

MG Vintage Racers Newsletter

December 2016, Volume 36, Number 2



MGVR 20th Focus Event - 2016 **Waterford Hills, Michigan**



MG Vintage Racers 35th Anniversary
1981 - 2016

From The Editor

55 Belden Road, Burlington, Ct 06013 860-490-5950, Editor@MGVR.org

2016 raced by so fast I almost missed it! Truth be told I had a fairly enjoyable, trouble-free year of MG Vintage Racing considering that I enjoyed four solid race weekends without a hiccup, or blown engine AND I got to meet several of my best friends while paddocked at Lime Rock, Mosport (still have to call it that), Waterford Hills, Watkins Glen, and while carousing the paddock at Sonoma Raceway. Thanks to all of you who made 2016's version of MG Vintage Racing special.

Please allow me a quick review of significant MG events for 2016, followed by a similar preview of 2017...

REVIEW: VARAC's Canadian Historic Grand Prix is a gemstone-quality vintage race event *organized and run by volunteers!* This year's event included a new twist-a Friday night paddock crawl where World's Best wings, followed by subs and ice cream, were featured along with BEER. Please read Dave Good's excellent article in this newsletter.

PREVIEW: 2017's version of CHGP promises to be better than ever with a MG/Triumph Challenge Race in the works, along with a T-Series feature of some sort in the offing-when? June 15-18, 2017. Where? Canadian Tire Motorsports Park (Mosport). I'll be there!

REVIEW: MGVR's 2016 Focus Event at Waterford Hills Raceway was the perfect event to celebrate MGVR's 35th Anniversary and 20th Anniversary Focus Event. Waterford's 1.42 miles races like 4 miles with its short front straight, undulating, climbing and diving curves and long back straight. Event chair Joel Hershoren has devised the perfect formula for fine racing, fun after-race activity, and banquet comedy/shtick. Congrats to award winners Gary Allen (John Targett *Doff of the Cap*), Mark Brandow (Bill Parish *Master of Speed Deception*), David Holmes (Crimson and Clover award-guess how he earned this award), and Dave Smith (MGVR Spirit Award *The Big Copper Bucket*). Many THANK YOUS to Jeff Sienkiewicz for his generous donation that made the Thursday Meet and Greet possible!

PREVIEW: MGVR's 2017 Focus Event will revisit New Jersey Motorsports Park courtesy the Vintage Racer Group. In 2008 we 'broke in' NJMP's *Lightning* Course with VRG (how'd you like those off-course excursions?) as part of *Wings and Wheels* weekend. As expected VRG and NJMP threw one heckuva party that included a tour of the Millville Army Air Museum and a flyover of WWII aircraft. 2017 promises to be at least as fun as 2008 with perhaps less distractions due to the newness of NJMP. Stay tuned as we work out the details of this event! When? September 15-17, 2017. Where? New Jersey Motorsports Park, Millville, NJ.

Quick Review: SVRA's U.S. Vintage Grand Prix at Watkins Glen was as fantastic an event as one can find on the MGVR calendar of events. This year's event featured another fantastic Thursday MGVR Meet and Greet (thanks to Lou the Chef and the many who contributed beer, wine, chili (!) and other tasties). Congrats to the many race winners capped off by Collier Cup winner Steve Konsin. Stay tuned for a full report in this issue, or the following issue.

Quick Preview: When? SVRA's 2017 Vintage Grand Prix at Watkins Glen is slated for September 6-10. If you have not participated in this event recently you should consider joining the fun-you will not be disappointed!

Quick Review: CSRG's Charity Challenge is my favorite West Coast event-I look at it as Mosport/West. Regrettably I did not race in this year's West Coast Focus Event but luckily found myself in Sonoma the same weekend and thus experienced West Coast MGVR as a spectator and comrade. While mere words will not do this event justice I'll share that the racing is fierce, the partying fiercer and the volunteer spirit is second to none! I now understand that the challenge is not in the racing, but in the charitable giving. West coast vintage race fans are quite willing to contribute to CSRG charities in exchange for a few thrilling circuits of the Sonoma Raceway-blame this on volunteers who line up on Start/Finish with their show quality vintage racers to escort said contributors around the track. Your editor's bride escaped the confines of spectatorhood courtesy my wallet and Mike Silverman's beautiful MGA. Thanks to event chair Scott Brown (and Mike Hayworth, and Jim Weissenborn, and Warren + Kathy Pierce, and Joe Huffaker, and Ed Lamantia and all who participated!).

