

# Classical Gas

January/February 2012

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# CXKJR/CCMGC 2011 Classical Gas Awards

The CXKJR/CCMGC Classical Gas Awards program was initiated in 2009, with the five categories of awards paralleling the categories used by the Jaguar Clubs of North America. Up to six awards are selected in each category. Selections are made by a committee that includes the Senior Editor and one club member from each of CXKJR and CCMGC. The 2011 committee includes Jaguar President Bev Kolosoff and MG President Jim McLagan. Many more individuals play an important role in Classical Gas. By no means an exhaustive list for other folks to thank: Advertising Manager Doug MacDonald, Al Riches, Distribution and Joe Carroll, Technical Editor. [Note that selections are in date order by issue, not in rank order.]

## 1. PHOTOGRAPHY

JENNIFER ORUM: March/April (Cover photo of the Tilbury 1956 MGA at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club on the Spring Run)

BEV KOLOSOFF: March/April (The Kolosoff 1970 Jaguar XJ6 ready for the Kaffee Klatch season)

MARCIA VANWELY: May/June (Cover photo of the Vanwely 1991 Jaguar XJS in front of the Yaquina Bay Bridge south of Newport, Oregon)

DONNA AUSTIN: July/Aug (Side view mirror photo of roadside tech session on Mike McChesney's 1967 MGB GT on the trip to Reno/MG2011)

DOREEN NEWBY: Sept/Oct (Katie Lawrence's dog Maggie in the Lawrence's 1977 MGB roadster at the Heritage Classic Field Meet.)

TOM DOYLE: Sept/Oct (The 1959 XK150 under restoration, after the Redi Strip treatment)

## 2. EVENT REPORTS

TONY COHEN: May/June "Drive Your MG Day: Kaffee Klatch #2"

PETER TILBURY: May/June "MGA Coupe Re-born (Drive Your MG Day)"

TONY COHEN: July/Aug "Presidents in Pemberton"

RHONDA GALE: July/Aug "MG2011 Human Funkhana"

DOUG HAAKONSEN: July/Aug "E-Type & Midget Anniversaries"

## 3. HERITAGE

BEV KOLOSOFF: Jan/Feb "Our New Jaguar Vice-President"

MIKE MCCHESENEY: Mar/Apr "Most Improved Club Car 2010"

BRIAN COOK: May/June "18 months with an MGB"

ROY DAVY: Jan/Feb, May/June, Nov/Dec "Jags for Rent: Part XI, XII & Epilogue"

BOB & MARIE SHERMAN: Nov/Dec "The White MGB"

## 4. TECHNICAL

DOUG UNIA: Jan/Feb "History of SU Carburetors: Part 4"

JOE CARROLL: Mar/Apr & July/Aug "What's Between You & the Road Pts I and II"

PETER TILBURY: Mar/Apr "What do MG Wire Wheel Knock-Offs, Shoe Laces, GPS's, and Cell Phones Have in Common?"

BIBENDUM: May/June, Sept/Oct & Nov/Dec "The Old Garage Parts 4 - 6"

BRIAN COOK: July/Aug "Windblockers: A Canada Day Afternoon Project"

PETER TILBURY: Sept/Oct "MGA Air Flow: A Practical Test"

## 5. TRAVEL

LEX VANWELY: Mar/Apr "A Grand Prix Legend"

TONY COHEN: July/Aug "RRReno"

PETER TILBURY: July/Aug "The Red Green Solution or A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Car Show"

AL RICHES: July/Aug "Adventures to Reno & Back"

PETER TILBURY: July/Aug "Driving an MG Solo: A Survival Guide"

MIKE MCCHESENEY: "My First Long Distance Trip and International MG Event"



