

The Magnette

Newsletter for all Z Magnette Enthusiasts in North America

Nov. 90

Dear Enthusiasts,

What a great MG summer Sharon and I had this year! We drove the Magnette frequently for both local and out of state events. We are definitely spoiled by the luggage space that the Magnette offers. I used to plan out exactly how to pack the MGB or TC for a long trip, but with the Magnette, I just open the boot lid or rear doors and toss in the bags.

We applied for and were accepted to participate in the Motor Muster at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. It was a two day event that featured cars of the 30's, 40's, and 50's, with five cars being represented for each year. The other cars for 1958 included a Lincoln Continental, Ford Fairlane Retractable, Rambler station wagon, and a Desoto. The Ford won our group.

Our trip to England was more than we expected. Dennis Klemm and family, Sharon and I were met at Heathrow by MG Club members driving a Austin Cambridge and a Morris Oxford, and were promptly driven to an autojumble! After two days in London doing the tourist thing plus visiting as many book and model car stores we could find, we headed to the countryside and to a Bed and Breakfast in the Banbury area. We used the B&B as our base for the remainder of the trip. We put over 2,000 miles on the rental car in ten days. We visited the Jaguar factory, Wedgwood China factory, Silverstone Racetrack, the MG Car Club office in Abingdon, antique shops, model car swap meets, MG junkyards, and many pubs.

We visited John and Lou Shorten and had a very nice afternoon talking MG's. John does the best body and floor repair work to Magnettes that I have ever seen. He has saved a lot of Magnettes from the junkyard by making the rusty bodies roadworthy again. Three cheers to John! Lou had the largest and most comprehensive supply of Magnette parts anywhere. Sharon and I wandered around her parts building not believing everything that we saw. Lou supplied us with a correct type tyre pump to complete the restoration of our car. Thanks Lou and John for a fun afternoon.

We attended the 60th Anniversary of the MG Car Club - MG Day - at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, where we met with Dixon Morris, Warren Marsh, and Paul Batho of the MG Car Club Z Magnette Register. We talked about Magnettes, and agreed to keep in touch. One good way of doing that was joining the MG Car Club and the Z Register in England. As a member I can tell you that it's a worthwhile organization that every Magnette owner should be part of. They have a newsletter Magnettics that is published quarterly.

A week after we returned from England we headed up to University Motors for the Summer Party. This year there were 503 MG's on the field with three of them being Z Magnettes and one Magnette MK IV. Sharon and I came in 1st in the sedan class with Pat and Dave Wittmer a close second. Betty and John Park came with their Varitone, and Dennis Klemm drove his Farina MK IV.

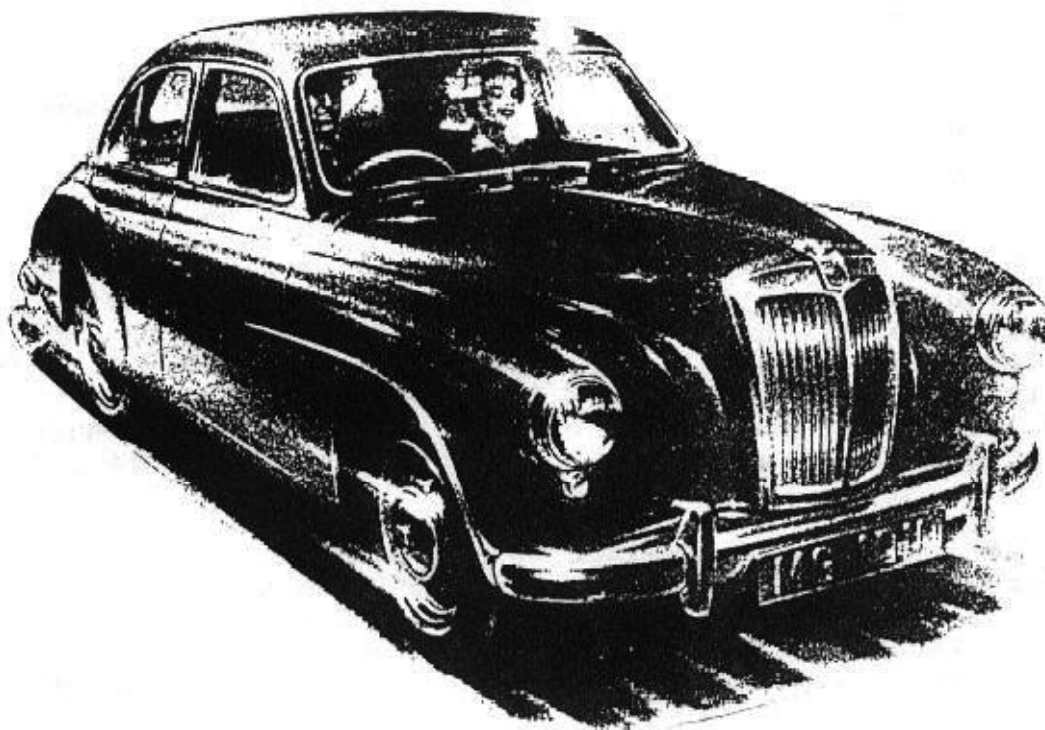
The Registry has finally been computerized! Recent members Gene and Becky Cooper of the Chicago area offered to make the list and print address labels. It's about time I got the names in alphabetical order. I also decided to formally name the newsletter and update the logo. The name, THE MAGNETTE shows my intentions to keep things simple and low key. I do this for fun, relaxation and the love of MG's. The goal of this Registry is to supply you with the names and addresses of other Mquette owners so that you can get in touch with each other for information and for you to meet and enjoy other MG enthusiasts. I enjoy the fact that I have no deadline for The Mquette newsletter, when it's finished, it gets mailed. I want to thank everyone who sent money to help with the postage. It was very nice of you.

