



# “The Breakdown”



“Serving all sides of the Marque” 1983-2009

Volume 26, Issue 4

July/August 2009

## Upcoming dates to Remember

- August 10th, BOA meeting at Ida Fritz Park
- August 12th, WNY Miata club Ice Cream Cruise
- September 6th Autumn Sports Classic
- December 12th, BOA Christmas Party at Payne’s Restaurant



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## President’s Message

By Joe Puma

Mid summer in Buffalo – or is this London? All this rain and cool weather must make our LBC’s a little homesick for Jolly Olde England. Actually, as I write this it’s the end of a pretty nice weekend. I’ve been spending lots of time working on the cars lately. The Midget race car didn’t quite make it through its first real test – a few runs down the drag strip at Dunn Tire Raceway intended to break in the engine. A myriad of small problems cropped up – fouled plugs, water and oil running well below optimum temperature, a wobbly distributor rotor and rear tires rubbing on the wheel wells. Then the ignition module died completely at the starting

line on the sixth run, ending the evening. It really ran pretty well until the plugs fouled up, probably due to a rich mixture and the engine running way too cool – it was fast enough down the straight to outrun a turbocharged Eagle Talon and a mid-eighties Camaro Z-28. Still not too sure why the ignition module failed, but at this point the other problems have hopefully been solved, and I’m looking forward to doing some autocrossing with it in its continuing buildup to vintage racing.

The red Midget, on the other hand, is testing my patience and has me wondering if keeping a British car for 25 years is really a form of self-

punishment. It seems that everything that I’ve fixed before is starting to break again – some stuff for the third or fourth time. At the moment, the small job of replacing the brake fluid and bleeding the brakes has turned into front wheel bearings and rear shoes. This on top of all new clutch hydraulics and a new oil pressure/temperature gauge earlier this spring. And I’ve only driven the car about 500 miles so far this summer!

On the calendar, the next B.O.A. meeting (Monday August 10<sup>th</sup>) will be held at British Car Night at the Lockport Cruise in Ida Fritz Park off Transit Rd. in Lockport.

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## Autumn Sports Classic is coming up!

Our annual car show; the Autumn Sports Classic is right around the corner.

This is important for many reasons. We make the majority of our operating budget from this event. We need volunteers to help out the day

of the show.

We need people to help sell tickets, tally votes, and set up the field. But we really need help with the food. Jeane and Brian Aldous have recently stepped up to run the food and help is

needed in the kitchen and on the grill. Please contact Jeane at 282-5568 or drop her an email at [jeanealdous@roadrunner.com](mailto:jeanealdous@roadrunner.com). We can also use some more donations for the Chinese Auction baskets. Thanks from the ASC crew!

## Bury me in an old MOWOG Parts Box July 2009

By Jay Lockrow

One of the good things about being a motor head is the simple fact that you don't have to limit yourself to one area of the motoring world. Now if you are reading this I can pretty much assume that you are a sports car aficionado and like those things directly related. However there is much more in the motoring world. For example racing car engines are generally much more modified than those of stock engines and a whole new world opens up when you start studying how and why to modify a stock engine to get the most potential from it. There are of course pros and cons to these modifications and you must decide if the modification is worth the chance of say higher compression

which could very well destroy an engine if you get it to high. Reliability is always a factor in such modifications and must be thought out ahead of time. Frequently, once a modification has been made you can't go back to standard unless you start over with a new block, cylinder head or what have you.

There are however, many more areas of motors and what they power. One time a few years back I had the opportunity to attend a vintage tractor and antique farm equipment down the road in Pennsylvania. Now I have no thoughts on starting in this hobby but I found it most interesting. The variety of tractors that have been available over

the years and some of the equipment it powered is quite amazing. I was also most interested in the old single cylinder hit and miss engines that powered so much of early farm machinery. One of the members of the Boston Valley Breakfast and Motoring Guild has gotten himself interested in this sort of thing and his discussions usually center on his favorite brand of Shaw tractors.

Over the years I have mentioned outboard motors and that category fits well into this column. These are gasoline powered of both two and four cycle design and the number of makes is mind boggling especially if you go back a few years.

*Continued on Page 4*

## President's Message continued;

This promises to be a good time with at least a couple of city blocks devoted to British cars. Come out and enjoy the camaraderie, fine cars and great music.

