



President's Message:

As I sit here watching the snowfall and writing this month's rendition of my message, I'm thinking of warmer times to come. As you are reading this, you know the prediction that Punxsutawney Phil already made during his debut on February 2nd of this year.

Regardless what that varmint may predict, spring is a-coming—March 21st to be exact! That means April is just a few weeks after that, and up-state classic car season is right behind. I promise not to "fool" anyone in this April's newsletter. Between now and then, we have some dates to think about. February 14th, of course is Valentines Day (here's your reminder), Sunday February 18th is the 49th annual running of the Daytona 500 (Daytona 500 party anyone?). On Sunday March 11th Daylight Saving Time begins (yes this is correct, it is now the second Sunday of March, no longer the first Sunday of April), Wednesday, March 14th ,starts the 55th annual running of the "12 Hours of Sebring" (a very long 5 days), St. Patrick's Day is March 17th, while March 19th is St. Joseph's Day (both days to eat plenty), and finally the 8th of April is Easter. Speaking of Easter, I remember growing up in Camden, and Easter Sunday was either snowy and cold or warm and sunny. In my early years I hung out with my parents. In later years, if it was warm and sunny, I would get together with buddies, we would gas up our bikes and go for a mid-afternoon ride.



Because we could. Not once did we complain about how much colder it was than we originally thought. Not once did any of us go back for gloves or an extra layer of clothing. Not once did any one of us complain about the driving conditions. That was then, this is now. Times change as well as our thoughts as we mature over the years (???). I know I have more mature and logical thinking cells in my body now than then I had back then. Ya, I'm sure I do of course I do. However, spouses seem to think differently on this subject.

April is the month we all itch to get back into our driver seats to take control of our cars. While some of us do go driving early in the season, others will wait till the April showers wash off the leftover salt mixture from the roads. Regardless of when you decide to crank up your classic for the first time, there is some thinking that must be done before those plugs fire for the first time. This brings me back to March, as that is the month our "Tech Squad" list will be published in our newsletter. Our "Tech Squad" consists of members willing to help other members by sharing their knowledge and expertise. If you would like to be included in our "Tech Squad" list, contact me and I'll be happy as a warm gear shift knob in July to add you to our list. For others that need some assistance, feel free to contact any of our volunteer members whose name is on our list, you'll see it next month.

Enjoy your ride, Mike

MG—Enjoy The Ride!

The 2 Seater

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UPCOMING EVENTS

February -

- 2/10- Tech session at Paul Andrews' - 10:00
(see additional info elsewhere in this issue)
- 2/15- Eurocar meeting— 7:00pm—Piano & Organ Store
- 2/22- Mystery Theater at Spaghetti Warehouse—6:45pm
"Big Louie & the Gang That Couldn't Think Straight"
Show starts at 7:00; dinner & show is \$25.95 plus tax and gratuity.

March -

- 3/6- General membership meeting at Barbagallo's
6:30—eat; 7:30—meeting.
- 3/15- Eurocar meeting—7:00pm—Piano & Organ Store
- TBA- Fun, food, and drink night—details to follow.

April -

- 4/3- General membership meeting at Barbagallo's
6:30—eat; 7:30— meeting.
- TBA- Spring Dust-off—details to follow.

Check the club web site for other events and updates

www.mgcarclub.com/cny

July -

Disclaimer -

The Club, its officers, the editors, and the author of any piece disclaim any responsibility for damage, injury, or loss connected with use of any technical information provided in the newsletter. Repairs/maintenance/technical tricks/procedures described herein should not be attempted without the proper tools and equipment and should never be attempted by anyone not experienced in the techniques involved

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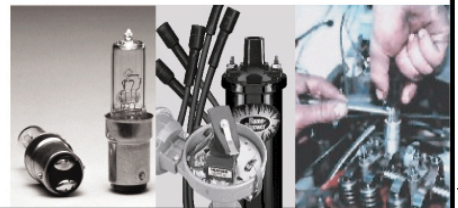
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Member Profile -
Dennis & Mary Lagoe

My first encounter of an MG was when Dennis brought this small black car home- my first thought was, " what is MG?" . Dennis explained he had an MG in high school (but what car didn't he have?). We went out for a drive, and I was hooked-what fun car. We did day trips, and then we found others who had the same interest in these little, fun cars-the MG club was born. Since then we have been on many wonderful trips and havemet many great people. The talents of these people have made memories of trips like Cooperstown, Kingston, wine trips, dinners, Norwich, ice cream runs, and Moose Lake, just to name a few of the many trips planned by this club.

