



# NORTH AMERICAN MMM NEWSLETTER

North American MMM  
Register  
Midget, Magna, Magnette

Spring 2013

*"Once in a great while someone makes an automobile that is a thing apart from all others, an impersonal machine possessing a definite personality.....many a man competent to know will argue that the most completely appealing and unforgettable personality ever built into a car was put into the smallest of them all: the MG Midget."*

Ken W. Purdy, *The Kings of the Road*

## More Tales of Ancient Grease

By Dave Harrison

Operating my MG L1 in the sixties on a student budget required driving skills rarely used today. One challenge was the lack of daylight during the long winters. The best plan was to avoid driving in the dark altogether, but visits to pubs and taking girls out inevitably involved nighttime driving, and lack of battery power and tarnished and unfocused headlights were not a good combination on dark country roads. Actually lights were not legally required to be turned on until official "lighting up time". These times were pre-published and based on some astronomical average, and took no account of actual weather conditions. Thus it was possible and legal to drive on dark evenings on sidelights until lighting up time, saving the battery. In real darkness my usual strategy was to loiter until a modern car with better lights overtook me, then rev up and attempt to follow it, giving my battery a rest by turning off the headlights. This assumed that I could keep up and the other car went where I wanted to.

The need to conserve the battery required other strategies. Planning the route so the car could be parked facing downwards on a hill was one. The old Mk1 starter clipped behind the back seat was a usually a reliable backup. After a night at a pub there were always a few beery souls willing to give a push.

Another challenge was the lack of brakes due to ancient crystallized linings. I got pretty good at panic double declutching into the lower gears. Sometimes a passenger could help by grabbing the hand brake which actually had better leverage. After a couple of years, lots of near misses and one dented wing, I got wise and had the brakes relined.

The basic problem was lack of money. My scholarship at college was ninety pounds a year. Even with the UK system of free tuition and beer being a bob a pint (about 25c), it didn't go far. My first transportation was an old Francis Barnett motorbike, but girls seemed reluctant to ride pillion on a date come winter. I then got my first car for 20 pounds, a 1936 Ford 8 saloon, 850 cc and three speeds, 40 mph flat out in third with a following wind. I ran it for a year and even toured Scotland. It also had braking problems, they were rod actuated and not compensated. If I braked while turning a corner the combination of lost motion in the linkages and a flexible chassis would steer the car to one side. I had to crawl under the car every couple of weeks and adjust clevis pins linkages. The puny side valve engine was reluctant to climb steep hills in first gear, but would happily go up backwards thanks to the lower reverse ratio. I imagine that's a lost art with today's traffic.

The L1 was a revelation, even if it cost 40 pounds. It would easily do forty in third, with one more gear to go, and was much more of a crumpet-catcher than the humble Ford. The lack of a heater, drafty top and flapping side curtains were minor problems. In fact I rarely drove with the top up even in winter, it seemed warmer to have it down. At least the draft would come from behind. I drove the L1

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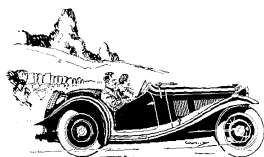
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The Pre-war MG Register

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## NAMMM REGISTER NEWSLETTER

The NAMMM Register Newsletter is published quarterly beginning in March of each year. The deadline for "camera ready" contributions—stories, technical reports, ads, and general information—is the end of Feb., May, Aug., and Nov. Please submit all contributions to Larry Long via:

e-mail at NAMMMRNewsletter@aol.com

"snail-mail" at 1411 Foxenwood Drive,  
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Contributions are solicited for all activities associated with your MMM cars: local or national events you have participated in, technical tips, restoration progress, etc. Let us know what you are doing with your cars and how you have been enjoying them.

\*\*\*\*\*

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# **Chairman's Outlook      Jack Kahler**

WOW, the winter is coming to a close and we are about six months away from our Eastern National Meet at Put-In-Bay, Ohio. It seems like yesterday that I became your Register's Chairman but it has been about seven months since I agreed to take on this challenging leadership. I have heard the old saying that the older you get, the quicker time passes and I believe it. In these past seven months we have made some great moves to bring you a Register that you can continue to be proud of and that contributes to your enjoyment of these FANTASTIC automobiles Mr. Kimber provided us in the 1930s.

I am most excited about our Eastern National Meet in Put-In-Bay, Ohio and our Western National Meet in Carefree, Arizona. Both meets are setting up to be well organized, fun driving events and maybe a little MMM racing, too? The attendance looks to be promising for both meets and we are looking forward to having, in Carefree, John and Brenda Hancock all the way from Auckland, New Zealand. I wish to thank in advance, Craig Peck for project managing the Eastern Meet and Mickey Saperstein for project managing the Western Meet. It is great to see members step forward and get involved.

In the past few months your Officers and Steering Committee have streamlined the membership renewal system, made positive adjustments to our financial picture and launched a new up to date website, [www.nammmr.org](http://www.nammmr.org). We will continue to work for you, our membership in providing a Register that is focused on some good tire kicking and driving our outstanding MG MMM cars.

Start preparing that beautiful MMM car and I look forward to meeting each and every member this year whether it is in Ohio or Arizona. Be sure to make your reservations early and send in your registration form for the meet of your choice or even both meets!

*Cheers—Jack*

# **Registrar Ramblings      Lew Palmer**

The sap is rising! At least this sap is doing so. With spring right around the corner, I, for one, can't wait to get the MGs out of hibernation in this cold climate of frozen Minnesota. I hope to get some real miles on the Airline Coupé this year and have promised my son to teach him to drive a car with a "crash" gearbox. I hope he can master it better than his father. The PA is coming along, only slowed by available cash to purchase the new crankshaft, camshaft, connecting rods, and pistons; to say nothing of chrome and paint. Who said this is an inexpensive hobby???

A reminder that if you still haven't paid your dues for 2013, this is your last newsletter you will receive. As usual, most of you have paid promptly, but just as usual, there are still a few have overlooked the renewal date which, as always, is at the end of January each year. We did have to slightly raise the dues this year, due to increased printing and mailing costs. But hopefully, less than 2 cents per day extra has not put you off. You may have also noticed that you may now pay your dues via PayPal. Simply send the amount due (\$40 for North American members and \$50 for all others) to [renewal@nammmr.org](mailto:renewal@nammmr.org).

In the last issue, I announced that we have now hit a milestone. Since I took over the position of Registrar, we have hit the 500 number of memberships. Sadly, not all 500 are still members. Many have sold their car, passed away, or simply lost interest. I also expressed hope that we would soon hit member number 510. Well, you have not disappointed. Just since the Winter issue, we have added three new members. So please join me in welcoming:

Roger Morse  
Poestenkill, NY  
J2304 and J3328

Thurston "Koke" Twigg-Smith Jr.  
Barnard, VT  
J3459

Stephen Star  
San Francisco, CA  
NA0933

That's it for this issue, and remember, if your mailing label shows a 2012 expiration date, you need to get your dues to me.

*Octagonally, Lew*



(Continued from page 1)

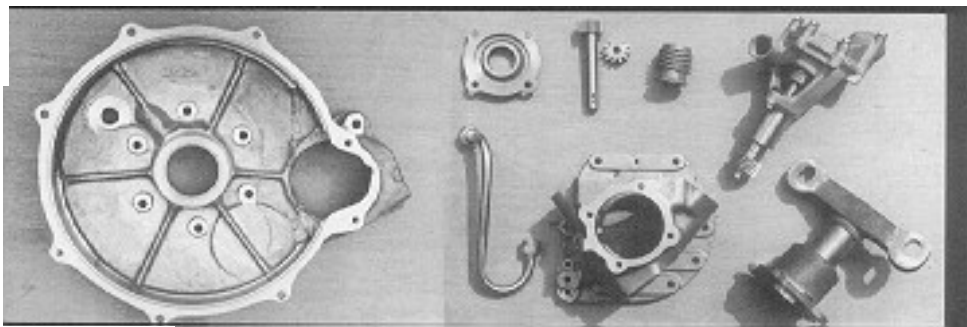
all over Somerset, Yorkshire and even to Glencoe for a New Year ski trip. It was quite reliable at first, and a lot of fun. I had few on-road breakdown, one that I remember was a burst water hose in rural Somerset. I walked over to a nearby farm with the remains of the hose, the farmer gave me one of the pink udder

cups from the milking machine, it fitted quite well with a trim and I drove the car for six months with it. The engine and radiator survived a major freeze-up in Glencoe, I could only afford one gallon of antifreeze. It was so cold all their bottled beer froze in the local pub. Fortunately the Drambuie survived to celebrate Hogmanay. The L1 survived three years of bodged maintenance, but was sold for 30 pounds to a Leeds university student and replaced by a 1947 Triumph 1800 roadster with a snug top, rollup windows and a heater. Sic transit Magna.