Remember, the Autumn Sports Classic car show is just around the corner. It's been returned to the traditional Sunday before Labor Day, so mark your calendar, shine up your car and please try to lend a

hand – day-of-event help is always needed and appreciated by all. The A.S.C. is a twenty-five year community tradition as well as our major fundraising event of the year, so let's make it another fantastic show! Starting with the September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, we return to Otto's Restaurant for our regularly scheduled meetings through the end of the year.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the Lockport Cruise!

Joe



## Bury me in an old MOWOG Parts Box August 2009

By Jay Lockrow

One of my big fans of MOWOG told me the other day he would like to see more columns on vintage racing. This was told to me after I had mentioned to him that I had no idea of what to write about for my next column as the well seemed to be dry. He quickly piped up with this idea. This is agreeable to me but

one of the problems is I haven't been to a vintage race lately so any material I have is a little dated. Anyway Mary Dryers TC8915 (ex Tommy Hoan, ex Bill Bradley, Ex Cliff Lockrow, ex Dave Hughes TC) was at Euro Car Day parked next to yours truly. This car (TC 8915) may have been an EXU but the list of

numbers that I have say no. 8195 is not an EXU but 8196 is. EXU's were done in batches and my car for example TC7440 is and so is TC7441 but 7442 is not. Don't ask I dunno.

Now that this TC is back on the racing circuit after many years

*Continued on page 5*

TWENTY SIXTH ANNUAL  
**AUTUMN SPORTS CLASSIC**



**CAR SHOW & FAMILY PICNIC**

**SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6th 2009**

**COMO LAKE PARK**  
 AT THE CASINO

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- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
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| ● PINE CAR RACES | ● FUN & GAMES     |

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- |                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
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| B. MGB & GT CHROME | M. VW                           |
| C. MGB & GT RUBBER | N. CORVETTE                     |
| D. MGA             | O. CORVAIR                      |
| E. MGC             | P. MIATA                        |
| F. MGT             | Q. ASIAN SPORTS                 |
| G. BRITISH OTHER   | R. DOMESTIC-STOCK               |
| H. TRIUMPH         | S. DOMESTIC-MODIFIED            |
| I. JAGUAR          | T. SPECIAL INTEREST/<br>KIT CAR |
| J. AUSTIN HEALEY   | U. DATSUN                       |
| K. EURO SPORTS     |                                 |

**RULES OF THE SHOW**

- |  |
|--|
| ● Fire extinguisher mandatory in all vehicles  |
| ● Buffalo Octagon Association will not be responsible for any & all damages or losses. |
| ● All cars must be driven on & off the field.  |
| ● No FOR SALE signs larger than 3x5 inches   |
| ● No Glass Containers  |
| ● The BOA reserves the right to add or subtract classes                                |
| ● No trophies will be mailed   |

**Field Opens at 9am Judging at Noon**

**DIRECTIONS:** From Rochester & Erie PA. Exit Thruway at Walden Ave. Exit 52 E.- Right on Union Road (RT.277) - Left on Como Park Blvd. continue to Park Entrance - follow signs into park

**A portion of the proceeds will benefit local charities**

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I have read & accept the rules of the show

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 Make of Car..... Color..... Year.....  
 Model..... Class.....  
 Club Affiliation, if any.....

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## July MOWOG continued

If you want to get interested in marine engines this is another world. The mere size of some of these units is amazing. I have seen marine engines that are bigger than my house. Once these are installed I doubt if they are ever removed. One night I was with my brother in law and we were down near Delavan N.Y. He took me into a building that had about six huge Worthington industrial engines. These are used to generate electricity and the heat from the engines was used to heat the nearby school. One of the engines was partially dismantled and the pistons were out on the floor. They must have been close to twenty four inches in diameter. Later on he managed to give me a valve from one of the engines and the head was as big as a coffee cup saucer and the stem a bit larger than a quarter and over a foot long. I recall asking one of the guys working on the engine how they were able to get the piston out of the bore. "Overhead crane" was the simple answer and they were dismantling this particular engine because it had a bent crankshaft. These guys said yes they could have it straighten but the thing was as big as my MG.