# Cooling the Engine

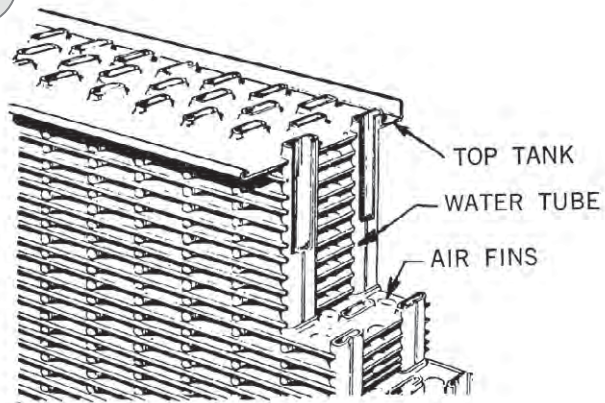
## – PART ONE –

By Joe Carroll

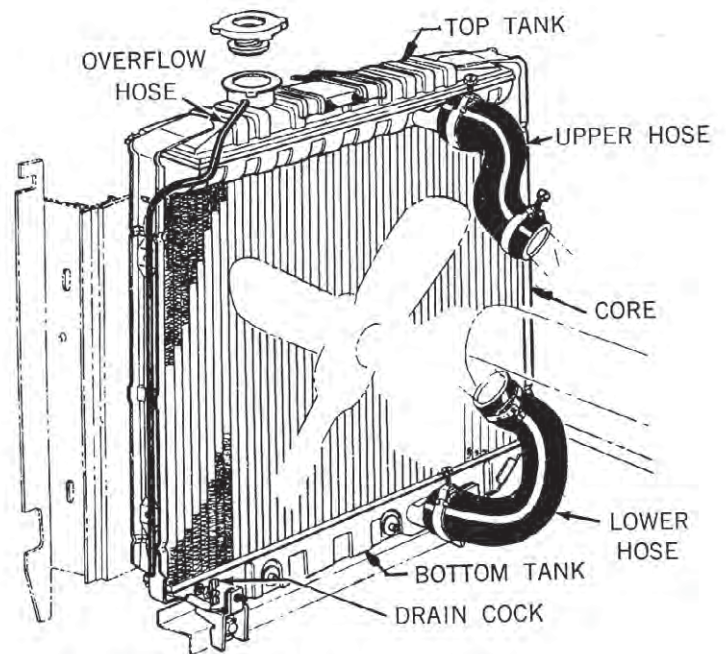
In our older Jaguars and MGs the cooling can cause significant concerns. However the theory and practice of cooling gasoline engines was well proven by the 50s and 60s. In this article we will not concern ourselves with more modern developments such as higher coolant temperatures and pressures and aluminum radiators.

Let's begin with what constitutes a cooling system. First we have an engine mainly composed of iron. The engine has hollow passages in the block and head designed to allow coolant to circulate throughout it. A belt-driven pump is fitted to assist this circulation. After travelling through the engine the coolant then passes through a radiator. The radiator consists of two tanks connected by many tubes fitted with fins which increase the area exposed to air which passes over them. In the era we are dealing with the preferred material for radiator construction was copper, a strong metal with excellent conductivity. At low speeds and when a car is not moving, a fan, often driven by the coolant circulating pump, draws air through the radiator.

The radiator is connected to the engine by two hoses, one connected to each tank. Hoses come in several styles and are made

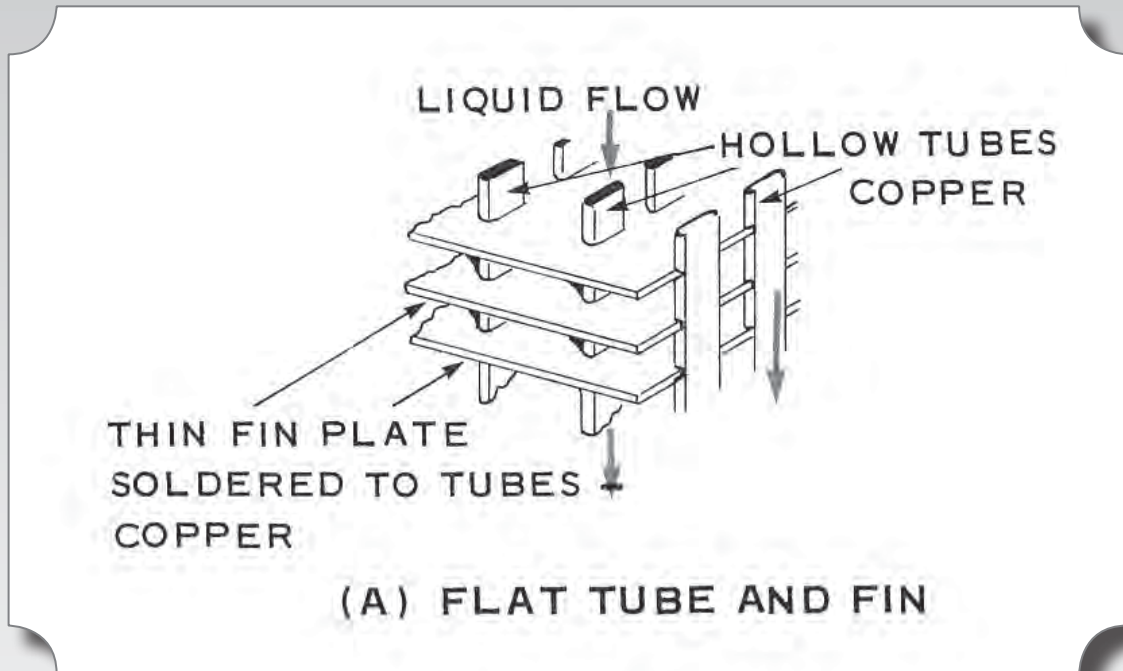


(A) RADIATOR CORE CONSTRUCTION



(B) RADIATOR AND CONNECTIONS

Illustration 1: A typical radiator from the era of our cars.



