

The ***SPOKES***

Founded 1958



Volume 44 Number 12

December 2002

Official Publication of the MG Car Club Western New York Centre



The Past Few Years in Pictures



**December Holiday Party
December 14, at the Burgundy Basin Inn 6:30 PM
1361 Marsh Road, Pittsford, NY**

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MG CAR CLUB WESTERN NEW YORK CENTRE

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"The SPOKES" is the official publication of the MG Car Club-Western New York Centre, a not for profit New York Corporation. It is distributed monthly to MGCC members, other clubs, and club event participants.

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Articles, anecdotes, stories, pictures, jokes, etc. are welcome from all readers. Materials must be submitted by the last week of the month prior to publication. Contact the editor directly for additional information. Send all correspondence and material to:

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SEND TO Leon Zak, EDITOR, 2467 Westside Drive, N. Chili, New York 14514, (585) 594-9150

PREFERABLY – Email to spokes@mgcarclub.com

Copies of "The SPOKES" are sometimes available, please write the editor with your request. "The SPOKES" is included with membership in the MG Car Club-Western New York Centre. An application is included inside back cover. "The SPOKES" is also available electronically to non members for \$10 per year. Contact Spokes@mgcarclub.com for more information.

Photo by Leon Zak

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Valve Cover Racing - January 19, 2003

Black Creek Park - 1:00 to 4:00

BRUDNO AWARD/LIFE MEMBERS

Desi Benet	George Haynes	Alex Kopen	Joe Tierno	George & Nancy Herschell
Gil & Betty Langswager	Richard & Bethel Powers	Dave & Barb Wild	Steve Fitch	Jim & Wendy Priestley

MEETINGS

Membership meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, except December, at the Burgundy Basin Inn, 1361 Marsh Rd., Pittsford, NY 14534 Board meetings are held the first Thursday of every odd numbered month, please contact the chairman for the location of the next board meeting and to arrange to get your item on the agenda.

From Your Editor

Leon Zak

What's faster than an MGB with a V8 - 2002. It's gone, my list of things I'm definitely, positively going to do this year now gets promoted to 2003.

I toyed with different ideas on what to do for the last cover of my first year as editor, actually put about 4 on but finally decided on the collage of previous years. Another advantage I've found to having digital photos is that I don't have to go looking through the attic for them. Well, I actually don't really have an attic but I do have a basement that has almost all the stuff from a 4000 sqft house packed into 800 sqft. It sort of works like a sponge - you take out all the space in-between the things and they do fit in a surprisingly small space. Of course trying to find anything accept what's on the upper/outer most layer is an evenings adventure!

Back to the cover - taken from the past 3 years and a variety of MG Car Club events. One of the cars on the cover is really only 7" long. If you guess which one, you get the whole next year of Spokes included with your membership, which by the way the renewal can be sent in anytime.

The Board is working on getting membership and other things we have to charge for on-line so you can pay right on the web site as well as the usual check or cash.. They'll be more information as it progresses.

CALENDAR TIME - this years calendar will be BEFORE and AFTER pictures (Color preferred, but if only B&W, that's OK) - if you've got pics of your car before the rebuild and after - send them along by mail or email. I've got room for a couple more. I'll scan then and give them back to you. I also have the pics from last years calendar and if you'll let me know how to get them back to you, I'll get them to you. (One of the benefits of packing your stuff into a small space - you get to grab those things you were looking for.)

If you've never run or helped run an event for the club before, or if it's been a while, why not check let Joan Heaney know you'd like to help out? The lineup for next year is getting fleshed out now, so there's room for you to jump in. Helping out is the way to ease into it if you're leery of taking on the whole event - phone/addresses on page 2.

The House - How is the House? Well the garage/expansion is out of the picture until spring, as is the siding and lawn. Inside it's finishing the window moldings, some paint touch up and having the ordered counter installed. They're things to do through the winter. Overall was it worth it - monetarily yes and physically couldn't have been better.

Vehicle update: The MG is back to burning oil when I punch it a little so that's got to be taken a look at, I'm that guy you don't want to be behind. Volveeta needs a gas line section replaced, the tunnel put back in, maybe a heater depending on how rugged I want to be (right now it reminds me of my old VW bug - what heat?) and hooking up the gauges. I think it's being put into late next summer schedule wise, I've just plain run out of "this year".

Later, Leon ...

P.S. - I'm putting the calendar together over the next few weeks so send your pics directly to me soon - Spokes, 2467 Westside Drive, North Chili, NY, 14514. spokes@mgcarclub.com. Thanks....

MGCC Meeting Minutes October 17, 2002

CALLED TO ORDER: 7:35 P.M.

MINUTES: Accepted.

NEW MEMBERS/GUESTS: Steve Sargeant (and a couple of TR 3's)

TREASURER'S REPORT: John Baum stated "Everything is good". See him for details and the check for our portion of the income from the June car show has been received and deposited. Yahoo!!!!

REGALIA: Dave Chase has a few new items— fleece pullovers ~\$20, MGCC jackets (Closeout), and blankets.

SPOKES: Leon Zak needs articles for this issue of SPOKES Thursday- Saturday of next week due to Thanks-giving holidays. He would also like "before" & "after" shots of your cars restoration projects for the January calendar issue.

ACTIVITIES: Joan Heaney reminds us:

Christmas Party 12/14, with (optional) gift exchange, dancing see SPOKES for details.

Wine & Cheese 1/13

Sweetheart Brunch February

Steak Roast & Auction March

Tune up clinic,

Autocross 1 May

Car Show June

45th Anniversary Party August

Watkins Glen Sept.

Fall tour Sept.

Halloween Rally Oct.

Garage tour Nov.

Xmas party Dec.

See calendar for exact dates and SPOKES for details in month prior to the event.

WEBMASTER: Scott Perry says "All is well"

OLD BUSINESS: Election of officers, secretary cast one vote & current slate is accepted for another term. They also get 100% increases in salary.

New Business: Al Costich handed down the coveted Alex Caldwell Freightliner "Drivers Award". Criteria included demonstrating the MG spirit, aworking knowledge of MG mechanics, Collier cup competition, and the award can NOT be given back! (it must be passed on someday to another deserving person). The winner was Dick Rzepkowski.