Now Dennis' turn: It was the spring off 1997 and I was looking for a hobby car. In fact I was looking for a Mercury Comet in Bayberry. I made wrong turn (we guys knows this as a short cut, because we never get lost—it's the scenic route). My radar spotted a car next to a garage under a tarp, and it was just the size to be a two seat roadster. So I pulled in for a peek! By the looks of things had been there awhile. I found out later it was inside five years and outside five years. The lady of the house called her husband to see if he wanted to sell. It turns out that we knew each other. After some small talk, we came to terms and I claimed my prize. An ORIGINAL RUST FREE MGB TEN MINUTES FROM MY HOUSE. As we all know, finding an original rust free car that has never been patched up, welded, etc. is a special event. About six weeks passed while we replaced all the good stuff like tires, battery, brakes, master cylinder, and slave cylinder. The clutch was passable and lasted year or two. The interior was a disaster (thank God for seat covers). But, by June 1, was driving my B almost everyday! Over the next two years, I pitched the nightmare they call a carburetor, tore off all the smog crap, and added a Weber and header. The thin tube head kept falling off, so I added an older style cast iron job and it worked just fine (a lot more pep). I was at a custom car show with my younger brother when I went over to look at a green Sprite. When I went to look at it, I picked up a flyer that said something about a meeting to start a car club for British cars.

Awhile later, I was upstairs at the Euclid Hotel and we had only a dozen or so people there. As they say, though, the rest is history. I do have the rare privilege of being a charter member. As I remember, someone said we had to have insurance. To raise the necessary \$400.0, everyone kicked in\$25.00 and got to be a Charter Member. I have been involved since we voted in our first group of officers. Mary and I have really had a lot of fun and feel we have made some life long friends. In fact, a couple of years ago I mentioned selling the car (I wanted a chrome bumper B) and Mary said NO WAY. So now if you notice the plates it says "MARYS' MG" . So that is our story. We feel fortunate to have found this club and the many wonderful people and events. We are looking forward to more events and meeting more people as the club just keeps on growing.

Tech, Play and Eat Session -

Save February 10th for a tech session at Paul and Loie's. Paul is planning on demonstrating the installation of battery safety switches and also talking about inertia switches for fuel pumps. (What on earth are they?) Probably this will lead into other safety issues like suspension, brakes, etc. Paul says to give him a call if there is another topic you would like to cover.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the non-techies will be subjected to another watercolor class. Please let me know if this is getting boring! I will supply all materials. If you could toss a couple of bucks in a pot to cover paint and paper, I would appreciate it. Except for Patty Golas - she threw me \$5.00 last time. That's too much. DON'T PANIC! No drawing skills are required. I will give you a drawing to trace. Actually, I appreciate your playing the student roll because I'm trying to learn how to teach.

The tech session and lesson will begin at 10:00 AM. I will brew up a pot of something for lunch. Bring whatever might fit around a main pot or call me if you want more details. Also call for directions if you haven't been here before. We are at 145 Island Road, off Route 49, in the town of Palermo. Phone 598-9187.

See you then—Loie

THE ROADSTER:

By Mike Mastracco

Roadster is the [North American](#) term for a 2-seater without a permanent top and without rollup windows (if it has rollup windows it is a [cabriolet](#), not a roadster), and the windshield is bolt on rather than integrated as in modern cars. Even with the lightweight [convertible](#) top raised and the clear plastic “windows” snapped in, the driver and passenger remain somewhat exposed to the elements. “Convertible” is an abbreviation for “convertible coupe” or “convertible sedan” which, in 1920s-30s parlance, indicated that the car had rollup side windows instead of removable windows (usually called side curtains in America). In modern times, the word is often used to describe a two-seat convertible without fixed window frames, especially a light-weight [sports car](#). Most modern day production “roadsters” only meet one of the three criteria. Here, the use of the name roadster is more a [marketing](#) gimmick than a technical label, invoking the feeling of an open-top machine for enjoyment, like those of the past. This paragraph was taken from Wikipedia.

Roadsters can trace their origins to the decade or so prior to World War II. In Europe, they were developed as pure racing machines to compete on the most challenging tracks across the continent: Le Mans, Monza, and Avus ([motor racing](#) circuit on the south-western outskirts of [Berlin, Germany](#)). Early roadsters, were short on amenities and creature comforts, (as we know so well), these were built for the express purpose of moving as fast as possible in order to win races. The essential design was simple: a roadster was defined by an open cockpit, two seats (driver and mechanic), a highly tuned suspension for road racing, and a state-of-the-art power-plant.

