

FALL SALE  
SAVE 20% ON  
SPECIFIC CATALOG PAGES!

# Moss Motoring

YOUNG HEARTS  
TIMELESS CARS

A MINI  
Legacy

ISSUE 3, 2014

[www.MossMotoring.com](http://www.MossMotoring.com)



SEE THE SPECIAL INSERT

# FALL SALE

20% OFF!

# **MOTORFEST**

## Win a \$250 Moss Shopping Spree

Register for Moss Motorfest before May 1, 2015 and you will be automatically entered!



Motorfest fires up on June 6, 2015, at our east coast facility in Petersburg, Virginia, and many have already bought their tickets! Registration is just \$20 for a vehicle (\$15 each additional car) and is only available online until May 31, 2015. It's going to be well worth the price of admission! Bring your family and friends—petrol-heads young and old will have a blast!

**Visit [MossMotors.com/Motorfest](http://MossMotors.com/Motorfest) to Register**



Save 20% on select  
catalog pages for:  
Cooling | Clutch | Suspension | Brakes



# Moss Motoring



## Restored?

Not everyone's gonna like it, but this guy has got a point.

5



## Garage Echoes

If you think this is about a car...

8



## Love in Motoring

May roads like this never end.

10



## The Issigonis Effect

A look at the man who changed everything.

16

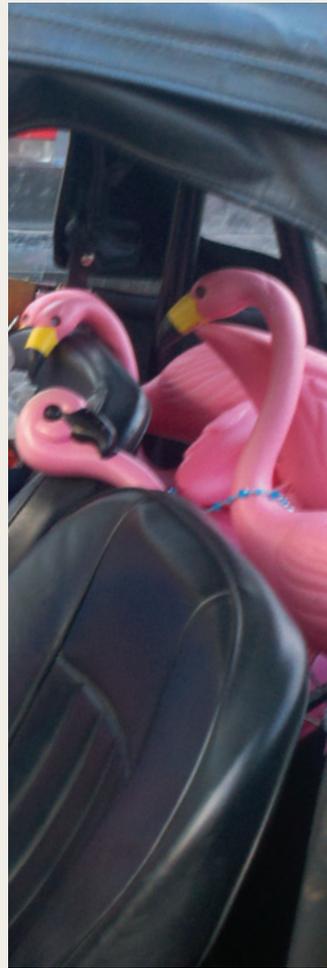
## On the Cover:

Hey there Whitney Sharp! We hope you enjoy this little surprise!

## THERE'S MORE ONLINE!

Tip of the iceberg. That's what this magazine you're holding in your hands is. The MossMotoring.com archive is chock full of stories and a wealth of technical advice. If you could just see the shelves and file cabinets of material we're gradually digitizing...holy smokes! But boy is it worth it!

[www.MossMotoring.com](http://www.MossMotoring.com)



# WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS WE WANT YOU!

Share your experience, wisdom and talent with British car enthusiasts across the country. Contributors whose work is selected for use in the magazine will receive Moss Motors Gift Certificates! Now, since there is no way to print all the terrific stories and tech articles that are sent to us, we will place relevant and first-rate submissions on MossMotoring.com for all to enjoy and benefit. Sorry, submissions that are published online are not eligible for gift certificates.

[editor@mossmotors.com](mailto:editor@mossmotors.com)

The very best way to submit material is via email.

Please attach digital photos at full size when possible. Film photographs and handwritten articles may be mailed to: Editor – Moss Motoring, 440 Rutherford St., Goleta, CA 93117

## \$200 Gift Certificates

Three to four-page stories and articles (approx. 1800 words). This includes: technical/restoration articles, historic accounts, Club and Event experiences, and anything that will inspire or entertain. Please include pictures for us to choose from—the more, the better.

## \$100 Gift Certificates

Cover and main feature photography. General interest stories. Medium length tech articles.

## \$50 Gift Certificates

Tech Tips. Cartoons/Illustrations. Humorous anecdotes. Odds-n-ends that help make Moss Motoring great.

## Fall Fun

A bit of creativity and lot of hard work add up to a great time for this Michigan MG car club.

12

## Nobody has More Fun

Continuing the LBC legacy of misspent youth.

20

Editorial contributions to Moss Motoring are welcomed, and should be emailed to [editor@mossmotors.com](mailto:editor@mossmotors.com) or mailed to Editor – Moss Motoring, 440 Rutherford St., Goleta, CA 93117.

Moss Motors assumes no responsibility for lost or damaged materials. Materials accepted are subject to such revision as required to meet the requirements of this publication. Unless otherwise specified, all correspondence will be considered for publication. All materials accepted become the sole property of Moss Motors, Ltd., which reserves the right to reprint/republish accepted materials.

© 2014 Moss Motors, Ltd.

Published by Moss Motors, Ltd., 440 Rutherford Street, Goleta, CA 93117 800-667-7872

Publisher: *Robert Goldman*

Moss Motoring Editorial Team:

Editor: *David Stuursma*

Senior Editor: *Shawn Carlberg*

Creative Editor: *Tamara Cribley*

Website Designer: *Anne Ducale*

Staff Photographer: *Damon Schnepf*

Contributors credited individually



Robert Goldman

# THE FOURTH SPOKE

I sailed a boat the other day, or steered, or tillered, or did whatever it is one does when causing a sailboat to go more this-a-way than that-a-way. It was a lot of fun, and in the aftermath it occurred to me I had finally “batted for the cycle” of driving experiences.

To my mind, there is no doubt our love of flying, driving, or sailing, includes an element of control. “I made this big mechanical thing go this way or that.” For me, it actually started with airplanes. At the tender age of six, my father took me up in his recently acquired 1936 Fairchild model 24, and handed over the controls. I don’t remember a great deal about that flight, other than we were heading toward the coastal mountains and I kept trying to turn away. To a nascent pilot of six, the fact it would have taken us 15 minutes to get to the mountains, and by then we would be vertically well clear, was too much to process.

Next up came driving. Although my father was the first ever to sit in the passenger seat as I steered a car, he promptly turned those duties over to a driving instructor. I want to say it was my mom who taught me to drive a stick, but the memory fades. In any event, for my sixteenth birthday, we went down to the DMV for the driving test, then out to the airport to solo an aircraft. Sadly, it was too windy in Santa Barbara that day, so my solo didn’t take place until a few days later.

Sailing however, had to wait. No one in the family was a sailor, and being uncomfortable in any body of water larger than a hot tub, boating in general has never been high on my list. Dave Stuursma, our esteemed editor, lives aboard his sailboat at the Santa Barbara harbor and invited the marketing crew to join him



on an afternoon sail. Leave work early. Hang out in the sun. Yeah, I'll try that. As luck would have it, when the time came to pull out from the dock, I was standing near the tiller. Dave asked me to "take the helm," and from that point it was game on.

Left is right, and right is left. Its rear steering like a forklift. The nose is light, and the tail heavy, like a Porsche 911. The sail is a wing, like an airplane, except it's semi anchored in the water. Lift, which causes an airplane to rise vertically, causes a sailboat to lean. You're using the keel to turn that lift into a combination of speed and maneuvering. Experienced sailors will instantly know I haven't a clue what I'm talking about.

But when all was said and done, it came back to control, and figuring out how to make speed and headway. In a car, the terms are different, the end result is the same. Within minutes I was experimenting, looking for speed and feeling through the tiller how the boat reacted to currents and swells in the water. Navigation was simple enough. Dave said things like "head toward the oil rig" or "don't hit the Wharf." More significant maneuvers like a tack or a jibe will have to wait for a follow up lesson.

If the sailboat has a down side, it's the amount of work required for the speed you get. On the day, I accomplished about seven knots. Hardly setting the world on fire at that speed. About the only thing I've driven slower was a steam engine, but that was

because my uncle's little 1927 Baldwin 0-4-2T steam engine only had a few yards of track running along the front, and through the parking lot of what is today our corporate HQ in Goleta. That steam engine, you see, was the fourth spoke in my wheel of driving experience. Unlike the others though, you can't actually steer a steam engine, and it makes a mess of the garage. That sucks some of the fun out of the "driving" experience. *MM*





# re•stored\*

By Jay Meilstrup

*buh-loh-nee*

1. The result of spending way too much money in an attempt to make an old car look old.
2. A descriptive term used to deceive a potential buyer by creating an illusion of proper maintenance and care.
3. Justification for excessive cost related to owning a British car.