*Illustration 2: Radiator fin and tube detail. Note the increased cooling area provided by the fins.*

of rubber reinforced with fabric. Some hoses have a steel wire coil molded into the hose rubber, these are not recommended for our cars. With constant engine movement these stiff hoses can break the joint on the tank connections. This caution does not apply to the separate wire sometimes inserted into hoses loosely to prevent their collapse.

A thermostat is fitted, usually in the cylinder head, which prevents coolant from entering the radiator until the engine has warmed up, and then continues to maintain the engine at a stable temperature. A special coolant filling cap, usually fitted to the radiator tank, controls the pressure in the system. A pressure of around 7 to 10 psi serves to raise the boiling point of the coolant, a beneficial feature.

Another useful feature fitted to most MGBs is a small radiator to cool the engine lubricating oil. Engine oil will deteriorate if overheated and can also lose viscosity, causing loss of pressure to the bearings. Oil

in itself also assists in cooling the engine, so the oil cooler is a welcome addition in hot weather.

The cooling system performs another duty, this time for our physical comfort. Coolant can be re-directed into the heater box to provide heat for the occupants and de-misting for the windscreen. The heater consists of a very small radiator in a box and a fan to circulate air over it.

Some later models of our cars are fitted with electric cooling fans which replace the belt-driven fan. They are controlled by a temperature switch in contact with the coolant and can reduce noise and improve fuel consumption. A similar sensor sends a signal to a gauge on the dash to provide driver information. This gauge is mechanical in operation on earlier cars.

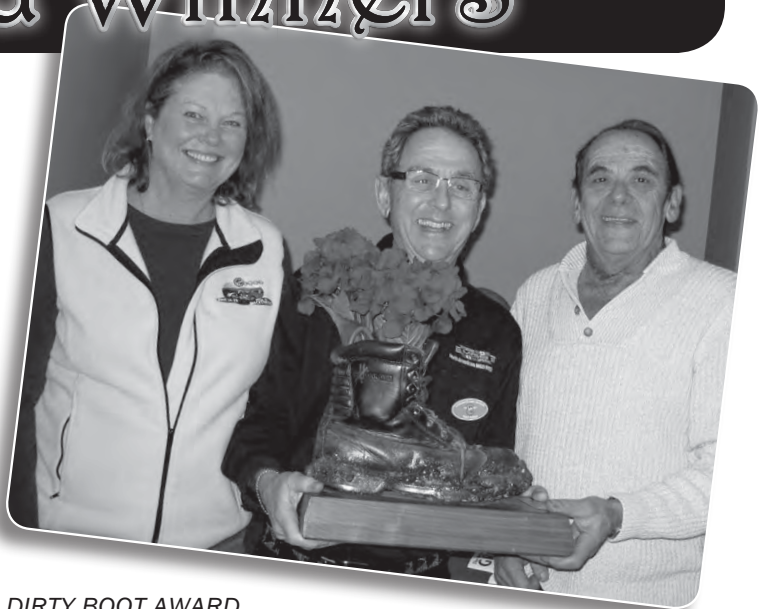
In the next article we will look into the maintenance of and minor improvements to the cooling systems.

□

# 2011 CCMGC/CXKJR Award Winners

The following were presented at the December 12 awards and potluck evening:

- MGA 50TH ANNIVERSARY AWARD (for overall contribution to club members, as decided by the previous award winner): **John Morse**
- MCL TROPHIES (for participation, sportsmanship & high point car): **Tom & Wanda Doyle** (Jaguar); **Jennifer Orum** (MG)
- MOST IMPROVED CLUB CAR AWARD: **Peter & Anne Tilbury**
- BAD PENNY AWARDS (for participating regularly in club events): **Al Riches** (MG); **Doug & Karen Haakonsen** (Jaguar)
- JOHN SHARPE AWARD (for overall contribution to the club by a Jaguar member): **Krista Briggs**
- OCTAGON MOTOR GROUP AWARD (for overall contribution to the club by an MG member): **Jennifer Orum**
- TALKING STICK AWARD (for the best 'rhetoric' at club meetings): **Doug Haakonsen**
- DIRTY BOOT AWARD: **Steve & Sheila Kaufman**
- OUTGOING PRESIDENT AWARDS: **Tom Doyle** (Jaguar); **Tony Cohen** (MG)



## DIRTY BOOT AWARD

presented by MG President Tony Cohen to **Sheila and Steve Kaufman** for their 18,000 miles+ journey around North America during which their 1961 MGA's boot must have got dirty.

