flat-tappet cam issues, and those requests did not fall on deaf ears, said Chris Hayek, Quaker State Global Brand Manager. "What we have been able to come up with is a zinc additive that is more effective and enables us to do more with the oil itself." An additional benefit of the new, fully formulated Quaker State Defy motor oil is that it is capable of running a full manufacturer-recommended drain interval during engine break-in and does not need to be drained after five hundred or a thousand miles, like some high-zinc break-in oils.

Quaker State Defy is also intended for use in higher-mileage passenger vehicle engines, and helps control the wear that high-mileage engines typically endure. In fact, the new Quaker State Defy motor oil helps stop engine wear in its tracks – preventing up to 98% of future wear through the use of the proprietary ZDDP additive. Quaker State Defy also is designed to help high-mileage engines perform more efficiently through the use of additional seal swell additive that reconditions dried-up seals and help control external and internal leaks.

The motor oil provides a thicker viscosity and stronger oil film to resist thermal breakdown and reduce oil volatility and burn-off, which help increase compression and reduce blow-by. For more information on this or any other Quaker State product, please visit: <http://www.QuakerState.com> □

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### The Care and Feeding of Leaf Springs

By **Chip Old** (TSR March-April 1973)

Are you tired of your teeth rattling whenever you drive on anything other than a glass-smooth road? Believe it or not, you can do something about it. Our cars, especially the TC and earlier models, ride rather hard to start with because when they were designed stiff springs were thought to be necessary for good handling. This natural stiffness is only made worse when the original lubrication dries up and dirt works its way in between the leaves of the springs. This causes extra friction between the leaves, and in really bad cases the spring takes on all the characteristics of a solid steel bar!

*(Cont'd on next page)*



The manuals for the TC and earlier models recommend that the front and rear springs be greased every now and then. To do this, you should first clean off the outside surface of the spring with a wire brush. Next, jack up the car under the chassis to take the weight off the spring. Then pry apart the clips that hold the leaves together, allowing the leaves to spread apart slightly. You can spread them even more by wedging a screwdriver between them. If you have access to compressed air, it's a good idea to blow the accumulated dirt out from between the leaves. Now you have to somehow work grease in between the leaves. Good luck! Try using a thin knife blade. Once that's done, let the car down off the jack and bend the clips back around the leaves. Repeat the process on the other three springs, and you're ready to go. The improvement in the ride will be quite noticeable, especially if the springs have been neglected for a long time.

The only catch to this is that the grease will wash out from between the leaves when you ride in heavy rain, and dirt will work its way between the leaves, so you're right back where you started. The only solution to this problem is to cover the springs somehow. At one time, you could get rolls of a sort of extra-flexible adhesive tape to wrap around the springs. I haven't seen them for sale recently, but if you can find some the proper drill is to clean and lube the springs as described above, then wrap the tape around the springs. This keeps the grease in and dirt and water out. Don't try to use regular adhesive tape or electrician's tape; they aren't flexible enough. An even better solution is to install a set of leather spring gaiters which are available from Octagon Sports Cars, Abingdon Spares and others. These gaiters are quite effective in keeping out dirt and water, and they usually have built-in grease fittings which make future lubrication considerably easier.

As you have probably guessed by now, the whole clean and lube procedure takes a lot of time, but it's the best way to do the job. If you want to try a shortcut, go to any motorcycle shop and buy a spray can of chain lubricant. This stuff is very thin and volatile, but when it evaporates it leaves behind a film of thick grease or a layer of dry lubricant like graphite or molybdenum disulphide, depending on which brand you use. Spray the chain lube generously over the spring and let it penetrate between the leaves. Do not use the car for several hours so that the volatile carrier will have time to evaporate. The results are not quite as good as the normal method, but it is certainly a lot easier! I used the spray lube on my TC's springs for about 8,000 miles with good results, but I found it necessary to re-lube about every thousand miles.

Those of us with TDs and TFs have it a lot easier. To start with, you only have two leaf springs to worry about, and they have rubber spacers between the leaves, so that the leaves never really rub together. These springs should never be lubricated with a petroleum-based lubricant, since this will eventually destroy the rubber. If you wish to lubricate them, use one of the silicone- or soap-based lubes designed for this purpose. Otherwise, just clean the springs and cover them with tape or leather gaiters. As for the coil springs at the front of the car, they of course require no lubrication.