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Jim Dougherty #437, Covington, Louisiana. 985-789-1826,  
Jim@coopercarsofcovington.com



# Australian National MMM Rally Schedule

The 5th biennial National Weekend Rally of the Pre-war MG Register of Australia is set for 25 -27 October 2013 in the historic city of Bathurst - 200 kms West of Sydney. With only 350 MGs built before 1940 spread across Australia, which is an area larger than all Europe, the Register is proud that participants with 70+ year old cars make the effort to drive long distances to attend and enjoy the social interaction and camaraderie.



The selection of Bathurst as the venue for the 2013 event is to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the staging of the 1938 Australian Grand Prix (AGP) at the nearby and now famous circuit of Mt Panorama. For this event on unsealed public roads an MG NE (NA0520) was purchased by ex-pat Aussie John Snow in England and shipped to John Snow in Australia as they both thought it had a good chance of winning this handicap race. This was despite the formidable entry including three K3s and Peter Whitehead's B-Type ERA - also specially imported.

Regrettably the NE failed to start but the MG marque's honour was upheld by the nine other MGs including two TAs which were 3rd and 5th. This very NE, now residing on the other side of the continent in Perth, will be the star attraction at Bathurst along with many of the surviving racing MGs that competed in Australia before WWII including the two PAs that won the 1935 and 1937 AGPs and a replica of the TA that won the 1939 AGP on handicap. A freshly restored Q-Type will also be in action again.



The weekend will also celebrate the 80th anniversary of the K3's class win at the 1933 Mille Miglia with one of the team cars present (K3002) and possibly another (K3003) and the 'recce' K3 (K3752). The ex-Bira K3 (K3030) will also be attending and possibly two others that reside in Australia. There will be several K3 replicas swelling the ranks.

The owners of all these cars and all the other MG sports, tourers and saloons will have the opportunity to drive around the Mt Panorama circuit over the weekend as it is made up of public roads.

The weekend will be further enhanced with the attendance of some vintage MGs, examples of all of the MMM MGs as well as some elegant SAs, VAs and WAs. As the Register embraces all MGs upto 1939 there will be a good selection of TAs and TBs making up an expected total of more than 100 pre-war MGs.

The weekend will start with a Friday Greet & Mingle evening at the Bathurst Racing Car Museum. On Saturday there will be car display in the centre of Bathurst and a run to the historic town of Sofala to pan for gold followed by a barbecue evening for story telling - true or otherwise. On Sunday there's a scenic and historic tour around the region with a relaxing lunch stop and a Grande Finale Presentation Dinner.

International visitors with or without their pre-war MG are most welcome and there are hosting arrangements available with local MG owners.

For further information visit the website <http://prewar.mgcc.info/>

I can supply pictures of the NE past and present or a general car display pic from the past.

Thanks and kindest regards, Rob [robertanddenny@gmail.com](mailto:robertanddenny@gmail.com)



One of our MMM Register members maintaining his skills while recuperating from surgery.

The Bonars from Kansas in the recently restored PA.



# Racing Cars—Past and Future

## *A Voice From the Past*

By W.W.Wallis

*Reprinted from Safety Fast, February and March, 1983.*

*There should be neither MG driver nor enthusiast who does not know that the late Cecil Kimber was the founder of The MG Car Co. His daughter, Mrs Jean Cook, has generously allowed a recently discovered Paper by "Kim" to be re-produced in Safety Fast.*

*As you read it, serialised in this and future issues, I ask you to keep recalling to memory that this man of vision was talking in 1944 —nearly forty years ago— and during a world war and without the hindsight that we have.*

Introduction by Jean Cook

The typescript of the talk that my father gave to Specialloids Sports and Social Club nearly forty years ago came to light when my step father, Eric Graham, moved house recently. He, of course, was there at the time, that I was away serving in the WRNS, so I can only hear my father's voice in memory, making pungent comments. He was to die, stupidly and tragically, only two months later in a railway carriage going backwards at walking pace.

My step father has vivid memories of visiting the factory at Abingdon around 1930 and being shown Mr Jackson's secret workshop where the EX 120 was developed. He said to me yesterday; "your father was MG. He had the ideas and everybody seemed to work together to carry them out. It was wonderful..." He added wistfully; "I couldn't persuade him to use Specialloid pistons though." Clearly, no human being has all the ideas, or all the virtues, but no one is going to take from me the pride that I feel in my father's achievement which, for a little while, touched on genius.

A talk given to the members of the specialloid Sports and Social Club at 'Ganarew' Club Rooms, North Finchley, on Tuesday, 7th November 1944, by Cecil Kimber.

Up and down the country there is a tremendous interest in Sports and Racing Cars. Because of my previous connection with these types of cars I have, by invitation, given talks all over the country to the various Motor Enthusiasts' Clubs that have sprung up and are now waiting impatiently for their favourite sport to commence once more.

When Mr Cansick asked me whether I would contribute something to one of your Tuesday evenings I agreed to give you one of these talks, as he assured me that most of you were sufficiently motor minded to be interested. Tonight, therefore, I am giving you a few remarks on Motor Racing.

Unfortunately, living like so many other people these days, in someone else's house, having let my own furnished for the duration, I have not the facilities for reference and must therefore rely entirely upon my memory for what information I can give. Having also severed my connection with the firm with which I was so closely connected throughout its racing career, I no longer have recourse to the technical data that would otherwise have been available; I hope, therefore any shortcomings in this respect will be forgiven.

I understand you would like me to give you a brief resume of how, from very humble beginnings, I developed the MG car from the time it won its first race — won at the modest speed of 62 m.p.h. — to the final effort when a 1100 cc machine in the hands of Major A T G Gardner achieved 207 m.p.h. on a German Autobahn.

Before going into this, a few remarks about racing generally might not be out of place, particularly as regards the future of the sport. Looking back over the years it is amazing that motor racing in this country existed at all. From the earliest years motoring has faced nothing but restriction and frustration. What other country in the world was so grandmotherly in its attitude that, for a period, one could only use

a car provided one had a man carrying a red flag walking in front! Then we had increasingly repressive taxation and that greatest betrayal and wholesale robbery ever perpetrated upon a section of the public. I refer, of course, to the robbing of the Road Fund after the motorists of the country had been solemnly promised that if they would willingly submit to increased heavy taxation, such money would be devoted to improving the road systems of the country. What a short sighted policy that was, to use those millions in paying the dole instead of providing employment in the building of real. motorways which would have been of incalculable value to the industry and the nation as a whole. Then there has been that strange reluctance to allow little used country roads to be closed temporarily for the holding of road races, and the abolition of organised hill climbs on the public roads. For this latter I blame the R.A.C. to a great extent, as owing to an accident involving a spectator at the last Hill Climb ever held at Kop Hill, Princess Risborough — I was there sitting with the one and only W.O. and the late Burgess, quite close to where it happened — all further events on the open road were banned. I believe I am right in saying the R.A.C. concurred in this instead of fighting back for the sake of motor-sport which they controlled. Then prior to the present War, hill after hill used by the enthusiastic weekend trials competitor was closed by the Police and even Parliamentary moves had been made to forbid such trials. What a short sighted policy with a War looming ahead in which motor transport, armed and otherwise, was obviously going to play a major part.

What a contrast to the way in which various Continental localities vied with one another to stage road racing events of all kinds. So the British motor racing fan was forced to stage such events in the Isle of Man and Northern Ireland, both being more or less inaccessible to the great mass of



Cecil Kimber (in trilby) with one of his leading lady drivers, Mrs 'Bill' Wisdom, and her K3 Magnette at Brooklands.



the British Public who otherwise would have been taking an intelligent interest in fast motor cars, and awakened to the importance of international rivalry in such sport.

Needless to say, any idea that the Government should subsidise motor racing would have been laughed out of Court as too ludicrous for contemplation, but what an opportunity was missed of placing the British Motor Industry in the forefront throughout the World. What export business would have resulted! Look at the export business the motor cycle industry enjoyed when British riders used to complete and win all the major Continental events. Great credit is due to the firms responsible, though it must be remembered that to build and prepare the necessary machines and provide suitable riders did not involve the same large financial outlay that building and racing teams of cars would.