Club asked for a volunteer to check our phone periodically. Gwen Poulton accepted.

Reminder. Dues are due. \$30.

Dave Wild spoke of some comming attractions at next years Watkins Glen vintage weekend: 6 additions to the "walk of fame", an additional driving tour for 2 seater roadster/ convertables ONLY (expecting 75 cars).

CARS & PARTS 4 SALE: Austin Healey 3000 original handbook

Jim Priestly-car dolly w/ 14 " wheels, \$650

Al Costich- '63 Volvo 122S, 2 Dr., 2 spare motors, OD tranny-make offer.

Dick Rzepkowski- '59 Chevy PU, in parts but it ran when disassembled.

Steve Sangster-94 Taurus, 64K miles, \$2500

Minutes - continued

AWARDS presented.

Meeting adjourned about 8:30

Brian Fallon, Ed Diamond, John Solomon & Al Costich told of their experiences while racing in the Mexican Panamericana driving a '66 Porsche 912. Their team was named Los Tres Viejos Locos (3 Crazy Old Guys). See SPOKES for details.

Respectfully submitted by Joe De Blaere, Secretary.

Attendance for November meeting:

Joanna DeBlaere	John Baum	Dave Chase
Joe DeBlaere	Leon Zak	Dick Rzepkowski
Kathy Hershey	Karna Palermo	Marlene
Ted Hershey	Ken Heusler	Rzepkowski
Brian Fallon	Laurie Scribner	Paul Wheeler
John Simonson	Doug Scribner	Barb Wild
Bob Tescione	Pat Sangster	Dave Wild
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Bob Harris	Dick Powers	Al Fink
Dan Suter	Jim Davis	Allyn Wagner
Tim Paul	Sharon Perry	Charles Elam
Geo. Herschell	Scott Perry	
Nancy Herschell	Harriet Hokenson	Guests:
Gwen Poulton	Leroy Hokenson	Douglas A. Jack
Mabel Case	Carl Webeck	Steve Sargent
John Thompson	Wally Roworth	

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BACKFIRE

by Dick Powers

Visiting Old Friends in Watkins Glen

A few weeks ago, some of us from the club went to an event at the International Motor Racing Research Center in Watkins Glen. Bill Green, WNYMGCC member, was doing a presentation about Graham Hill and the BRM he drove to Formula One victories at Watkins Glen in 1964 and 1965. In a way, it was like visiting old friends for me.

Bill is definitely a friend, but his presentation was so wonderful that it brought me and the 50 people who had also gathered there, back to a time in international racing that was much different than we have now. The drivers, like Graham Hill, were really approachable and the cars were much more straightforward than what we see today. We thought they were "High Tech" but it was still a time of seat of the pants racing and just the beginning of the technology era that continues to this day.

The drivers and cars were more approachable. That's why I say it was like visiting old friends again.

In the 60's I was an SCCA and RCA flagger and had a chance to get really close to the cars. The Glen had all types of racing, but in the Fall, it was Grand Prix time. Not only could you get close to the cars, but to the drivers too.

Graham Hill was a hero of mine. Why not? He was my kind of racer. He came up the hard way and drove his first race car when in his mid 20's. Hill saw an ad for a racing school that said anyone could drive a racing car at Brands Hatch for five schillings a lap. He did and the rest is history.

Hill started in F-1 in 1958 with Lotus. In 1962 (BRM) and 1968 (Lotus) he was World Champion. Hill won Monaco and the US GP in 1963, 64 and 65 driving for BRM, the Indy 500 in 1966, Monaco again in '68 & '69 (Lotus) and Le Mans in 1972. Not bad for a guy who didn't drive a car till he was 24 (a '29 Austin with no brakes, but he later said that helped him when he was a GP driver).

Graham Hill was more than a great Grand Prix driver, he was a handsome, dashing sort who was at home sitting in a racing car or sitting at the bar at the Seneca Lodge. At the Glen, he was everywhere and I still remember him by old "Start Finish" with the winning trophy and hundreds of fans around him. Laurie Scribner met him in London and if you want to know more about the handsome, dashing gentleman with thick wavy hair, I think you should ask her.

For me, BRM (not the band) was very much like Hill. They came up the hard way. British Racing Motors, was formed so England could compete in the FIA Formula One Championship that had become the highest level of motor racing in 1950. They were considered the "English Ferrari" and like Ferrari, Mercedes and Alfa, to some extent, produced chassis, engine and gearbox in their own workshops. Soon after they were formed, Alfred Owen of the Rubery Owen industrial group in Darlaston England, became the owner. The first 10 years weren't easy for them, but by 1965, BRM employed 100 and were a world class Grand Prix racing organization.

I'm not sure if BRM or a Graham Hill will ever be seen again. Things just cost too much and you have to have millions in support from team, engine and driver sponsors. You really can't get close to the world class teams or drivers of today as you used to be able to. Back in the 50's and 60's, they were more like friends that you could "meet" at the track, the Seneca Lodge or even in London. If you





CHRISTMAS PARTY

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6:30 pm Drinks 7:30 pm Dinner

