

# British Motor Club of Utah

November 1998

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## Want To Look At An Engine's Insides?

The November Tech Session will focus on engine rebuilding—not the actual rebuilding, but how to diagnose a disassembled engine's ills and how to know what to replace. Mike Bailey is rebuilding a MGB engine and two XPAG engines and will take us on the tour. The XPAG engines are from an MG-TD and an MG Y type. Both cars use the same basic engine. If you have never disassembled an engine, and never plan to do so, this will be a chance to see what is inside and how to talk intelligently to your mechanic. If you plan to tear your engine apart over the winter, this will be a chance to see how a pro does it.

For those of you who may not know Mike, he runs Bailey's Sinclair at **4793 South State Street in Murray** (northeast corner of State and 4800 South). He has been a professional mechanic and MG owner for years. The session will be at his station beginning at **2:00 PM on Saturday, November 21**. Notice that this is a date change for this event. For more info call Mike at the station, 264-8421.

## Fall Tinker Day

By Mark Bradakis

The weather report looked bleak earlier in the week, and memories of all those past Tinker Days where folks just stood and watched it rain, or snow, kept cropping up. But Saturday the 10th dawned bright and clear, if somewhat cool. Unfortunately, various circumstances delayed the newsletter with the Tinker

Day announcement, so the turnout for the fall Tinker Day was a bit sparse.

Still, half a dozen stalwarts who heard about the event through word of mouth or email made the trip to the Fat Chance Garage location with their cars. Pugs' Bricklin isn't British, but certainly quirky enough to be welcome in our company. He worked on the carb floats a bit, got the fuel level closer to spec. Bill Robinson brought his nice maroon Spitfire down for some help with routing the emissions hoses and equipment, in an effort to get the car past the I/M tests. Jon Hermance helped with this task, since the Volvo he drove down needed no tinkering that day. And as the afternoon wore on a bit, the charcoal was lit, and some chicken wings and drumsticks were enjoyed by all the participants, as well as a few of the neighboring shop tenants. This could be the start of a new tradition on Tinker Day!

Attending were Pugs Pivrotto, Jon Hermance, Bill Robinson, Mitch Johnson and family, Harold Jones, with Denzel, and Andy Lindeman.

## End of Season Dinner

Mark Bradakis

A crisp, clear autumn afternoon, perfect for tooling about in a classic British sportscar. But alas, of the dozens of folks who made their way down to American Fork for the end of season dinner, only one Triumph made the trip. Way to go Dan and Sharon! While there may not have been many LBCs there, there was an interesting array of parts brought along,

some displayed more prominently than others.

The dinner was quite nice, held at the Mi Ranchito. The staff did a fairly good job in dealing with a group this size, 29 people. The food was pretty tasty, and it didn't take long for the orders to be filled. There was some minor confusion about who got what at which table, but nobody seems to have gone away hungry. Kudos to Greg and Susan Chester for organizing this year's end of season dinner, thanks!

Attending the event were: Mike & Sharon Bailey, Robert & Sandy Vargas, Susan & Jon Hermance, Bruce Schilling, Dan & Sharon Forster, Karen & Mark Bradakis, Floyd & Kathy Inman, Andrew Lindeman, Ken, Maya, Tamara & Sean Lolmaugh, Bill Walton, Harold & Suzanne Anderson, Bill & Julie Robinson, Mike Johnston, Beth Strathmann, Greg, Susan, Amanda & David Chester.

## Rallye to Glenwood Springs

By Phil Bates

As anyone knows, the most important thing to do before a rallye is make sure your car is in excellent working order. I had only driven my '58 MGA about 400 miles since a rebuild. Further, I made several improvements along the way. Due to parts supply problems, I was up until 5 AM installing an oil cooler, a new clutch hose, shimmying the driver's side door, and performing other general preventative maintenance. So the next morning at 8 AM, off from Idaho Falls to Pocatello to pick up my navigator, Debbie Rubel.

We left Pocatello at about 10 AM. We took the scenic route to Arvada, CO: US 30 across Idaho and part of Wyoming to I-80, then to US 191 (which goes by Flaming Gorge) to Vernal, and then we took US 40 the rest of the way. A nice drive, with the top down most of the way. We arrived at the La Quinta Inn at about midnight, decided to get up at 5:45, and immediately went to sleep.

**Saturday morning: day of the rallye**  
Debbie & I wake up at 5:45 as planned, get ready, and head over pick up our registration, figure out some times, and eat breakfast. We are car 9, so we start at 8:09. Debbie takes care of adding 9 minutes to all of the times on the general instructions. This rallye is a bit different than some—it is "Monte Carlo" style. This means that all directions are clearly given to you (no riddles to solve) along with odometer readings, and the proper arrival time for any check points. You can take a documented delay with no penalty, but you must document it accurately between checkpoints. You can stop to hit the controls just right, but usually they are 0.1 miles apart in sets of 3, so it is hard to hit all 3 accurately if you stop too close. This is a rallye, so we take the top back down (it rained on us at the end of the trip the night before). It is my job to calibrate the clock to the second, and at 8:09, off on the rallye we go.