Then I do not think that the manufacturers of this country were too clever. There was a time when the oil and petrol interests and the various accessory and component manufacturers subsidised race entrants, both trade and private, widely publicizing the results to their benefit and to the benefit of the car and manufacturer who was good enough and fortunate enough to win. This wide advertising made a win worth while. Then the big interests in the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, who were not interested in racing, became jealous of the publicity that smaller and more energetic firms enjoyed by their initiative. In consequence all advertising by the petrol and oil companies and the accessory and component firms in connection with racing and record successes was stopped. Only advertising of the world speed events with aero engined monsters having no resemblance to any manufacturers products was allowed. Needless to say, as soon as the contributing firms were unable to derive any benefit from the successes to which their products had contributed, the bonuses and subsidies ceased. It was quite common for a star driver to receive a retainer of £3,000 a year from one firm alone.

This communal sharing of the heavy expenses of racing was, in my opinion, all to the National good and many a British team took part in Continental events that otherwise would have been an expense too heavy to bear alone or one that commercially could not have been justified.

Then again some of the promoting clubs were very unwise in the use they made of handicapping. Admittedly, handicapping is a very difficult art at the best of times and it is impossible to satisfy everyone. Even so, this should be on a logical basis if cars of varying engine capacities are to compete together. Instead, a winning manufacturer one year would have the odds heavily piled up against him the next. What used to happen was this:

In the long distance races — and I exclude the short sprint races from my criticisms — the various classes, determined by engine capacity, were given certain set speeds but these were never strictly pro rata to engine size. This was to encourage the manufacturer with the not so good car to enter. For instance, if the handicap speed of the 1500 cc car was, say, 65 m.p.h. and the 2500 was 75 m.p.h. instead of the two litre class being set at the logical 70 m.p.h. this particular class might be set at 67 m.p.h. to encourage entries, but if a certain manufacturer had been successful in this class the previous year at 70 m.p.h. and looked like being successful again, then the handicap might be raised to 72 or 73 m.p.h. I know this only too well to my cost.

That is not the way to encourage a continuance of manufacturers' interests and when the bonuses and subsidies ceased it was on the manufacturers and a very few wealthy sportsmen that the expense of racing fell.

Then, with dwindling interest on the part of the manufacturers and in spite of very gallant attempts by the E.R.A., motor racing, during the years prior to the War, began to decline. I believe that the Promoting Clubs could have very largely saved the situation or at any rate improved it if they had encouraged a nonhandicap 1,500 cc class, but it was, in my opinion, a very grave mistake on their part when at some considerable expense to the Promoting clubs, two teams of German Grand Prix racing cars were brought over to compete at Donington. This was a very great disservice to the Motor Industry of this country because machines of this type, built regardless of expense on lavish subsidies from their Government, obviously overshadowed the smaller cars which we were producing, good as they were.

Finally, I should like to suggest that if the Press, particularly the daily Press, had done their share of getting the public to take an intelligent interest in motor racing, there would have been a far better response from the manufacturers. Instead of that, quite important motor racing events would be dismissed in a small paragraph, which event should have and would have interested tens of thousands of readers, whereas columns were devoted to minor sporting events such as Public School Fencing championships and similar classes of sport which could only possibly interest a small collection of people. Needless to say, suitable publicity was given if any accidents occurred and the worse the accident the more space devoted to it, which is a very regrettable state of affairs.

The semitechnical press, whilst dealing, faithfully with these various motor racing events, were very naughty in the way they extolled the Continental racing car to the disparagement of the British counterpart. Also they were apt to attach a somewhat overrated snob valve to large cars and I can well remember the time when Horton won the 500 miles B.R.D.C. race at Brooklands in an MG Magnette and not a single press photographer had taken a photograph of him,

having concentrated their energies on drivers much higher in the social scale. The same thing happened a later year, when a hitherto unknown driver came in second in the same race in an unsupercharged MG Magnette of 1250 cc at an average speed of over 92 mph. This was really quite an outstanding performance which never got the credit it deserved.

What with the attitude of the Government, the manufacturers and the press, it is no wonder that motor racing began to decline and I feel that there is very little hope of the situation getting any better in the postwar years to come.

During the immediate postwar years the large car manufacturers will be so busy endeavouring to satisfy a carhungry public that they naturally enough are not going to be in the slightest degree interested in racing, neither can I see any early resumption of International Grand Prix racing.

However, there are a very great number of racing enthusiasts in this country, many of them with racing cars of one sort or another carefully stored away, who, when they come back from the War, will want to take up their favourite sport again and this they more than deserve. I therefore feel that motor racing during the few years following the War will be revived by the sheer enthusiasm of these individuals to whom I refer, and if they can count once more on Donington being reopened as a race track, here is a venue that will provide a tremendous lot of fun to the participants and interest for the spectators.

If the somewhat false glamour that surrounded the German and Italian Grand Prix cars was properly discounted, I think it will be admitted that for sheer fun and interest nothing surpassed the early short sprint handicap races at Donington in which all sorts of weird and wonderful vehicles took part, none of them extremely fast, but all of them capable of putting just as exciting corner work — which is what the crowd loves — as the Continental Grand Prix cars.

When the postwar car demand has been more or less met, then it is quite likely that certain firms will once more turn their attention to racing as a means of building up their prestige. In this we cannot hope to expect any possible help or encouragement from the Government, but I do hope that the manufacturers, Promoting Clubs and the press will work to encourage the sport and build it up so that it becomes strong and healthy instead of going again into a decline.

As to my own personal connections with racing, these really started in a somewhat indirect way during the last war, because whilst I was with the Sheffield Simplex Motor Company I possessed a 14 hp tee headed Singer which had raced at Brooklands in the hands of one of the early aviators called Vivian Hewitt, but with what success I do not know. I believe it was capable of lapping Brooklands round about 80 mph and needless to say at the time was the pride and joy of my heart. It was somewhat unique in as much as it was one of the only cars of its day that I ever came across that had a geared up fourth speed and as the engines of those days were not given to revving smoothly at high speeds, to click into this high fourth gear made for quite pleasant motoring.

My first active association with racing was round about 1929 or early 1930 when I was producing the 18 hp 6 cylinder model known as the mark II, I got the Morris Engine

Company at coventry interested in the idea of producing one for racing purposes, and one was duly built and entered for a long distance Brooklands race driven by Callingham of the Shell Mex Company.

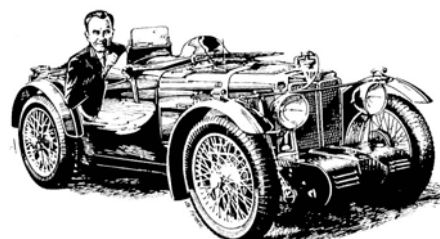
The Engine Company were naturally somewhat jealous of their knowledge of the engine and it was therefore left that they should be responsible for the power unit whilst the MG Car Company produced the chassis. Anyway, in those days we did not pretend to have any real knowledge of racing engines, though the engine factory did. The results were disappointing as the maximum speed from this engine of under 21/2 litres was far short of their racing cars of similar capacity, but what we learned from this particular lesson was the necessity of having a fully balanced crankshaft. We did timidly suggest to the Engine Works that this might be necessary but were told to run away and look after the chassis we were building; but the fact remained that owing to the crankshaft being unbalanced the throwout loads at high speeds were so great that, when eventually taken down after the race, the crankshaft main journals were actually blue from the heat that had been generated. Needless to say, under these conditions the big end bearings did not stand up. However, used on the road purely as a sporting car this particular engine gave every satisfaction and had an extremely long life, but it just was not capable of any sustained power output.

Round about 1928/29 someone entirely outside the influence of the Morris organisation at Cowley deigned O.H.V. Morris Minor. I immediately saw the possibilities of this little job and designed a light fabric covered two seater body for it, and with a few minor modifications to the engine, produced it as the first MG Midget, known as the 'M' type. With good power/weight ratio and an 850 cc engine it had exceptional acceleration performance it was three of these models that six enthusiasts entered in the Double Twelve Hour Race, and with which they brought home the temil prize.

The general preparation work for this race, and the experience we were gaining all the time, increased our knowledge to an immense extent. We had no test shop facilities at all; not even a Water Brake. All our testing was done either on the track or on what we termed a comparator. This consisted of two pairs of pulleys about the diameter of the road wheels, carried on a pair of shafts, one of which was extended and carried a simple air paddle as a brake. The whole was let in flush with the floor, the rear wheels of the car placed on the rollers and there you were.