(Photo by Mike Powley)



THE JAGUAR BAD PENNY AWARD (always showing up like a \_\_\_\_\_) presented by CXKJR Vice-President Bev Kolossoff to **Karen & Doug Haakonsen**.

(Photo by Allan Lawrence)



THE MG BAD PENNY AWARD presented by MG President Tony Cohen to **Al Riches**.  
(Photo by Allan Lawrence)

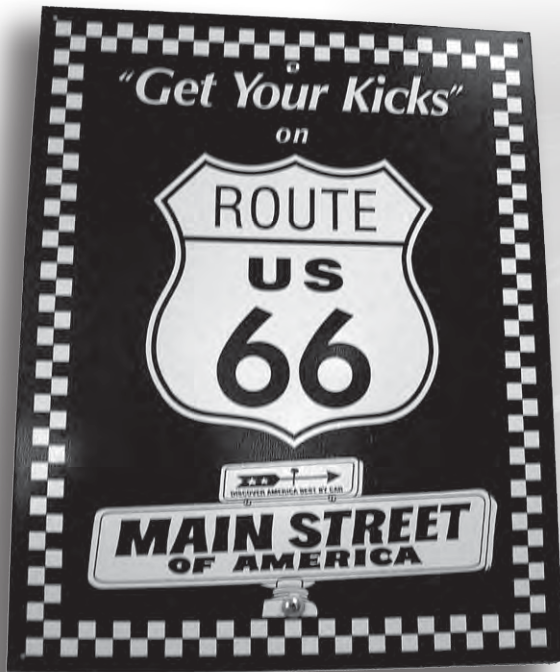


## THE JOHN SHARPE

AWARD (for overall contribution to the club by a Jaguar member) presented by CXKJR Vice-President Bev Kolossoff to **Krista Briggs**. (Photo by Allan Lawrence)



THE MOST IMPROVED CAR AWARD presented by CCMGC Vice-President Jim McLagan to **Peter & Anne Tilbury** for the restoration of their 1950 MGA coupe.  
(Photo by Allan Lawrence)



## ...or What We Did Last Summer

*Tony Cohen, with photographs by Carole Cohen*

**On** 15 August 2011, Carole and I hopped into our '68 MGB Chickmagnet and headed down to Seattle. By pre-arrangement, Sergei of NOA Carriers arrived the following day in his "B" train" double-decker trailer and loaded up the MGB for its trip across the continent to Elgin, 50 miles west of Chicago. The loading was a little nerve-racking for me because the inside rails of the ramp up to the second level were about 1" from each inside face of the wheels. But Sergei gunned the engine, popped the clutch and up he went. We spent the rest of the day in Seattle in the Pike Place Market area.

Next day we flew to New York for five days of sight-seeing and shows and then to Chicago for another five days of sight-seeing and socializing with our friends from Elgin. I could

write several columns about these two wonderful cities, but that is not what this article is about. Chickmagnet arrived in Elgin safe and sound, if a little dusty. On Monday 29 August, after giving the B a good wash, we departed for a cruise down Route 66.

It's possible to drive from Chicago to St. Louis in about four and a half hours on Interstate 55. We took four days on Route 66 which runs most of the way right next to I-55. We picked up 66 at Lou Mitchell's restaurant in Chicago, the alleged start of the Route, and on to Cicero, a popular hangout of Al Capone and his gang. The Castle Car Wash is still standing. I popped in to Henry's Drive In, still offering its famous hot dogs "It's a Meal in Itself", to check out the hotdogs, and they were indeed enormous. Cicero is also the home of the Cindy Lyn Motel dating back to the '60s and still in operation.

Passing through Willowbrook, we stopped briefly at Dell Rhea's Chicken Basket which has been here on Route 66 since 1946. It had to be brief because it was closed. We discovered that day that Mondays were not a good day to travel this Route, because several places weren't open.