**B**ritish cars have a reputation for being a tad quirky, and if you are going to shop for one you are going to hear all kinds of warnings from your uninformed friends, especially Porsche and Corvette owners who don't have a clue about British cars let alone their own makes. To be a British car buyer you have to be inquisitive as most cars come with their own special history and idiosyncrasies, almost guaranteeing a list of Previous Owners and the damage they have caused with which you will have to deal.

In the British car world there is a wide spectrum of personalities and it would take a team of behavioral experts to figure out why some guy in Newton, Iowa stuffed a 2012 Chrysler Hemi into a 1960 Austin-Healey Sprite. In my recent search for yet another LBC, I found one particular land mine out there that needs to be defused quickly before it claims more innocent lives: the use of the word "restored\*."

Valuing and seeking authenticity a little more than the average LBC owner, I get ruffled when a

seller or PO willfully alters the authentic state of a truly collectable car and then insults me as they attempt to convince me that it was done in the name of restoration. One would be naïve to think that there is still a bone stock unmodified MGB in running condition out there for \$4500, but if a seller wants to sell a metal flake purple 1967 Spitfire with a header and describe it as restored, it's not just his ignition timing that may be retarded. Even in my own garage there exists the stark difference in value and desirability of stock versus modification as my cars are kept in close, exacting condition as manufactured...parked next to my wife Yvonne's heavily modified and enhanced cars complete with roll bars, free flow exhaust systems and custom interiors.

In my recent quest for a metal dash MGB I encountered an alarming overuse of the word restored. Being a classic guy, I pulled off the shelf a real dictionary made of paper and printed back in the 70s. Webster tells me it's "to put something back to its original or previous state." So, it would follow

that any change made to the car that is not original would suggest that you have unrestored the car or are actually taking it away from being restored.

In the past two months I have been sifting through MGB ads in Hemmings and on the web, looking for the next love of my garage. Now that I have found the car that I am sure will be the envy of the automotive world and will put me on top of the LBC car owner food chain, I find it necessary to warn all others of the heinous misuse of the word restored going on out there by sellers preying on the innocent.

## WHERE ARE THE MEN OF HONOR?

When you realize the MGB was at one time the best selling sports car in history, you can imagine all of the modifications that have been done to these cars throughout the years. Some good and some that make you wonder. But with those enhancements each car moved slowly away from the condition of delivery from the manufacturer. No one can argue the superiority of radial tires and the positive affect they have on safety and performance, but they are not original in some cases. I have yet to see a post-1967 MGB with that useless hunk of ballast mounted high above the alternator, yet the sellers of those cars still label them as restored. Ripping off a smog pump does not constitute an act of restoration even if you sell the pump to a recycler in an attempt to restore the planet. And take for example, a new paint job which may not necessarily be a positive step in the restoration process unless you do it in the color, material and quality as originally manufactured. And for Pete's sake, strip off the old paint if your intention is to restore the car. Even Leyland did not supply cars with bad re-spray jobs.

Original MGBs had crappy vinyl tops, and not nice cloth ones. Yes, I also think the cloth tops are better in every way, but they push the car into the category of over-restored, not restored. Tube shocks have no place on a properly restored MGB, nor do Weber carburetors, aluminum radiators, Minilite styled wheels and stainless steel exhaust systems. They are all desirable enhancements (except the Weber), but please don't describe your car as restored if you do decide to install them.

There is a \$20,000-plus 1964 out there that has apparently won several show awards but has an alternator and was promoted as "restored to the greatest detail." In all likelihood, the polarity had been changed as well as the number of batteries. The tachometer would either have been from a later car or modified to work in the new electrical environment. All very nicely done and desirable

to many, but definitely not appropriate on a car described as restored and priced accordingly. Enhanced, or updated would probably be a more appropriate description.

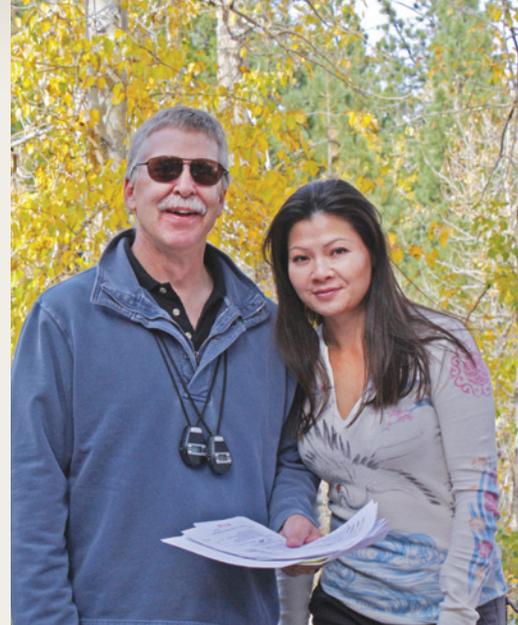
Here, on the other hand, is an example of an ad that caught my attention:

*"This has been my project car for 26 years. I have always kept it running, but there is always more that could be done. It really needs a complete rebuild (Paint, Engine, interior etc.) to make it a daily driver again. That rebuild will be up to a future owner. I purchased the car when I was 24 years old, and it was my daily driver for about 2 years, I put about 35,000 miles on it in the first 2 years I had owned it, and only about 5,000 in the last 24 years. The car is complete and runs and drives. Only non-stock modifications made to the car is that it has a Weber carb, electronic ignition and stainless exhaust. Mileage is probably over 186,000, I don't really know for sure."*

Now this is a guy I want to talk to. My impression is, he is trying to honestly represent the condition of his car, and subsequently will probably be an honest person to deal with and more accurately used the word "rebuild" while avoiding "restored." He is indeed a man of honor.

Let's not be purist snobs that believe every car should be kept in stock unaltered condition. Your





car is yours and the joy of ownership comes from making the car your own. Do what it takes to keep it alive and motoring—just be honest about it.

Restoring a car is a very difficult, expensive and extensive process and those who undertake it should not be diminished by misrepresentation of lesser cars. There is good reason that restored examples of any classic top the list when it comes to value, only to be exceeded by original examples in show condition. Let's face it, it takes balls to drive around in a bone stock TC. There have been so many improvements available throughout the years that make all of our LBCs just a little more enjoyable and tolerable. Therefore, simple car ownership and all of the upgrading, modifying, enhancing and customization that goes with it reduces the number of truly excellent examples of original cars.

I just bought my next "restoration project" which we think is a 1968 MGB. It of course comes with a long list of stories and POs. It was obvious the car was going to need a new steering wheel prior to its uphill pilgrimage from San Francisco over the Sierras back to Reno. As our planned route would take us over Donner Pass where so many have died before us, we thought it would be prudent to have a steering wheel on the car that would not deteriorate under the stress of actually steering the car. My intention is to restore the car exactly as manufactured so I needed to find a good original steering wheel. I turned to a friend of mine who had a pile of partially dismantled metal dash MGBs sitting in a mass grave next to his shop. I asked him if he had a suitable steering wheel and he gave me clearance to wade through the pile on my own. In the middle of the scrap pile, sitting on what appeared to be the battery shelf of a faded blue pull

handle carcass, was an old wooden steering wheel attached to the steering shaft. My heart began to pound, even my voice changed. I asked him what he wanted for it and he said I could have the wheel since "nobody wants those any more," but the steering shaft had to stay. So I wiped 30-plus years of crud off the old wheel to find out it was an original six bolt Moto-Lita steering wheel with an Astrali hub. What would be more appropriate for a restoration than that? After all Webster did say "...original or previous state" and this is truly a period piece that could only enhance my car. Now all I had to do was a simple restoration job to my newfound example of automotive history.