In regards to Bernard Siegal's open letter to the Registry, please get in touch with either Bernard or myself on this matter. As I had written before, MG Magazine is also interested in the values of Z's for their price guide. Bernard attended the auction of the Gene Ponder collection of MG's in Texas and informed me that a ZB Varitone in #2 condition, 51,000 miles, unrestored with a Webasto folding sunroof sold for \$12,500!

Have a safe winter, see you in the spring!

Happy Holidays
Safety Fast!

JEH



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M3J 3A4
(416) 736-4267

Repairs Midgette speedos, has new speedo assemblies.

MG CAR CLUBS

MG Car Club Ltd. monthly magazine-Safety Fast
Kimber House
P.O. Box 251 Abingdon
Oxon, OX141FF England, U.K.

Z Magnette Register-MGCC quarterly magazine-Magnettics
Paul Batho-International Liaison Officer
2 Broadway Close
Harwell, Oxon OX110LB
England, U.K.

No. American MGA Register monthly magazine MGA!
Bill Gallihugh-Registrar
2455 Glenhill Drive
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

MG Owners Club monthly magazine-Enjoying MG
Freepost
Swavesey, Cambs.
CB4 1BR England U.K.

MAGAZINES

MG Magazine
P.O. Box 321
Otego, New York 13825

Ron Embling-editor
quarterly magazine

MG Enthusiast
P.O. Box 11
Dewsbury, West Yorkshire
WF12 7UZ England U.K.

Martyn Wise-editor
bi-monthly magazine

British Car Magazine
P.O. Box 1045
Canago Park, Calif 91304

David Destler-editor
monthly magazine



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BERNARD A. SIEGAL, ASA

September 4, 1990

Dear Fellow ZA and ZB Mquette Collectors:

I am addressing this letter to you in the hope I can get a discussion going about the values of the ZA and ZB Mquettes in North America. Quite frankly few have been sold between collectors and even fewer restored ones. As an appraiser I find myself in somewhat of a predicament of trying to establish a value since my job as a valuator is to find actual sales, advertisements and value listed in guides. While I have seen some ads of ZA/ZBs for sale, few ever go to an auction and none are listed in the common value guides for the United States. Several British publications including Classic Cars and Practical Classics list good to very good examples at about £3000 to £4000.

The collector in me doesn't want any firm listing of values as this tends to lower the sales prices or at least cause a wide fluctuation of values, especially of unrestored running examples. On the whole though, I believe it would be in the best interest of most owners of ZA/ZBs if some research was done to try and establish some published values. For this the best source is recent private and public sales prices.

In terms of numbers produced and still exist and cost of restoration the Mquettes are far scarcer than MGAs and quite a bit more expensive to restore. That could mean the MGA is a much better proposition to restore at this time or the Mquette is really undervalued. I am interested in hearing from the various owners their ideas of value. My own feeling, if listed in the Old Cars Price Guide number system would be:

#6 Parts	#5 Complete	#4 Poor	#3 Average	#2 V. Good	#1 100 pt car
\$500	\$800-1200	\$2000	\$3000-4000	\$6000-8k	\$10k-15k

I hope to be hearing from some of you in the next six months.

Sincerely,

Bernard A. Siegal
Bernard A. Siegal



SECOND OF TWO SECTIONS

Rare MG Midget brings back a lot of memories

Keith Holdsworth drives a time machine.

I sit in it, inhale deeply, turn the key and push the starter button.