Our next stop was Joliet (formerly Juliet) which is just down the road from Romeoville (formerly Romeo), Shakespeare wherefore art thou? It being about 100F we stopped at the "Kicks on 66 Ice-cream Hut" for a cool one. The guys on the roof are the Blues Brothers. In Wilmington, we found the Gemini Giant, one of four on Route 66, the Launching Pad Drive-In Diner and the Mar Theatre. We then passed through



*Cicero Henry's Hot Dog Hut*



*Joliet "Kicks on 66" Ice Cream*

Braidwood where another diner, the Polka Dot, a '50 - '60 era drive-in, is located. It has statues of James Dean, Elvis Presley, Marilyn Munroe and Betty Boop.

As evening drew near we entered Dwight where we would stay for the night. This is a lovely small town with many restored buildings and lots of history. In the morning we stopped off at the Amber-Becker Texaco station dating back to 1932, which is the longest-operating gas station on Route 66 and now a museum. The Bank of Dwight was established in 1855 and speaking of banks, this little town also has one of only three banks designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

We continued on through Odell which houses the Standard Oil Filling Station aka the Odell Station, built in 1932 and closed in 1975. We passed through Cayuga, Pontiac and Lexington where the local residents have preserved a piece of the original road alignment as a walking path and called it Memory Lane, complete with period billboards.

In Bloomingdale we found the site of the original Steak and Shake Diner, started in 1934. We stayed the night in a town called Normal which lived up to its name. For

dinner we went to a nearby Steak and Shake and it was like stepping back to the '50s.

Next morning we drove through Shirley, stopped in at Funk's Grove to look at the ancient General Store and then stopped in Atlanta. There is lots to see here: the J.H. Hawes Grain Elevator Museum dating back to the early 1900s; the Paul Bunyon giant, the second of the four on Route 66 moved from Cicero; a clock tower, library and 1908 museum. After all this we stopped for a cool drink and a slice of pie in the 1950 Palm Grill Café.

On we went to Lincoln, the only town named after Abe while he was still alive, where a strange sight was the phone booth on the roof of the City Hall. The Old Cinema in town was showing "Gone with the Wind".

After passing through Broadwell, Elkhart, and Williamsville we arrived in Springfield where we would spend our last night on Route 66. In Springfield we found the Coney Island Restaurant, now Steak and Shake, and Bill Shea's Historic Garage and Route 66 Museum. Unfortunately it was closed, but we could peer through the mesh fence at all the outside displays and memorabilia. Quite a collection.

On our last day on Route 66 we passed through Litchfield where we saw the Sky View Drive-In Theatre. We stopped

for a peak in to the Ariston Restaurant, a classic Route 66 icon, now upgraded to a very up-scale eatery. We gave this a miss in favour of the very eclectic and original Route 66 café. I swear some of the patrons have been there since the '60s.

Then came Staunton and Decamp Junction, an original Route 66 roadhouse. In Hamel we passed Weezy's Roadhouse, and in Edwardville we visited the Mustang Corral, the graveyard and restoration mecca for anything Mustang.

Mitchell is the home of the Chain of Rocks Bridge, built in 1927 and crossing the Mississippi joining Illinois and Missouri. It was



*Wilmington Gemini Giant*

*(KICKS ON 66 – cont'd on p. 21)*



*The 1968 MGB "Chickmagnet" at the Dwight Amber-Decker Texaco Station*



*The Atlanta Palm Grill Cafe*

closed in 1960 because of the large number of accidents on the bridge resulting from the sudden unexpected 20-degree kink at mid-span. I can imagine two young bucks racing across the bridge at midnight in their Mustang and Charger and suddenly coming to the bend. From here we crossed the Mississippi - not on the Chain of Rocks Bridge - and headed to St Louis.

After four glorious days we arrived in St. Louis, with the temperature hovering around 105F and humidity about 95%. The end of our ride down Route 66 for now, however the future holds another trip to explore the western end.

Next morning I set the Garmin for Huntington Missouri and we headed out, but the Garmin had a mind of its own and before we knew it we were back in Illinois on the East side of the Mississippi River. This was a fortuitous occurrence because with a bit of lateral thinking, we decided to proceed along the banks of the Mississippi and enjoyed wonderful views of the River. But the Gods were out to get us because just then Chickmagnet had a minor hiccup, a stuck float valve in the front carb. Nice

timing with the temperature again in the 100s and humidity you could swim through - I really felt like leaning over a hot engine! But twenty minutes later we were on our way again.



*Piece of Original Route 66 Alignment*

The way home was north up to Interstate 90 to South Dakota where our first stop was the Corn Palace in Mitchell. Then it was on to Wall to see Wall Drug, another icon from the depression years, now occupying a full city block. We proceeded through the Badlands National Park to Deadwood where we stayed a couple of days to visit Keystone and Mount Rushmore.