I used up a couple of ScotchBrite pads sawing through the 30-year old finish. What was revealed was the most dried out piece of mahogany laminate ever seen. It looked like it just came out of a tomb sealed beneath an Egyptian pyramid for the last 5000 years. I took some wood grain filler to the low spots and let it dry over night. The next day I smoothed it out and then looked for a good finish that would help protect me from splinters on the drive home. I found a can of UV blocking polyurethane that would probably be close to bulletproof if I could get enough of it to stay on the surface and not get sucked into the ancient wooden sponge. After five coats of poly the wheel looked useable and pretty damn good for having sat in the Nevada desert most of its life. I was just packing it up to get ready for the trip to pick up the new car when Yvonne, my loving and caring co-driver, owner of the world's only metallic candy apple blue Sprite says to me, "You aren't going to put that steering wheel on your new car are you? The original finish would have been varnish and not polyurethane. That's not really original." *MM*



# GARAGE

## ECHOES ECHOES ECHOES

By Kerry Fores

I'm an empty-nester as I write this. My last child left home this past weekend and, like her three sisters before her, she will never return to live with me though I may see her from time to time. The move came suddenly, unexpectedly, as her 18th year in my house approached. One day I was making plans to buy her a new Pimento-colored dress, and just a few days later I was helping her pack her possessions into boxes for the move.

It has been just her and I the last six years but we've had fun and I'm happy to say that the last thing we did together was take a week and wander the beautiful back-roads of Michigan, visit some great friends and hang out at the beach. We raced up and down narrow, twisting Wilco Road near Empire, Michigan, played in the rain, and mischievously broke into Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore while it was closed. Only weeks before that, we competed together in a driving event and placed second out of more than 20 other couples. In years past we had also run some races and, despite our lack of training and mediocre equipment, we did very well against much better equipped couples, finishing first, as a matter of fact, in our very first gymkhana.

She makes friends easily and is readily approachable. She introduced me to a young woman named Anya that she met in Empire. Both of them were

born overseas and moved to America. Anya is a curious, intelligent, free-spirited, unbelievably grounded Russian-American with a knack for putting things in perspective in this world that seems to have no perspective. This world where you can be famous for being famous, and where there is a whole section in every daily newspaper dedicated to people who can throw and catch. They have remained friends.

But it has been a lonely few years for her, I think, with her sisters gone. She's gotten out less. Gone are the days of having two of her sisters doubled-buckled in her passenger seat. No more accelerating away from home, her, me and one of her sisters, with me asking, "Did mom say, 'Have fun,' or 'Be careful'?" No more taking the long way home from school, theater rehearsal, soccer practice, or grandma's house. No more runs to Leon's, Ardy and Ed's, or the South Main Street Dairy Queen for ice cream. It was just she and I, and our outings tended to be thoughtful ones, not playful ones.

Two years ago she was excited when her oldest sister, Erica, invited her along for a Father's Day drive. It came with the request that she sing 80's songs while we drove because, as Erica said, "It just isn't her unless she's singing 80's songs." They both have beautiful singing voices. That's a proud father's opinion, of course, but my youngest daughters,

From Top: My daughter Alex perfecting her driving skills at the airport in 2009. Grandson Colin exploring the TR6 after his first ride in 2011; he was two years old. Daughter, Natalie on a TR6 outing to Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin in 2008.

Natalie and Alex, would agree as well, as they have all commented on her voice (she sounds great belting out a tune under an overpass), as well as her scent. She's leaves an impression, and always a good one.

She helped me teach Natalie and Alex how to drive a stick. They tore up and down a taxiway at the airport where it was safe for them to learn and where there was plenty of space for them to enjoy their sister's athleticism. I took movies. What father wouldn't? And not too long after that Natalie invited her out with her girlfriend, Jenn, for an afternoon of play. It was a cool thing for me to stand in my driveway and watch the three of them romp down the road to spend a crisp, fall afternoon together.

My grandson took to her when he was only two years old. Top down, he rode along in his car seat mesmerized by her wood dashboard and then squinting

into the sun. He explored her every switch and lever when we got home. He may have been too young at the time for that to be a forever memory, but I know she imprinted on him.

As I helped her pack for the move I found her adoption papers, gathered up photos of her from our 18 years together, and collected together all of her news clippings and awards from the races we'd run. Those I will keep. Those are *my* possessions from our time together.

There's so much more I could say about her but it would just be the boring talk of a bragging father and I'll spare you that. I'm sure I'll recount stories in the future, like the time she and I... sorry.

Her room will remain empty only briefly, however, as I have adopted again. I will bring "Hobbes" home in only a few days. Hobbes never had children to play with so it will be a great fit—two bachelors out looking for fun

together. Hobbes is all boy—a hard-headed one at that—so this will be an interesting change. I can't wait to see what adventures unfold for he and I. I can't even speculate on what they may be. Besides, the best adventures cannot be planned, they just happen.

Anyway, this past Saturday I moved her to her new house. She has new sisters (and a brother!) that are still young and will grow up with her. They are excited about their new sister and I'm told they played together all weekend. That's what she needs—young brothers and sisters. There will again be a soccer ball in her foot well, a trumpet in her trunk, and ice cream spilled on her seat as the "long way" is taken back home.

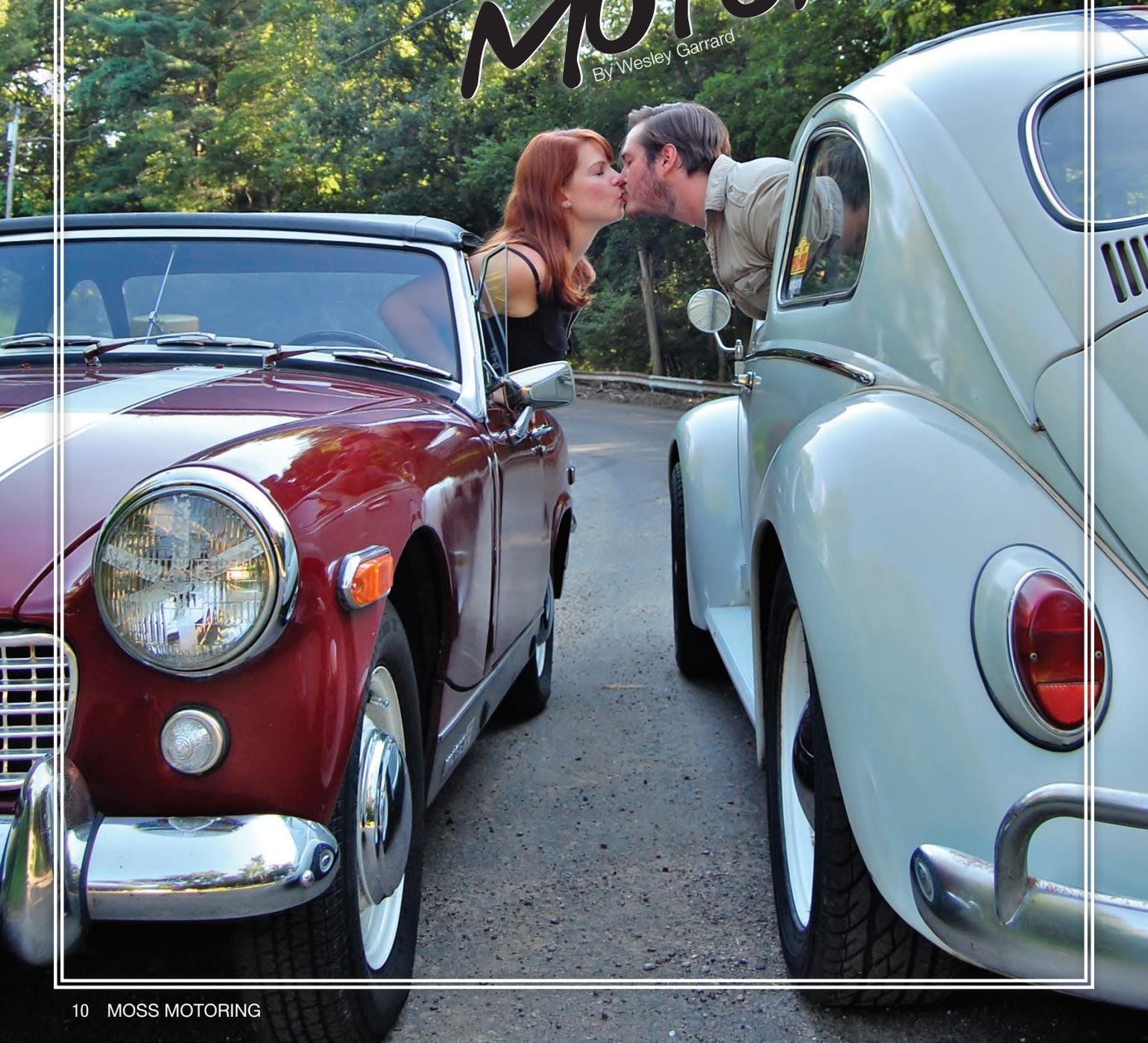
I was only her caretaker for the last 18 years. I hope I did right by her. She never let me down; I hope she can say the same about me. To her I say, "Have fun. Be careful." *MM*