We don't move a millimetre, but a combination of the sound and smell transports me back more than 22 years.

... it's the middle of a north-east English winter, snow is falling thicker than the dandruff in a "problem-scalp" shampoo commercial, and only a lunatic would be on the roads.

But my girlfriend lives 24 kilometres (15 miles) away and adolescent lust has propelled me out into the teeth of the blizzard.

I'm about halfway there and trying to keep the car moving up a steep and slippery hill when over the top comes one of those lunatics I mentioned, in a Morris 1100 going like a bomb. Sideways.

With solid snowbanks on either side, I have nowhere to go. The 1100 hits hard.

Seatbelts haven't yet been made mandatory but I've had one fitted — passengers have to take their best chance — and it saves me from getting the steering wheel through my chest.

I'm alive but my beloved MG Midget is dead.

... then, suddenly, it's 1968 again and I'm back in an underground parking garage in downtown Toronto.

Wheeling Around

Bill Taylor



Thanks, Keith, I needed that.

Holdsworth's Midget ZB isn't exactly the same as mine. His is a '57, mine was a '58. His is all maroon, mine was a black-and-gray Varitone, with a bigger rear window. But it's close enough.

The burble of the 1489cc engine, fed by two hefty S.U. carbs is the same. As is the smell of the "old car" leather and walnut interior.

Back when I had one (my brother-in-law had an even nicer ZB at the same time), Midgets were common. They enjoyed great success in rallying and saloon-car (okay, sedan) racing against the likes of Ford Zodiacs, Austin Cambridges and 1.5-litre Rileys.

Hundreds of others met a violent end in a different form of racing — the jalopy classes at stock-car tracks all over Britain. How short-sighted we were in those days.

It's one of the reasons why immaculate examples such as Holdsworth's, or even derelict shells, are so rare these days.

especially on this side of the Atlantic.

And why so many people ask him, "Is it a Jaguar?" followed by, "I never knew MG made a sedan."

In fact, some of the finest MGs were sedans, though the ZB was the last in a pedigree line. The so-called Midget that followed was an execrable, tarted-up version of an Austin/Morris mongrel.

Then there was the MG 1100, of which the least said the better.

But back to Holdsworth's dark-red pride and joy.

"The previous owner had had it from new," he says. "He chose me to buy it and as part of the deal he and his wife have visitation rights!"

"There are only about 30 that I know of on the road in North America. They were one of the first monocoques and the floor tended to rust out."

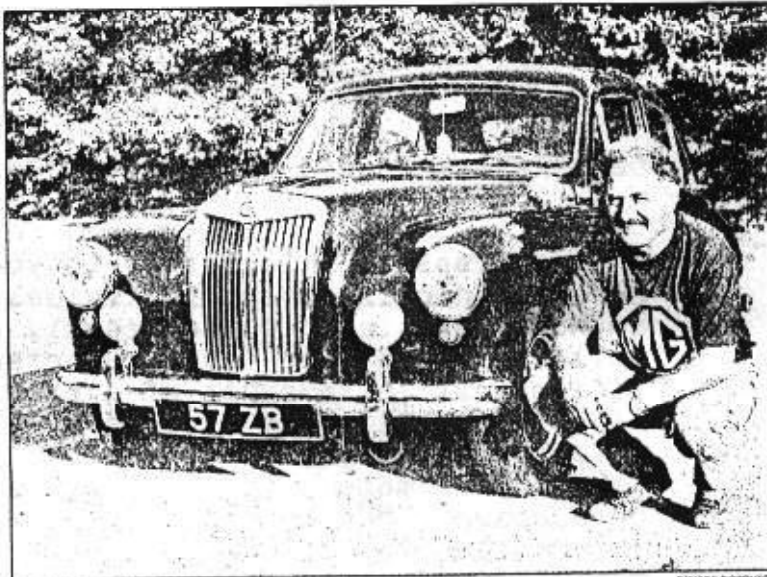
True enough. This happened to mine. Fortunately, that was in the days when backstreet welding shops were still cheap enough to justify having a new floor put in.

Holdsworth has four MGs including a TF sports car, a 1970 MGB and a spare car for the Midget.

Not surprisingly, he belongs to the MG Car Club of Toronto — celebrating its 35th year — which boasts 220 members and some 500 cars (no, you don't have to own an MG to join).

Dropping in on a recent club outing, I was interested to see another real rarity, an MGC.

If you've never come across the model, it looks much like an MGB



SWEET CHARIOT: Keith Holdsworth of the MG Car Club of Toronto communes with pride and joy — a 1957 Midget ZB. Only about 30 are still in use in North America.

except for the wide bulge in the hood. That's to accommodate a 3-litre, straight-six. The C was under-developed by the factory and under-rated by the market.

