

# Minnesota MG Group

## March Newsletter

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### ALL CAR CLUB DINNER



Wednesday, March 14

TIME: 6:30 pm.

LOCATION: Robert Lee Restaurant. 2350 Palmer Dr. in New Brighton, MN. This is one block north of the I-694 and Silver Lake Rd. intersection.

This will be an all European Car Club gathering with participants from many local car clubs. The event was last held in 1988 and was a great success. Turn out is usually large, vendors are present with their products and videos of club or racing events are shown.



### KICK OFF BRUNCH Sunday, March 25

The Kick Off Brunch is open to anyone, club member or not who is interested in MGs. Our purpose is to have a get together to begin our 1990 event schedule. If you are not presently a member of the MMGG, you are invited to attend so that you can learn all about our group.

TIME: 11:00 am.

LOCATION: Toby's On The Lake. I-94 and Century Ave. on Tanners Lake in St. Paul. 612-739-1600.

Toby's features an "Olde English" atmosphere and has a private dining area that has been reserved for club use.

COST: Ordering will be from Toby's menu. Prices range \$4 to \$10.

RESERVATIONS: Not required.

### RAMBLING ON by John Eaton

"There it is again. Did you hear that?"

"Hear what?"

"Must be my imagination, I don't hear it now."

Unfortunately, what I thought I was hearing had nothing to do with my imagination. That heavy ticking/light knocking was actually the sound of impending doom. When we exited the freeway and accelerated after the stop, the occasional tick had become a regular knock, accompanied by a slight loss of oil pressure.

"What's that noise?" asked Cindy.

"I don't know but I'm pretty sure it's not the fuel pump."

Ever so slowly we limped back to the house and parked the ungrateful heap. It was obvious to me that the hundreds of hours of work, skinned knuckles and dirty finger nails, not to mention the countless hundreds of dollars meant nothing to it. How dare it re-pay my devotion with such a kick in the teeth!

After several days of ignoring it and sending it to bed without supper, my outrage at the indignity finally subsided to the point where I could almost begin to think rationally about its behavior. The obvious starting point was the Haynes manual, more specifically, engine section, troubleshooting guide.

OK, let's see...

Rumble, big drop in oil pressure, don't think so. Regular knocking, slight loss in oil pressure, yeah, that sounds like it.

Remedy: Replace big end bearings, ie: connecting rod bearings.

Pull the oil pan, oops, I mean sump. Not easy with motor in car but can be done with swivel

## RAMBLING ON

socket and skinned knuckles. Knock back locking tap on #1 big end, undo nuts and pull cap. Repeat operation on #2, 3 and 4. Hmmmm... Verdict? Inconclusive. Slight scratch on #1 crank journal, 2 through 4 look fine. Even more curious, the bearing shells look like they've seen an oil/water mix at some time in their life but no shell appears worn through, ie: no copper showing.

I'm stumped and call John Twist.

"Have you ever heard of a rod knock where no bearing shell is worn through to the copper?"

"Nope. I sure haven't."

Mr. Twist suggests the possibility of a cracked crank shaft. Oh woe is me. Say it ain't so!

I then enlist the aid of some of the brightest minds in the MG automotive kingdom: John Stebner, Roger Karnopp, Jeff Ingebrigtsen, Doug Madson and Verl Wilkins. These people have each rebuilt MG engines, sometimes successfully.

John Stebner and I remove the center main cap and inspect some very loose fitting thrust washers. John discovers that one of the thrust washers has a nasty looking gouge. Hmmmm... What would cause that? What to do? Slap in some new thrust washers and big end bearings and see what happens or undertake a complete rebuild? When I decide, I'll let you know.

One final thought:

We're all familiar with the somewhat questionable reputation of Lucas Electrics. You know, "Joseph Lucas, the Father of Darkness", wimpy electrons, etc. Maybe this less than sterling rap isn't all Lucas' fault. After all, Lucas purchases their wiring harnesses from the largest wiring loom manufacturer in England, Autospark, Ltd. No fooling.