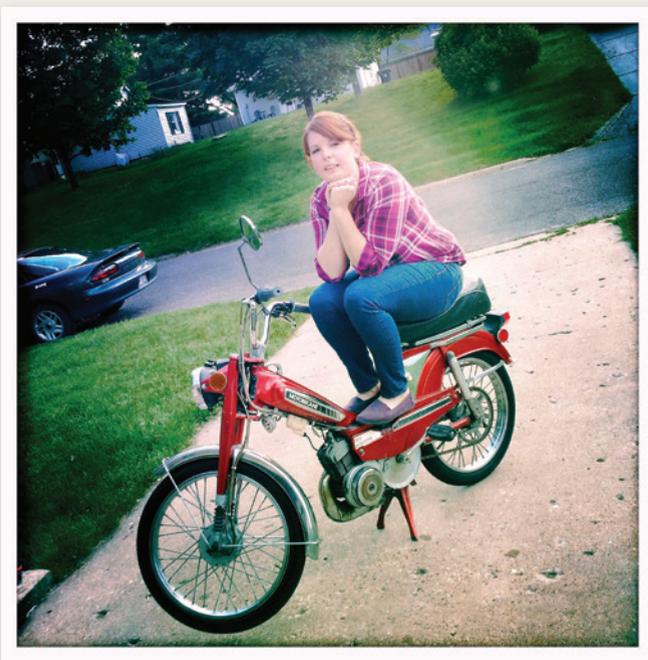
Hobbes is ready to play.



# LOVE IN MOTORING

By Wesley Garrard





*It has been a few years now. The beginning of an adventure I pray never to end.*

There are many things that forge a lasting relationship in life, allowing people to grow with one another and share in an adventure that raises high the human existence. It is funny when nestled prominently among those things are two quirky little cars—just as funny looking as they are fun loving. Motoring along we see smiles on faces and bystanders pointing with joy. This is an affection brought about by two little cars. Each time we get behind the wheel we have added to a shelf of love stories with bookends in the shape of a Beetle and a Midget.

I met Whitney while reluctantly crashing a mutual friend's cookout. Others mingled and I sat in a corner of the backyard playing with a puppy. My sunglasses remained on even as dusk descended into darkness. When choosing to be unsocial, wear dark glasses at inappropriate times. Despite my grumpiness, the dog found me good company.

As evening wore on, a bubbly redhead whom I had been eyeing from early on sat next to me and sparked a conversation. Somehow she managed to start the engine that is my love for Anthropology. Once I concluded an in-depth lecture on how a simple change in diet and dentition shaped human evolution to the group that consisted of said redhead and my band of friends, I said my goodbyes. I hopped into my Beetle and retired. This might have been the end of the story. I'm thankful it wasn't.

Just as I was about to nod off, the harsh buzz of text message shook me awake. I had received a charmingly seductive note from a number I did not recognize. Assuming

my friends were paying me back for being dull at a party, I was stifled when it was revealed to be the bubbly redhead. She too had been doing some eyeing, in my direction as it were. Right there via text, I set a date. So began our odyssey.

Whitney and I enjoy the company of two quaint chaps who play a big part in most of the adventures on which we embark. Myself and my German companion, a 1963 Volkswagen Beetle, along with Whitney and her British companion, a 1979 MG Midget, depart for many exhilarating excursions. We schlep them on many road trips and enter them in many shows. She often accompanies me to some all-German car shows and cruises with her car. In these times we dub her car as the British Expeditionary Force. Likewise I invade her British car shows in what we call Operation Sea Lion. Neither group seems to mind all that much. True auto enthusiasts rarely care what you are driving as long as it invokes that certain "feeling."

Owning the People's Car was a dream of mine. I spent three years making it into the finest representation of the Love Bug that I could. It lives up to its name.

Whitney and I have logged many miles and memories on road trips, journeys to car shows, and nights stargazing through my car's large sunroof. It was on a day that she was assisting me with changing the gear oil when we decided to make our relationship official. On some occasions I gave Whitney a few lessons behind the wheel. She had never driven a car with a manual transmission before and never one as old. She had gotten a taste for the fun in classic motoring. Now it seemed she wanted her own classic to enjoy.

Whitney's first foray into classic transportation was the purchase of a 1977 Motobecane moped that had once dangled from the ceiling of a local saloon as a decoration. We got it running in a short time and she was enjoying buzzing around with her fiery hair blowing in the wind and peering through her favorite pair of horn rimmed sunglasses as the sounds of the two stroke "brap" echoed off the urban traffic. We began to take that to a few motorcycle shows where, beyond my belief, it too attracted its share of fanfare. Whitney was now entranced by the fun that the motoring community brings.

A year and a half into our relationship she was awarded an insurance payout from a minor automobile accident. While looking for a replacement, we talked about how fun it would be to attend motoring events together with our own cars. I showed her cars that I thought may be engaging to her but they did not garner much affection. Then at a large car show in Iowa she discovered, what I and many others may argue is the only car that just looks absolutely tickled to be a car, the Frogeye Sprite. With its massive grin and headlamps opened wide with enjoyment, she was overcome by the adorable little car. However, we soon found out a decent driver was outside the budget—but later Spridgets fit within the price range.

I picked out a few cars to look at but they were a ways out

*continued on page 14*

# MOVIES FOR MOTORHEADS

Well this Top 10 sure struck a chord! We had well over 1,000 votes and many comments about which movies should've been on the list. And your favorites are...

- 1 **Grand Prix**  
1996
- 2 **Bullitt**  
1968
- 3 **Le Mans**  
1971
- 4 **American Graffiti**  
1973
- 5 **The Italian Job**  
1969
- 6 **The World's Fastest Indian**  
2005
- 7 **The Gumball Rally**  
1976
- 8 **Vanishing Point**  
1971
- 9 **Gone in 60 Seconds**  
2000
- 10 **The Italian Job**  
2003

Be a part of the fun of the next Top 10, go to [MossMotoring.com/top10](http://MossMotoring.com/top10)

# FALL FUN

By Robert Davidson

## Old Speckled Hen MG Car Club

Take one crazy farmer, a beautiful September day in Michigan, and MG car enthusiasts and it all leads to...an unforgettable time! Farmer Bill Hirsch, our current Old Speckled Hens president, who apparently doesn't have enough to do, decided that if he took out 5 rows of corn it would be possible to make a maze that was an ideal size for our little cars. But automated farm equipment would cut a much larger swath than that, so the cutting began by hand. Through this large corn field over a mile of trails were cut by Bill and his sons. Over 80 truckloads of corn stalks were removed, ground up and fed to his happy cows.

When the morning dawned with beautiful sunshine and moderate temperatures—plus a dry field—it all added up to a great day. There were many areas in the maze where one could make a wrong turn. There were also a number of different exits, one coming out of the north side of the field over a half of a mile away.

After going over a few rules, engines were started and the cars began to lumber into the maze. The very first decisive turn was a tricky one. A mistake would immediately route the driver right back out the entrance in full view of the rest of the drivers. Further in there were abundant opportunities to take the wrong path, and with the corn eight feet high it was tough to tell exactly what direction you were pointed in. There were a fortunate few who did make it all the way without any mistakes using logic and a bit of blind luck.