After this initial success the petrol and oil interests and the accessory firms began to gather round and make attractive offers which led to a series of racing successes and record breaking that has not been equalled by any other single make of car.

*To be continued in the next issue of the NA MMM Register Newsletter.*





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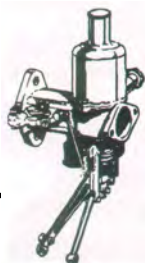
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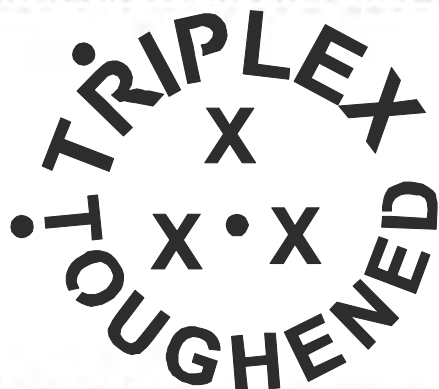
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**Subject: Spring Wrapping—All models**

**By Chris Leydon, Salida, CO**

The challenge of wrapping suspension springs for the prewar cars is rarely described and, as this is probably my last effort in building a K for competition, I thought it best to chronicle the effort to help encourage others not to shy away from the task.

Before the wrapping saga begins, it is important that all four springs are:

1. Disassembled and cleaned.
2. Inspected for cracks, especially around the eyes.
3. Trunnion ends measured for suitable reuse: not excessively worn.
3. Mating surfaces ground to a polish.

Mix a paste of grease and graphite powder, heavy on the graphite side, and coat the mating surfaces of the springs. It is a messy job reminiscent of the days when locomotives reigned, so wear an apron. Assemble the springs using C-clamps and install centering pins and U-clamps. This will squeeze out grease suitable for applying to suspension pins and like. Wipe springs with thinner and coat with radiator enamel. This paint has flex agents that prevent cracking in use. At this point, the springs can be either mounted on the chassis or securely mounted on a bench or table (Fig. 1) as long as clearance is permitted around the axis of the spring.



Fig. 1—A simple set-up for securing a spring.

At this point, a decision must be made on the design of the wrap: either with security threads which engage each single wrap with a cord of smaller diameter or with no security cord. This exposition will be with the former. Not only does it resist unwrapping if a cord gets severed, but it also has precedence as the design used by the factory.

The Cord: The cord used for wrapping is a woven cord, not a twisted cord like the yarn used in weaving or knitting. It measures around 5/32" and is often called "sash cord" because it is used in the restoration of old windows.

The Security cord: is a waxed thread, also woven, of a much thinner diameter. It is similar to the cord used on airplane harnesses before plastic tie wraps became popular.

The length of the cord used is a function of the length of the springs. It should be obvious that the six cylinder cars will use more cord the four cylinder cars, however, if you have never attempted the effort, what will not be obvious is that it takes a hell of a lot of more cord than you might estimate.

The cord will need to be stretched prior to wrapping. Take a minimum of fifty feet of cord and tie one end to a stationary object: milling machine, door knob, car bumper. Pull one end until a noticeable amount of stretch is taken out of the fibers. Roll the cord around a dowel or suitable mandrel to make it easier to handle in the wrapping process. You are now ready to wrap.

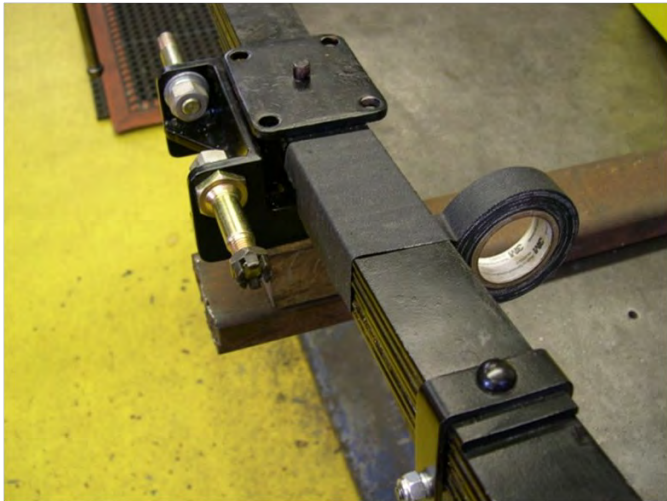


Fig. 2—Tape the springs with old fashioned friction tape, the kind you might have applied to the end of your hockey stick when you were young.



Fig. 3—Mark the friction tape. Notice that the longer spring section close to the axel mount is divided into thirds. On a C,P,J, and M, this might not be necessary. The marking will outline the security thread pattern.

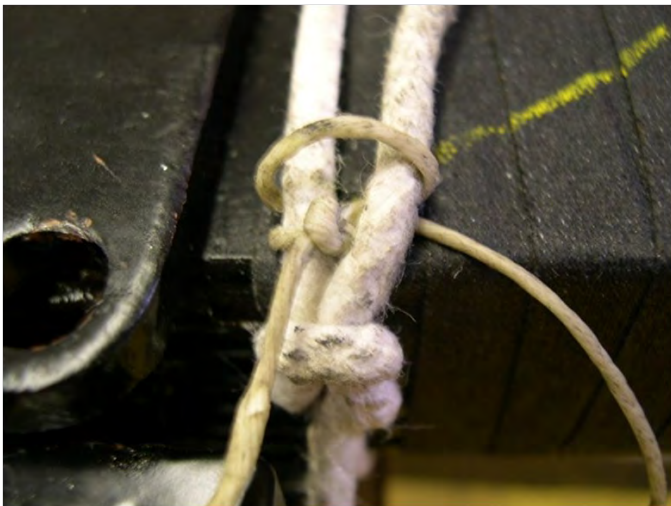


Fig. 4—Starting at the axel purchase, begin with a double slip knot making sure to start at least one cord width away from the axel mounting plate. Tie waxed security cord around and through the wrapping cord to anchor the start of the pattern. This is as seen in photo 4. An alternative to this "start" is to lay a two inch cord in the axis of the spring toward the axel plate and then wrap around the cord as if you were making a hangman's loop.

Fig. 5—Wrap the spring, pulling the cord tight with every loop and secure the waxed thread around the cord as shown with the end of the cord always pinching the wrap against unraveling.

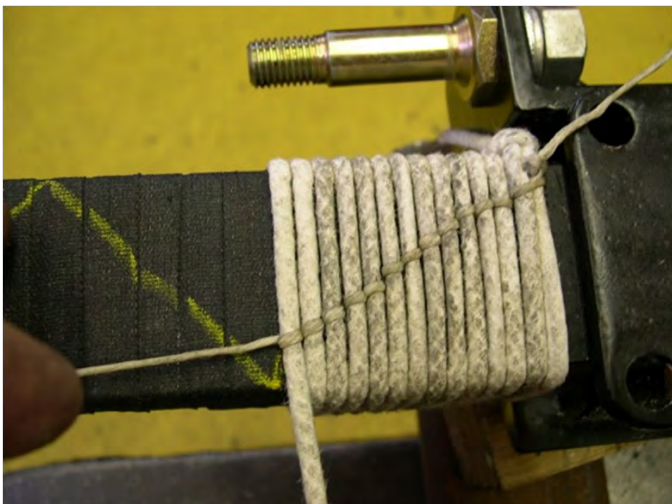


Fig. 6—Have your security cord follow the pattern you have drawn on the friction tape.





Fig. 7—When coming to the end of a spring section, knot the wrapping cord and secure with the security cord to insure against coming undone.



Fig. 8—Ending the wrap



Fig. 9—I use a dog bone type stick with a cut out on the end in which I wedge the cord when either taking a rest or knotting the security cord.

Fig. 10—Simple set-up for handling the cord.



Fig. 11—When approaching the end of the spring, it is sometimes wise to pre-wrap the remainder of the spring to insure you have measured enough cord.



Fig. 12—When going between spring sections, I use a chain loop and leave play in the chain so as not to be stressed by spring elongation in use.



Fig. 13—It is important not to crowd the rubber trunnion cover with the cord. Keep 1/4" away from where it might lie to insure against interference. Seen in the photo is a flat packing tool to tighten up the wrap.

Fig. 14—End the wrap with a chain knot but be sure to engage the waxed security thread in the chain.