Needless to say, you should examine the springs for wear when you clean and lubricate them. A neglected spring will wear at the points where the end of one leaf rubs against the longer leaf adjacent to it. The result is a groove or thin spot which weakens the leaf. When this wear is excessive, say more than .020", the leaf is likely to break, as I found out the hard way. This can be dangerous, and the only way to avoid it is to clean, inspect and lubricate the springs on a regular basis. □

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### **TD-TF Rack Seal & Front Suspension Bushings**

By **Len Renkenberger** (TSR November 1977)

We have all heard the gripes, justified in my view, about the poor service life of the rubber front end components the major suppliers provide. The worst of these seems to be the steering rack "bellows" & the 8 bushings on the inner end of the lower control arm. Since I don't have a shop manual anymore & since I'm not sure of the terminology, these are #38 and 4 in the illustration on page 14 of your Moss catalog. A much better bushing is available from your local MG dealer or BAP-GEON. Just ask for the same component for an MGB. Unfortunately, a better rack seal is not available, but I can tell you an easier way to install them.

Again, because I don't have a manual, I'll digress to make a point. I was replacing the above bushings when Bill Porter dropped by. He told me he didn't know it could be done my way. It reminded me of a passage in that book he wanted us all to read (*Zen & the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*) where the hero says people with natu-

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ral abilities don't use manuals & can do a job in several ways; whereas the manual will lead you to believe there is only one way to do it. The point is: don't believe it. Look & think. Now, let's return to the job.

As I recall, the manual tells you to use all kinds of special tools to assemble the spring, spring pan, bushings, and lower control arms. If you are assembling the whole front suspension, skip the next paragraph. If only replacing the bushings, read on.

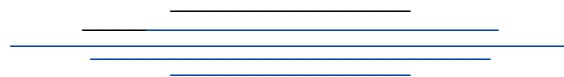
Raise the car and block up the front on one side of the car. Remove the wheel. Using a scissor or hydraulic jack placed under the spring pan at the inner side of the coil spring, take up some of the tension of the spring — but not enough to raise the car. The arm should first be removed from the side on which the lower link nut is located. Remove the nut from the pivot shaft (inner end of the whole assembly bolted to frame). Remove the two ¼" Whitworth bolts holding the arm to the spring pan, cautiously as they may have some tension. Remove the nut from the bolt thru the lower link and tap the bolt inward just enough to clear the arm you are removing. Remove arm and discard bushings. Spray new MGB bushings with Armorall or rubber lube. Place in the arm and install on pivot shaft; install nut finger tight.

Next, you will need two ½" X 4"± bolts, and two punches or screwdrivers that will fit the small holes for the spring pan bolts. Bring the large hole in the outer end of the arm in line with the link bolt. Place one of the ½" bolts through the arm and against the link bolt. Drive (gently) the link bolt out being careful not to displace any seals or washers (these are easily replaced at this time). Use the other ½" bolt to drive this bolt back out. Now drive the second bolt out with the original link bolt. Confusing? Not really. What you have done is reverse the direction of the link bolt so it will keep everything together when you are ready to remove the other arm. It is also now holding the first arm in place. By maneuvering the punches you can now put the small spring pan bolts in place. Tighten the spring pan bolts and the pivot nut sequentially (a few turns each at a time). If you tighten each of the pan bolts only you will strain them and also compress the inner rubber bushing too much. You are now ready to repeat the process (except link bolt reversal) on the other arm.

To install the whole assembly with the spring you will need either some 5/16" bolts in decreasing lengths from 6" to 1" in increments of 1" (4 of each) or four 6" lengths of "all-thread" rods and 8 nuts. Assemble, the spring pan, arms, pivot shaft & bushings with the pivot shaft brackets which bolt to the frame held in place by two bolts. Detach the pivot shaft & swing the assembly down. Place spring in spring pan & into cross member. Using a jack with a top wide enough not to slip off, raise the assembly by jacking up the pivot shaft or the inner edge of the spring pan. When the pivot shaft is within reach of the crossmember, place the bolts or "all-thread" rods thru the cross member and pivot shaft. Tighten sequentially until the pivot shaft is in place. Replace "all-thread" rod with original bolts one at a time.

Now, to replace the rack seals. Simply break the tie rod and lock nut loose, then turn the nut back until it just touches the tie rod end. Usually the accumulated crud on the threads will hold it firmly enough that it will not turn easily. If you find that it does turn easily, just loosen it several turns and put a little Lock-Tite or Permatex on the threads, then turn it back down until it touches the tie-rod just inboard from the end of the threads. Turn the tie-rod by a wrench on this flat until it is free of the tie-rod end. Remove the old rubber seal. While you're at it, check the ball joint at the inner end of the tie-rod for looseness. Liberally coat the inside of the seal with Armorall or rubber lube. With a little cautious stretching and using a small, blunt screwdriver you can work the new seal over the nut. Screw the tie-rod back on to the tie-rod end until the nut again just touches. Hold the tie-rod by the flats and turn the nut firmly tight against the tie-rod end.