Quick Preview: ATTENTION EAST COAST MGVRs- You don't need a MGVR West Coast Focus Event to enjoy all that is CSRG's Charity Challenge. Please consider doing what I did this year-fly out to San Francisco (do you need an excuse?) to enjoy Sonoma and Napa Valley and the best West coast racing. When? September 29-October 1, 2017 Where? Sunny Sonoma Raceway north of San Francisco, CA!

Many thanks to the staff of MGVR Newsletter: Greg Prehodka-PR and Editor-at-Large, Larry Smith-Accounts, Subscriptions and Hospitality, Dave Smith-Technical Editor and Advisor, Dan and Jane Leonard-Regalia and Hospitality, Chris Kintner-Web Editor, Mark Palmer-Advisor. As MGVR celebrates its 35th anniversary now, we look forward to even more great events and MG racing in the future! *Happy Holidays to everyone!*

Safety Fast,

Chris Meyers

Thank You MG Racers!

- Celebrating MGVR's 35th Anniversary

How fast 35 years has gone! I started vintage racing in 1977 with my MGTD. For my first race back then, all that was required was: a helmet, a seat belt and \$35 to enter the New England MG T's Register's **"Double Three"** six hour race at Lime Rock Park, Ct. Few MGs were being vintage raced back then (*they were still making MGs!*) and there weren't many vintage racing organizations. Then in 1981-35 years ago - I contacted all the MG racers I could locate and suggested a simple **MG Vintage Racers Newsletter** as a way for us to keep in touch with each other and share information. No big plans - just a simple newsletter for 40 of us in the US and Canada. Who knew if it would even make it to issue number two? I typed up that first newsletter on a manual typewriter, copied it at work, and mailed it out in December 1981. Vintage racing back then was small potatoes and much simpler. But with time the newsletter and vintage racing grew and changed. The newsletter saw steady growth and support and today it has over 250 MG racers. I was its editor until 1995 when Mark Palmer took it over, and then Chris Meyers - its current editor - took it over in 2006. I'm proud that over the years it has bonded our **"MG racing band of brothers"** together and has promoted MG Vintage Racing in many ways. It has evolved into a first class organization, well respected in the vintage racing community. It now has its annual "Focus Events", its own awards and socials, a web site, and of course the newsletter. Through it and MG racing, I have met and raced with so many great MG folks - a number of whom are no longer with us.

I personally thank every one of you who race an MG, who support a MG racer somehow, or have supported MGVR in one way or another. Special thanks to Mark Palmer and Chris Meyers for keeping the MG spirit and newsletter alive and well and on a steady course.

It has been 35 years of wonderful memories for me, and now even my daughter carries on MG traditions and spirit by racing my MGTD. And if all goes as planned, soon the MGVR 35th Anniversary Newsletter will be sent out.

Thank you all !

Greg Prehodka

MGVR Founder, December 1981

35 Years of MGVR History!

(A letter from Greg Prehodka to Chris Meyers)

Chris,

I did the MGVR newsletter for some 14 years, and then **Mark Palmer** was its editor from 1995 through 2005 when you took over - so it has now been under your editorship for over 10 years. **Thank you!** I never would have thought back in 1981 that in 2016 we would be celebrating **MGVR's 35th anniversary!** I never had a grand plan - just make it to the next newsletter - when I was editor. Mark built on that, and you took it even further! MGVR went from 40 inaugural members to its current membership! Over the years the NL has been our MG bond for events, racing, spirit, and camaraderie, unlike any other marque vintage racing group! MGVR has set the gold standard in vintage racing! Because of MGVR there have been many MG races over the years, including Focus Events, the Collier Cup, Simms Cup, etc. Throw in Pittsburgh, Hallett, Lime Rock, etc. You have done an incredible job with MGVR, and I still am amazed at how you have managed to juggle it with family, business, and racing!! Our "Focus Event" have - and still are - flourishing under your leadership! East coast and west coast FE's too!