*Mitchell Chain of Rocks Bridge*

Heading northwest into Montana we travelled into Glacier National Park for a tour along the spectacular Going-to-the-Sun Highway. After exiting at Whitefish Montana, we made our way to the Canadian border and cruised through the Kootenays, stopping in Penticton to visit Carole's Mum and headed home.

And the rest, as they say, is history.

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# Clarke Garage Nights Off to a Great Start



Report & Photographs by Jennifer Orum



**T**wenty club members attended the first of the new Garage Night series on November 29, during which John gave an update on his Jaguar Mk IX restoration project (he actually now has four Mk IX's!). The target is to have the 1961 on the road this coming summer and on the field at the Heritage Classic field meet in August. Winter storage was the major discussion topic of the evening, with John providing helpful hints including:

Collector cars should not be stored outdoors with waterproof tarps over them

Keep relative humidity below 65% in the garage by using a small heater & dehumidifier

Fill up the tank, add methyl hydrate and fuel stabilizer, top-up the cooling system with 50/50 mix antifreeze – then take the car for a 15-minute run before storing it

Comprehensive handouts were distributed that dealt with winter storage and tools.

Twenty-three showed up for the January 31 Garage Night, including John's 8 1/2-year-old granddaughter Alyssa and 7-year-old Kiera, with John stressing the importance of encouraging future collector car enthusiasts by getting them involved at a young age. He gave an update on the Mk IX project over the past two months, which involved work on both the body and transmission, with the motor and transmission now back in the car. The objectives of the Garage Nights are varied – to assist the less technical club members to purchase services intelligently and start doing simple tasks, and to provide a forum for more technically-skilled and knowledgeable folks to learn from John's experience and that of other members. The importance of "having

a plan" was emphasized, for both reconditioning a collector car to get it on the road and for more extensive restoration.

Many key terms were explained such as "body-on", "body-off" and "rolling restorations" and "spot", "plug" and "butt welding".

Use of Bondo in body work was compared with making replacement panels from cold-rolled steel, with John describing how to use manila file folders to create patterns. He outlined the perils of working with the new water-based paints and passed along important tips such as "never practice on your own car, use someone else's" John gave an ongoing show-and-tell from his massive collection of tools for every purpose under heaven. Not surprisingly, the evening included a large dose of humour. Handouts relating to restoration planning and use of flow-charts will be distributed at the February 28 Garage Night, which will deal with Fasteners and Bearings. Reminders from John: only paid-up club members can attend, and arrive by 7 pm. □



## PHOTOS:

1 John explaining the red tool box he gives to each of his grandchildren at 6 years old, while 8 1/2-year-old Alyssa and 7 year-old Kiera look on.

2 The welcome sign on one of the Mk IX's doors.

3 John at the November 29 Garage Night. Note the t-shirt from his highschool teaching days "Let Me Drop Everything and Work on Your Problem"

4 A sample being circulated of the problems of Bondo use.

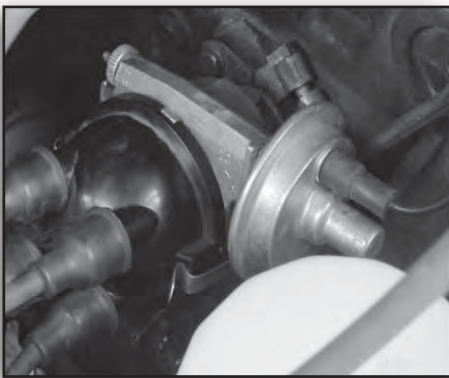
# 18 Months With An MGB

April 2010 to September 2011

By Brian Cook

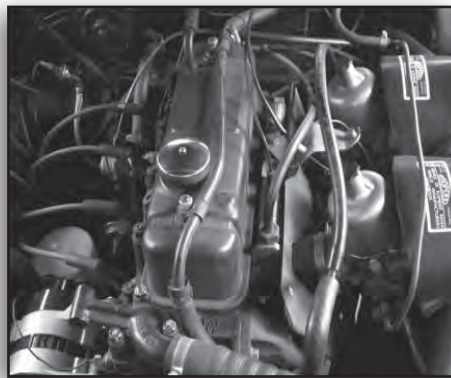
*Starting with the November/December Classical Gas and continuing in this issue, we are following Brian Cook's adventure with his 1974 MGB roadster from April 2010 to September 2011.*