## EARLY SPRING CLEANING by Scott Fisher

Well, it's been just over a year since I bought the MGB, and though I've done a fair bit of maintenance on it, I hadn't tuned it up since I picked it up from the shop where I bought it.

(Well, I did twiddle the carbs a bit after the smog shop wrecked the balance so that they could charge me the additional \$35 for trying to get it to pass, but that's another story.)

It had been running a little rough lately, with an idle that I didn't care for, so I plunked down for the genuine Lucas points and condenser and a set of four Bosch Platinum plugs, as well as a can each of engine cleaner and carburetor spray.

The good news started when I yanked the old plugs. They looked just exactly like the pictures in the Haynes manual that is captioned, "This is what you want your plugs to look like because it means your engine is running just dandy." (Well, maybe it doesn't quite say that.) All four looked good, a light brownish-grey with a fair bit of carbon around the outside ring of the rear two plugs that hinted at too much richness. I finished the four plugs, replaced the points and condenser, and turned to the carbs.

Sure enough, the rear carb was several flats too rich (left over from the smog tuning?) I did the usual things -- put the Unisyn on and got the flow rates just right, then pushed up on the lifting pin and listened to the idle speed. When everything was well in balance, and I got the idle speed down from 1500 back to about 1000 (again, only the rear carb needed adjustment for this), the car idled smoothly and was happy to rev when I'd pull on the throttle connection.

Before I put the air cleaners back on, I took the dashpots off one at a time and cleaned them with a paper towel. (I'm sure most of us know this, but never use any abrasives on the inside of the dashpots. Each instrument is a precision fit, no really and stop laughing now, and if you make the fitting too loose your car will never run right again.) There was a tremendous amount of crust on the top of the throttle body, under where the piston drops inside the dashpot; I cleaned the carbs inside and out, clucked over the huge air-passage obstruction that my spring-loaded throttle buttons cause (now where did I put those '67 throttle plates...?), and put them all back together with new dashpot oil.

I tried the sewing machine oil, put the air cleaners back on the car, and went for a test drive. Yee-HA! What a difference a little tuning makes! We have throttle response, we have low-end torque, we have top-end power,

## EARLY SPRING CLEANING

we have a Sports Car again! I picked the bugs out of my teeth and parked the car in front of the house (I had to rotate the tires on the GTI before the next autocross, and the garage is the only flat space). When I finished the tires, I asked Kim if she'd like to put the MG in the garage. For some reason, she has never driven this MG -- the responsibilities of parenthood, the necessity of fitting a third passenger with the current child-seat laws (sure, they're a good thing, but riding in the XK-120 didn't kill me -- a little brain damage, maybe, but...), whatever.

She found the seat adjuster, fired it up, and went vrooming down the street. Hey, the car sounds pretty good from the outside! From time to time I could hear its exhaust note wafting over the houses and trees in our quiet neighborhood... "not a raspy, rough exhaust note, full of the byproducts of poor combustion and bad scavenging, nor yet the lumpy, raucous exhaust note of a hot-rodged teenager's car: it was an MG exhaust note, and that means Sports Car" (with apologies to Professor Tolkien and his description of a hobbit-hole).

Then she rounded the last turn and I could see her heading for home, the sunlight glinting on chrome strips set amid a green curve of fender and flank; the gentle but insistent whine of gears and the throaty purr of the exhaust carried up the street as she snicked the gearbox up to third, then down to second and into the driveway.

"Why have I never driven this car before?" she asked.

"It's a little better than my last B, isn't it?"

"Torrey and I can get around just FINE in this car," she said, and pulled it up into the garage.

Now I might have to get another one...

## NEW MEMBERS

Carol and Kevin Badgett-Mahoney  
Faribault, MN

Gregory Snelling  
Bloomington, MN

## DEAD OF WINTER BOWLING PARTY

In spite of a last minute schedule change courtesy of SouthTown Bowl, the Dead of Winter Bowling Party was a reality. Our group of gutter ballers did not turn in very exciting scores (we did not get to use the kiddie bumpers to keep the balls out of the gutter) but we did have fun. After the bowling, we repaired to the nearby Applebees for refreshments to finish up the evening.