And I have been so proud of the newsletter and all the MG racers over the years, and what it has accomplished and influenced. MGVR is respected in Vintage Racing! I wonder what it might be like today if the MGVR newsletter never was? Would it just be just be a random bunch of disconnected MG racers going to events? No "all MG" races! No MG racer's parties! No Big Bucket! No Parish award! No helping each other? Etc. Would I still be racing my MG now - some 39 years after I started - without the encouragement of my MG buddies? And how many MG friends I've made along the way! The times are always a changing!

The times have changed a LOT since I started racing, when a helmet, a seat belt, and \$35 got you on the track. Heck - there wasn't even e-mail back then and I did the newsletter on a manual typewriter! I thank you for **ALL you have done – and continue to do - for MGVR!**

Its been a great trip - with wonderful friends like you! **I hope the trip continues!**

Greg Prehodka

MGVR Founder, 1981



Letters to The Editor

Chris, thanks for a great newsletter with so much information. Missed you at Lime Rock yesterday, were you there??? I didn't race because I have a new hip, 3 weeks old but I'm walking without a cane so looks good. Plan to race in the Vintage Festival on Labor Day weekend. Your news letter brought back so many memories. I was there at the beginning with Greg. It was Jim Haynes idea to have a vintage race after the major events to help eliviate the traffic jams with spectators exiting the track. The first ones were free , sponsored by Merrill Lynch and then the cost went to \$35.00 . Those were the days !!!! But that was also the beginning of our great racing group. Small group of racers this weekend in the rain. Hope to see you later in the season.

George T. Smith, Mass.

Best wishes for the Holiday Season. It is remarkable how much MGVR grew. Many thanks to Greg, Mark and Chris for keeping it going all these 35 years! We, the MG racers who have benefited so much from the Focus Events, have to recognize that many other events held during the year have large representations of MGs, which I'm not certain would have been the case without MGVR "**priming the pump**" so to speak.

Safety faster!! **Butch O'Conner, NJ**

"It's hard to believe that MGVR has been in existence for 35 years now! That's probably longer than most organizations last. As I reflect on the life of MGVR, I think the most remarkable thing is that MGVR has been the prototype for numerous similar groups who have followed our lead. I think we've clearly demonstrated that camaraderie and sportsmanship (not simply competition) are the foundations for an enduring organization of this type. And I believe that no other organization has created a common bond among such a wide range of owners/drivers, spanning Pre-war cars to 1970's technology -- a truly amazing achievement."

Mark Palmer, MGVR Editor 1995-2005

Greg,

I would like to thank you for all the work you have put into founding the MGVR, and being it's editor for so many years (1981-1995). I am not new to MG racing by any stretch, I have been doing it almost 35 years non stop, mostly SCCA over the years, and now even make my living keeping these old cars going. However with that said, I am a relatively new vintage racer, as a driver, 5 years now, and as a MGVR member only a couple years now. I can tell you firsthand, the MGVR events are now the events I look most forward to attending. We absolutely loved the Waterford event, and plan on being at NJMP next year. Thank you again for all do, and have done. Merry Christmas Greg.

Thank you,

Hap Waldrop

The MGVR Technical Information Team

On the occasion of this 35 th anniversary of MG Vintage Racers, I would like to thank Greg Prehodka our Founder and editor 1981 to 1995, Mark Palmer, editor 1995 to 2005 and Chris Meyers, editor 1995 to present.. They have contributed hundreds of hours to make the MGVR into a friendly, fun and valuable experience to us MG racers. When I was asked to become the **Technical Editor** and with their contributions in mind it was my privilege to accept Chris's offer. I discussed technical article goals with Chris and Greg and they both have given their support.