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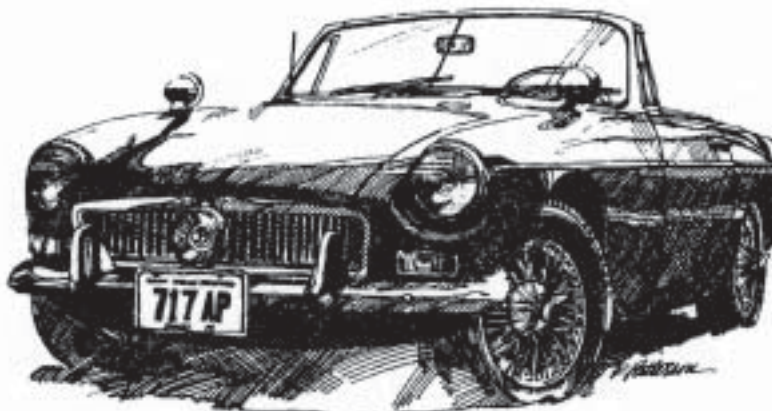
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Two months ago Gil Langwager, talked about the MG Car Club and the Concours de Elegance at Watkins Glen in the early days. When he mentioned the last year it was held in Town 1962, it struck a chord in my (otherwise) feeble brain. It took me back to my early involvement with Watkins Glen Concours. Nancy and I attended our first event at Watkins Glen in 1949, (without a sports car at that time) the second year the Watkins Glen Grand Prix races were held. That was the year of the racing Cunningham's of Briggs Cunningham and Counours participants like Dave Garroway and James Melton. We didn't get as good a viewing spot as we hoped, but it was still exciting. We attended again in 1950 and 1951, but in 1952 Uncle Sam had some different travel plans for me, so we missed the last year of running "Through The Streets". I finished my "vacation in the Far East" in 1954 and returned home to get back to civilian life. Watkins Glen was not too high on our priority list but rather, getting a house, settling back in my job, and starting a family had much more urgency and importance.

In 1959 I bought the TD (our first sports car) and began work on it. In 1961 we attended our first Concurs at the Glen as a participant with the TD. It was a real shock and one I was not quite ready for, but we did learn a lot about what is required to show a car at such an event. Our initial attempts at restoring were a bit on the "lacking" side but we did learn what is needed. We didn't take any trophy but did vow to return the following year. We entered again in 1962 and 1963. In 1963 the Concours was held at the track and that was the year we were parked next to Lucy Cunningham and her Jaguar XK-E. She introduced us to Briggs Cunningham (her husband) and this was heady stuff for two such green kids (?) on the Concours circuit. But they were both great people and one would never realize, without knowing, the wealth behind these two. That was the year that we stayed at Miller's Motel next to Smalley's Garage and were lulled (?) to sleep with the strains of Alf Momo tuning one of Cunningham's Birdcage Maserati's. I loved it, but Nancy slept with the pillow over her head that night. (I still hear about that one.) It was also the first time we met a very young Joe Tierno and his bunch of MG buddies. They were driving MG A's painted white with blue racing stripes and the Octagon for the racing number "al-a" the 1956 Sebering cars. They were a crazy bunch and I still remember how impressed they were by folks like us that actually drove a TD everyday. One of them opened the gas filler cap and whispered into the tank "MG's forever". (Forty years later I still agree with his assessment.)

After that we took a hiatus from many shows with the car at the Glen as the boys were growing up and it was too difficult trying to travel with them and the little car. In 1966 the engine on the TD failed and it sat in the garage for two years and then went through a two year frame up restoration.

In 1970 we began the show circuit again, starting with a T Register event in Jug End Mass. The car got its first of many trophies at that show and we attended 5 more T Register events getting a trophy at each one and eventually getting a First in the Premier Class. (similar to a Best In Show) As was and is the custom, the TD was then retired from T Register competition being shown then as "Display Only".

We joined the MG Car Club in 1966 and now began to attend their events and shows. There was the infamous Wagon Jack Farm meets hosted by Dave and Bard Wild. These were low key fun events and held at their farm. Mostly the weather was good but there were a few occasions when cars were "helped" out of a muddy encounter. But it was FUN.

Then in 1971 along came (from the vision of Dave Wild) "The Sports Car and Vintage Auto Festival" (its proper name) also known (grudgingly) as the Victor Car Show. What started out as a show for about 100 cars, has evolved into one of the largest one day shows in the country. But then we all knew that didn't we?

In 1974, a TF joined the TD in the garage and now we had a choice of which MG to drive. But we vowed that this was not going to be a frame up restoration. It has been to Victor, a number of times, many T Register events and, to events in Ontario with the Canadian Club, and to Watkins Glen a number of times.

Our involvement with the Canadian clubs and our trips to Ontario on the Lake spurred another interest and in 1984 an MGB joined our growing MG Family. We had seen many MG B's and decided that it might be a fun car. Fortunately I managed to get one from the original owner and it has been our "traveling car" ever since. It is my only concession to getting older.

So where am I going with all this drivel? Well to sum it up, we have been to 31 shows in Victor (note how I referred to that) with all three of the cars. Plus at least 20 shows sponsored by the Genesee Valley Antique Car Society. (Our first show at GVACS was their second annual show). Shows in Buffalo, Williamsport PA (first in 1962), Hildene in Vermont, (10 times) Watkins Glen (18 times), T Registers events (25 times), The British Invasion in Stowe Vermont (11 times), Wagon Jack (8 times) Gerry Gougens Autojumble in Vermont 6 times plus the B Register events etc. 10 times. It makes for quite a list of car shows. The cars(s) have been driven to every show except two. Once trailered when it was not finished and once towed to be able to take our two boys.

We have played with these cars for over 40 years and still continue to show them. Do we still enjoy it? You bet we do. Would I do it over again? You bet I would. We have met some fascinating people with these cars and one can only be in awe of the many MG "celebrities" that have crossed our paths during these travels. We have seen (and many times

competed with) some of the most beautiful cars one could ever imagine. And even though we didn't win all the time it was an honor to be alongside these magnificent cars. Someone once said to me while looking at the "collection" in the garage, "what do you do for a hobby"? I told him I try to earn enough money to support the cars. So far I have been fortunate in being able to do so.

I have also been fortunate in being blessed with a very understanding wife of 50 years, who has gone along with this crazy addiction. She has tolerated all the troubles that go with owning and maintaining these toys, and all the unexpected costs that can sometimes wreck havoc with a budget. She has tolerated painted parts being "dried" in the oven, clothes so dirty that they belong in a landfill, greasy fingerprints on doorways, noises in the garage at the most ungodly hours, and all the other stupid things that go along with the hobby (?). She has gone with me on most of these trips, all over the country, and has done so cheerfully (most of the time).