At the end of the event, every car was covered in dust and dirt. And every face was covered in a big smile. *M.M.*



## Show & Event Calendar

Visit the MossMotoring.com Event Calendar to find upcoming events in your area and get all the details.



Find an Event  
near YOU

## Get the Word Out & Get Sponsored

Share your next Club Event on MossMotoring.com by filling out our online event submission form at [MossMotoring.com/AddYourEvent](https://www.mossmotoring.com/AddYourEvent)

## SHORT CUTS

"I hope that when I die that my wife does not sell all my restoration parts for how much that I said I paid for them."

~ Anonymous Customer

**CUSTOMER TIP:** It's amazing how much you can do with dental floss. When installing a dash warning lamp, and you have to compress a spring, to get a cupped washer and horseshoe clip installed, compress the spring, and tie it compressed, with dental floss. You can then slip the spring onto the warning lamp housing, slide the cupped washer against it, install the horseshoe clip, and then cut the dental floss. Trying to install one of those carburetor springs with the hooked ends that swivel? Make a lasso of dental floss. Install one end of the spring, onto the heat shield or bracket. Attach the loop to the other hooked end. You can then pull up, adjust position with needle nose pliers, and install the hook where you want it.

~ John Seim



*continued from page 11*

of town. Whitney on the other hand found one in town that she liked. It was a rubber bumper car and frankly I felt that if she wanted a chrome bumper car we should just start with one. I do enjoy looking at cars nonetheless. So I asked her to arrange a time to check it out.

It was not a bad example, a Carmine Red 1979 MG Midget. It had been sitting since 2009 and belonged to the seller's father who had recently passed from cancer. It looked as though it was well cared for. At some point it had been repainted in its original color and although there were a few minor problems I thought they could be easily fixed. It was all around a very decent driver. We thanked the man for his time and said we would let him know if we decided to go ahead with the purchase. I felt that although it was a nice car, the British Racing Green 1967 Austin-Healey Sprite that I saw online would be a better choice.

It wasn't. Not even close.

Whitney's thoughts never left the little red Midget. We talked it over, called the seller and agreed to meet that night. Something about that little red car struck a chord with her and it showed. Whitney began to beat up the seller in a round of negotiating, eventually knocking \$2,000 off the asking price. The things I would be able accomplish if I were a cute girl such as her. Whitney paid the gentleman and we were off with

her new car, which has been affectionately named after the seller, "Pete."

The next week was a busy one for Pete. We started with the standard maintenance: oil change, ignition tune up, chassis lube, etc. Once that was completed we tackled the bumper swap. We managed to fill some holes, metal finish, prep and paint the modified areas of the car in under a week.

The funny thing about our two cars is they seem to have switched reputations. Pete is far more reliable than Herbie. Since our ownership of Pete began in August of 2012, Herbie has used up two engines, a clutch, clutch fork and a pressure plate. The only things that we have had to do to Pete are clean up some electrical snafus from the previous owner and general maintenance.

Another trait commonly attributed to British cars has also been imitated by my German one. On a trip to Dubuque, Iowa for Vintage Torque Fest, we had to navigate a massive rainstorm in which the downpour outpaced our wipers. It was so torrential that visibility was less than 50 feet. But wouldn't you know it, the Midget stayed dry, hardly a leak. Whereas the Love Bug had to be pulled into any service station every 30 miles so that my co-driver and I could bail out the standing water using camping mugs and all of the stations' paper towels.

We like to take our cars out on day trips, cruising in search of fun roads and gorgeous views hidden in the vast agricultural



We attempted to recreate an opening scene of *The Blues Brothers* at Joliet Prison.



spaces of the Midwest. You can live in a place most of your life and yet have no idea what is really out there. From the interstates there is not much to see other than miles of corn and soybeans. But pull onto the byways and you find another world of small towns that seem stuck in a 1950's time warp, especially those that dot the Old Route 66. We are lucky to be quite close to the mother road and the character that many communities maintain along its stretch.

Our old cars fit right in with these towns that time forgot. Whitney and I become welcomed guests. Everywhere, people stop us to talk about our cars. We recently had an elderly man tell us about how his wife used to have a Midget. How he would only catch glimpses of her speeding past before he was actually able to grasp a moment to talk to her. It is wonderful to see how something so simple could play such a large role in so many lives. But that is what appeals to classic car ownership. It is the memories, the relationships, and the destinations that these machines lead us to.

This year has many adventures planned; another road trip to Iowa, and even some autocross and hill climb events. I desperately want to race her car against mine. Her confidence behind the wheel has been growing and I would like to find a safe place for her to express it. The grand journey for this year is a 1000-plus mile trip to Cape Hatteras during which we hope to rack up many Moss Motoring Challenge points. It should prove interesting. Pete has managed many drives of more than 300 miles in one day without flinching. However, he does like to keep us on our toes. He's been known to randomly pop open his hood while we're driving. We've yet to find a cure to this prank no matter how much we fiddle with the release mechanism.

It's plain to see that this is a love letter. I am truly blessed to be with someone who makes life more fun. Whitney's

adventurous spirit complements my childlike wonder. Together we bounce around the country in our little cars, skipping along the streets of small towns like complete goofs, blissfully unaware and not caring what others think. We get excited about any excursion we take—anything to satisfy the monkey that is wanderlust. It will be interesting to see how we handle this journey, and how many times we have to pull over to close Pete's hood. *MM*



# The Issigonis Effect

By Jamie Kitman



**W**ithout Alexander Arnold Constantine Issigonis, there'd be no Mini. The car's chief engineer and designer—raised a subject of the Ottoman Empire by his Greek father and Bavarian mother—was widely known for penciling freehand engineering sketches. The stubborn eccentric designed the original Mini by eye and despised mathematics. “You must not mix function with fashion in a car,” he once said. “A car should take its shape entirely from the engineering that goes into it.”

Ongoing, even perpetual, celebration of “Alec” Issigonis is fitting in our view, if ironic. Although he changed small-car design forever and was 100 percent central to the Mini's existence, Issigonis was pushed aside by the company that built his iconic machine not so long after he'd invented it, his trap-door demotion coming in 1968. Also, were he alive today, it's fairly certain that Issigonis, the minimalist's minimalist, would disapprove of the new version introduced by BMW. The outspoken engineer loved his cars small and unadorned, and today's Mini is neither. Truth is, if Issigonis hadn't shut up (he died in 1988 at age 82), they'd have had to shut him up.

Exiled from the Greek (now Turkish) city of Smyrna when Atatürk's army invaded in 1922, Issigonis fled with

his mother to Britain as a teenager. Although he would rise to a high place, becoming a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, roundly decorated by the Royal Society, Sir Alec knew what he wanted in his life. While he hoped, like Henry Ford, to move the working man ahead in the realm of creature comfort, Issigonis remained deeply, cantankerously spartan at heart; excess automotive size, weight, and frippery irritated the hell out of him. Strident asceticism would put him at loggerheads with marketing men, for on that point he was unapologetic. On the other hand, engineering complication in the search for simplicity didn't scare him, either—but it troubled cost accountants. Thus, his key insights and greatest weaknesses as a corporate soldier were curiously intertwined.

Issigonis began training as a mechanical engineer in England with Humber in the 1930s, moving to Morris and then Alvis before returning in 1955 to the British Motor Corporation, which then owned Morris. It will be hard for many to believe today, but Britain was the world's second-biggest motor-manufacturing nation through the 1950s and into the 1960s. BMC, which represented the 1952 merger between William Morris's Nuffield Organization and the late Herbert Austin's eponymously named firm, was one of the



Photography by Daniel Byrne.

largest car companies in the world. One reason was the Morris Minor, an excellent small car in its day (1948–1971) and a commercial home run; Issigonis had laid it out during his first stint at Morris.