After the odometer check (at 14.02 miles) we pull out to have another rallye car, a Jeep, number 11 in front of us. They obviously don't know exactly what is going on, as they are in front of us (we are car 9) and they tend to be stopping or swerving a lot. This car was a consistent problem, but nothing that we couldn't get around. The rallye takes I-70 west and heads out toward Dillon Reservoir. We head south on US 91, by Climax, CO. Somewhere on Freemont pass (if I remember the location correctly) it got very cold and started snowing. Needless to say, we stop to put the top up. Top goes up, side curtains go on, and knowing that I can't close the driver's side door from in the car, I shut myself out of the car. Then Debbie unzips the zip-out rear window, and I climb in.

On we go, and with no trouble as we head to Leadville where we have a 20 minute break. We head out of Leadville on US 24 and go south toward Buena Vista. Past Buena Vista, we head south on US 285 almost to Ponchoa Springs, but there is a checkpoint before that. We missed the turn for the checkpoint, so we take a 4 minute 30 second delay to get back on course. We find our way back, and end up heading west on US 50 over Monarch Pass. We go over the pass, and continue toward Gunnison.

It's about noon, and we hit Gunnison, where a 55 minute break is provided for gas, food and whatever else, and the Gunnison McDonalds is recommended. We get gas and go to Pizza Hut. We start back up on time, and head out on US 50 to Blue Mesa Lake, and take a right on US 92 to go through the Black Canyon. Debbie decides that she is tired, and we have another 30 miles to a checkpoint, so she tells me to wake her up at an odometer reading of 26 miles, and she goes to sleep while I drive (it's about 2 PM). I wake Debbie up at 26 miles, and we pass on time and go out of the Black Canyon to Hotchkiss, and north on CO 133 up Keebler Pass and McClure Pass. On north up toward Carbondale. On the way to Carbondale we have a built-in 15 minute stop in Redstone, a quaint little town, but very busy. On we go for a fairly large stretch of road. We head right up 133 until it joins with 82, and head to Glenwood Springs. At the end of the rallye there are about 10 checkpoints (a place to rack up points fast). We head in, estimating that we have somewhere between 30 and 60 points (one point per second off of perfect - ahead or behind) amongst the 20 some odd checkpoints. There comes Jeep #11 passing us. They stop short and put us behind. I ask Debbie if she wants to take a delay, but it's 5 PM, and we've been at this since 8:09. "No just gun it," she says. We do, and hit the first checkpoint off by quite a bit. By #10, we were about just right. In to the Hotel Colorado for the evening.

There is a dinner that evening, and we sit with a bunch of people that did the Tour. The tour seems much more difficult to me.

## The Lucas Calendar

This calendar works about as well as its namesake, so use it with care. Club events have bold dates. The others you may find interesting. All events are subject to change.

**November 21. Tech Session at Bailey's Sinclair. This is a date change!**

**January 16. Tech Session.**

**February 13. Pot-Luck Dinner.**

**June 14-18, 1999. National MGA Convention at Lake Tahoe.**

**August 2-6, 1999. GoF West at Whistler Ski Resort near Vancouver, British Columbia.**

You are told about where to go, and asked questions, many of which are trivia questions. All of the answers can be found somewhere around where you drive on a sign or something. Dinner is over at about 9:30 and we head back to sleep.

### **Sunday: car show and funkana**

Sunday is the car show. There are several MGAs there—one in triolite green, one virtually perfect car in British racing green. Several MGBs, an Aston Martin, a few Austin Healeys, a couple Jags, a Rover 3500, several TR6s, and TR3s. A good showing overall. They also have the Funkhana on Sunday.

The Funkhana route went like this: 1. Put on XL tee shirts prior to the start. 2. Pull up between two work benches that have MGB heads on them. Get out, swap spark plugs from one head to the other, get back in. Back out and head forward. 3. Drive by some cones, and have the passenger try to toss any one of 3 fan belts on them. Three misses gives you a 20 second penalty. 4. Pull up to a rope attached to a cone. The passenger grabs the rope, and you back in a circle around it. Pulling the cone over gives you a 10 second penalty. 5. Continue backing into a "garage" (actually a rectangle made up of cones). Swap tee

shirts. 6. Pull out of the garage (forward) and swerve around a cone. 7. Swerve back on course and pass the right hand wheels between two rows of tennis balls (6 each). Penalty is 5 seconds per ball knocked out of line. 8. Pass finish line

You are allowed to run the funkhana 3 times. We ran it twice. The first time, we got a penalty for not getting a fan belt on the cones. Overall time was 2:28. We pulled out and strategized a while. We decided that we were just going to do everything fast. We were not going to stop to throw the fan belts, and certainly we will knock over the cone with the rope - well it takes more than 10 seconds to do it right. So this is exactly what we did. We got lucky, and Debbie threw all three belts at once, and hit the cone - great no penalty yet. Next Debbie grabbed the rope, and we went flying around the cone - well we did knock that down - 10 second penalty. We pulled into the garage (barely) and swapped tee shirts. As we did this we hear the siren on the bull horn go off, and Debbie says she heard the official say "look out folks, they're maniacs." We pulled out, did the swerve, and blew threw the tennis balls without knocking any over. Over the line and locked up all 4 wheels. Including 10 second penalty 1:31. This firmly putting us in first place. That lasted until the very last car ran it. They had the same time - 1:21, and no penalty. So we come in second.

