

MINNESOTA MG GROUP NEWSLETTER FOR JULY

In the "Side Glances" column of the July 88 issue of Road & Track, Peter Eagan discusses what it's like to be seen driving a Ferrari, and how one's ego can not help but be somewhat inflated by on lookers straining to get a better view of who is behind the wheel. To paraphrase, Peter goes on to say that when he sees someone driving an old British car, he looks at the car rather than the person because he figures the driver is probably pretty much like himself, that is a self taught mechanic, or very likely to be, perhaps even in the next few minutes.

This self taught home study version of auto mechanics 101 was recently experienced by new member Dave Kruth. Dave moved to the area a short time ago and promptly located and bought himself a clean and solid '75 MGB roadster. Overall, the car was in very fine shape mechanically speaking with one exception, the clutch. Dave attended the tech session this spring, discussed his problem with the assemblage of knowledge and experience present and with the aid of the good book (i.e. workshop manual) decided to undertake clutch replacement on his own. Perhaps this was a somewhat bold decision for someone so new to the mysteries of the octagon, but after all, is not at least half the joy of owning an MG, that of solving these mysteries?

Moving ahead in time to early June. The phone rings. I answer. It's Dave on the other end. Dave reports that engine and transmission removal have gone rather well but... with the new clutch disc and pressure plate in place the transmission won't quite mate back up with the engine. Are you sure you have the clutch disc centered I ask. Yep, I used a clutch alignment tool is Dave's reply. I ask a couple of other probing questions, but to no avail. I'm mystified, pretty much my normal state of mind. Hmmm... What now? "Hey Dave, why don't you give John Stebner a call, he had the engine out of his car not to long ago, maybe he has an idea. So long Dave, Good Luck."

Fast forward to Mid June... John Stebner and I get together to go see a man about the Club logo that John designed to find out about shirts & badges, etc. (more details later) John mentions that he had a call from Dave Kruth. I soon learned that John, armed with his own clutch alignment tool, decided to go take a first hand look at the problem. As it turns out John discovered that the clutch disc Dave had purchased from J.C. Whitney would fit neither the alignment tool nor the input shaft. Ah Ha! so that's the problem. The next day, John Stebner and I both found ourselves at Dave's, who by this time had gotten hold of the correct clutch disc. What we have now is a Moe and Larry to the rescue scenario. The mounting of the new clutch disc and pressure plate to the flywheel went off without a hitch right up until one of the pressure plate securing bolts broke off in the flywheel while being torqued to the specified 25 to 30 ft/lbs. The busted bolt was eventually coaxed out of the flywheel, other problems to numerous to mention were encountered but in the end were resolved. By June 19, Dave and his MG were back on the road. Mission accomplished. So, what does it all mean? What's the point. I'm not sure I know. I do know that working on your MG can be extremely frustrating, almost heart breaking at times, but it can also be very rewarding, and provide a very real feeling of accomplishment. Kind of like finally solving Rubic's Cube. The next time your MG misbehaves, why not have a go at fixing it yourself. If you hit a dead end, call a club member. At the very least they'll make some encouraging noises. If all else fails there's always Quality Coaches. One thing's for certain, you'll learn more about your MG.

NEXT EVENT

WHEN: Sunday, July 17th

WHAT: Scenic Drive to St. Cloud/Tech Session
Hosted by Doug and Mary Madson

PLACE: We will meet at J.P. Mulligan's Restaurant, N.W. corner of Hwy 55 & I 494

TIME: 10:00AM - Tour will depart promptly at 10:30AM

The journey will take us to the home of Doug & Mary Madson. Upon arrival, the host couple will provide potato salad and other condiments for a picnic style B.B.Q.. Bring you own meat for grilling, sandwiches or whatever. Soft drinks will be provided. After lunch we will conduct a tech session on front suspension rebuilding.

If you are a hands on kind of MG enthausist I'm sure you will enjoy this event. Doug is one of your more avid MG types with a talent for creating the absolute best restorations I have ever laid eyes on. If you have never seen Doug's MGA you're really missing something. If you've never seen Doug's powder blue Bug Eye Sprite, to bad! He sold it. A grevius sin for which he should not be forgiven. As a measure of atonement, Doug has undertaken the restoration of a anniversary edition 67' MGB GT which will be on hand for your inspection. If you can make this event, please R.S.V.P. by calling John or Cindy at 423-5475 on or before July 13th (leave message if no one is home).