This afternoon I was having a discussion with a friend and the subject of Crosley automobiles came up. These were built back in the late 40's and early 50's. There are a few around but they were way ahead of their time and people wanted "Big Cars" and as gasoline was cheap in those days Crosley never really had a chance. However the engines of these cars wound up in a good number of specials as they were very light four cylinders with an integral head like an Offenhauser or Bugatti. Many of the early Siatas in the early 50's were fitted with Crosleys. They would wind to a high rpm and were fairly reliable. A good number of these engines also wound up in race boats also as the high rpm made them competitive.

Engines are totally captivating if you start to study the different designs and ideas used over the years. It is also interesting to see who stole what idea from whom. For example a couple of Miller 91's were once taken to Europe to run at Monza at the Italian Grand Prix. These were oval track cars and were not made for a road course. They tried anyway and at least one of the two Millers cracked the front wheel drive

gear casing. The cars were sold by Leon Duray to Ettore Bugatti and not long after the type 57 Bugatti appeared with an engine that was almost a total copy of the Miller. Fast forward to 1964 and the Millers were discovered in a Bugatti factory warehouse with a large assortment of Bugattis. They were purchased by Griffith Borgeson and one is in the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum (ex Leon Duray car) and the Packard Cable Special is in the Smithsonian Institution. Miller engines alone are fascinating study and several books alone have been written on the subject. But let's save that for another time.



*Jay Lockrow with his father and his 1927 Mercedes-Benz Type "S" 36/220S*

## Cruisin Cuisine by Jim and Elaine Pawlak

We made our reservation at "Vinos" 1652 Elmwood Avenue. We dropped the top on the "B" and headed down Route 400 North to I-90 to I-190 to 198 Scajaquada Expressway. Driving around North Buffalo and past the Albright Knox Art Gallery we cruised down Elmwood to "Vinos". Parking is limited in their lot. We parked across the street in their neighbor's lot... plenty of off the road parking there.

The Restaurant is across the street from the old Pierce Arrow factory. The façade is a quaint reminder of years gone by. A few tables outside dotted the entrance to Vinos. Our table for four was ready with linen table cloths and napkins, a lighted candle on the table and a wine list. The Specials Menu was posted on the wall in hand scrolled pen, shades of "Billy Ogden's". The Main Menu is a

simple two page print out of their Appetizers, Salads, Pastas, and Desserts. Three Appetizers are \$4.95, one the Caprese Salad was \$6.95 and two are \$7.95. We shared two appetizers the \$7.95 Steak Ala Vino a 4 ounce Filet cut in half over garlic toast with a side of Garbanzo Salad and the Caprese Salad...

*Continued on page 5*

## August MOWOG continued;

I have decided to tell you what I know about this particular car. Now some of this you may have read some of this before but a lot of MOWOG fans have not so it's time to update history. If you have read this before now is a good time to go out and work on your car for an hour or so.

First of all Tommy Hoan was not the original owner. Tommy told me a good number of years ago that he bought the car second hand but could no longer remember the name of the person he purchased the car from. Tommy raced the car a good deal and one of the venues was the Grand Island Grand Prix on August 30, 1952. I had just turned thirteen and was impressed by the way the car performed. (You people put away your calculators I don't have to be reminded of my age!) My friend Jack Archibald, that I was pit crew for a few years, was technical inspector at that race and he can vouch for the fact that Tommy was there and he flunked the car the first time through tech. The car was repaired overnight and he did run and had a wonderful dice with either a Frazer Nash or a Lea Francis. (Both are on the entry list) He never passed the Nash or Leaf because the famous oil cooled rear brakes on the TC kicked in on his car and he had to back off. He did however win his class.

He raced that fall at Watkins Glen and hit a hay bale with the right rear of the car and put it through a store window. He campaigned the car for a few years and then sold it to Bradley in Detroit sometime in the early 1950s. When my dad and I purchased the car and we were talking with Bill Bradley (He was from Detroit and a professional photographer) Bradley told me he had purchased the car from Tommy Hoan after a race at Harwood Acres as Tommy was getting out of racing. Bradley raced the car for several seasons and supposedly won a SCCA championship in 1957. If this is the case he may have been out running with MG A's and cars of that engine size and beating them. Bradley was always supposed to send us some pictures of the car but he never did. I do have one slide showing the back of the car and the slide is labeled that the black TC in the upper corner is either Hoan or Bradley. I have about three or four slides of the car taken at Harwood Acres in Canada of the car when Bradley owned it when it was painted blue and had a roll cage on it not unlike the one now fitted. At least twice in the few years I went to Harwood I saw the car run but did not know at the time that it was Tommy Hoan or Bradley. I do know it was a pretty quick car and its history points that out. We pur-