At noon, the rallye, show, funkhana, and tour awards were awarded. We took 1st place in novice class in the rallye. Total points in 31 checkpoints was 116. There were only 2 scores better than ours in any class - an 86 and a 23 (these guys were in computer class). We were awarded the trophy for best showing on the weekend, but as they were taking pictures, it came to the attention that we had a 1st and a 2nd - another car took 1st in their class in the rallye, and 1st in the car show, so it had to be awarded to them.

Sunday at 1:30 back on the road to home. Scenic route again, but this time we took 70 over to CO 139 up to Rangely and

across 40 to Ogden. On up I-15 to home. Debbie got home at about 11 PM, I arrived in Idaho Falls at about midnight.

*Editor's Note: We recently got a copy of the "Dynamo" from the Rocky Mt. Centre of the MG Car Club. It had a photo of Phil and Debbie rocketing through the cones in the funkhana, and the note that Phil probably didn't know that the person giving him his award, Dick Fritz(?), is a BMCU member. We are everywhere!!*

## A Sad Note

We learned recently that Steve Nelson's wife, Jane, died a few weeks ago after a long illness. Steve and Jane had appeared regularly at club events in Steve's white MGA.

## Left Over Parts

Thanks to Andy Lindeman for copying the October newsletter.

The BMCU, in its timely fashion, is starting to develop a way to use the email addresses many of you sent in last February. There actually will be two ways to use email. The first will be a way to send out official announcements of late breaking news and reminders of events. These will be sent to everyone who supplied us with an email address. The second will be a way for members of the BMCU, and anyone else interested, to chat, sell cars or parts, or get advice on problems. To be part of this second list you will have to subscribe on your own. To subscribe send a message to [majordomo@autox.team.net](mailto:majordomo@autox.team.net) with a single line in the body of the message, not as the subject. This line should say "subscribe bmcu", just those two words in all lower case letters, no quotes, no signature, or anything else. You will receive a reply message with instructions on using this mailing list, and how to remove your name from the list if you desire.

MGA owners, we have started the process of getting a group to go to the North

American MGA Register's (NAMGAR) 1999 national convention at Lake Tahoe over July 14-18. You will be receiving a letter from Steve Nelson giving you some information about this event and a NAMGAR membership application. To attend this event you must be a member of NAMGAR. NAMGAR publishes a great magazine, MGA!, that is well worth the membership fee even if you do not go to Tahoe. National conventions are great fun and to have one this close and not attend would be passing up a wonderful opportunity. Most the cars there will not be show cars. Yes, there will be a show, but most cars will have been driven there, and will be used as drivers. Don't be embarrassed about your car. Worried about the car making it? We will go as a group, with a commitment from everyone to help if you have problems. We will bring an array of spare parts and tools that can be shared through the group. It is likely someone will have mechanical problems, but it is unlikely that we won't be able to fix it. There will likely be someone with us in a modern tow vehicle, too. We would suggest that you try to get your car into good running condition during the winter. Then drive it a lot before going on the trip. If you think you would like to go, make hotel reservation during the winter. It is far easier to cancel reservations than it is to make them when the hotel is full. We will have a meeting during the winter to talk about plans. Talk to the T-series owners, they love the GoF trip. I talked to a guy from Michigan in the fall who said their MGA club would make the trip to Tahoe. I would guess that is 1500 miles or more for them. If they can do it we can too.

Congratulations to Dean Lowe. Dean's MGB won first in its class at the Senior Citizen's car show at the U of U last month.

## Autojumble

For sale: '79 MG Midget, totally restored, tonneau cover, car cover, 5,000 miles on reconditioned engine. \$3,500. Call Andrew, 485-7381.

## Hint for the Month From the Exchequer

Shocks need oil too? You bet! If your shock fluid level is very low, the car will bounce up and down over bumps. With the car on level ground, remove the filler plug (Whitworth threads and head, but a crescent wrench will do) and check that the oil is visible just below the plug-hole threads. If it isn't, use Armstrong lever shock fluid from your British parts supplier. Not available? You can substitute 20-weight or 30-weight motorcycle fork oil. Use a small pump type oil can to put the oil in. Leaking shock seals need to be replaced or the shock needs to be rebuilt. Check the oil once a year.

--Thanks to The Morris Gazette of the Arizona MG Club.

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This Newsletter is published by the British Motor Club of Utah, Ltd., a non-profit corporation of British automobile owners. The group holds monthly events such as drives, picnics, technical sessions, and more. We welcome owners (or potential owners) of British cars, in any condition, to the group. Membership is free, but we ask for a donation at events to support the Newsletter and other activities. If you would like to join the group, send your name, address, and a list of British cars owned to Bruce Schilling, 917 East Mill Creek Way, Salt Lake City, Utah 84106, or to Bruce's email address shown above.

## British Motor Club of Utah

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