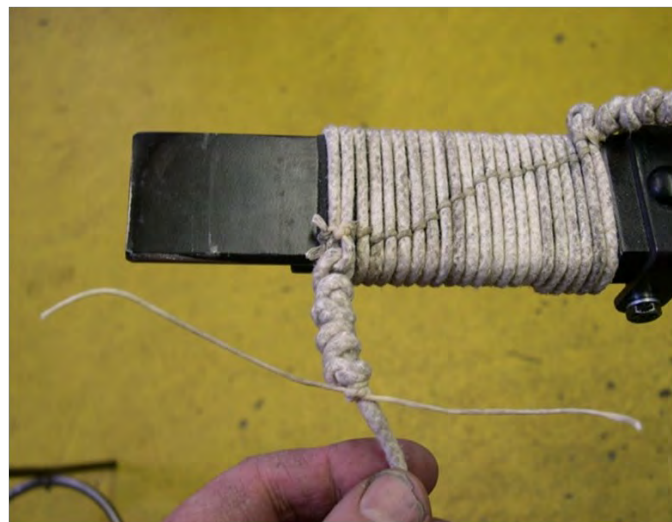


Fig. 15—In order for the job to look "vintage" and protect the wrap from moisture, a process that might safely be omitted in Colorado USA, shellac the cord with amber shellac. Mix in burnt umber die for a deeper color.



Fig. 16—At this point, this is what your springs should look like: tidy. But the process is not over.





Fig. 17—Using a double boiler, melt down brown beeswax candles.



Fig. 18—Brush the liquid wax onto the wrap making sure to put a liner under the spring to catch the drippings.



Fig. 19—Using a hair dryer or heat gun, warm the wax until it saturates the cord and goes in between all the spaces. In the "old days" the prescription was to use Russian Tallow, however, that is not so readily available.

Fig. 20—At this point, your springs are ready for installation. In the 1930's, serious racers would put an additional wrapping of friction tape over the entire wrapping. Although serious about many things, the need for this extra margin of protection has always escaped me.



Chris Leydon is the author of this Technical Topics subject. Chris is the founder and owner of Leydon Restorations, located in the heart of beautiful Bucks County, Pennsylvania. A visit to his web site has this information about his business:

"Leydon Restorations continues the tradition of fine engine restoration first established in 1973. Our small staff size of seven skilled artisans, with over 100 years combined experience, ensures that every engine we restore receives the attention to detail only an expert can provide.

We use original parts when available, and have the capabilities to repair or remanufacture nearly every part of every engine we service. Whenever possible, we attempt to apply modern engine advancements to improve the performance and reliability of our engines without sacrificing their historical integrity.

As we approach our 40th anniversary, the torch has been passed for a new generation of leadership to continue the reputation upon which our name has been built. Let us give you the opportunity to find out what it means to have a Leydon hand-built engine.


Through this portal, I present a portfolio representing four decades of my work as a vintage car restorer and engine builder (Visit the web site to see the portfolio). The purpose of the site is three-fold:


1. to celebrate the craftsmen and craft of the shop which I founded.
2. to share the excitement and joy of working on some of the most prestigious machines in automotive history.
3. to inspire a new generation of craftsmen.

This website is dedicated to all my former employees, suppliers, gifted artisans, and the many patient clients, without whose support, nothing presented here would have been accomplished.

The shop which I founded, Leydon Restorations, continues with the same dedication to craftsmanship under new ownership."

Please visit their website at <http://www.leydonrestorations.com/> to learn more about Chris and Leydon Restorations. Chris will soon be moving to Salida, CO where he is building a house on 35 acres, and where he will join Jack Kahler and the Colorado group of MMM owners. You can contact Chris at <http://www.christopherleydon.com>.

**Another**  **Success**



*By permission of "The Motor"*

**Brooklands Bank Holiday Meeting**  
(August 3rd, 1931)

**1st Mr. H. C. Hamilton (M.G. Six)**  
*In the third August Mountain Handicap*

**2nd Major A. T. G. Gardner**  
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## Rob Roy Hillclimb - 75th Anniversary - August 2012

*The folks "Down Under" certainly enjoy their cars and the outings they have. The following is from an article in the Pre-War Register of Australia Newsletter, November 2012. There were several photos from the meet, and I have included a couple of them on the last page of this newsletter. If you want some interesting reading about pre-war MGs and how these folks enjoy them, you should subscribe to this newsletter by contacting them at: [musgrovemedia@netspeed.com.au](mailto:musgrovemedia@netspeed.com.au) or visiting their website at <http://prewar.mgcc.info/> (Ed.)*

It was Bill Clinton who established Clintons Pleasure Grounds at Christmas Hills in the early 1930s, years before that American chappie created his own Clinton's pleasure grounds in the oval office of the White House. Graeme Jackson reminisces...

At Bill Clinton's invitation, the Light Car Club of Australia developed on the site "the first hill in Australia ...to be specifically made for hillclimbing. It was cut out of virgin bush to the specifications of the LCCA and it is its objective to make it the Shelsley Walsh of Australia." The approximate distance of the hill is half a mile, the steepest section is a 1 in 3.75 grade following the level section across the dam.

The first meeting was held on February 1st 1937, and from then until today, MGs have dominated the entry list for the Rob Roy hill climb. Many drivers compete in cars in fairly standard tune with just spare wheels and tool boxes removed trying to improve on their personal best times, while other cars were seriously stripped and supercharged in an attempt to secure a class win or to achieve that elusive FTD - Fastest Time of the Day. This is not easy, because unless you own a two bob watch, time is not elastic, so you can't have a fast time, but simply a shortest elapsed time from start to finish.

Four out of five of the MGs competing at the first meeting at Rob Roy are still around. Hugh Syme driving J3767, the car now owned by the Batkin family, was quickest MG, climbing in 47.46 seconds, then Les Murphy in P1427, Graeme Steinfors cream car, recorded 49.59 seconds. Derry George in J3763, Ros Kelly's MG, entered as a J4, achieved 49.37 seconds, as did A Morgan in J3766, the now missing Aspal bodied J3. Stan Edwards drove P1424, Anthony Fagan's ex Bill Thompson P type, in the time of 52.95 seconds. A number of other Rob Roy runners at subsequent meetings before the war have been identified. Col McLachlan drove the Jackson red P0595, the Steinfors cream car P1427 ran three times in the hands of Les Murphy who then sold it to Jack O Dea who in November 1938 lowered the run time to 40.41 seconds. Derry George drove the J4 at four meetings; Lister Jackson drove K3016, later Otto Stone's K3 now in the UK. Interestingly at the 23rd June 1940 Rob Roy event, Otto Stone made his only pre-war appearance in an MG in the under 2000cc class, suggesting a 6 cylinder car, achieving a 43.46 seconds climb. This is an excellent time if he was driving the saloon, K0420, which he then owned. R Mauser conducted NA0281 once in 1938, Walter Magilton's Aspal bodied N type, and W Bishop drove J3771 Tim Jackson's J3 on two occasions. PB 0301, Neil Cooke's machine, ran at Rob Roy on 13th June 1938 in the capable hands of J Williamson, recording 42.24 seconds. Williamson had borrowed the car from the then Victorian Governor's daughter, Clair Lyall, and stripped it of mudguards, doors, screen and bonnet. How Claire fared is not recorded.

The Kleinig Special now owned by Tom Roberts, is built on the chassis and running gear of a 1933 L type, so we can claim it as an MG. The Special, which gave Bathurst's Con Rod Straight its name when the Kleinig's Hudson engine disintegrated, ascended Rob Roy on January 1939 in 29.72 seconds. This record time stood throughout the war years. Frank Kleinig then won the Australian Hillclimb Championship in 1948 in a time of 28.37 seconds, a new record time for Rob Roy.

After hostilities had ended and a limited petrol supply became available to the public, Harry Firth flogged a blown P0489, now Michael Martin's P type, in a time of 48.57 seconds but the motor expired and was discarded by Harry. It now lives again in Tony Sloan's car. Peter Manton was renowned for his quick, spirited runs in Graeme Steinfors green car PA1298, and John Barraclough ran the bodiless NE and then in 1949 won the Victorian Hillclimb Championship driving Helen and John Gillett's K3030 in a time of 29.69 seconds. Reportedly his wheels rarely touched the ground.