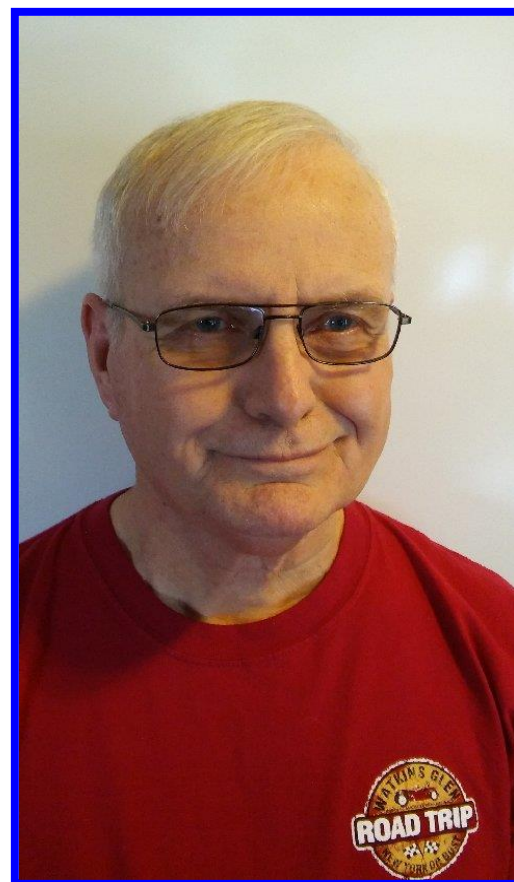
Our goal is to actively seek **your Tech articles** and requests for future articles. Each of you has found innovative and cost effective ideas to make your MG more reliable or to perform at a higher level. Sometimes it is trial and error, but with continuing effort the improvement does occur. Along with these ideas, there must be some funny stories out there on trial and error with an unexpected but not tragic outcome. Please send me those bits too. Your contributions can be sent to mgvrtech@gmail.com or call me at home at 517-694-4856. Yes. It is a landline.

Wife Chari and my social MG club is the Michigan Rowdies. They are a statewide chapter for the MGA and the first chapter of NAMGAR. In 1995 many of the Michigan Rowdies came to the Smith home to assist with the frame up construction of #49 MGA. They built the car in 3 months and had it ready for the first SVRA race in 1996. The team was named Rowdie Racing in appreciation of their support. I would like to borrow one more idea from them. It is the Survey Monkey which is a very user friendly electronic survey. With Chris Kintner's support, we will be sending out the first survey in the New Year. Please take some time to open the survey and respond with your ideas. This will be a tool we can use to find the areas of greatest interest to the MGVR racers. Brake systems, Tire Selection, Cooling system design, Race preparation or whatever you suggest.

Thanks to Stan Edwards for his time as the MGVR Technical editor, I always read his tips with interest to see if there was a better mousetrap for the car or for the team. Thanks to Bob Spruck's MGVR series "Cheap Tricks". These technical tips are interesting and written with humor too. Thanks to Bob Vitrikas for generously sharing his wonderful Track note system. As a new race team, we learned what to bring to the track, How to document engine or chassis changes and then the improvement in lap times (or not). Best of all, how to set up the car when returning to a track that we had experienced one or more years earlier. These records certainly made a big difference in our fun factor as a new race team in 1996.

Please join with me to making our MGVR technical articles interesting and fun to read.

Dave Smith
(MGVRtech@gmail.com)



2016 Collier Cup at Watkins Glen - Steve Konsin

Thanks for the opportunity to share my experience from the Collier Cup this year at Watkins Glen. Receiving the Collier Cup award was a great great honor. The announcement at the winners circle was totally unexpected. There were many deserving and accomplished members present that weekend so yes I was very wonderfully surprised and thankful for the support. Being part of Collier Cup history is a great feeling...

The event itself has always been on the top of my list since my first visit to the track in 1991. This year was special to me because it was a last minute decision. My wife Mary Lou was able to come and we took two cars the MG TD to run in the Collier cup and the MGB for some group 3 fun trying to catch the 356's. The new track surface was very smooth and seemed faster in places where I would have previously held back. The rain played havoc for several of the practices and early races but we still had fun just cautious with slower lap times. Sunday, the day of the Collier Cup race, was perfect and we were able to go full throttle. I moved ahead several positions on the start with the TD and held my own for a few laps drafting the faster cars which pulled me along but always looking in my mirrors for Kurt in his very fast MG TD. I love to give the MGA's and MGB's a run for their money but was back to my starting position after a few laps having lost the draft. I think everyone had a good race the weather was perfect and I was able to snag the T Cup too...

I have been racing MG's since the mid 80's and like most of us managed to make the first race on a truly shoe string budget with the help of the MG vintage race community at that time. George Shafer really put me in the drivers seat lending me a motor to run for the weekend and taking me to driver school with my son Stephen in his motor home. How do you ever find or repay that kind of friendship? That about sums up what the MG Vintage Racers are in my opinion.