At the behest of Leonard Lord, the Austin chairman ascendant in the postmerger reorganization, Issigonis was summoned back to BMC and quickly tasked. Horrified by the incursions of German and Italian microcars in the days following the 1956 Suez Crisis and the resultant fuel shortages, Lord challenged his new chief engineer to come up with a competitor. “God damn these bloody awful bubble cars,” the celebrated British motoring writer L. J. K. Setright quoted Lord as instructing Issigonis. “We must drive them out of the streets by designing a proper miniature car.”

Issigonis had long pondered the space-utilization advantages of front-wheel drive and quickly delivered an advanced concept—notwithstanding that in 1957 and 1958, the period of the Mini’s gestation, the computer was still an oddity and the slide rule the primary tool of the engineer’s trade. With a team of eight at Austin headquarters in Longbridge, England, Issigonis and his freehand drawings guided the building of running prototypes in a scant seven

months. In double time, he’d worked out the particulars of a small, two-box car whose engine was turned sideways and placed above its transmission (with which, fatefully, it shared lubrication). Wheels, small and cleverly suspended by rubber (and later fluid), would be pushed to the corners.

The rest of the story is the stuff of lore. Even though it would rarely earn its makers much—if any—money, the Mini would become a classless cultural icon and prove to be so popular that its amazing voyage as a salable commodity comprised four full decades with ports of call in two others. A work of packaging genius, it allowed a remarkable 80 percent of its tiny footprint (ten feet) to be devoted to passengers and their things. With out-of-the-box thinking about what happens inside the box, the Mini established principles of vehicle architecture that inform car design today.

That first car also suggested the layout of several Mini variants (wagon, pickup, van, and beach buggy), plus many larger corporate relations and a host of imitators. Leaving service in 2000, it spawned BMW’s first Mini tribute of 2001, the opening salvo in what has been a committed effort to grow a more encompassing brand out of the most admired name in very small cars.

## IMPRESSIONS FROM THE ROAD

Ultimately, other manufacturers would learn to profit from Issigonis's advanced design strategies where BMC failed, the cost and the complexity of its new cars for many years helping to drag the company—troubled in many other ways, it's only fair to note—down. What is it they say about why you want to be second to the market with new technology? Thanks to Alec Issigonis, BMC was there first, and to celebrate his achievements, explore with me the Issigonis Effect in action in two of his creations.

First up, the original. Flatbedded my way from the corporate collection came what BMW terms a "Classic Mini." For some reason, that conjured in my mind a 1959 Austin Se7en or Morris Mini-Minor, as they were also first known. But what showed up was a luxed-up 2000 Classic Cooper edition, one of the very last old-style Minis built. Roll-up windows and a full-width dashboard meant it lacked the early cars' solitary, centrally mounted speedometer pod, sliding door glass, and capacious door bins, of which Issigonis was particularly proud. It also came with twelve-inch wheels, huge next to the ten-inchers that graced earlier cars, plus—gack!—an airbag, a radio/cassette player, and air-conditioning, all obviously non-options in the car's formative years.

Along with the original's microscopic dimensions, even final editions of the Mini had bolt-upright seating and steering wheels canted as if for bus drivers. Issigonis liked to quip that he intended to ensure that drivers remained alert at all times. And, like its predecessors, the last old Mini was plenty fun to drive. Thanks to a wide track and a relatively long wheelbase, as well as a low center of gravity and a clever suspension, the Mini would deliver, its inventor posited, 70 percent more roadholding than conventional small cars of its era. In time, such tenacious grip would lead to the Mini's many competition successes (Monte Carlo Rally overall victories in 1964, '65, and '67, for instance) and a general reputation for cornering prowess, as well no doubt as an accident or two borne of overexuberance.

While it boasted old design, this build-out special nonetheless possessed a sense of modernity, and its urge (zero to 60 mph in thirteen seconds) a testament to an injected, 1275-cc A-series engine with 63 hp. At roughly 1520 pounds, this Mini Cooper was heavier than early Minis. But it went, and even with but four gears, carefully selected ratios meant motoring at highway speeds without trouble or much engine roar at all. That was a surprise.



## FROM MY GARAGE: THE MG 1100

An old BMC ad said of the Mini, “[T]he bigness is in the proper place—inside!” True enough, but nowhere was Issigonis’s space-efficient thinking more evident than in the Mini’s bigger brother, launched in 1962 and code-named ADO16. A not very large but incredibly spacious evolution of the concept, its feasibility was enhanced by an emergency last-minute revision to the Mini’s build spec—separate subframes.

ADO16 distinguished itself in every one of the dozens of iterations in which it appeared—two-door, four-door, wagon; MG (the example I own), Morris, Austin, Wolseley, Riley, and Vanden Plas—by actually having room for four or even five adults and their luggage. Such vast space in a car so short, mated to 35-mpg fuel economy and ample potential for driver amusement, is not an achievement to sneeze at. Its twelve-inch wheels might not be fashion correct anymore, but along with a uniquely compact “Hydrolastic” fluid suspension penned by Issigonis’s eccentric associate, Alex Moulton, they help deliver a commendably smooth ride and a low-riding minimum of body roll, although the faintest pitching can be detected on rougher surfaces owing to the movement of fluid between its interconnected front and rear spheres.

As a sporting, upmarket version of this unashamedly badge-engineered model, the twin-carb, 55-hp (twenty-second 0-to-60-mph time) MG is handsomely trimmed in red vinyl but resolutely spare even so; a strip-band speedometer, fuel and temperature gauges, and a quartet of toggle switches are all that adorn a thin, car-width dash covered in ersatz wood. But with its solid construction and airy accommodation, the MG is a pleasant, even luxurious, car in all respects save one, living proof that the British industry did not go down without moments of incredible inspiration. That one demerit: it’s kinda screamy on the highway.

Purchased new in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, the 1966 1100 you see here was intended to be a high-school graduation gift for a businessman’s daughter, bought in the hope that she would restore Christian virtue to her life. When she proceeded to flunk out of junior college and then get pregnant, her moralizing dad yanked the keys, whereupon the car began twenty-five years of stationary repose in a corner of his factory. After he passed away in the early 1990s, it bounced between collectors. Seven years ago, one of them bumped into me. At the time, this car had 850 original miles. Today it has but 4,200.

Britain’s best-selling car for most of its 1962–1974 life span, ADO16 was quite successful in the Commonwealth. But somehow it never set America on fire, selling slowly in MG garb and later, with more fanfare and hence more disappointment when it bombed, as the Austin America. It was the last of Issigonis’s technologically nouvelle offerings to grace our soil.

I’m not sure because there is no tach, but it sounds like this 1100 approaches 9000 rpm at 65 mph in top gear. Badly

blinkered (and wearing earplugs), British industry ignored the 1960s highway reality at its peril. That said, this is indeed one of my favorite cars. *MM*

*Jamie Kitman has written for Automobile Magazine, CAR, Top Gear, GQ, New York Times, Harper’s, Men’s Journal and The Nation. Growing up in Leonia, N.J., one-time home of BMC, he has had a lifelong affection for British cars. Which may explain a motor house that currently contains no less than a dozen British classics and oddities.*



# NOBODY HAS MORE FUN



By Chris Seely

**W**hen I bought my MGB, I knew just a fragment about the mechanical aspects of a car, but each day I would learn something new. One day it was how to set the gap on spark plugs and contact points. The next it was bleeding brakes and slave cylinders. By the time I had owned my MGB for a couple months, I replaced my clutch, valve gaskets, the steering column, and even rebuilt the generator. However, parts can be expensive, and for this reason “Necessity Before Accessory” is a phrase this high school student on a budget lives by. And Moss catalogs and Haynes repair manuals quickly became my New and Old Testaments.

Car painting is one of the hardest skills to master, and this spring, that’s just what my friend, Ian, and I tried to do. My MGB had worn four different colors over the years, starting out red in the sixties, switching to baby blue in the eighties, wearing rust orange in the nineties, then finally wearing a green coat of spray paint I had put on a year ago. However, this coat was put on quickly, and had already begun to chip and fade. This spring my bank account had a slight surplus of money, but not enough for a professional job. So in one night, a whopping \$140 was spent on two spray guns and a kit of British Racing Green single-stage urethane paint.