*Watch the March/April issue for the final of the three instalments.*



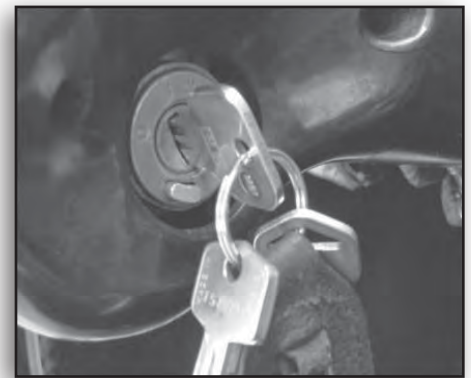
## IMPROVING FUEL ECONOMY CONTINUED

A new rebuilt 25D distributor with rebuilt vacuum advance arrives from Jeff Schlemmer at Advanced Distributors in Minnesota. Jeff comes highly recommended from hundreds of MG sites & owners. Jeff has re-curved a 25D for optimum performance for a 1974 B without the air pump and has rebuilt the associated vacuum advance unit. Jeff's post-sale involvement is terrific. He always had time to explain my questions on vac advance and ignition timing. Have a great afternoon getting that rebuilt distributor installed with an old friend, Don Lines.



## IMPROVING FUEL ECONOMY, THE FINAL STEP

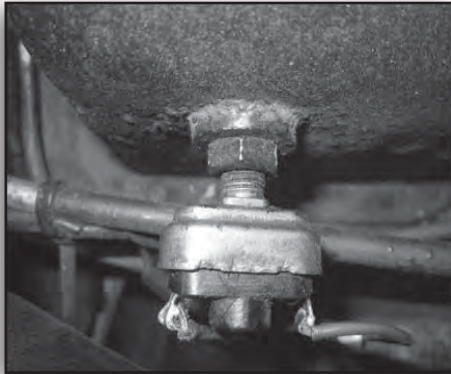
Get the car over to Silk Cat Automotive in North Van. They send out the intake manifold be resurfaced. Points, plugs, valve lash and timing all set. Ignition timing is advanced as far as it can go without pinging under load, which turns out to be a whopping 20 degrees BTDC at idle, and the carburetors are tuned. The test run is wonderful; a very different car. Now it idles smooth as silk, and takes off with so much more torque than ever before. Incredibly, I make it 180 miles of city driving, before filling up with 32 litres of 91 Octane gasoline.



## FAULTY IGNITION SWITCH

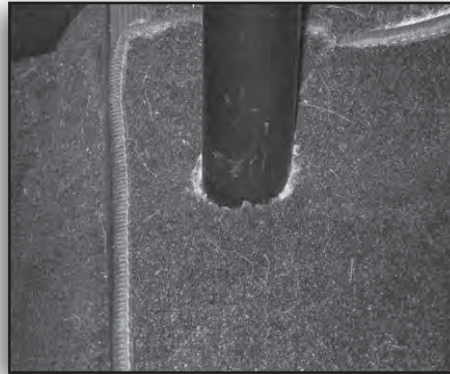
One recent afternoon, on my way back home, upon starting the car I hear an awful grinding noise. The key refuses to sit back in drive position. With force I manage to twist the key back. The grinding stops and I make my way home. Once home the steering column cowling comes off easily. There are two shear bolts holding the lock assembly in place, to prevent thieves from disconnecting the steering lock. Fortunately mine have not been sheared. I notice that the plastic housing of the electrical portion of the switch has a groove worn into it, resulting in the sticking of the switch. A trip to Octagon gets an OEM housing. It works just great. No more sticking.

**...18 MONTHS WITH AN MGB - Part 2 (cont'd on p. 26)**



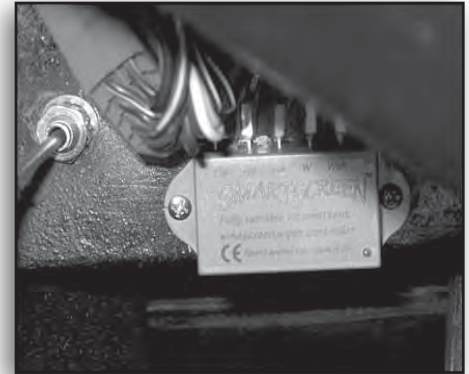
### FAULTY BRAKE LIGHTS

Thanks to a motorist from behind letting me know, we got another electrical problem: the brake lights are not coming on. It turns out to be the brake light switch. A bit of contact cleaner spray on the plunger does not help. There are four indents on the metal casing that can be pried loose, opening up the switch. The two internal brass contacts were covered in gunk. They were easy to clean, and gave them a buff with some fine emery paper. Got it all back into the car and it works as good as new.