A group of guys and gals like none other....So thru the years I have become a bit of a MG extremist, always trying to go a little faster as racing budget dollars became available and then amassing a small collection of MG's that I have developed over the years. I always had the intention of selling the Lester or TD or the MGA once the newest car was reliable but never pulled the trigger because I really like driving each one of them for what they are and I get the chance to race with my sons from time to time having the extra cars sitting idle. I don't know what the future holds for me but I hope there will always be time to enjoy many more great weekends at the track with my MG's, family and my fellow MG Vintage racing friends...Thanks again for making this all happen Greg and Chris...



Steve Konsin #284

Watkins Glen Vintage Grand Prix – MG Results

1. 1st Place. Kent Prather. MGA
 2. 2nd. Peter Uzdavinis. Midget
 3. 3rd. Harry Gentry. Midget
- **Jack Archibald T-Cup winner:** Steve Konsin
 - **Bucher-Decker Cup** winner-Kent Prather
 - **Cornett cup** winner-Prather
 - **Bill Glanville Cup** Winner-Peter Uzdavinis
 - **Target 622 Cup** winner-not sure who he was-drove Konsin's MGB. Will check with steve
 - **Collier Cup** Winner-Steve Konsin

MG Vintage Racers Camaraderie In Action

At the Waterford Hills MGVR Focus Event, Rachel Prehodka-Spindel's MGTD broke on her first lap of practice (*how's that to ruin your racing weekend after coming to Michigan from Connecticut!*) Graciously, so as to salvage at least some of the weekend, MGA racer Chris Meyers graciously loaned Rachel his MGA for the next two practice sessions! Kudos Chris!!



MG's Win-Win at 20 & 35!

It all started in 1981 when 40 MG vintage racers got together and created the "**MG Vintage Racers Newsletter**" as a way to stay in touch with each other and share information. Vintage racing was rather obscure back then. Little did they know what they had begun! Their ranks would slowly grow to over 250 currently, as they now



Mark Brandow – Parish Award

were celebrating their **35th anniversary** - 1981 to 2016! Plus back in 1996 they started their "**Focus Event**" (FE) tradition of designating one special vintage racing venue each year - at different tracks - where all MG racers would be encouraged to come. MGVR would work with the sanctioning race body to get "**all MG races**" included in it, and MGVR began the tradition of including their own socials and awards at these events. Their first "**Focus Event**" was at Waterford Hills, Michigan in 1996, and now 20 years later, over 35 MG racers would come back to celebrate the 20th anniversary FE at the very same track! Some FE's over the years have attracted as many as 143111 racing MGs! A MGVR FE center piece became the awarding of the "**MGVR Spirit Award**" - also started in 1996 at Waterford Hills. It is an award presented to one MG racer at each FE - as voted by their racing peers there - as the person best exemplifying the "**Spirit of MG Vintage Racing**" - in a combination of spirit, racing, and car preparation. It literally is a "**Big Copper Bucket**".

Dave Smith with the "Bucket"



Each winner gets to add their name to the bucket, as it gets passed on yearly collecting MG history! So many significant MG racers have been awarded it over time, and this year the MG racers voted MGA racer **Dave Smith**, from Holt, Michigan the honor! Dave later commented "**Receiving the award was one of my Highlights in my 20 some years of Road Racing.**"

Plus Mark Brandow was awarded the "Bill Parish" award as the MG racer having the most FUN!

David Holmes awarded the McGregor Award by VARAC

The Jim McGregor Spirit of Sportsmanship Award -The membership of VARAC votes for the club member deserving of the McGregor "Spirit of Sportsmanship" Award. The award is "Given annually to the individual who in the opinion of the racing members of VARAC best exemplifies the spirit of and dedication to vintage automobile racing in Canada." This year the award went to David Holmes. "I am ever so pleased and honored to be given this award. It feels it strange to be awarded for something that I am having such a great time doing. What an incredible sport for a father and son to do together. I also can't think of another sport where you are fiercely competing with a person that will drop everything to help you fix your car if you have a problem, to get you back on the track. I have met so many new and wonderful people. I had little time for anything else but work my whole life and can truly say the last ten years have been the best. Thank you all." David Holmes.

David was awarded this due to:

David Holmes is a strong supporter of Vintage racing and particularly the Canadian scene. He regularly runs VARAC events and is a past VH 4 Champ in his MGA, which he built. It's not unusual to for David to be teamed with his son, Evan at the track either crewing or running his Midget.