So 75 years after the first Rob Roy, the VSCC and MGCC combined resources to stage a spectacular anniversary meeting at the hill. Event Chairman, our very own Graeme Steinfors, practically single handed, erected enormous marquees for catering, attracted an entry just short of 100 interesting and desirable pre-war motor cars, managed a large crowd of elated spectators, produced a souvenir program, arranged for fine weather, and then on the Monday, collapsed in a heap. He is still a bit incoherent, is not allowed too much excitement, and consequently is having Austin Seven therapy.

*(You can read the rest of the story about this event on their web site. Ed.)*



# **GoF WEST 2013 Registration Form Carefree, Arizona October 28-November 1, 2013**

**Regist. #**

Registration Fee:  
Check payable to GoF West 2013  
\$50 USD before July 1, 2013  
\$60 USD after July 1, 2013  
In Spirit \$25

Cancellations after July 1 will revert to In-Spirit  
Registration, with the balance refunded.

**Names—as you want them on your name tag and in the booklet:**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Co-driver: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Children under 12 who will be attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you previously attended a GoF WEST? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Has the car previously attended a GoF WEST? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Bringing a Trailer? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Club Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Car: Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_ License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment: Check \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ Master Card \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Hotel Information:**

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Hotel Phone: (480) 488-5300

Online Link to hotel registration: [www.GoFWEST.org](http://www.GoFWEST.org)

Please refer to GoF West 2013 to get these rates.

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**In October 2013 the Arizona MG 'T' Roadrunners hope  
to see YOU "care free" in Carefree, Arizona.**



# The North American MMM Register

Invites you to attend

## TWO Special NAMMMR Events This Year

You won't want to miss either of these events, but, if you can't attend both, one of them will be not far from you, and both are easily accessible from your part of the USA, regardless of where you live. More information will be forthcoming in the NAMMM Newsletters, but the enclosed will hopefully entice you to register and plan

### The Arizona MG T Roadrunners invite you to Arizona!



...to the next GoF West gathering to be held in Carefree, AZ from  
**Oct 28 thru Nov 1, 2013**

*Plan to stay at the beautiful Carefree Resort, nestled within the foothills and boulders of the Sonoran Desert. The accommodations and amenities will surpass your expectations. In addition to stylish, comfortable rooms, there is a full complement of facilities to suit all of your needs.*

Characterized as an upscale residential area, Carefree was conceived in the mid-1950s as a master-planned community. Typical of Carefree's character are its street names—Tranquil Trail, Easy Street, Ho-and-Hum Roads and Long Rifle, Stagecoach and Bloody Basin—which reflect both its quiet, casual air as well as its Western heritage. The motto of Carefree is "Home of Cowboys and Caviar, Where the Old West Meets the New."



The four day event will start on Monday with the roundup of all the first timers and a special display of their cars. If you have never attended a GoF West event then you will be in for a treat because **you** will be our special guests on opening night. All MMM cars will be eligible to participate in all of the events.



Other events for the week will include car display, tech sessions, "special" ladies tech event, funkana, roadrunner rally, and finally, arts and crafts to include photo, model, and dioramas competition. The week's activities will end with an awards banquet.

Overall, there will be lots going on but there will also be plenty of time to socialize, sightsee, shop and relax. And when you combine the casual Carefree setting, local western flare and the excitement of the MG family, you will have a GoF to remember. **So, come along and be....."carefree" in Carefree**

# ....And for those of you in the Eastern US: **Put-In-Bay, Ohio, is Your Destination**

## August 27-29, 2013

**Put-in-Bay** is a village located on South Bass Island in Ottawa County, Ohio. If you look at a map of Ohio, go straight up from the center of the state and you will find Put-In-Bay. There is no doubt that Put-in-Bay is one of the most unique places you will ever visit. The tiny two by four mile island is dotted with historic homes, the nation's third tallest monument, quaint restaurants and local pubs. Beautiful water surrounds Put in Bay where you will find the best walleye and perch fishing in the United States.

Put-in-bay, nicknamed the "Key West of the North", offers an exciting night-life with live musical entertainment to satisfy all generations. Strolling Barbershop singers, bagpipers, steel drums and Ohio's best entertainers are frequently seen on Put-in-Bay island.



Our host hotel will be the Bayshore Resort Put-In-Bay. We have reserved a block of (20) double queen rooms under the North American MMM Register at \$169.00 per night. They also have King rooms with a jacuzzi in the room for \$179.00 and Suites for six for \$225.00 per night. They will hold the block until February 25, 2013 so be sure to register early. Call the hotel directly at 866-422-9746 to make your reservations. Be sure to mention that you are with the NAMMMR group.

For this event, you will register with the Put-In-Bay Roadraces, which will be held at the same time as our meet. You will get your registration materials and updates from their web site at <http://piroadrace.com/events.html>.

Plan to arrive on 26 August. 27 August is the PIBRRR History Day including talks about the history of PIB and visits to historical venues. There will also be a series of laps of the original road course held through the streets of Put-In-Bay. The 28th will be PIBRRR Race Day at the Airport. After the races there is a cookout sponsored by Joe's Bar (Cemetery Corner). You will register for this cookout when the PIBRRR Registration opens.

29 August will be the PIBRRR Car Show Day. This should be very special this year with vintage and historical sports/racing cars circulating the island. Having the North American MMM Register cars on hand will simply dazzle the islanders.

The village played a significant role in the War of 1812 as the location of the squadron of U.S. naval commander Oliver Hazard Perry, who sailed from the port on September 10, 1813 to engage a British squadron just north of the island in the Battle of Lake Erie. If you care to stay for Labor Day, there will be special Battle of Lake Erie events this year. Ten Tall Ships will reportedly grace the waters of Put-In-Bay Island. You will be able to see them right from the car show grounds. Make your accommodations accordingly.

If you have questions, please get in contact with Craig A. Peck at (440) 238-2729 or (440) 315-0981. He prefers e-mail at [CraigAPeck@wowway.com](mailto:CraigAPeck@wowway.com).

NAMMM REGISTER NEWSLETTER Volume 26, Number 1





As you can see, both of these events are going to be outstanding events in the chronicles of the NAMMM Register. We would like to see as many MMM cars as possible at both events, so use the spring time to get the cars in shape for the road trip, or trailer them—we don't care. Just get 'em there!! And if you can't bring the car, bring yourself; we know you will enjoy seeing all of the MG T-series cars in Carefree and the historic racing cars at Put-In-Bay.

Be sure to register early for GoF 2013 at Carefree by sending in the registration form, or go on line at [gofwest.org](http://gofwest.org) and send the completed form electronically. Hotel information for the Carefree event is included on the registration form, or check out the details on line. Send a note or email to Mickey Saperstein at [f3mickey@hotmail.com](mailto:f3mickey@hotmail.com), or Jack at [mgjack@aol.com](mailto:mgjack@aol.com) to let us know that you have registered.

Event registration for the Put-In-Bay event will be forthcoming at the road race web site; be sure to check that periodically. But be certain to register at the hotel very soon before they release the block of rooms. And, after you have registered, send an email to Craig Peck at [CraigAPeck@wowway.com](mailto:CraigAPeck@wowway.com), or Jack at [mgjack@aol.com](mailto:mgjack@aol.com).

If you have any questions, please contact Jack Kahler at [mgjack@aol.com](mailto:mgjack@aol.com), Larry Long at [emgee-guy@aol.com](mailto:emgee-guy@aol.com), or the contacts shown on the [Gofwest.org](http://Gofwest.org) web site.

Looking forward to seeing you at these events! **Larry Long, Director of Register Communications**



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# **MG Spanners - Abingdon, King Dick and Shelley**

**(with apologies to Lynne Truss!)**

**by Simon Johnston**

*Reprinted from the Triple-M Register Newsletter, December 2012*

It's all Oliver Richardson's fault really! As he was coming to the end of the fabulous job he did in putting my J2 together, he casually dropped the suggestion that I might like to gather up some nice period tools to go with it. What a great idea, I thought, but where to start? Well of course there's the list of tools in the Parts List and in the Instruction Manual, and the very useful picture on Barry Walker's web site showing a wide range of tools for our cars. But there wasn't much by way of specifics available. A trawl through the MMM Forum produced lots of general information that seemed to boil down to the fact that our cars got fitted out with whatever tools happened to be in stock on any given day and that one can't be too obsessive about originality as what one car had might be totally different from the next car down the line.

There was much talk on the Forum about Shelley and King Dick and Abingdon spanners, and in particular their adjustable ones, but little by way of factual information about which was which, which was better (if any) and why the apparent interchangeability between them at MG in the early 1930s.

