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THE ROARS

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WHAT A BREAKFAST!!



It was another great gathering for the Houston MG Car Club, held at Another Time Soda Fountain & Café in Rosenberg. Keith Ryder has connections with the owners and persuaded them to open for breakfast for the club on Saturday, Sept. 8. The café is normally open for lunch and early dinner, but we were served scrambled eggs, bacon, and biscuits with gravy buffet style with fresh orange juice and coffee at the table.

A total of twenty-four mem-

bers enjoyed the food, camaraderie, MG talk, and the trains across the street, while only two couples tried the quick drive quiz around the café. With Keith's and Ron Redding's MGAs, those two couples, the Dawsons and the Ulrichs, had the only other MGs present.



Events are planned as driving opportunities for the marque, but the time to visit with members that you don't see at the meetings makes the gatherings worth the drive even in the other car.



Ross and Dovie Werlla stopped by to visit, and Dotty Lantz came with her husband, Don, who is the new regalia person. Vernon and Barbara Jenkins and Bill Foote drove all the way from New Caney and Cleveland to chat, and Steve Cochran and Ken Dyess took time from their busy schedule to enjoy breakfast. Ken is a new member and his car is currently at 5R Restorations for some restoration.

The breakfast was enjoyable again, but maybe someone can put together a rally or tour that would put us at this place during the lunch hour or in the afternoon for ice cream sodas. And if you haven't been antique shopping or seen the railroad museum across the street, you have missed another treat or two.

Waiting for another time.....



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2007 HMGCC Officers

Jack Swepston, President,
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Events: Robert Black
713-974-7919
Membership: Keith Ryder
281-238-8701
Regalia: Don Lantz
281-341-7033

The Houston MG Car Club is an open marque club dedicated to the promotion and enjoyment of motor sports in all aspects.

Meetings are currently held at 7 pm on the first Wednesday of each month at Christie's Seafood Restaurant, 6029 Westheimer, Houston.

Membership dues are still \$30 per year. Applications can be obtained from our website and mailed to the club address or to the membership chair. Renewals, change of address and other membership-related correspondence should be sent to:



Betty Courtin, Editor
4418 Kingfisher Drive
Houston, TX 77035
713-726-1080
abcourtin@aol.com

**Keith Ryder,
27334 Karaugh Dr. South,
Richmond, TX 77469**

The ROARS is published monthly and can be accessed before the next month's meeting via club website to all paid members.

Articles, advertisements, and suggestions can be sent to the editor by the end of the third week of the month.

Club Affiliations

MG Car Club, Ltd., Abingdon, UK
North American MGB Register, Akin, IL
New England MG "T" Register, Oneonta, NY
North American MGA Register, Portland, OR
American MGB Association, Chicago, IL
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Advertising Rates

Business ads should be submitted in an electronic format.

Prices for the ROARS on the website are
Business card \$50/year, 1/4 page \$70/year

Car Show brochure.
Business card \$25, 1/4 page \$35, 1/2 page \$70
Full page \$100

Classified Ads Members may place For Sale ads in the ROARS for free. Nonmembers may place a For Sale ad for three months for \$10.

All ads are payable to **HMGCC, Inc.** and sent to
abcourtin@aol.com. (Please note new email address!!)

Keeping It In the *Fast Lane*

by Ron Redding, 5R Restorations



I have been asked recently to explain some of the differences in modern day paint. Of course the first consideration should be color. Is the color you need available in the paint you want to use? Many times you may need to have the paint custom mixed to get a specific color, especially if you are trying to keep an original color on a 50 year old vehicle. This color match can be done if an existing panel is available that shows enough of the color.

Next we need to consider the type of paint to use. There are many paint manufacturers making automotive paint and most will carry the types of paint we will be talking about. I would encourage you to stick with name brand paint in order to get

a quality finish on your car. Many of our cars were originally painted with lacquer paint. This paint was inexpensive, easy to apply, and looked great. Over the years there have been numerous improvements in paint and of course lacquer paint is no longer available. Single stage paint systems don't require an additional covering to make the paint shine. This would be similar to what was originally used on our cars in that it was applied and there wasn't anything additional needed to make it shine. The more recent innovation in paint would be the base coat / clear coat system. This was originally developed to make matching colors easier while doing repairs. With this system the base coat is applied to supply the color to the car. Then after the

base has dried a clear coat is applied and this supplies the shine to the paint.