She has yelled at me for doing dumb things with the cars that I knew I shouldn't be doing, and she has comforted me when "I can't seem to find the seat of my pants with both hands" while working on the cars. She has sat patiently with the car while I have gone off to talk to someone or to photograph a car for a future drawing. She has listened to my complaining when things go wrong and been happy for me when things go right. She has endured water in the face from "leaking" side

curtains and, on at least one occasion, worked the wipers by hand while we were driving through the Adirondak Mountains during a particularly bad storm. She has walked miles with me both here and in England through flea markets looking for that item I really didn't need but just had to have. She has helped me lift off and on the body tub of the TD. (Check out our relative heights and you will understand why that was a real challenge for her) She was very tolerant of an article I wrote for Spokes many years ago titled, "My Mistress Has Four Wheels". (Today it should be My Three Mistresses Each Have Four Wheels)

But most of all, she's been great for keeping me and, this infernal addiction for 40 + years.



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The Course –

- The course shall consist of a launch incline 8 feet long, followed by a level run of 20 feet.
- Two lanes shall divide the launch incline, each 2 feet wide. The incline shall be 2 feet high at the rearmost part and level with the course at the front edge. The front edge shall be mitered so as to provide a smooth transition from the incline to the run out area.
- The official "Starting Line" shall be 2 feet from the rear edge of the incline. A mechanized starting gate, which is 2 inches high, is provided.
- The run out section of the course shall consist of 2 lanes, each 3 feet wide. The lanes shall be clearly marked.
- The finish line shall be marked 20 feet from the front edge of the launch incline.



The Races –

- Cars will be run in heats of 2 cars each.
- The cars are to be launched with their front wheels on the starting line. If your car design does not allow this, that is your disadvantage. **The first car to have its front wheels cross the finish line is the winner.** If neither car makes it to the finish line, the car going the furthest wins.
- If the wheels of a car should **touch** the lane markers, or **cross over** the lane marker, the car shall be **disqualified**. The competing car immediately becomes the winner.
- Winning cars will advance to the next round until all are eliminated except 1 car.



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3 Chris Baum
4 Richard Coleman
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4 Karen Dupre
5 Sandy Coleman
6 Jim Herschell
6 Nancy Chase
7 Mike Marsh
7 Beverly Lockrow
8 Jon Van Dorn
9 Sheridan Cornett
10 Norman Wright
11 Joseph Kozloski
11 Georgean Abels
13 Ken Jock
15 Ann Coleman
15 Pamela Houseknecht
16 Nancy Culling
16 Ann Lenweaver
17 Don Lovell
18 Betty Langswager
19 Hollis Hames
20 Jim Bartasevich
24 Robert Abels
26 Scott Alberti
26 Harry Davis
26 Dennis Leipold
27 Dezi Benet
27 Linda Perkins
28 Arnold Van Denburgh
29 John Forrester
29 Ron Hein
31 Robert Houseknecht
31 Paul Lilley

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

4 Philip Culbertson
5 Vincent Kerrio
5 Robin Christ
6 Gary Agosti
6 Phil Parisi
8 Jeff Miller
8 Liz Colquhoun
8 Mary Ellen Suter
9 Willard Brown, Jr.
11 Douglas Drake
11 Barb Wild
12 Allen Hess
12 Nedra McElroy
12 Pat Stahl
13 Louis Le Brun
13 Ned Paulsen
15 Michael Palermo
16 Ed Haefner
16 Eve Manca
17 James Franzen
17 Cheryl Baldwin
17 Jane Kirchgessner
18 Geoffrey Briggs
19 Denny Trask
20 Fred Miller
21 Henry Kron
21 Gil Langswager
22 Stephanie Haynes
23 William Baldwin
23 Linda Lytle
23 Pam Porter
25 Sam Squiers
25 Krystyna Todaro
26 Steve Philip
27 Mary Ann Mance

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

4 Gregg Gleba
6 Dan Suter
6 Linda Moulton
7 Susan Cooley
7 Virginia Johns
7 Carol ? (Bert's friend)
11 Jim Dix
12 John Simonson
13 Lloyd Potter
13 Dave Stutzman
14 Michael Mack
14 Paul Wheeler
15 Leon Zak
15 Kris Bennett
15 Joeanna DeBlaere
15 Bernadette Foster
16 Susan Potter
16 Julie Noble
18 Mary Fitch
18 Mary Ann Blair
18 Sue Herschell
19 Sondra Franzen
20 Roger Gunther
21 Bernice Black
24 George Bennett
24 Jim Riley
24 Frank Testa
25 David Riexinger
26 Fran Marsh
28 Gilda Parisi
28 Terrie Sleeman
30 William Favro
31 Jean Riley

HAPPY BIRTHDAY EVERYONE!!
FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

HAPPY BIRTHDAY EVERYONE!!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY EVERYONE!!

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

1 George & Mary Ann Shetterly
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22 Louis & Enid Ryan
26 Dezi & Bill Benet
26 Brian & Kelly Fallon
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7 Vincent & Rose Kerrio
12 Joseph & Linda Higley
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16 Ken & Sharon Stickle
17 Gerald & Jane Kirchgessner
19 Dennis & Mary Costich
20 Tom & Ann Lenweaver
20 Joseph & Paulette Schultz

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

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6 Bruce & Elizabeth Freeland
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12 Thomas & Lia Glanville
30 Bob & Gwen Harris

CONGRATULATIONS!!

CONGRATULATIONS!!

FINALLY – after months of intensive activity, it seems as though the “urgent” workload around Phoenix Acres is finally easing up. The yard now sports two raised growing beds off the deck and the mowed area has expanded to everywhere there aren’t trees or a house. There’s a real storm door installed on the weather side of the front door, there are curtains in the living room and in the Master Suite,* there’s a water filtration manifold in the basement, the generator starts, runs and provides power on demand, the plow truck starts with a tickle, the Midget holds water again, the Mercedes has new brakes and a new left rear wheel bearing, the ’95 4-Runner sports new tie rod ends and a new exhaust, and even the ’84 4-Runner, this year’s Leading Candidate for the project we liked to procrastinate on the most, is back on the road – not to mention a few other small projects not worthy of mentioning.