Holdsworth, like most mem-

bers, can talk by the hour about MGs — twin-cam MGAs; R-Type single-seaters, which had fully independent suspension; K3 racers, also designated Magnetics.

He likes the marque in general

and his Midget in "mostly for the nostalgia, taken back to a time when life was simpler."

To what better use could you put a time machine?

The magic of the marvelous MG draws fans from coast to coast

By Sald Deep
The Grand Rapids Press

A Wisconsin license plate on the front of the little car summed up Friday's gathering: "MG NUT."

More than 1,000 nutters to be exact, driving from as far away as California and Nova Scotia to attend the largest meeting of MG car owners in America.

The 14th annual event, which will continue through Sunday, is hosted by University Motors in Grand Rapids and is second to none, claims John Twist, organizer of the event.

"It started out as an event that was strictly business," explains Twist, who, in the same breath, notes that those days are gone. "It's the people that make it exciting. It's a chance to enjoy the people and the cars."

The enthusiasts come from all walks. There was nuclear power plant operator John Park who drove his 1959 MG Midget from South Hampton, Ontario, and retired Boston Symphony trumpet player Gerard Goguen who traveled 800 miles from his home in Walpole, N.H., bringing with him to sell everything from \$250 MGTC fog lamps and \$222 carburetor bodies to video cassettes detailing the evolution of the MG.

"This started as a hobby," Goguen says. "I bought a brand new MGTD in 1953 ... I bought a wrecked TD and rebuilt the whole thing."

Today, Goguen claims he operates the world's largest shop, selling parts from his home for MGTCs, TDs and TFs. In addition, he and his wife Doris operate their own MG museum featuring 27 models, an extensive motorcar library and other motoring artifacts in Westminster, Vt.

MGBs and Midgets were the last models produced by the British car maker before going out of business 10 years ago. MG left behind 1920

The car was created around 1920 by designer Cecil Kimber who worked for Morris Garages, hence the MG. In September 1980, British Leyland decided to retire the famous octagon symbol of the MG and concentrate on its Triumph line.

This weekend's gathering, simply put, is a fun-filled carnival for adults.

Some 500 of the MG sport cars will be on display today at Douglas Walker Park in Byron Center between 10 a.m. and noon.

Vendors will sell all sorts of odd MG paraphernalia, ranging from car parts such as wheel bearings and brake cylinders, to windshield wipers, MG medallions, workshop

manuals and items such as caps, shirts and flags.

But it is more than just a flea market. Car owners exchange ideas for keeping rust from eating their cars to making repairs to keep them on the road.

While the cars can't stand up to the Motor City muscle cars like Mustangs and Corvettes, there are some MGs that could certainly give the Detroiters a good run.

That was apparent when Glenn Towery, of Delaware, took his black 1978 MGB, equipped with a Buick designed British built Rover V8 engine, for a 125 mph ride down Int. 96.

The other cars on display may not be as quick, but they are pretty to look at. The MGTC, a two-seater with 19-inch spidery wire wheels, long swept clamshell fenders and cutaway doors, was imported from 1946 to 1949. It was introduced to the U.S. by servicemen returning from World War II. The car, most driven from the right side, had wooden floor panels and bulkheads.

Between 1950 to 1954, the company introduced the MGTD and the MGTF, making only minor changes to the coupe.

In 1956, a radical styling change took place with the introduction of the MGA. Still using wood, which



Betty Park of South Hampton, Ontario, lovingly polishes her 1959 MG Midget.

was then covered with sheet metal, many variations of the MGA were built until 1962.

The cars will be posed for pic-

tures about 1 p.m. at the park. Today's activities will begin at 9 a.m. with a rally from the Hilton Inn, 4747 28th St. SE, to the park.

THE M G CAR CLUB Z MAGNETTE REGISTER



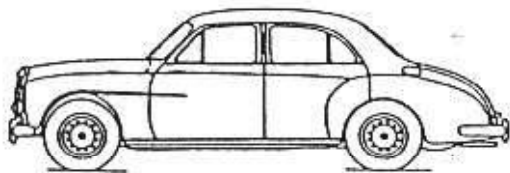
MG DAY
AT THE NATIONAL MOTOR MUSEUM
BEAULIEU ENGLAND

LOVE: MR. & MRS. DIXON MORRIS
CHAIRMAN

RIGHT: WARREN MARSH
HISTORIAN

BELOW: PAUL BATHO
INTERNATIONAL LIAISON





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Jeff Powell
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