### NEW RUG FOR THE BACK SHELF

Got a bit of time to make that back shelf look nice. With a small piece of extra carpeting I found it was easy to cut it to proper shape, and to fit around the roll bar. However, it does need an edging. I get the carpet over to McCrann's Carpet Finishing in Burnaby. They have a hundred or so styles of edging to choose from, and do a perfect job that looks stunning. Back to the carpet shop for another piece of that wool underlay. Cut it to size and get it in the car. Wow. What a nice project, and surprisingly, the car is a bit quieter.



### INTERMITTENT WINDSCREEN WIPERS

I really am not big on accessories. To me, a stock car is a beautiful car. But on a recent trip to Europe I discover a very neat accessory that is ideal for Vancouver; an intermittent wiper controller, from Smartscreen in the UK. The driver sets the sweep rate by flicking the B's wiper stalk as needed. Sweep rate can vary from 3 to 60 seconds. The unit mounts under the dash, so it is discrete. A two evening project for me; first evening was mounting the unit and harness, the second evening was splicing and soldering the six electrical connections. It works flawlessly. What a nice treat for Vancouver driving.



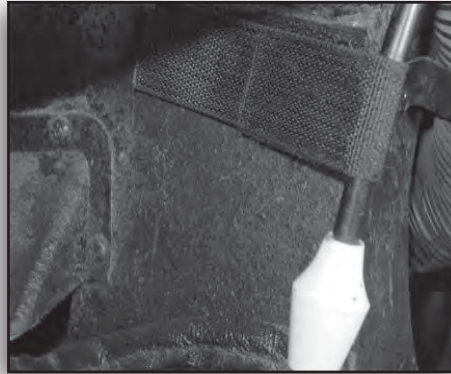
### IT STILL LEAKS

Not quite rain proof yet. The drips on the floor have improved, but somehow, there is still a puddle on the floor at the end of every rainstorm. Read an article on how to install a radio antenna, it says, "To access antenna remove the splash panel and rubber seal from under the front fender. On my B, on both sides there is a splash panel with a 1/2" gap between panel and fender; with no rubber seal. Another trip to Octagon and a bit of grease. Now, I am sure I have got rid of those leaks.



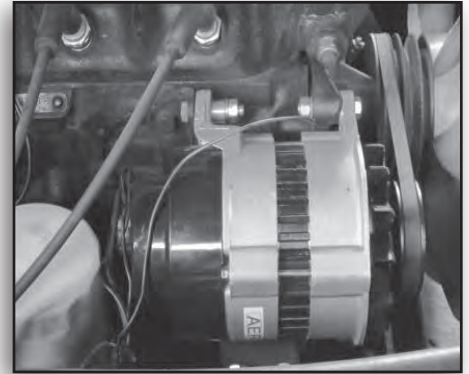
### STARTER PROBLEM

Well, starter does not turn over. Fortunately it has happened at home. I check the electrical system. Sure enough, there is a break in the ground connection, where the wire from the starter bolts on to the car chassis. Upon investigation I discover the paint in the engine bay has not been cleaned away from under the ground screw. Wow. How did it work up to now? I sand it away and snug up the ground screw. Incredibly the B kicks over on first click. Could there be more connections like this? I don't know.



### LEAKING FRESH AIR VENT

Last winter I couldn't get the fresh air vent to seal. Cold air came in even when the fresh air vent was closed. After numerous unsuccessful attempts to seal this vent, I finally found a solution: A strap with Velcro attached, screwed to a point ahead of the vent handle. With a bit of 1-inch banding, it took 5 minutes to make it with the sewing machine, and a bit longer to bolt it in place. Now the vent closes tight. And it can easily be released to open up for summer.



### ALTERNATOR FAILURE

Upon starting the car the other day, the ignition warning light stayed on while the car was running. Checked the alternator output, it was faulty and the battery was failing. As I had to make a drive of 50 kilometres the next day for work, I didn't know what to do. One garage suggested I trickle the battery overnight and go for it. I should be okay he says. Well, got a battery charger from our neighbour, which I set for trickle charge on the B's battery. Next day I get on my way 50 kilometres to work, then 50 more to Aers Auto Electric in North Vancouver. Amazing. It works. I get there. One new alternator please!



### ANOTHER EVENING'S PROJECT

The console lid just didn't stay closed due to a broken clasp. Again, with a bit of scrap oak, I made a base for the clasp and bolted it in.

Also, as I often store my glasses in the console tray, to prevent them from scratching against the console retaining screw, I made up a soft under lining with a bit of black felt for the base of the tray. An easy project with a sewing machine.

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**...18 MONTHS WITH AN MGB** - Part 3 (cont'd NEXT ISSUE)