However, it ain’t quite over yet. Frustrated with having to chip my way IN to the plow truck on more than one occasion last year, the Thanksgiving weekend saw me erect a temporary aluminum and plastic shelter to shield the truck for the Winter. The current plan is to move the shelter to where the barn will be some day, but not until the weather warms up and we can put a driveway in to the site. The ’84 still needs to have a minor exhaust leak at the manifold fixed (here might we go again) and an oil leak at the pan gasket repaired. Then there’s the mower after that, and my daughter brought her car over when she was home from school because the front bumper fell off, and the beat goes on....

Given all of that, however, it’s a good feeling to be ramping down a bit. At this point I’m sure Eileen is convinced that I’m a weekend workaholic. Well, maybe. For many years, my Father engaged in significant home repair and improvement projects on weekends. Then, when he’d “run his list,” he enjoyed the results and relaxed a lot more. I plead a long list of “want to dos,” punctuated by too many “wish that hadn’t just been discovered.” This is, after all, a new house and a new shop, and the house and shop “personalities” are only now beginning to emerge. On the other hand, I am looking forward to slowing things down a bit.

I think one of the “truths” of moving into a new place is that there can be a lot to do just to make it practical and possible to do a lot. Far too many times in the past year, I’ve had to “fight the shop” to get things done, as opposed to focusing on the projects. For example, when we moved in, there were no electrical outlets in the automotive shop. This was by design; since I wanted so many I didn’t want to contemplate what the electrician on the job would have charged. On the other hand, going from “too many” to “none” might have been a slight overcompensation. Given unlimited funds, I might have done this differently, but then if Froggy had wings he wouldn’t do that hoppy thing.

In late January, when it was fairly cold last year, I managed to get one quad outlet box mounted and connected just below the distribution panel for the shop. I lived off this box with a long extension cord for most of the Spring, and then one fine day when Eileen wasn’t home I took a break from one of the projects and ran one more quad box in a more convenient location. (I tend to find that activities like walking around on trusses up over the garage and shop are best done when those who might be concerned about such

activities are out shopping.) I’m still using long extension cords, but I don’t need to climb over a lot of stuff now to plug them in.

So at the end of “this our first year of our content,” a burning question may well be “what would make this shop an efficient and convenient space to work in, and how soon could I get it done?” And, of course, like any major construction project, I’ll need to do this while continuing to work in the shop, so whatever I need to do will take longer and cost more. It will ever be thus.

All good projects start with requirements, so it seems important to first identify what I want to do. And like any good architectural approach, the analysis needs to begin with an understanding of the kinds of activities that should be considered from a design perspective. So here goes: I continue to think of this space as a combination of a place to do running repairs, particularly in the colder months, as well as a full blown back-shop restoration facility. The rationale is that I like doing both, but I have essentially one set of tools, and I don’t fancy pushing rolling tool cabinets through the snow to go from one space to another. Nor, for that matter, am I interested in doubling up on tools at the moment.

Additionally, I find that sometimes the ability to “multi-task” across a combination of restoration work and running repairs is a big advantage. For example, I can drop the oil out of an engine in for an oil change while a coat of rust converting primer is drying. Multi-tasking across projects also gives my ageing mind a chance to figure out a better way to solve some imponderable problem – not that one ever finds such problems in an automotive shop, of course.

Given the intended uses, it makes sense that there will always be a need for at least two, and maybe three vehicles to be in the shop in some form of disrepair at any given moment. Floor space across the three bays then becomes important, so that access to any of the vehicles on any side is enabled. Given that much of the floor space around the perimeter of the shop is currently taken up with fresh oil, used oil, antifreeze, boxes of “stuff” I need to sort through, etc., and additionally that there’s a loft full of “stuff” over at the Macedon barn, storage space becomes a real high priority.

The generator, of course, and the floor space required to access it on all sides, does pull about 3-5 feet of the length of one bay. In the months leading up to the heating season I questioned more than once whether I should have made arrangements for the generator to be outside the working shop space, say in an additional “engine room” located one more bay to the West, so that all three bays would have been full depth. In fact, as it’s turned out, the generator in combination with some electric heaters has become the primary heat source for the shop, at least for now, so the location may be a bit serendipitous. (Between the engine heat, the airflow from the radiator fan and some additional heaters to create “load” and make more heat in the radiator, I’m able to squeeze virtually every BTU out of the diesel fuel except for the losses up the exhaust stack.)

In addition, should the need ever arise to work on the generator, having it under cover in the shop where the tools are will enable that to be done in a civilized manner regardless of the weather, which has a lot of appeal to me. As it’s

turned out, I can actually get everything I own into even the short bay where the generator sits, with the one exception of the plow truck when the blade is on. With the blade off, the truck fits with no problem, and the truck with the blade on fits all the other bays, including the daily driver space. This is probably a fair trade-off for now, so for this next phase I'll mandate that the location of the generator has become a "given" and one of those limitations good architects can figure out how to work around.

Power and light are crucial, of course, and at the moment there isn't enough of either. There are 50 amps of 220V power available in a sub-panel in the shop, but most of it ends there. Clearly, an abundance of outlets, located at the head of each bay, at any benches that might come to be and at the edges of the doors (to enable things like welding and grinding to be done outside in nice weather) will be a requirement. Also, while the current two bare bulb lights are enough to ensure I don't stumble into things in the dark as much as I would without them, I'm currently using a drop light / trouble light as a primary source for task illumination. This is probably OK for mechanical work, and will always be the case for "bottom work," but the light is insufficient for bodywork. This will need to be addressed as well.

Finally, there's the question of temperature extremes. I'll need to be able to work year-round in both extremely cold weather as well as Summer heat. This will call for insulation and heating and cooling sources. The current state, thanks to a tip from Bill Glanville, is plastic sheeting stapled to the underside of the trusses. With the generator

hammering away, and three heaters running, I've been able to get the shop up to 60 degrees in about half an hour. Of course, I need hearing protection while this is going on, so this ought to be considered as well.

So there we have it. Armed with requirements, myself the Architect now has the challenge to sort out how to address the problems of myself the Customer. This could be a somewhat dichotomous process, in which I could possibly have conversations with myself. Out loud. Not only that, but someplace along the road, I'm bound to lose an argument or two. Would it be a bit much to suggest I'm looking forward to the process?