But let's start with the old canard that King Dick adjustable spanners with Abingdon stamped on them were made specially for MG. But first we need to go back to the 1850s when one Thomas Mabbutt, from Abingdon on Thames, opened the Abingdon Works in the gun making quarter of Birmingham where he made breech blocks, roller skates and also some tools. The business prospered and began to specialise in the manufacture of motorcycles and hand tools and in 1907 moved to new premises in King's Road, Birmingham. The tools produced under the "King Dick" brand were actually named after the show winning bulldog belonging to the owner of Abingdon Works. The name was adopted first as a trade mark in 1881 (complete with picture of the prize winning hound himself!) and later, in the 1940s, incorporated into the name of the company itself as Abingdon King Dick. (As an aside, Abingdon Works also made motor cycles in the 1920s under the 'AKD' brand - Abingdon King Dick)

In general it would seem that while the King Dick name was the only name stamped or cast on open ended spanners, the adjustable spanners sometimes also have 'Abingdon' stamped on them. But as should now be obvious this has nothing to do with MG at Abingdon, but simply refers to the name of the manufacturer of the spanner.

But why are the King Dick and Shelley adjustable spanners virtually identical? One avenue of research led me to believe that at one time Shelley actually owned King Dick, but while there was anecdotal evidence to support this from a former Norton employee (Shelley owned Norton in the 1920s), there was nothing factual to

back it up. I had a great exchange of correspondence with a guy who is writing a history of the adjustable spanner in Britain (yes, really) and he could throw no light on this, but then two seemingly unconnected bits of information came my way which made the link. In my correspondence with King Dick Tools Ltd., I learnt that Abingdon Works went into decline in the late 1920s and early 1930s ending up in liquidation in 1931, and the company, including King Dick tools, was bought by a Mansell family. And in researching the Norton connection I found out that one of Bob Shelley's close business associates was Walter "Bill" Mansell whom he appointed as Managing Director of Norton when he bought it in the mid 1920s. But I couldn't find anything to confirm that they were one and the same Mansell.

And then over lunch with Mike and Anne Allison and Oliver Richardson when Sandra and I went to collect the J2, the subject of Karl Weissmann's J4 came up (I can't remember why) and the story of how he was given a set of King Dick tools by the car's original owner D K Mansell who apparently had some connection with King Dick. With Karl Weissmann's help it was fairly easy to track down, and then speak to, Tina Mansell, grand daughter of Dennis Mansell, J4 owner and later MD of King Dick, and great grand daughter of Walter "Bill" Mansell, MD of Norton and the head of the family that purchased King Dick in the 1931. Bingo! The link between Shelley and King Dick and MG was the Mansell family.

So why the interchangeability between the brands at MG? To be honest, there's no definitive answer to this that I could find. But it does seem that within the Shelley group there was a general policy of sourcing components from companies that had an association with Shelley by virtue of their owners being directors of Shelley companies. So King Dick, owned by Walter "Bill" Mansell's family, would have been considered part of the Shelley 'family' when it came to doing business. And in fact there are parts of the adjustable spanners which would seem to be identical by virtue of having the same Registered Design number stamped on them and which quite probably came from the same factory. So it may simply have been that MG bought from both Shelley and King Dick; or they bought from Shelley who could fall back on "Bill" Mansell's King Dick company for supplies if need be; or indeed they may simply have purchased tools from a local wholesaler who kept both Shelley and King Dick in stock.

So if we're on the lookout for an appropriate adjustable spanner for our MMM MG what should we look for? As far as I can determine, MG did not specify any particular preference (although I seem to recall that Shelley jacks were specified in some cases) but I didn't have access to all the parts lists so I stand to be corrected on



this. But we shouldn't forget that in 1931 the makers of King Dick went bust after some years of decline so they probably wouldn't have been seen as the premium brand that they are thought of today. I'd venture to suggest that they may quite possibly have been the second choice for MG in the early 1930s with Shelley, a large and successful manufacturer of a wide range of tools and equipment, as first choice. But I doubt we'll ever know for sure.

So when hunting on eBay or round the auto jumbles how to tell if a spanner, whether Shelley or King Dick, is of the right period for our cars? Well, we can't be absolutely precise but we can at least narrow it down to pre-1931 and 1931-45. Prior to 1931 the adjustables, both Shelley and King Dick, had a slot down one side that extended as far as the adjusting barrel (see Photo 1). So one like this would probably really only be appropriate for an early M type.

The next major change was in 1945 when the adjusting barrel was increased in length from 0.45" to 0.6" (Photo 2). So it's really quite easy to pick out one that dates from the 1930s or early forties as the adjusting barrel is noticeably wider than it is high (Photo 3). But beyond that, for now I haven't been able to identify any specific characteristics that would enable more precise dating. (See note1)

OK, so we've now found an acceptable adjustable, whether King Dick or Shelley - your choice - so how do



we choose which open ended spanners to put in our tool roll? The same arguments about whether to go for King Dick or for Shelley still apply and I'm not convinced that either one of them is inherently better than the other. The Shelley spanners I acquired (Photo 4) are rather more substantial than the flat plate or flat forged ones one more

commonly sees and I haven't actually come across a similar set of King Dick ones. That's not to say of course that they don't exist; simply that they certainly are uncommon.

The standard sizes in the tool kits seem to have been 3/16 x 1/4, 5/16 x 3/8 and 7/16 x 1/2. Note the lack of overlap in sizes so tough luck if you need two 1/4 spanners to undo a lock nut! But more importantly, note the lack of descriptive size, i.e. no W or BSF.

And this is the key to making sure that your spanners are age appropriate, although as we'll see even then we can't be absolutely definitive in every case. Most of our modern workshop spanners probably carry dual sizing, i.e. both 1/4W x 5/16W and 5/16BSF x 3/8BSF but this simply isn't correct for a 1930s tool kit.

The original Whitworth sizes (where the nut/bolt size corresponds to the spanner marking, i.e. a 1/2" W spanner fits a Whitworth bolt with a shank/thread diameter of 1/2") were standardised in 1841 by Sir Joseph Whitworth and featured a significant head oversize to accommodate the crude tolerances of the production methods of the

(Note 1) Ron Geesin, who is writing the magnum opus on the history of the adjustable spanner in Britain, has promised to let me have the results of his research into the minutiae of King Dick and Shelley adjustables in due course. But for now, this is as narrow a date range as I could confirm from the information he was able to give me.

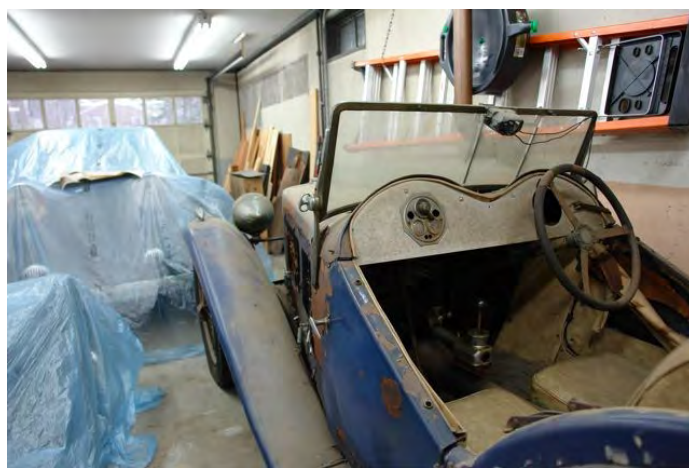


## 1933 J2 For Sale

1933 J 2 for sale. Swept wing car. Needs full restoration, extra parts included.

James Perman 203 375 6095

[brooklandsengr@mac.com](mailto:brooklandsengr@mac.com)



MMM MMM

*This was a note that appeared in the Triple M newsletter from Australia; I thought that there may be some interest with the NA MMM Register folks (Ed.):*

It was good to see you at the Sydney Concours in October. Thank you for keeping my solitary Pre-War entry company with the splendid addition of the Airy Coupe, always a delight to see. As discussed, enclosed are a couple of sample pen and wash drawings that I enjoy doing, and readers of the Pre-War Newsletter would be welcome to enquire about me doing something similar for them. All I need is a nice photograph of their car and I'll do the rest. If anyone is interested in a similar drawing or a watercolour, I could email them shots of what's available, or arrange to do one especially for a very reasonable fee. My preference is Pre-War MGs and vintage racing cars, but I may be corruptible. My email address is [hurst01@gmail.com](mailto:hurst01@gmail.com) and my phone numbers are: 02 9617 1123, 0457 810 200





# DGROUP DISPATCH

NUMBER 38  
SPRING 2013



THE 8/33 MG MIDGET SPORTS SERIES D (LONG CHASSIS)

[www.mgdgroup.org](http://www.mgdgroup.org)

## NEWS AND VIEWS.....

Good to see so many D owners and other Dispatch readers at Stoneleigh! I thought it lacked a few stalls than previous years and certainly visitor numbers seemed down. I missed the autojumble/garage clearance area too, which we've had in earlier years – and what happened to the MG undercover parking! Apart from collecting a couple of items for an overseas D owner I bought nothing, very unusual for me.