All these paints are produced in various qualities. Some are inexpensive and some are very expensive. Some paints can approach \$1000 per gallon or more. As a general rule you really do get what you pay for. If you are having your car painted and you try to use a cheaper paint you will probably have to buy more of the paint in order to cover and you will have to pay for the additional labor to apply it.

This short explanation is really only scratching the surface but should you have any questions please call me at 281-346-2417 or e-mail ron@5RRestorations.com.

PRESIDENT'S FUEL LINE By Jack Swepston, or Betty Courtin

Jack is leaving on Tuesday, the 2nd, for a two-week cruise with his family. He reported that he had tons of things that needed to be done before he left, including the Fuel Line. As of press time he had not sent anything. I wonder how many other things did not get done before his departure.

He is expected to be back for the Car Show on October 20, but someone else, presumably Ken

Kelley, our vice president, will be handling the meeting Wednesday night. Come to Christie's Wednesday night and enjoy dinner and visiting with others who know MGs.

If you're interested in serving on the nominating committee or the Christmas party, let Ken or Greg Ulrich know your interest.

If you haven't registered for the

Car Show, you can still do so. However, you will not be able to order a T-shirt, and it will cost you \$25 for each vehicle.

See you, and Jack, at the Houston All-British Motor Vehicle Expo on Saturday, October 20.

Jack Swepston
Betty Courtin



NOVEMBER SPEAKER

Member Gary Watson will provide an informative program at the November 7 meeting. He will show a sneak preview of Inside the Octagon II and will talk about this important MG historical film project and how members can assist.

Please note the Inside the Octagon ad on page 6.

MG PARTS GARAGE SALE

I need to clean out my garage (warehouse) of MG parts, bits and pieces kept over the last 30 years. Includes parts for TD's, MGA's, MGB/C's, and a few Mustang parts. Saturday, October 13th at 5610 Trendale,
8:00am til 12 noon. I'm trying to get a list together so email me at jalrio@yahoo.com. My price or yours, they need to go.

Joe Lopez



This is one of many cartoons by Dave Renner. I found this one in the August 1992 issue of the Roars, when Dave was the editor and Gary Watson was president.

Dave has recently rejoined the club after being away from the club and MGs for several years. He has been at the meetings. Stop and introduce yourself.

I took the liberty of photographing from the print since my scanner is out of order. That's why it's so gray.

A MIDGET STORY FROM THE AUGUST 1992 ROARS

It was another special Midget known as EX127 that pushed up the 750 cc international speed record up to 120 mph in 1932. This car was known as the Magic Midget.

The next series of Midgets were the J-types, the most famous of which was the J-4, built specifically for racing and still only 750 cc but very fast.

“Now the J-4 was the brave man’s car,” said John Thornley, “it was quicker than it ought to have been for its size.”

The J-types were replaced with the P-type Midgets and their racing counterparts the Q-types, still only 750 cc in 1934.

“That was, I thought, a very good car,” said ‘Wilkie’ Wilkinson as he recalled the Q-type. “It would do about 120 mph at Brooklands lapping the circuit... but the suspension was very hard...so it really gave you a bit of a pounding about the body!”

It was the R-type Midget that would introduce MGs to the revolutionary idea of independent suspension. But a corporate take-over ended the racing department and the design was not developed.

Under the new corporate management, the Midget grew in size and became the T-types build from 1936 to 1939 as the MGTA and MGTB, and after the war as the MGTC, MGTD, and MGTF.

With the development of the MGA, the Midget line ceased to exist for a number of years until John

Thornley was given a directive from his employers.

“I was under pressure for long enough to produce what the management called the buzz-box,” said Thornley. “What they meant by that was the latter day successor to the original MG M-type. Cheap as possible transportation for two.”