The Holidays are upon us, and Eileen is suggesting she needs help decorating the place for Christmas. Not a problem. We're in reasonably good shape at this point, and I view the shop design as a longer-term project. The implementation will likely take even longer. As we all settle in for the long Winter nights, this will provide just a little extra food for my thoughts. We'd like to take this opportunity to wish everyone well for the coming year, and we'll look forward next year to another round of "making things better" as well as those new adventures which show up "just around the next bend." All the best to you and yours. Happy Holidays, everyone.

(Endnotes)

* No, I don't sew. In fact, Eileen swears I am "Fabric Challenged." Absolutely guilty as charged, but I did get to hang all the rods.

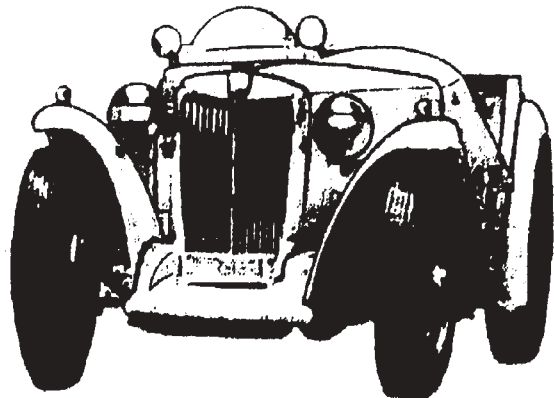
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La Carrera Panamericana 2002 or Los Tres Viejos Locos! Ride Again

Brian Fallon

After a rather uncomfortable ride in a too stripped out Porsche 356 last year we decided to up the comfort and technology level this year with a 1966 Porsche 912. The '66 was one year over the age limit for La Carrera but as it was unchanged from a '65 the organizers accepted it. It offered more room inside, a more modern suspension and a five speed transmission while retaining the Porsche 356 SC engine that we were familiar with. Scott Harvey had won the class last year with a 912 so it was a logical choice. We would be running in the Historic A class for four cylinder cars up to '65.



The car was purchased in May and preparation started in June but always took second place behind the maintenance required on the 356 as the vintage racing season progressed. Mid September to mid October blurred by as we frantically tried to get the car ready. It was running too rich, fouling spark plugs and we were unable to determine why. A change to the factory recommended street plugs instead of the racing plugs helped but not enough.

A call to Vic Skirmants, the mid west and east coast Porsche guru, on Sunday the 13th of October resulted in an invitation to come to his place in Warren, Michigan, a Detroit suburb, on the 14th, the day we were to leave for Mexico, so he could have a try at sorting it out. So, at 4 AM on the 14th Al Costich and I, towing the Porsche on a trailer with a Jeep Cherokee, left for Mexico by way of Canada! We arrived at Vic's place around 10 AM and he immediately set to work to straighten out the carburetors. After about four hours he had it about 90% right.

The car ran well from half throttle to wide open but was still rough and rich below that. Although we couldn't tell that at the time as Vic's road test was a mostly flat out blast down his local streets and expressways with some handling tests on the off and on ramps.

We left Vic's about 2 PM and got as far as Indiana before stopping for the night. The next day we made my brother's house in western Kentucky and stayed there for a day. The following day we stopped for the night south of Dallas, Texas. We arrived in Laredo, Texas on the 18th, procured liability insurance for Mexico for both cars, changed our dollars for pesos and spent the night in the Rio Grande Plaza hotel right on the river.

Our adventures really began on the 19th as we at-

tempted to cross the border. We went to Bridge #1 as it was closest to our hotel.

The US supervisor advised us not to cross there but rather at Bridge #3 or #4 as "The Mexicans are ready for you La Carrera guys there". We went to Bridge #3, the International Trade Bridge and saw the traffic was almost all trucks. As we crossed the border I noticed the usual customs posts were absent. We drove down about a mile of road and came to a huge truck parking lot and warehouse area. We parked and went in search of someone who could process us into the country. After about an hour the Mexican supervisor determined that we were at the wrong bridge and we had to go back to the US. The line of trucks waiting to cross into the US was four lanes wide and a mile long. Finally, when we got to the US Customs they didn't buy our story of inadvertently having crossed at the wrong place and required that we have the rig X-rayed before we could proceed. Another hour of waiting in a long line of trucks to pass through a gigantic X-ray machine before we were cleared.

Finally we got to Bridge #2 and into the normal flow of automobile traffic into Mexico. We went to the "Aduana" or Mexican Customs building for the importation of cars and then the fun began again. Ed, when he drove the rig out of Mexico last year had neglected to turn in the necessary documents. The customs clerk discovered this as soon as she typed the VIN of the Cherokee into her computer. Now, we had to spend another hour filling out forms and getting the chief of customs to OK it before we could bring the Cherokee into Mexico again. Finally after several more hours of dealing with the bureaucracy we had the necessary documents and were on our way. We got to our hotel in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico about 3:45 PM. It had taken us almost seven hours to advance four or five hundred yards south.

At the hotel we met the first of our companions and new friends that would make up the convoy to Tuxtla Gutierrez. It had been organized by the new US La Carrera representative, Gerie Bledsoe. Gerie won Historic C (8 cylinder cars) this year. Over the next day more cars and crews continued to arrive including a group from Car & Driver magazine with a '53 Ford.

We left at 7 AM from Nuevo Laredo in a twelve car convoy escorted by the "Federales", the Mexican Federal Road Police. The Federales seem to be similar to our state police in their functions but are a national police force. They were uniformly professional and competent in all our dealings

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with them. After driving all day we arrived at a truck stop about fifty miles north of Mexico City where we waited until about 11 PM to cross the city. Even at night with a police escort crossing Mexico City is difficult. It is about fifty miles across and has about twenty two million people (all of whom have cars).