One final note: If you're not using original bolts, use aircraft grade bolts. The hardware store variety are not strong enough and may let you down with a bang! — (literally). □





## Advertisements

**Note:** Chapter Members are encouraged to submit classified ads free of charge to the Editor via email or snail mail at one of his addresses shown on page 2. Photographs are accepted. Also, please remember to let us know the results of your ad and/or whether you want it to appear again in the next issue of the Newsletter.

### FOR SALE:



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## Wise Counsel to Maidens

Oh damsel fair, beware the car  
Where seating space is wider far  
Than any man of reason needs  
Except to further his misdeeds;  
The steering-column change eschew,  
No good can come of it for you,  
And likewise any motor shun  
From which you can't bale out and run.

Let maiden modesty decide  
To take a summer evening ride  
In something of the vintage breed,  
For virtue's friend was ever speed.  
No vulpine sibilance can come  
From guileless lips of village chum,  
With passion he is never dizzy,  
(His motor keeps him far too busy)  
And vintage bucket seats preclude  
The acrobatic interlude.

Nor can he sit you in the back,  
For there a Jerrican, a jack,  
An inner tube, some oily rags,  
A pair of moldy flannel bags,  
A grease gun, several tattered maps,  
Dead bottles left by other chaps,  
A tow rope and a grimy glove

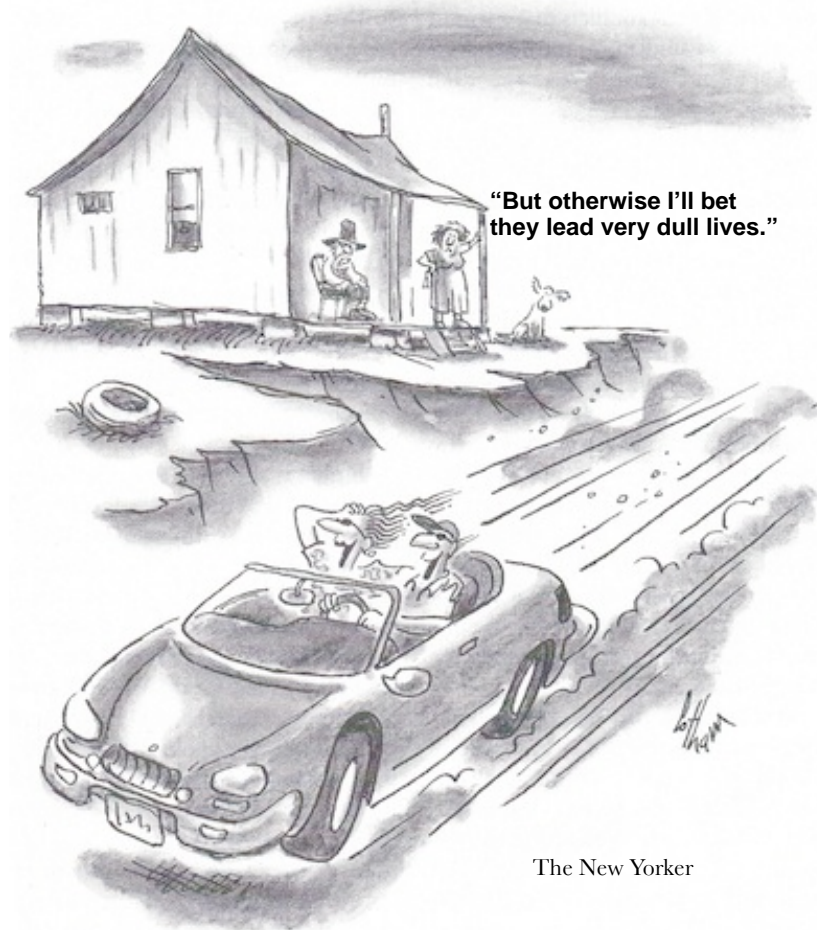
Don Juan hands it to his betters  
To flirt with triple carburettors,  
And modern Casanovas thrive  
On ultra-hydrumatic drive.  
But vintage bod of stark appearance  
Gives his poppets ample clearance,  
He keeps his honour engine-bright,  
Is never loose and seldom tight.

And should the half-elliptic ride  
Bring bruise to tender underside,  
Those precious nylons go to hell  
Among the spanners in the well,  
And gearbox cast a blob or two  
On tiny white and cherished shoe,  
These are but little things to pay  
For being out of danger's way,  
And back again, intact, to Mum.

The trouble is, the vintage brew  
At length may prove too strong for you,  
And if with him you ride a lot,  
You'll end by marrying the clot.

So, all in all, it seems to us  
You're safer riding on a bus.

*The Square Rigger, November 1977*



The New Yorker

*Steve Mefferd suggests they're driving an MGB.  
Or could it be Dale & Eleanor in their XKR?*