We may even have to do this again next year!

## ON THE MARKET

FOR SALE: 1959 MGA. 1600 engine, wire wheels, partially restored in early 70s, no rust, excellent condition. \$7250. Kevin Disse, Detroit Lakes, MN. 218-847-2476. ma

WANTED: Midget or Sprite. Body or running car. Will consider anything, but am not interested in spendy concurs-quality Bugeyes. Also, have extensive inventory of parts to sell or trade, ranging from near-junk to very nice. Phil Ethier, 612-224-3105 or 298-5324. ma

FOR SALE: 1966 Mustang GT Coupe 289. Repainted original Nightmist Blue 2 years ago, new original style interior. Rust free Southern California car, never hit or abused. Original service records. This Mustang will never be worth anything less than what I'm selling it for! \$5000. It has never seen a snowflake! Show quality. Car is near Denver. Will consider Twin Cities delivery. Owner is going Vintage Racing with Triumph Spitfire and needs the garage space. Call Kirk (303) 350-4291 or (303) 351-8654 or call Phil Ethier in Saint Paul at 612-224-3105 or 298-5324. ma

FOR SALE OR TRADE: One pair of black MGA seats, complete with rails. Also MGB wiring harness and gauges. 1974 four synchro gearbox in good condition. Verl Wilkins. fm

WANTED: One steel wheel rear axle complete with ring and pinion gears. This must be a late unit with anti-roll brackets. Also need one overdrive unit for MGC. Verl Wilkins, 612-935-1608. fm

FOR SALE: A variety of hard tops for MG roadsters, mostly in good condition. Mark Brandow, Quality Coaches. fm

## Minnesota MG Group Directory

Events Coordinator: Open.  
Treasury: Al and Sharon Keisey. 484-2262  
Newsletter Editor: Mike Funck 881-3223  
Newsletter Publication: Jon Carlson 423-1761  
Photo Album: Ken And Diane Merrill  
Member Data Base: Al Bramer 432-8058  
Contributing Editors: John Eaton, Scott Fisher,  
Phil Ethier.

### Newsletter Contributions and Ads

Contact: Mike Funck  
9517 Portland Ave. S.  
Bloomington, MN 55420  
612-881-3223

Personal ads for cars, parts for sale, cars wanted, etc. are free to dues paying members. Ad fee is \$10 to non-members. Ads will run two months. Please submit a \$10 check plus your copy by mail.

For commercial ads, please call or write.

### Change of Address

Contact: Al Bramer  
626 Portland Mews  
Burnsville, MN 55337  
612-432-8058

### Membership Application/Renewal

Annual dues are \$20 per member/family. Includes subscription to the MMGG Newsletter.

Remit \$20 check payable to:  
Alan Kelsey - MMGG  
3150 W. Owasso Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55113  
612-484-2262

### Newsletter Subscription and Associate Membership

Minnesota MG Group Newsletter subscription is \$6 per year. This includes Associate Member status in the MMGG. Remit \$6 to Alan Kelsey - MMGG



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ALL CAR CLUB DINNER: Wednesday, March 14.

MMGG KICK OFF BRUNCH. Sunday, March 25.

MMGG TECH SESSION. Sunday, April 29.

MMGG MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DUE DATE: May 1, 1990.

ALL BRITISH CAR PICNIC. Saturday, May 19. (tentative date).

MMGG CAR WASH AND WAX. Saturday, June 16.

HERITAGE DAYS CAR SHOW: Sunday, June 17, 8 am - 4 pm. Rice County Fairground, Faribault, MN. There will be a MG class. Ed Wassell, 507-334-4110. Car Show registration is \$3 in advance, \$5 at the show.

AMGBA NATIONAL CONVENTION. Atlanta, GA. June 21 - 24.