Some teams will drive hundreds of miles out of their way to avoid it. We finally arrived at our hotel in Puebla around 2 AM. We were up at 5 after three hours sleep ready for another long day. We left about 6:30 and arrived in Tuxtla Gutierrez, our destination and the starting point for La Carrera at 9 PM that night. We drove almost 2000 miles in 38 hours. There were only three of us left of the original convoy of 12.

The others having dropped out with mechanical problems, fatigue or disagreement over the route. So far we had driven almost 4000 miles and the race hadn't started yet.

John Simonson, our Co-driver, had flown in that afternoon and reserved two rooms. So our immediate need for showers and rest were taken care of. However, the lobby was full of old friends from last year and as tired as we were bed was not an option until we had dinner with Bobby and Zoya Johnson who come all the way from the Aleutian Islands to race in La Carrera. Bobby finished last year on three cylinders in his '53 Hudson coupe.

The next morning we took the car out to the fairgrounds and secured a garage. All the processing for the race takes place there. We got the car and our gear through tech, had our physicals and received our Mexican competition licenses. That afternoon Ed Diamond flew in completing our team.

On Thursday we finally received the graphics and number packages and spent most of the day applying them. Our car, Ed's helmet and gloves were selected as props for a Tag-Heuer advertising photo shoot so we may see it in an ad someday for the Heuer "Carrera" watch.

There were large teams from Italy and Germany entered this year. The Italian team had such notables as former F1 drivers Clay Regazzoni and Arturo Merzario. Also driving an Alfa in the Original Pan Am class was Prisca Taruffi, the daughter of Piero Taruffi a brilliant engineer and driver in the 40s and 50s and author of one of the first books on race driving "The Technique of Motor Racing". Sadly, the ability of some of the Germans was not up to the demands of the cars they were driving and all three of the Mercedes-Benz 300SLs were wrecked before the race was over.

Friday, October 25th, was the start of the race. Ed drove and John Co-driving. Alan and I were in the "Servicio"

Cherokee. We left about two hours before the first car in order to be set up and waiting at the first service stop about 150 miles down the road at La Ventosa. We were held up for an hour by a big truck burning in the road. There was no fire equipment available and we just had to wait until it burned out. However, we made it with plenty of time to spare.

When Ed and John arrived at La Ventosa they complained of overheating. We bungeed the decklid up and ran the rest of the event in that configuration. It was ugly but effective. The oil temperature stayed in the green for the rest of the race. That night in Oaxaca (pronounced Whahaca) we had a lot of minor problems to work on but nothing too serious. Ed and John were 4th out of 12 in class and 50th overall out of 79.

Saturday, Oaxaca to Puebla, found me in the car with John for my first stint as driver. I can't remember much about the day except I couldn't find any rhythm as a driver and dropped us down to 8th in class.

Sunday, Puebla to Morelia through Mexico City, was Ed's turn again. Alan and I got lost crossing Mexico City but finally made it to our hotel in Morelia by hiring a taxi driver to lead us there. I was standing at the entrance driveway chatting with a Brit who was crewing on a Mini. He had no sooner finished saying "Porschesbloody good cars, mate,



dead reliable" when ours came in on a flat bed. The throttle linkage had broken on the first special section thus costing them the whole day. We jacked the car up and I crawled under to find the rubber buffer in the throttle linkage had broken. We didn't have a spare. Alan, ever resourceful, found a crew with some machine shop capabilities and in a few minutes made a steel replacement. Meanwhile, a Mexican friend of mine, Luis Unikel, who finished 3rd overall in his '54 Ford, came by to see what the problem was. His chief mechanic looked at the pieces and said "I can fix that" and half an hour later came back with the part as good as new. He had revulcanized the rubber in a hotel parking lot! Amazing....it could only happen in a country where people have had to be very resourceful to keep their cars on the road.

The next morning I was back in the car with John again. We were driving the "Mil Cumbres" or 1000 Peaks sections and my driving finally started to improve. This area is very mountainous and it is like driving in the Adirondacks but on even tighter, twistier roads...great fun. We did three special sections and then it started to rain. It poured off and on for the rest of the day. All the afternoon stages were cancelled. At dinner that night the results were announced and we had moved up 20 places overall and back into 5th in Historic A.

Day Five and it was Ed's turn again. It was to be a

noon start from the mall parking lot where we finished the night before. The racers were to go to the race track at Aguascalientes for six hot laps and then proceed to Zacatecas for their first run over La Bufa. La Bufa is a mountain outside of Zacatecas with a long, smooth, sinuous but fast road over it. There are few guard rails and many long drop offs. La Bufa is taken very seriously by everyone. (Alan deCadenet crashed heavily there in a "C" Jaguar in '91.) Alan Costich and I were waiting at the service stop near the finish of that stage. The cars would be serviced and then run back the other way over La Bufa into Zacatecas for the ceremonial finish to the day. While we were waiting Bobby Johnson drove up and said that the Porsche had broken its crankshaft on the race track and was being trailered down to us. An hour or so later another team, who had gone to the track to spectate, brought our car in.



Our second try at La Carrera was over. We loaded the car on to our trailer and went to the hotel in Zacatecas. The next morning we adjusted the loads so all four of us could ride in the Cherokee and started home. We crossed the border that evening after stopping to do the correct customs procedures for taking the cars out of Mexico. Ed continued with the rig intending to drive it back to Connecticut. Alan, John and I flew out of Laredo Thursday morning and were home that afternoon.

We are listed as finishing 64th out of 79 and 10th out of 12 in class. It was a sad end to a good try. We didn't do as

well as last year when at least we finished. However, we all feel we have the right car for the job now and that when we go back next year we can do much better.

Los Tres Viejos Locos! want to thank: Larry Eksten, Rick Hoyt and Mark Eksten of Eksten Autoworks, Barry Brown and his crew at Riter Vintage Auto, Gary Moore of T-Shirt Express and Vic Skirmants for their help and friendship. Without their abilities and expertise our team would never have even gotten to Canada let alone Mexico. I personally want to thank Ed Diamond, John Simonson and Alan Costich. No one ever had better team mates and companions on a very grueling and ultimately frustrating trip and race. Finally a big "Thank You" to my wife "Kelly" and in fact to all of our wives and loved ones who continue to put up with our "NEXT last great adventure".