Sanding the car was the first step and, as I had only one orbital sander, Ian and I took turns

sanding and removing the various chrome trim from the car. This was done without trouble, and we soon moved on to taping the remaining exposed portions of the car. Our main problem came when we bondoed the car. I had no idea how to bondo, but Ian said he had a little experience. We knelt in the grass in front of the shed, Ian mixing the bondo, explaining to me how to apply it to the car. It took about an hour and by the end the whole car was covered in the pink plaster.

The next morning, I returned to the car to a horrifying realization. The bondo was not hardening up at all. The plaster still glistened in the sun, and in one swipe, I could wipe it off with my finger. Instinctively, I ran inside, grabbed a sheetrock knife, and began scraping the pinkish gray goo off the body of my car. It was four in the afternoon before Ian and I could begin painting. We had spent the entirety of the day dealing with the sticky mess we had created the day before; but that was finally all behind us.

Painting with an air compressor was completely new to me, and adjusting the guns to the proper spray took a half hour by itself. Painting the car was monotonous; I only had a two-gallon air compressor. This made for a very long night, as I would spray the car for five or so seconds, then wait an additional twenty for the line to pressurize. Ian and I switched off, spraying the car then mixing more paint. My

dad visited us frequently, giving us advice on how to get an even coat, examining our work. On our third trade off, the gun began to feel light. "I will check the level," I thought, so with cold, trembling hands I unscrewed the cap, sending the remainder of the paint down my flannel shirt and worn out jeans. I stood speechless for a second, hands out in front of my chest, examining my new British Racing Green skin. I looked up to see Ian keel over with laughter. Surely this would be a long night.

The painting was finished by ten o'clock. Ian had left hours ago. The paint remained on my hands for four days and took a hard scrubbing with steel wool before it finally came off. The final paint my car wears is in no way, shape, or form perfect, and it is evident the job was done by two teenagers. But we did it.

## HIGHS, LOWS AND THRU WE GO

My girlfriend at the time loved the MGB almost as much as me, however, her first real experience with the car did not turn out as well as I had hoped. I pulled into her driveway, ready to pick her up for an evening hike in the White Mountains. "It's so cute!" she exclaimed, running her hands over the wood dash. I reached for the center of the dash and turned the key. "Ru, ru, ccccccccc." A tidal wave of embarrassment washed over me. I could feel the blood rushing to my already rosy cheeks. The starter had jammed on the flywheel, but luckily I knew just what to do. "We have to get out and rock it a little." I claimed. "Uhh, ok," She replied. We unbuckled our seatbelts, and just before exiting the cockpit, I put the car into fourth gear. One, two, three... "click." the flywheel and starter had parted. We returned to the cockpit, and the engine roared to life, this time without failure. The car rolled out of the drive, and we took off into the evening sun. To this day, her first ride in the MGB is still a topic that comes up. We are great friends, and will continue to be, with much thanks to that car of mine.

Apart from the classic methods, such as listening to music, and playing little driving games, I find ways to have fun in the MGB. One way is simply through being friendly. When you are driving a classic roadster, the people you wave to will wave back ninety-eight percent of the time. Waving is fun, but my friend Ian and I quickly invented a new game we call "Tunnel Time." Tunnel Time is always worth driving the extra mile. Utilizing the loud MGB exhaust and a nearby underpass, we speed up the road, rifling through gears in a burst of acceleration quickly approaching the dark shadow of the tunnel. While under the highway, I depress the

clutch and rev the engine up. Time moves in slow motion, and our ears erupt in the high definition deafening growl. I can feel the seat and steering wheel vibrate from the tenacious sound waves. I look over to see a wide smile spread across Ian's face, his head back enjoying the experience. The car rolls from the tunnel, light blinding our eyes, and at this moment, time returns. We look at each other and laugh, hard, for we have just experienced the most incredible listening experience known to man. Tunnel Time never disappoints.

## LOOK WHAT I STARTED

It wasn't long before others began to see the benefits of owning a classic. It started with my friend Ian in study hall one day. Ian had already been around my MGB, frequently bumming rides in an attempt to not only save gas money, but also to drive without a roof. He was flipping through my newest Moss catalogue, eyeing the black '73 on the cover. "How much did you say you bought your car for?" he asked nonchalantly. "Six hundred dollars." I replied without even lifting my eyes from my statistics homework. "That must've been a killer deal, maybe I should get one." At this my head shot up. Looking around, I noticed that our friends at the table had the same reaction. "Really?" I replied with a slight hesitation. "Yeah, it could be fun, working on the car together, then driving the two around this summer." "That would be fun." I replied, "That would be a lot of fun!"

It wasn't long before we found a candidate. A 1975 Tahiti Blue MGB located about two hours away. The car was listed at \$750, and we immediately expressed interest. We were anxious to get started on a project.

Walking around the car, we realized just how much work it would need—body work, paint,



brakes, distributor, fuel pump, and carburetors. In the owner's mind the condition wasn't that terrible, so I was sure to communicate to Ian just what needed to be done. An agreement was made at \$650 and, as with almost all MGB sales, the car came with boxes of parts, adding to the value of the deal.

The MGB arrived in two weeks, and Ian, my cousin Luke, and myself stayed up late into the night working on the car. I hooked up the fuel pump, Ian vacuumed out the engine compartment, and Luke thoroughly cleaned the interior, frequently quoting the *Family Guy* character, Consuela saying, "More lemon pledge" in his best latina accent. By the end of the night, the pump was working, the engine bay was spotless, and the interior was showroom ready, although it smelled like a freshly cleaned bathroom.

A car will not run without electricity, and with all of the internals of the distributor left in shambles, there was no spark to be had. Although the MGB comes stock with a Lucas 45D distributor, all that remained in the car was a brittle skeleton. We decided to instead install an earlier style 25D distributor found in one of Ian's boxes of parts. We worked efficiently; Ian labored over the engine compartment trying to remove the rusted-in distributor while I replaced all of the internals of the 25D. The distributor slid in with ease, but when we turned the engine over and held a plug wire to the block, we saw no spark. It would take another hour before we found the faulty ground wire.

With the distributor in place, we moved on to the timing. This took forever. We used a 12-volt test light at first, stopping the distributor at the diminishing of the light, tightening down the

distributor, then configuring the firing order. After hours of cranking, multiple checks of the firing order, and almost a full can of starting fluid, the car would not fire.

Working on the car soon became a bleak, repetitive task as our attempts followed the pattern of the day prior with checks for spark, fuel, and order. "Maybe our original static timing was off," Ian suggested. With a weary nod, I agreed, and this time as he turned over the engine, I rotated the distributor back and forth. Then we heard a putt. Our eyes instantly met through the windshield, and I backed away from the engine. He turned the key once again. "Rururururururu BANG!" We both jumped back from the car as if it were a poisonous rattlesnake, and an instant later, heard two definitive shrieks from Ian's baby brother inside. We laughed hysterically in return, and I hightailed it to my own car knowing we were done for the night. If we startled the baby a second time Ian's parents would surely be upset with the two of us for the remainder of the week.

The next few evenings' efforts resulted in yet more backfiring. With the car static timed for the third (fourth?) time, Ian once again turned the key, this time with me manually operating the throttle from under the bonnet, as the pedals were not yet hooked up. As soon as the motor turned it came alive, sounding strong on all four cylinders. After a minute, Ian killed the engine, climbed out of the cockpit and jumped in the air. We had done it. We had started the car, thus beginning our restoration journey. It had taken money, thought, grit, and a lot of luck, but nonetheless, we were finally on our way. *MM*



# original duplicates

By Joseph Baba



I recently became aware of the fact that I have been a Moss Motors parts distributor for over 32 years. How did this happen? By accident or design?

Many years ago a friend of mine was autocrossing an MG Midget and insisted I give it a try. That was it, I was hooked. I bought my first British Sports Car, a 1974 MG Midget, joined the car club and got heavily involved in autocross. The little MG did fairly well for being bone stock but it was not very competitive. I wanted something faster and purpose-built for the sport and a \$400, 1964 Triumph Spitfire seemed like a good base to start from.