During this same time period Roadsters were also being developed in the United States, and in small numbers as well. History tells us there were roadsters from Chevrolet, Dodge, Ford, and other mainstream manufacturers, but these were merely two-seat convertible versions of their standard, everyday passenger cars. In the United States, true roadsters were the domain of the “Rich and Famous.” movie stars and starlets, captains of industry, and Gatsby-styled playboys of the 1920s who drove custom-bodied roadsters from such legendary and long-gone marques as Auburn, Cord, Duesenberg, and Packard. Built for different purposes, U.S. roadsters of the period were wickedly fast, and often twice the size of their European counterparts. U.S. playboys traded light-weight and fine handling in favor of size and status (I’m sure to lure the female flappers of the day). American roadsters were rare icons of success and enormous wealth - basically “the Rich and Famous.” The Great Depression effectively put an end to the U.S. roadster as well as to high-end roadsters in Europe.

Hard on the heels of the Depression came World War II. Then, as luck would have it (for us), roadsters re-emerged in the postwar period, most notably with the MG-TC. With our servicemen returning from Europe, these cars soared in popularity, especially with those veterans who had been stationed in England. Memories of driving small, nimble cars swiftly over charming and challenging English country roads stayed with them as these servicemen arrived back home. By the early 1950s roadsters were popular enough in the United States to prompt American automakers to launch new, more affordable alternatives to the racing-tuned beauties coming our way from Great Britain and Italy. Chevrolet led the way with the Corvette; two years later Ford introduced the famous Thunderbird.

Talking production numbers, roadsters reached their zenith in the mid – to late 1960s. Before and during this time frame, enthusiasts were faced with many choices, particularly from Europe, in a variety of price ranges. Choices ranged from small entry-level models like the Triumph Spitfire and MG Midget on up to pricey E Type Jaguars and, of course, the Ferrari and Porsche lines of automobiles. There was a model and style for every taste and budget. In the ‘70s the world was faced with a global gasoline shortage; some of our population concerned about the impact of the automobile on the environment; and, of course, the government stepped in with a combination of safety related and pollution issues aimed directly at the production automobile. Our government regulated everything from the height of bumpers to average fuel economy and exhaust gases.

European carmakers, which were not faced with these same kinds of regulations, now had to make costly adjustments to their cars in order to sell them in the U.S. market. Lacking resources and capital, several auto makers disappeared from the U.S. market, among them Austin-Healey, MG, Sunbeam and Triumph. Ford stopped production of the convertible Mustang in 1973, Chevy the Camaro convertible in 1969, Plymouth and Dodge ended the Barracuda and Challenger convertibles in 1971, and Cadillac its convertible in 1975. It was pretty much “hard top coupe” for several years. However, during the economic boom in the mid-to late 1980s, the roadster’s popularity began to take hold and increase once again.

Next month, the Sunbeam.

Phil is on the Mend -

No, not Punxsutawney Phil, but our own Phil DiMatteo. He continues to make steady progress. Cards can be sent to: Phil DiMatteo, Room 8138m, SUNY Upstate Medical University, 750 East Adams St., Syracuse. NY, 13210. Let him know we’re all cheering him on!

**Spectacular Holiday Party 2007 -
By Chris Carbone**

It was a dark and stormy night (all great stories start out this way). I was so worried we'd have a huge snow storm that night as the forecast for the weekend was grim. But my prayers were answered and it turned out cold and crisp but clear. We had forty-eight beautiful couples who came out to wine, dine, and trip the light fantastic. We gathered on the lake at Borio's Restaurant. The room was tastefully decorated and softly lit in candlelight with a beautiful view of Oneida Lake. We had a delicious buffet with plenty of food for everyone. The delectable desserts were generously supplied by our talented members and a big thank you to all who gave their time and talent. Everything was scrumptious. Dinner was followed by dancing with music provided by Mike Quirk as DJ. He did a great job. Of course, the pressure was on because nine couples actually just finished taking dancing lessons privately from Mike. They need not have worried as everyone had a great time and did a great job with the samba, the rhumba, and even the macarena. Mike even personally danced with many lucky ladies, showing up their dancing-shy husbands. We won't mention any names. The night came to an end all too soon but everyone hopefully had a great evening. Thank you to all who joined us.

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MGA Adventures

By Dave Winne

The first MGA I was ever involved with was a '59 1600, that my friend Curt Ruby and I fixed up while we were both airmen stationed at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, in 1973. (I know, some of you weren't born yet in 1973). Curt and I rented a stall at the auto hobby shop for a long-term project and began from the beginning. The car was very solid but hadn't been run in years, ran on three cylinders, had a very tattered interior, and was at least three different colors of primer. First, we found a used MGB 5-main engine and set about the task of adapting it to the MGA transmission.