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Jay Lockrow

Last month we covered the subject of British saloons and the fact that many of them are sort of orphans.. On this same subject and on a different twist there is the category of specials. Many of these “specials” were raced with great vigor and anyone looking through records of long gone races would quickly discover names of cars of which they had ever heard. Just recently *Classic and Sportscar*, one of my favorite magazines, ran an article about some of these home built specials. The ones that were covered in this particular article were of English manufacture but many companies in various countries made these including the US. What many of these amounted too was a simple fiberglass body or possibly even an aluminum shell. You were then told to dig out a donor car of some sort and using the engine, suspension and other bits you would quickly assemble a sports car or even a sports racing car. Some companies even went so far as to claim you could do this in a couple of weekends and evenings. A good number of these were sold and according to this particular story many “new” bodies still show up never having been assembled. Buyers either lost interest, became interested in other things or just decided the whole project was more than they could tackle and shelved the whole project. Names like Buckler, Hamblin, Toronado, Thunder Bolt and dozens more would be familiar if you were looking into the history of these cars. These were supposedly poor mans sports cars but you had to be a pretty good mechanic to put one together. Many were also made in back yards and garages and I have even heard of one with a chicken wire and papier-mâché body that disintegrated one day in the rain.

In my own experience I once owned a MG TC chassis, engine and drive train that had an Allied fiberglass body affixed to it. It was raced locally in the Buffalo area and Canada for several years. The story goes the chassis was put together from the BMC parts depot somewhere around Hamilton. If this is true, I do not really know and how these characters achieved access to this treasure of goodies would make a good story if it is true. The only one I know that was

involved is long deceased. The car looked very much like an Italian Cisitalia coupe but in looks only. A friend of mine bought it and started to restore it but the whole project was abandoned quite quickly. I purchased the chassis, engine, gearbox and both axles to use on my TC restoration. The fiberglass body was sold to someone who was going to put it on a MG A chassis but I have never seen or heard of it since. I also sold off many of the parts (way too cheap) and how I wish I had some of them today. I have had to buy new or used parts several times and at one time I had just what I needed.

One of the favorite donor cars in England for specials was the Austin seven. They were light, and would lend themselves to some tuning. There were virtually thousands of Austin sevens out there for the taking. It's no wonder they were so popular. One of the best models of the seven was called the Nippy and this is the car that most of the tuner's copy. There are probably more Austin seven specials looking like a Nippy or Nippy copies made from saloons than were ever produced. From what I have read original Nippys are few and far between and are quite dear. Copies can be found buy the handful. Then again that's what it is all about, having fun with cars?

Some specials were professionally built and I recall cars like the Sadler and Bocar that ran at Watkins Glen years ago. Many of these were one off and were very successful in racing but never made an attempt to go commercial. These were quite sophisticated and way beyond the amateur builder. Both of these cars mentioned I believe used Chevy V8s and the Sadler even had an IBM pre-selector gearbox. Just what you need on your everyday car.

These companies are long gone and the closest thing you could find today would be a kit car or dune buggy. Not really the same thing but if it stirs your juices go for it!

Happy Holidays to all!!!

2002 Memories



THE MG CAR CLUB, WESTERN NY CENTRE, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership Dues are \$30.00 — All Memberships expire December 31st

Name _____ Birthday _____
Spouse _____ Friend _____ Birthday _____
Phone: Home _____ Work _____ Anniversary _____
Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip+4 _____ Today's Date _____ New or Renewal? _____
Cars Owned & Yr. _____

INTERESTS: Racing _____ Gymkhana _____ Rallye _____ Restoration _____
Car Show _____ Social _____ Touring _____ Other _____

Hobbies, etc. _____

Occupation _____ E-Mail Address _____

Roadside Help? No _____ Yes _____ Days _____ Evenings _____ Nights _____ Weekends _____

MAIL APPLICATION WITH CHEQUE PAYABLE TO: MGCC OF WESTERN NY, INC. TO:

**Jim Priestley
251 Bronx Drive
Rochester, NY 14623**

MG CAR CLUB of WESTERN NY CENTRE -REGALIA-

Cloisonné Pins	\$ 2.00	Mylar Decals	\$ 1.25
Six-pack Cooler	10.00	Fleece w/emblem	22.00
Antenna Flags	10.00	Fleece w/emb. (XXL)	24.00
Name Badges w/MG	10.00	Log Book	6.00
Leatherette Key Tag	3.00	Car Badge	25.00
Luggage Tag	1.00	Bumper Stickers	1.00
Badge Bar Clips	5.00	Old Fashion Glass	4.00
Sweat Shirts	15.00	Polo Shirts	18.00
British Style Cap	5.00	Color MGCC Decal	1.25
Ladies Pendants	15.00	Club Emb. Patch	2.00
MGB Badge Plates	7.00	Tee Shirts	12.00
Sport Cap w/ emb.	12.00	Club Jacket	36.00
		Club Jacket w/name	39.00

**Dave Chase
689 Erie Station Road
W. Henrietta, NY 14580 (585) 334-6826
Call or write for details on mail orders**

WESTERN NEW YORK CENTRE MGCC

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2002/2003

September	October	November	December
5-8 Watkins Glen 19 Meeting 21 Tune-up Clinic 22 Autocross III	13 Fall Foliage Tour 17 Meeting 26 Halloween Party 27 Autocross 4	3 Nov Brunch 10 Garage Tour 21 Meeting	14 Holiday Party No Meeting
January	February	March	April
13 Wine & Cheese 16 Meeting	19 Sweetheart Brunch 20 Meeting	2 Steak Roast & Auction 20 Meeting 30 English Pub	17 Meeting 13 Brunch Run
May	June	July	August
Tune Up Clinic 15 Meeting 15-18 Carlisle Autocross I	1 Vintage Car Show 19 Meeting Garden Tour	Autocross II 17 Meeting Kids day - Glen Tailgate Picnic & Funkana	Steak Roast & Rally 14 Meeting 17 45th MG Anniversary Party

For more information visit our web site <http://www.mgcarclub.com>

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