It became almost immediately apparent that Spitfire spare parts were hard to find if at all available. There were few sources from which to choose. I tried to order a part through the local Jag dealer, it had to come from New Jersey and it was, ouch, painfully costly. There had to be a better way, so I was forced to resort to criminal activity, “Industrial Espionage.” I spent the next couple of weeks dumpster diving behind Auto Parts stores and the Jag dealer in the middle of the night cutting shipping labels off of cardboard boxes to find parts sources.

Bingo, I hit upon “Cars-Nisonger” down in Camarillo, California. A simple telephone call opened my account, I got free catalogs and my first parts rep, Nina, helped me track down parts to get the Spitty up, running and competitive enough to start winning my class. Other racers took notice

and asked questions about my car. “Were did you get that? Is that a homemade part? Can you help me sync my carbs? What cam profile are you using? Have you ever installed a clutch?” I felt I had a solid fundamental understanding of how cars worked and I started to formulate an idea for a small niche business with British cars. After all, they were really no different than cars I played with as a teenager.

I bought my very first car, a 1939 Chevrolet two-door sedan, when I was fourteen with money I made picking strawberries and milking cows. I managed to build up the motor to run 108 mph in the ¼-mile. Getting in the 12-second bracket at the Stockton Dragway was pretty good for a kid without a license.

I felt confident that I could successfully run a British Car repair and restoration shop and opened the doors of “Original Duplicates” in 1985. Flyers hung on the windshields of every British Car I saw and a two line ad in the *Fresno Bee Classifieds* got the telephone ringing.

Parts, again, became a major issue. If I ordered five of something from Nina, she would ship two and backorder three from New Jersey. It was taking two weeks to do a tune up, longer for anything more complicated. I badly needed an inventory and alternate sources. I decided to write a letter to the “British Consulate” in San Francisco, outlining my business plans and requested a list of auto parts suppliers and manufacturers in England from whom I could import parts directly. I sat

back, pleased with myself and awaited reaping the rewards of my revelation.

On a very cold, very foggy Saturday morning in mid-December, a black limousine pulled up in front of my shop and out stepped a gentleman with tight red curly hair, wearing a perfectly tailored three-piece suit with spats over his shoes. Although I don't recall his name, I won't forget that he introduced himself as "SIR"—Executive Vice President of Lucas International. He'd been chauffeured down from San Francisco to appraise my business in response to the letter I had written. Holy crap, it was The Prince of Darkness in person! Sir Prince stepped into my 800-sq feet of empty shop, without tools, inventory or customer base and excused himself to leave, but promised to do whatever he could to help me get further established in the market place. True to his word, he hooked me up with "Her Majesty's Britannica Service" a program to import products directly from England. I soon found this was not the Golden Ticket. Parts had to be ordered by the boatload, payable thru an international bank account, and then there was the Customs and VAT thing. I decided to stick with Cars-Nisonger.

Stu Bowman became my new parts rep when Cars-Nisonger and Moss came together as a single entity, and now decades after the opening of my shop I still call Stu almost once a week, either to order parts, track down or cross reference an OEM part number or for any number of things. I tried to slow down and semi-retire in 2001 but it didn't stick very well, the telephone is still ringing. Since "retiring" I have restored two MGB GTs, a TR-6, two Bug-Eye Sprites, one GT-6, a Datsun 2000 Fairlady, and a Datsun 1600 Roadster (don't say it; sometimes I loose my direction), at least eight motors, lots of Weber carbs and I just started on another Bug-Eye.

And then of course there is the tool thing...

Over the course of those 30-odd years in the business, I had crudely fabricated a number of specialty tools in order to get a specific service job performed; tools that at one point in time were available and supplied to dealerships from British Leland; tools that are no longer available. A friend of mine casually mentioned one day that I should sell my tools through Moss Motors, and a call to Kelvin Dodd in the Moss Tech Department proved fruitful. Kelvin said to supply prototypes for consideration. Now Moss purchases eleven different items from me. I'm a customer and I'm a vendor.

This coming March, I will turn 75 years old and I still look forward to going out and working in my shop every day. I do not know what the future holds, but for now all is good. What more could a person ask for? *MM*



These are the items I sell to Moss Motors. The component parts are either Laser cut or CNC machined. I either Weld or Braze as needed, paint and bake on the finish.

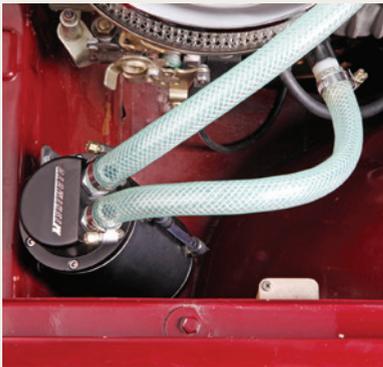
**384-950** Installation Tool, Door Glass Seals / MGB, Triumph Other  
**384-945** Puller, Rear Axle, Tube Type MGB  
**384-955** Puller, Rear Hub / Sprite, Midget  
**384-957** Puller, Rear Hub / MGB (Banjo Type)  
**384-959** Wrench, Axle Hub Nut / Sprite, Midget  
**866-255** Wrench, A-Type Overdrive / Healey

**384-965** Air Purge Tool, Cooling System / MGB, Midget, TR-7  
**384-935** Puller, Wheel Bearing Grease Cup, Wire Wheels / As Fitted  
**384-930** Puller Plate, Steering Wheel / MGB 77 On  
**370-485** SU Carb Side Bowl Spacer Kit HS-2 & HS-4 Carbs as fitted.  
**370-505** SU Carb Side Bolw Spacer Kit H-Serier Carbs as fitted

**Stainless Steel U-Bolt Type Exhaust Clamps**

These Stainless Steel U-Bolt type exhaust clamps are strong, durable, and best of all, will not rust.

1-5/8"	412-200	\$4.95
1-3/4"	412-201	\$5.25
1-7/8"	412-202	\$5.50
2"	412-203	\$5.75
2-1/8"	412-204	\$5.85



**Oil Catch Can by Mishimoto**

You may think that an oil catch can is just for race cars, but actually all engines benefit from one. When your engine is running, oil vapor is being produced when all the parts bathed in oil move quickly. This mist is known as blow-by and if you have a PCV system or a road draft tube, that blow-by gets messy and can really affect your British sportscar. Draft tubes leak oil onto the underside of your car. PCV systems introduce this oil back into your combustion chamber which causes carbon build up and lower performance. By installing an oil catch can between the engine and either your intake manifold or the atmosphere, you can trap all that oil and dispose of it properly.

Oil Catch Can - 16oz. 223-075 \$129.95



**Cross Drilled and Slotted Brake Rotors by TRW**

TRW is a leader in aftermarket car parts and these slotted brake rotors are a performance upgrade. Under hard use the brake pad surface emits gasses which cause the pads to plane over the surface of the rotors. The grooves in these slotted rotors channel the gasses away from the braking surface and reduce brake fade. The grooves also reduce pad material build-up on the rotor surface and minimize glazing. Sold as a Pair.

1962-80 Spitfire	586-655	\$119.95
1962-80 MGB	586-635	\$114.95
Late TR4 thru TR6	586-645	\$144.95



**Clutch Hydraulic Kit**

Save money and make ordering easy with this kit which includes all usually replaced clutch hydraulic components: master cylinder, slave cylinder with pushrod, hose and required copper washers.

1962-80 MGB 180-718 \$79.95

**Windshield Washer Bush and Jet Kit**

This windshield washer bush and jet kit is now available for your TR4-TR4A or TR250-TR6. The kit contains bushings, bezels, tubes, and nozzles for both the left and right side.

Washer Bush and Jet Kit 565-028 \$29.95





**Moss Motors, Ltd.**  
440 Rutherford Street  
Goleta, CA 93117

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
MOSS MOTORS,  
LTD.



# TIME TO PUT THE TOY AWAY, KIDDO.

It's getting to be that time of year again. Call on Moss Motors for all the supplies you need for the off-season. We'll gladly help winterize your car or send you parts for winter projects.

[MossMotoring.com/putting-your-car-into-storage](https://MossMotoring.com/putting-your-car-into-storage)

MOSSMOTORS.COM

800-667-7872