After weeks of hard work and some favors by a friend in the machine shop, the MGB engine roared to life and we took it on a shakedown cruise around the base. Using only the emergency brake, it was a good thing that traffic was light on that Saturday morning. We were enjoying ourselves and soon we had company on our route. The Security Police decided the taillights not working, but we didn't have any floorboards or brakes either. The cops took a dim view of all this and promptly escorted us back to the auto hobby shop. Close call!

The next week we pulled the interior out and sent it out to the upholstery shop to be redone in tan naugahyde. It was a site to behold! The next job was to sand down the body and get it ready for paint. We sprayed it ourselves at the hobby shop and the metallic green paint-job looked very nice, especially with the black hardtop. After we got the MGA completed, I was due to ship out to my assignment in Wyoming, and Curt took the car to his new home in Michigan.

Years later, after I had married and raised a family and owned over a dozen MGBs, another MGA came along. I was in San Diego on business and talking with Bruce Swift, a fellow I had known casually for several years through work. Bruce and I somehow got on the subject of MGs and he mentioned that his brother-in-law from Atlanta had an MGA, and it had sat in the garage for the last twenty years. He also mentioned that his brother-in-law might be interested in selling it. So I got Peter's email address and e-mailed him when I got back to Syracuse. We then talked on the phone and I found out that the car was stored in Binghamton, NY, at his mother's house.

Long story short, my wife, daughter, my granddaughter and I made the trip to Binghamton and looked at the car. A couple weeks later, when Kathy was in San Antonio for a conference, I sold my '76 MGB and picked up the MGA. When she got home, there was still an MG in the garage, but it was fifteen years older. Kathy shook her head, but knew, after living with my car habits for the last twenty years or more, that this wasn't anything out of the ordinary.

I spent the next several months getting the red MGA roadworthy, and after finding out that this car seemed jinxed from the start, I reluctantly sold it to help pay for my daughter's divorce attorney. What some fathers do for their kids!

Fast forward six years to 2006. Since the MGA, I had been through a pair of MG Midgets, a purple MGB-GT named Barney, and was (and still am) driving my '79 MGB-V8 Roadster. I was looking at the MGCCNY website and stumbled onto a classified ad for an MGA. It read something like, "1961 MGA Roadster, paint not original, long term storage. Good condition. \$700."

I called the gentleman in Baltimore and talked to him about the ad. Déjà vu- you have heard the urban legend about the Corvette in the barn and all that... Apparently I was the first caller, and, after satisfying myself that this car was too good to pass up, I told the man that I would send a check in the next day's mail to secure purchase of the car.

The following Tuesday, my neighbor, Mike Savino, and I made the trip to North Baltimore, Maryland with his big diesel truck and a car trailer. We met the owner at his mother's house, and after exchanging pleasantries, he escorted us to the back of the house where the car was stored in the basement garage. What a nice guy, but if you really think about it, have you ever met an MG owner who wasn't???

He opened one side of the swinging door, and we needed to shovel dirt away from the bottom of the other door to gain access to the car. There it sat with a mound of tarps and blankets with four flat tires hanging out underneath, sort of a time capsule. We asked when he drove the car last, and he replied that he bought it in 1963 to go to grad school and stopped driving it toward the end of the sixties. He mentioned that his dad drove it a bit, but couldn't seem to remember when he took it off the road. We deduced that it was probably around 1969.

We carefully pulled off the coverings, as if unwrapping King Tut secured in his final resting place. The top was original, the side curtains were original, the seats were red leather in good original condition. The paint was a non-descript bronze metallic, with a tan racing stripe down the middle. The original color was the rare color Alamo Beige, which, apparently the original owner disliked, as the car was repainted before Mike, the second owner, bought the car in 1963. And there was a great Baltimore Colts championship decal on the inside of the windshield. This car was truly out of a time capsule!

Mike Savino and I spent the next two hours, in the sweltering Baltimore heat and humidity, pulling the car out of the garage onto the concrete driveway, and freeing up the brakes and pumping up the tires. We then pushed the car carefully (with no brakes) down the driveway to the

MGA Adventures—cont.

street and winched it up onto the trailer. The rest of the money changed hands and I couldn't get the deal done soon enough. It was as if I would wake up from my dream and I would be lying in bed trying to remember the details of my dream!