Do you know who owned the first MG ever imported into this country? How about the last MG ever imported? Give up? Well neither did I, but thanks to Club member Al Amundson who provided our group with a nicely framed composit picture, this interesting bit of trivia can be answered. The first MG, a 1929 M Type was brought into this country by Edsil Ford. The last MG imported, a 1980 limited edition MGB was presented to Henry Ford II.

If you have pictures or MG memorabilia that you would like to contribute to the Minnesota MG Group, please bring it to one of the club events or send it to Alan & Sharon Kelsey, P.O. Box 26, Star Prairie, WI 54026.

See you at Mulligan's.

John

T-shirts \$10.00 ea.
(light blue or grey)

Polo Shirts \$15.00 ea.
For more information call John Stebner at
(612) 455-0229 or mail check payable to John Stebner
344 13th Avenue North
So. St. Paul, MN 55075

BE SURE TO INCLUDE QUANTITY, SIZE AND COLOR

BUSINESS NOTES BY JOHN STEBNER

Our practice of trying to conduct occasional business meetings at club events will end at the picnic in Stillwater on August 13. At that time we will conduct a short meeting to bring you up to date on a few things. In the future, club events will be strictly social and club business meetings will be strictly business. These meetings will not be social events. If you wish to be an active, contributing member of the Minnesota MG Group, plan to attend. Complaints? Come to the business meetings. Ideas? Come to the business meetings. We need you. Meetings will be held every month throughout the year, every third Friday from 7:00PM to 9:00PM. The first meeting will be at John Stebner's home on August 19, 1988. Call 455-0229 for directions if you plan to attend. If you are unable to attend, and have something you want discussed, call John Stebner and leave the information with him.

POSTSCRIPT:

GOOD NEWS! Ted Beale just called and informed me that he has already found a replacement MGB, and will be attending the Stillwater event.

Be sure not to miss John Stebner's announcement for the August 13, "Assult on Stillwater".

See you there!

John

MINNESOTA MG GROUP NEWSLETTER

For the second time this year, we must report the death of another of our members. On June 24th Greg Kurtz died due to complications after elective surgery. For those of us who knew Greg this tragic news created a sense of numb disbelief followed by the realization that we have suffered a great loss. Greg was 37, the president of a computer software firm, treasurer for the National Austin Healey Club, and perhaps the most avid MG enthusiast I have ever met. In one of last fall's newsletters I told of how Greg owned an extremely rare MGA MKII delux and poked fun at his endless MG addiction. The absolute fascination that Greg had with those odd little cars from Abingdon was really remarkable. All who knew Greg, and all of us in the Minnesota MG Group are poorer this day. To Greg's wife Meg, and to Greg's entire family, we express our sincerest condolences. I'm sure we can only imagine their sorrow.

The Hare & Hound Rally sponsored by the Minnesota MG T-Register was a qualified huge success. Mother nature saw fit to give us a break from the ridiculous heat we've been suffering this summer; the only weather related complaints that day were confined to sunburns. Attendance was outstanding and we will no doubt be doing this again next year. The organization for this event was handled by Bill Hite Jr. of the T-Register and by our own Dave Braun. How did they do? In a word, **OUTSTANDING!** Talk about taking some initiative. These boys each spent in excess of 15 hours of their own time just mapping out the route and painting those elusive green and orange dots. Not only that, Mr. Braun took care of every other detail, from writing the announcement for the newsletter to picking up the refreshments, to coercing his parents into hosting the party at their beautiful home on Weaver Lake. Imagine 20 or so leaky old MG's sitting on your front lawn. From all of us, Thanks Dave! Well Done! Thanks too to the MG T-Register for letting us join in the fun.

All in all it was a near perfect day with one major exception. We all know that the drought of '88 is taking its toll on the farmers, but it seems it has also taken its toll on one of our member's cars as well. During this Hare & Hound Rally, Ted Beale, attending his first Minnesota MG Group event, was doing very well until at one point, near the end of the route, he attempted a u-turn. During this maneuver his beautiful red 78 MGB got off the side of the road just a little and he found himself on a bit of an incline covered by some very slippery grass. I'm not real clear on the rest of the details, but as I understand it, Ted was able to move the car some but not in the right direction. The more he tried to get back on the road the further he slid into the ditch. About this time, some other club members happened along and stopped and tried to help push Ted out. Soon they noticed that the grass under the car had started on fire. (Apparently due to spontaneous combustion from the extreme heat of the catalytic converter) A couple of times they thought they had this grass fire stamped out only to discover that it was still smoldering and would rekindle itself. Before they knew it, the car had caught fire. Shortly thereafter Ted's MG was completely ablaze. By the time I got there the fire was out. What was left was hardly recognizable as an MGB. The heat of the fire had completely stripped the paint, warped body panels, and exploded the rear tires. The car was a total loss. Thankfully, no one suffered any injuries whatsoever. The mood of the day took a dramatic change. What could anybody say that might lift Ted's spirits? We were all stunned speechless. The next day Ted called to ask if I knew anyone who might want to buy a burnt out body shell. I gave him a couple of names and then asked how he was doing. He said it really didn't hit him until that morning. I asked if anyone there during the fiasco had a fire extinguisher. He said no, but the firemen said an extinguisher would have had no effect on the grass fire. (Nonetheless members, a fire extinguisher in an MG is not a option. It's a necessity!) All things considered, Ted is handling the whole ordeal remarkably well. Much better than I would I'm sure. He is already looking for another "B". If you know of a nice clean B roadster for sale, give Ted a call at 633-8929. It could have happened to any of us.