chased the car in about 1969 or 70. We towed it back across Canada and had a flat tyre on it about half-way across. Somehow a guy in a gas station patched the tube and we were able to get home. We did quite a bit of work on the car replacing floorboards and cleaning things up. The car, when we obtained it, was fitted with a TF XPAG1500 block with a Laystall Lucas Aluminium cylinder head. I don't recall if the block had been bored or not but by now it probably has. It was, and still is, quite a potent machine and when they get the bugs worked out I'm sure it will be up among the leaders in vintage racing. For some odd reason I was always able to keep up with 8159 with 7440. Not until I rebuilt the engine about a dozen years ago did I discover I also had a XPEG block. My cylinder head is from a TC and I can tell you it is not a Laystall Lucas but it is the next closest thing. It has one of the most beautiful port and polish jobs I have ever seen and is probably one of the main reasons my car will out accelerate most T series. I do not know what the top speed is as I try to treat its age with a little respect. Never the less if you have a T series and want to have a little go.... I'm ready, just keep the fuzz away!

## Cruisin Cuisine continued;

...pass on the Caprese Salad and go for two Steak Ala Vino Filets. All the Pastas are served with a House Salad and Bread. The Entrée Pastas are all \$9.95. The Desserts are made in House and are all priced at \$3.95. The cocktails are \$5, the same for a glass of wine. We paid \$25 for a bottle to share. Elaine had the Off the Wall Special, Chicken Vino with Ziti \$12.95. I had the Meat Lasagna

\$9.95.

Pay attention to the Desserts. When you arrive ask to reserve a slice of their homemade Coconut Cake. It was sold out. I had Sweet Potato Pie and Elaine had the Peach Pie. She says pass on the Peach Pie.

We paid our Bill for a party of four, \$88.35 and remarked about the fine

service from Katie and how it was worth another visit. Then the Owner Kathleen came to the table to apologize, our waitress gave us the wrong check. We paid our revised Check, \$117.

If you want a pleasant dining experience, enjoy a nice drive, and like pasta and coconut cake...visit Vinos. We gave "Vinos" four lug nuts!



Buffalo Octagon Association  
P.O. Box 236  
Bowmansville, N.Y. 14026

## MG Midget Rear Tube Shock Conversion

By Ed Werick

Here's an inexpensive and easy way to convert your MG to tube shocks at the rear axle. There are a great number of sizes and styles of tube shocks available. The trick is to pick a size and style that will work. I started by measuring the distance between the original shock linkage mounting hole on the lower spring pad of my 75 Midget and the upper rebound strap mounting bolt while the car was on a lift and the axle was suspended. These points are almost directly in a vertical line and just ahead of the axle tube far enough to leave plenty of room for a shock body. The dimension I got was 14" I went to my favorite NAPA auto parts store and asked to borrow the shock absorber catalog. I had to ask for an old one because they have begun deleting the dimensional listings from the new catalogs. I found an out of the way spot at the counter and began to

study the listings. The codes for the various types of mountings were listed in the heading. I first went down the "extended length" column and noted all the shocks that were from 13.5" to 14.5". Then I went back over this abbreviated list to pick out shocks that had sleeves or eyes top and bottom. I finally selected a front shock for a 1979 Chevrolet C-10 1/2ton 2wd pickup which carries the part # 94005. This came the closest to working without modification. I had to replace the upper sleeve which came with the shock with a piece of thick wall tubing (5/8" OD, 3/8" ID) the same length. A piece of 1/4" pipe would probably work. The lower sleeve is 1/2" ID so I fitted a 1/2"x 2" USS Grade 5 bolt and tapped the original shock linkage hole in the spring pad to 1/2"x13. I reused the top bolt for the rebound strap, threaded the lower bolt through the shock sleeve and

into the tapped hole, threaded a jam nut onto the bolt threads which came through the hole and tightened the bolts which completed the installation. The whole job took less than 2hrs.

The shocks I used are designed for the heavy end of a much larger vehicle so the valving may be a bit stiff. The ideal way to do this (cost being no object) would be to use KYB or Bilstein shocks which are adjustable.