To make the trip even sweeter, there was a beautiful red Honda 350 motorcycle next to the MGA in the garage and it had to go, too, as the gentleman was due to close on the sale of his departed mother's house. So Mike made him an offer for \$200 for the bike, we pumped up its tires, and pushed it onto the back of the trailer and strapped it down for the trip home.

We both shook hands with Mike Magrogan and headed for home, six hours away. It was a treat reading the service records on the way home. It was a very long day, but we both had troubles wiping the smiles off our respective faces all the way home. When we arrived home at 11:30 PM, Marty greeted us in the garage and what a relief... She thought the MGA was great and can't wait to drive it!

The next day several MG Clubbers came over to view our new find. Paul, Bob, and Fred crawled all over it and were quite sure I got the better part of the deal. Then a week or so later, Paul and Fred helped me pull the engine and transmission, and then Mike Chetwin and I disassembled the engine and "mic'd" out everything, assessing it for a little freshening up.

The MGA project has been on hold since the end of the summer, as Marty and I just moved into our new home and have a lot of unpacking to do. But now that we are done with the holidays, perhaps I can take some time to read those three MGA restoration books that Marty and Heather gave me for Christmas and finally get to work on this project...



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Member Profile—Mike Chetwin

My family and I appreciate your kindness and thoughts when my Dad passed away. We sincerely thank you all.

As a young boy growing up in rural upstate New York, I had wonderful opportunities to be around all sorts of "neat things". My Dad owned a construction company and had trucks, dozers, graders, backhoes and all sorts of related things that I considered to be my personal toys (he did not always share my views...). At an early age I was encouraged to learn the basics of mechanics, maintenance, operation and use of all these wonderful things...I kept hearing how fortunate I was to be "educated" (my brothers and I considered it to be slave labor...). By the time I was 15, a 1931 Model A ford (it seemed like a good thing to have...) occupied one bay of Dad's three bay maintenance shop. Before I was 16 we were working on the Company's equipment outside...(that did not go over too well). I had a sailboat under construction in bay two and another Model A in bay three. The terrible disease of "toy collecting" had started!

Upon my graduation from a junior college, Uncle Sam thought I should see the world (my draft lottery number was 16). I served in the Air Force and the Army, flying helicopters and seeing places that will never be hot tourist attractions! The military was a good experience, in hindsight as I traveled to places I would not have otherwise seen. This allowed me to locate another toy: a 1930 Model A, which I still have. After spending five years with Uncle Sam, it seemed appropriate to come home and settle down. I became a policeman and enjoyed several years of exceptionally varied work, most of which was undercover. My assignments took me all over the world (literally!). Along the way, an aerial crop spraying business was started (and sold-what a great day that was!), an aircraft maintenance business was established at Fulton, N.Y. which I still operate today, a family was started (Kaye graduates from nursing school next month), two bachelor degrees were finished, and Lady Luck smiled and got me accepted at the National Maritime Academy where I received my USCG Master's license. I became partners with a marine contractor and engaged in commercial diving/dredging and salvage, the FAA gave me a pocket full of ratings and allowed me to fly and fix transport planes. A divorce took


place and I retired in the fall of 1999 (sort of...).

After "retiring" I accepted a position with PPG Industries as an engineer in their aircraft product support division. It was a great job (we were designing next generation aircraft windows for Boeing and the military) but it required constant travel and did not allow for "toy play time"(the old fords and ,by then Buicks and MGs, were getting dusty). We finished the project and I returned to "retirement". Along the way I met Diane (I tripped her in the coffee shop at a book store) and we were married a couple of years later (it worked!). She chairs the science department at Jamesville-Dewitt Middle School and plans to retire after the 2007-08 school year, when her son graduates. I operate a flight department for a law firm in Syracuse and still travel extensively. When I became eligible for "senior citizen" discounts it occurred to me that the old cars in the barn are now antiques and I ought to get semi-serious about really retiring. Our plan is to live between summer homes in Canada and upstate New York, enjoy time with our family and friends, take several long and slow (maybe get out of 3^{1d} gear Bob??) road trips to keep the dust off the cars, and enjoy the ride...it's been great so far!!

February Birthdays -

- 2/2 William Yorton**
- 2/7 Richard Jeffers**
Paul Stewart
- 2/8 Amy Kuhn**
- 2/9 Diane Galster**
Karl Stein
- 2/11 Tim Curley**
- 2/12 Editor Tom Ross**
- 2/18 Ed Seiter**
- 2/20 Rob Silverman**
- 2/21 Mel Denney**
Peter McCarthy
- 2/23 Ice Cream Man John Golas**

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