By the way, the winners of the Hare & Hound Rally for the Minnesota MG Group were Ron Bertsch, pilot and Mike Funk, navigator. CONGRATULATIONS! This is ironic as Ron wasn't going to run because he didn't have a navigator and Mike wasn't going to run because he didn't have a car. So they team up & win. Sounds like a couple of sandbaggers doesn't it?

The July 17th trip to Doug and Mary Madson's in St. Cloud turned out to be a dandy good time. A few clouds, and almost reasonable temperatures made the trip up very pleasant indeed. Upon arriving at our destination, we soon discovered that Mary Madson redefined the meaning of the term gracious hostess. She was absolutely super and really did much too much. What was supposed to be just potato salad turned out to be potato salad, buns, hors d'oeuvres, baked beans, desert, coffee, pop and more, not to mention a lovely presentation of all of the above. Thanks Mary, we all enjoyed it throughly. After feasting in the Madson's garden like setting of a backyard it was time for the tech program. This was supposed to be a front end rebuild demonstration. However, our intended victim, Dave Kruth's car, was suffering mysterious carburetor ailments and was unable to make the trip. So, we played it by ear. What followed turned out to be an extremely informative, highly enjoyable couple of hours. It would be a gross understatement to say that Doug Madson knows something about the restoration of MG's. A close inspection of Doug's MGA speaks volumes about his credentials. In his well equipped backyard garage/workshop, Doug demonstrated his homemade glass bead blaster. From there the topic naturally turned to paint. Doug proved to be a regular encyclopedia and easily answered all questions on the topic. When asked how he achieved such an incredible glossy finish on his car, Doug explained that the real secret is color sanding. Upon hearing this Roger Karnopp immediately volunteered a recently repainted fender for a demonstration. First 800 grit, then 1500 grit, polishing compound, then carnuba wax, a good dose of patience and a steady hand and Roger's fender was transformed into a smooth shiny orange mirror, right before our very eyes. Thanks again, Doug & Mary for a wonderful day.

In a couple of newsletters this year we included a little reminder that said that if you have not paid your dues you would receive no more newsletters. Well, we've reconsidered. We reasoned that if we don't send newsletters to non-member MG owners how will our club grow? We therefore, have decided to send the newsletter to anyone who has expressed an interest whether they have paid or not. If find it interesting that we have faithful dues paying members as far north as Walker, and as far west as Moorehead who are prevented by sheer distance from attending events, and seemingly interested people right here in the Twin Cities who have never attended a single meeting. At present, the treasury is reasonably sound having approximately 50 dues paying members. Thus, unless we are overruled by the membership the dues payers will subsidise printing and mailing costs for the deadbeats. We understand that this rag we call the newsletter is certainly not worth \$20.00 per year but the fun and knowledge that can be gained by attending an event or two most definitely is. In the event that you would like to be dropped from the mailing list we would appreciate your letting us know, but we doubt that you will as even that act would require some effort.

Thanks to the artistic efforts of Jon Carlson, and the procurement efforts of John Stebner, we now have T-shirts with our new Minnesota MG Group logo available for sale. If you prefer a polo shirt with logo these can also be purchased by placing an order.

MINNESOTA



CARS

THE BRITISH ARE COMING!!

BE THERE, OR BE ~~SQUARE~~!!

OCTAGONAL!!