Thornley and his team attempted to design a car to the specifications required that could be sold at an acceptable price. Repeatedly they failed. One day he and Chief Engineer Syd Enever were called to the corporate offices to look at a car that Donald Healey had designed that met the specifications at a very cheap price.

“It was really a con in point of fact in that it was completely unsuitable for production by any reputable organization,” said Thornley. “And quite clearly they had priced the components way below what we would have to pay for it—not because we were in a worse buying position—just because they were kidding themselves!”

On this basis, the Frogeyed Sprite was approved by the British Motor Corporation and, in 1958, given to the MG factory at Abingdon to build where, according to John Thornley, “...we reworked it and turned it into a productable job.” In doing so, the price of the vehicle shot up to the point that Thornley and Enever had estimated before.

But the Frogeye had a single piece bonnet that was expensive to replace in an accident and it had no boot for storage. It was decided to

redesign the Sprite with a conventional front end and a new rear end with a boot. It was also decided to make an MG version of it at the same time.

“And they just took my body lines off the MGB—tail lamps and all,” said Don Hayter, MGB designer, “grafted them on in a smaller scale—but grafted them onto the Midget.”

“My intention was that we should make the Healey as the barest minimum vehicle,” explained John Thornley, “whereas the Midget would be a plush affair with everything on.” But the Austin distributors rebelled against that idea and the Sprite and Midget were produced as almost identical cars.

The Sprite and Midget co-existed for many years starting in 1961, both being built by MG men at Abingdon, until the Sprite was discontinued in 1971.

In 1974, the Midget was given the engine from the Triumph Spitfire in an attempt to meet US emissions standards a little more easily. The last Midget was built in November of 1979.

It has been a while since I have seen the first Inside the Octagon, but I’m thinking that this story is part of that film, written and produced by Gary Watson. Be sure to come to the November meeting to learn about the second Inside the Octagon. Betty Courtin





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HMGCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2007

October 3, Wednesday, 7 PM, Business meeting at Christie's Restaurant, 6029 Westheimer.

October 20, Saturday, 8-4, Traders Village, **HOUSTON ALL-BRITISH MOTOR VEHICLE EXPO**
See previous two issues for registration and information. Call Ron Redding at 281-346-2417.

November 7, Wednesday, 7 PM, LAST BUSINESS Meeting at Christie's Restaurant, 6029 Westheimer.

Nov. 9-11, CVAR racing at Texas World Speedway at Bryan/College Station. Contact Ed Rosenquist at kedtexas2@msn.com.

Nov. 10, Saturday, Daughters of the British Empire Bazaar and Car Show at Fluor Engineering, Hwy 6 & 59.

December 15, Saturday, HMGCC Christmas Party, Christie's Restaurant, 6029 Westheimer.

January 2, 2008, Wednesday, possibly a meeting, place to be announced later.

Call Robert Black, at 713-974-7919
to schedule an out-of-town tour or rally,
a weekend stayover, or an in-town spotlight.
Let's get those engines roarin'!



Living in Santa Fe and not knowing where to look or turn as we begin to consider selling our 1952 MGYB, we thought we would start with MG enthusiasts in the nearby state of Texas. This classic is such a rare find and in such mint condition that we want to display it only in organizations and publications involved with ardent MG fans and owners. Below is a general description of the vehicle:

1952 MGYB Saloon type (Chassis #0549), 1 1/4 litre, 4 cylinder, 4 door exquisite beauty, a joy to look at and drive. Only 35 of these listed in the United States in the "MG Car Club Y Type Registry"; 378 registered worldwide; 1,301 manufactured. This car was registered with the international "MG Car Club" by a previous owner in the UK., Mr. R. Day who lived in Eastbourne, Sussex. At that time it was allocated the Y register number 4405. Vehicle is in excellent condition: smooth road performance with a mere 2,587 miles on the reworked engine, gleaming red/black paint, polished chrome headlamps/grill, leather seats and door pockets, rear window roller blind, burl walnut interior framing, chrome-framed instrument panel. Original Operation Manual included. This totally restored gem placed second in a national MGYB competition in Boston. Current ownership 6 years. Sale price: \$32,000. Vehicle located in Santa Fe, NM.

Stephanie Thomas
David Loendorf