MMGG DRIVE TO ST. CLOUD. Sunday, July 15.

FINAL DATE FOR MMGG MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: August 1, 1990.

MMGG AUTOCROSS. Date to be determined.

UNIVERSITY MOTORS SUMMER PARTY. AUG. 20 - 28.

WINGS AND WHEELS, Saturday, Sept. 8.

MMGG INDIAN SUMMER RENDEZVOUS. Oct. 13.

MMGG HOLIDAY PARTY. January 1991 date to be determined.

**You're Invited To:**

# EUROPEAN CAR CLUBS OF MINNESOTA SPRING GET TOGETHER



## CLUBS

Triumph  
Sunbeam  
Aston Martin  
Morgan  
MG-T  
Austin Healey  
Austin ;Minis  
Lotus  
Jaguar  
M.G.  
DeLorian  
Vintage Sportscar  
Alfa Romeo  
Ferrari  
Maserati

**Date:** Wednesday, March 14, 1990

**Time:** 6:30 -- Registration & Appetizers

7:00 -- Buffet Dinner

**Cost:** \$10.00 per person, cash bar

**Place:** Robert Lee Restaurant

**RSVP:** Call David Hoel, (612) 636-3589

Limited to first 80 people

### Appetizers

Wontons  
Rib  
Egg Rolls  
Chicken Wings

### Buffet Dinner

Sweet & Sour Chicken  
Beef & Pea Pods  
Fried Rice

### Vendors Representing:

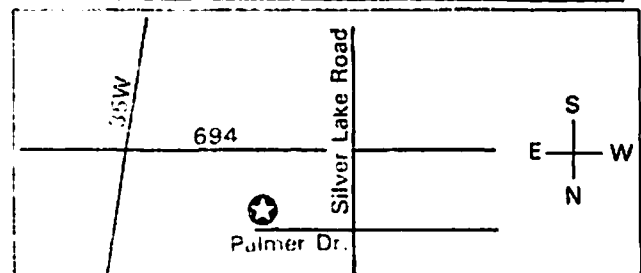
- Restoration
- Paint & Body Work
- Upholstry & Tops
- Tires

### Also:

- Professional Car Photography
- Movies of Racing & Car Shows ★big screen TV★
- Car Club Photo Albums
- Door Prizes

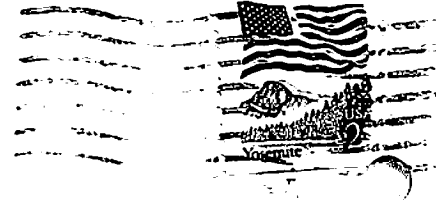
WE WANT TO MAKE PLANS FOR A RALLY THIS SUMMER

Robert Lee Restaurant  
235J Palmer Dr., New Brighton



**BRING A FRIEND!**

Minnesota MG Group  
Michael Funck  
9517 Portland Ave. S.  
Bloomington, MN 55420



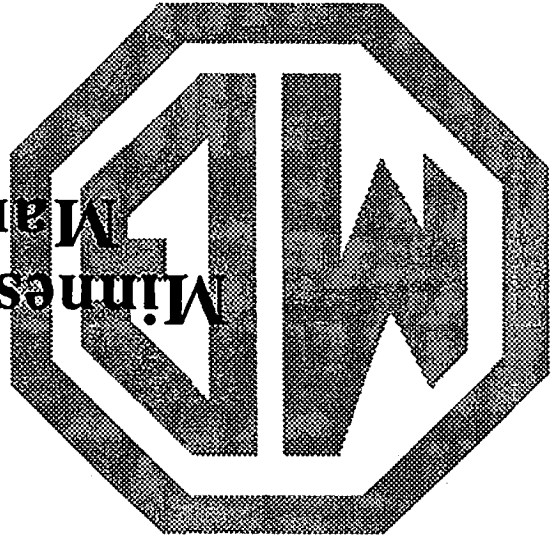
**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

David Braun  
7106 Lower 170th St.  
Rosemount, MN 55066

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