GROUP

1st Annual Assault On

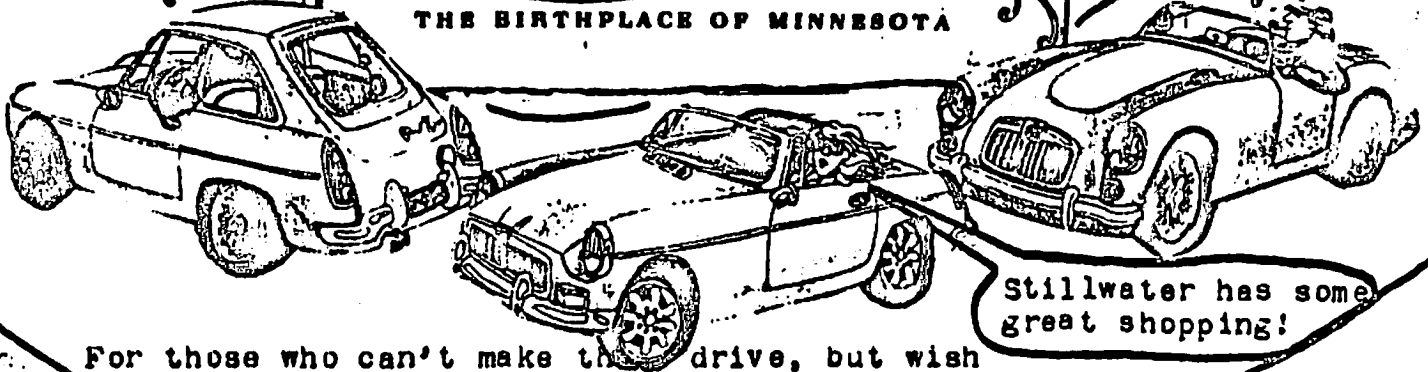
Stillwater.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF MINNESOTA

What color are the dots this time?

No alcoholic beverages in Pioneer Park, please.

Stillwater has some great shopping!



For those who can't make the drive, but wish to attend the picnic, from Stillwater's Main St. turn up any hill to No. 2nd St. Pioneer Park is on the No. end.

Sat. Aug. 13

White Bear Beach
Hwy 61 to White Bear Lake
East on Hwy 96 1/2 mile

We leave for Stillwater
at 10:30 a.m.

Bring your own picnic lunch.
Soft drinks provided.

Short 20 min. drive to Stillwater

Brief club business

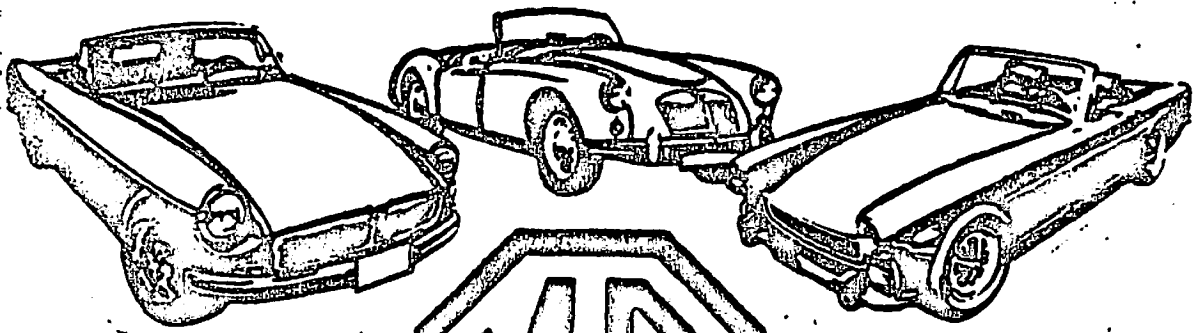
Picnic with scenic view of St. Croix

Drawing for prizes

Trivia Contest (prizes awarded)

Shopping on Main Street

It's been a year full of great events for members of the MMGJ. If you haven't been fortunate enough to attend them all, you've read about them in the monthly newsletter, so wonderfully chronicled by John Eaton. Soon it will be August. It will be HOT. No matter how much you love your MG, let's face it, long drives this time of year can be miserable. Our "Assault on Stillwater" offers a short, leisurely drive (after you get to White Bear Lake Beach) and some alternatives to the usual picnics. It's kind of a "breather" so we can all catch our second wind for the upcoming fall events, but still gives us the opportunity to see each other. Hope you'll be there. John & Anne Stebner 455-0229



MGA

MGB



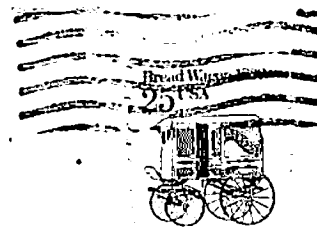
MGC

JULY NEWSLETTER

MIDGET



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