As some of you will have noticed the diary page on the website has been updated for 2013 events. If any of you take your D out on 'Drive it Day' on 21st April do let me know – ideally with a picture. I intend to be at MG Silverstone of course and will arrange a meeting point on the Saturday – watch this space. It will be the D Group's 10th Anniversary in the Autumn and we hope to have some sort of celebration or passing acknowledgement at this year's Pre-War Prescott on July 20th. If you've never been to Prescott, or never been to a Pre-War Prescott, this would be the one to attend! You don't have to attend in a pre-war car, there is ample room for spectator's cars so even if your D is not finished just come along, it's a great day out! As before I can offer help with accommodation lists or other info. For more information on the event as a whole see [www.prewarprescott.com](http://www.prewarprescott.com)

## THOSE JIGSAW PUZZLES.....

Remember the D Type jigsaw puzzle from 1975 mentioned in Dispatch 34 and pictured on our Archive page on the website and again here? Well one of our readers in the States has amazingly found a very small, brand new batch, unopened and still sealed, in his cellar! Unfortunately the cost of getting some here is making them somewhat expensive but if you would like one at £10 plus UK postage let me know – first come first served! If you are in the States and would like one let me know and I will put you in touch with the rest of the batch!



## NEWS ON CARS.....

Chris Blood has sold D0430 mentioned in the last 'Dispatch', fortunately to a very enthusiastic J1 owner and already a Dispatch reader so we look forward to seeing it back on the road in due course!

Chris's saloonette continues its rebuild as can be seen in this recent photo. Needless to say numerous small problems arise as there is little to base originality on but he is getting there.



## BITS AND PIECES.....

At last the proper original floor plate for the D (and F1 – see original manuals) has been made and is pictured here. Most of you will be aware that the one sold from the usual sources is for other/later Triple M cars and only mentions the brake adjustment and doesn't include for the fuel tap.



They are a very reasonable £9 each including UK postage and please contact the seller, John Emmett, by email direct at [je@bpr.org.uk](mailto:je@bpr.org.uk) if you would like one. Obviously overseas postage would make them more.

In the pipeline as a good possibility are complete advance/retard sets for the steering column down to the distributor. As you are probably aware these are like hens teeth as so many were destroyed when 'governed' distributors replaced the original manual control ones in later years during maintenance. No commitment but if you might be interested please let me know so a reasonable batch size can be thought out. For a picture of at least the top end see the MG Girl picture on our website under Archive.

Also in the pipeline are original door catches and behind-the-front-wing fairings; watch this space!!

Recently purchased by one of our readers was an inlet manifold for a downdraught SU carburettor as pictured here in its undrilled state.

This separates the exhaust and inlet manifolds and allows for a more efficient exhaust system. Noticed at Stoneleigh on Andy King's stand were finished versions of this inlet manifold and a very tidy looking 4 branch exhaust manifold, presumably for the J2, but no doubt he has 3 branch ones suitable for M/D to go with this inlet one. Not cheap but those seeking more performance without changing the look of the car might be interested in investigating these items further. Interesting that the reference on the casting to 'EX120' maybe reference to the record breaker and experimental car of that number that preceded the C and D MG models.



Following on from the piece in the last 'Dispatch' about the oil gun for the lubrication system I came across 'Service Information Sheet No.18' issued by the factory in August 1934. It covers the adjustment of the needle valves at the various points and the fact that the rear spring trunnions should now have the needles removed to allow more oil to reach them. I'll include the sheet in full in the next Dispatch if of interest.

And finally, highly recommended for our cars are the relatively new coolants available. Several makes now around but for a few years I've used '4Life' – now marketed by Classic Castrol (search for Classic Castrol dealers on the web – there is sure to be one near you). The great thing is that it is not water based so doesn't create rust, has a higher boiling point than water and won't freeze! Not as cheap as water so you need to keep it if you drain the rad but very effective.





# Technical Topics

*Reprinted from the Pre-War MG Register of Australia Newsletter, Nov., 2012*

Tim Jackson's restoration of J3771 is progressing well, but two missing items are the front stays which support the cycle mudguards and on which the headlights are mounted. In tracking down replacements it was quickly realised that there are two patterns of stays produced at Abingdon for the cycle winged J series MG. The stays which allow for the mounting of the headlights further forward and closer to the radiator, which is correct for Tim's car, are very difficult to find. Why is it so? The answer is to be found in the MG Car Company Ltd Service Information No. 2J document issued in January 1933.

## "MUD PROTECTION ON THE J2 TWO-SEATER

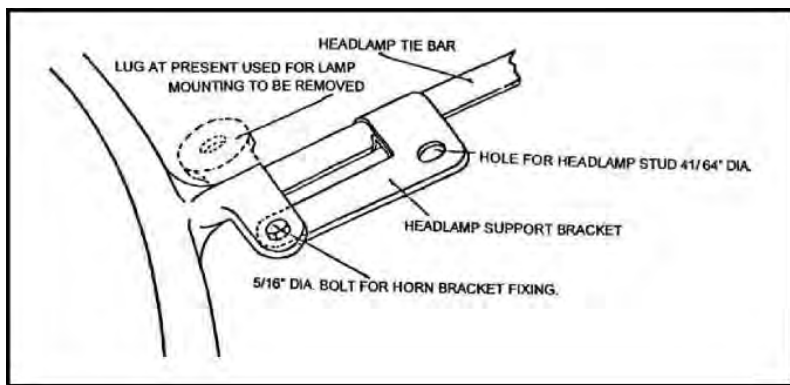
A number of complaints have been received to the effect that in wet weather the J2 model throws so much mud on the windscreen in line with the driver's eyes that it makes the car unpleasant to drive. Taking advantage of recent very wet weather, tests have been made to see what can be done to improve matters. As a first test the headlamps were removed and it was promptly found that the trouble had disappeared, the lamps were refitted and the trouble appeared as before. The problem was therefore primarily a question of how to mount the headlamps in a position which cures the trouble without spoiling the appearance of the car.

The drawing shows how this is done. The existing headlamp support lugs are cut off and filed up, the bare patch so caused being touched in with cellulose. Headlamp support brackets Part Nos. 2425 offside and 2426 nearside are then fitted in position utilizing the existing front lugs. The headlamps can then be mounted in a new position further forward and closer together which is the best position so far found.

Various half valances and other devices have been tried at the Works but none of them produce the effect which is obtained by moving the headlamps. Headlamp brackets as above can be obtained from the Works on receipt of chassis number of the car in question."

Although the information sheet was issued in January 1933, the production car specification was not changed until 8th May 1933 commencing car chassis number J3330 and continued until 13th July 1933 when chassis number J3438 and subsequent J types were fitted with swept wings. So of the total 2494 J types manufactured, only 108 examples of the aerodynamic J2s and a few aerodynamic J3s, with the cross-eyed headlights left the production line at Abingdon, a rare variation indeed.

The 22 J3s were made concurrently with the J2s from 3rd November 1932 to 27th July 1933, but they had a separate batch of allocated chassis numbers commencing J3751. It seems that the J3s were favoured with cross-eyed headlight wing stays earlier than the J2s because J3762 and J3763 which were finished on 2nd February 1933 had the aerodynamic update.



**Mark Alsop concentrates on the hill in M0402—Rob Roy 75th Anniversary event—August 2012. Photo from Robin Page**



**A nervous Tony Sloan heads the MG queue for the Rob Roy starting line—75th Anniversary event—August 2012. Photo from Matthew Magilton**



**Ross Kelly's C-Type (C0261) in the main hall of Melbourne's exhibition Buildings for the 2012 Motorclassica. Harry Hinkling's F1 (F0525) behind. Photo by Robin Page**

*All photos from the Pre-War MG Register of Australia Newsletter, Nov., 2012*