Within the past 5+ years David has brought back two significant Canadian cars to our grid. One being the Tommy Hoan late 40's MGTC. Tommy ran this car very successfully in the early 50's. The other is the Dick Baker MGA Twin Cam special. Dick ran this car in the 60's.

With these cars David proactively supports vintage racing by competing, by participating in car shows and he has been the subject of newspaper articles and TV interviews. He has also helped others within the MG racing community with parts, advice and a helping hand at the track. He has also helped others get started in the sport

*(From Jeremy Sale,
VARAC)*



MGs & Vintage Racing

By: Greg Prehodka, *MG Vintage Racers*

Introduction

This article will briefly reflect on the history of vintage racing and the *MG Vintage Racers (MGVR)*, as they celebrate their 35 anniversary. Like life, vintage car racing had its beginnings and it has been constantly changing ever since. What was considered “vintage” in 1959 is very different than what is considered “vintage today”! Many of the “older” cars that use to race back in the early years have all but disappeared from the track today – for a variety of reasons! New sports cars that I once owned are now viewed as vintage! And all MGs are now considered vintage by default, because the last one imported here was in 1980! This article reflects on some of those changes over the years and the role MGVR has played in vintage racing.

I have had MGs since 1967 and have been vintage racing my MGTD since 1977. In 1981 I founded the *MG Vintage Racers Newsletter*, and was it editor until 1995. I’ve seen the changes and have so many memories from all those years and events! I’ve raced across the country, the Bahamas, England, and Canada. I could write a book about my adventures! The cars, the events, the organizations, the places, the travels, the drivers! Even my daughter Rachel races my MGTD now!

The Beginnings of Vintage Racing

So where did “**Vintage Car Racing**” originate? The answer might surprise you! As the saying goes “*The first car race probably began when the second car was built*”. Yes, soon after cars were built races and trials soon followed! With time car cultures and car clubs evolved. Then at some point, certain folks wanted to use their older “vintage cars” with events just for them.

The **Vintage Sports Car Club of England (VSCC)** was established in 1934 to promote the sport and pastime of motoring for cars built years earlier.

They formed their club in October 1934, to keep machinery of the past active by only accepting cars that were five years old - or older. Rule two of the newly formed club stated that “*The object of the Club shall be to provide competitive events for cars five years old, or older, and have social events for its members*” They are still an active organization in England today conducting vintage car races. (www.vsccl.co.uk)

Now to the states! By 1959 sports car racing in the US had become more competitive, and not everyone wanted to be that competitive, or wanted to buy the latest, hottest sports cars. So in 1959 a group of “*vintage car enthusiast*” formed the **Vintage Sports Car Club of America** creating a club in which they could drive their older cars in spirited events, while sharing in their love of their wonderful steeds. Its president Bill O’Donnell laid out the club’s philosophy:

“The primary purpose of the VSCCA, as set forth by its founders in the by-laws, ... is to encourage the acquisition, preservation, and restoration of vintage sports cars. Clearly, the emphasis is on the cars – not on the competition, and not on the drivers. We give no trophies to the winners...”

(continued)

(MGs & Vintage Racing – Continued)

It was more of a “club” than a “racing organization”. To join you needed two letters of recommendation from its members (*to insure you had the right “attitude”*), and only “**approved cars**” were allowed to compete. In their early events, many of the participating vintage cars were “*driven to and from the events*”! No tractor trailers! No race crews! They were the only vintage racing game in town for a number of years. Their events were very low key, with minimum rules. Club socials complimented racing events. It was “gentleman’s racing”. Often their race events had only two race groups – if any: Fast cars, and not so fast cars – regardless of the car types - which made for some most interesting fields on the track! {VL-R-3} And sometimes an “*all comers handicap race*” at the end of the day for those still having gas left! I recall having great races back then at Lime Rock Park, in my MGTD against Fred Willits’ Bugatti! A turnout of 25 to 40 cars was normal – not like the hundreds we often see today! The people who worked the flagging stations around the track usually were “volunteers” from the racer’s crews – sometimes with little or no flagging experience! It was a different time! I participated in some of their events back then and even was their event chairman for some races.

Growth of Vintage Racing

Then in the late 70’s - and 80’s in particular - the sport of vintage car racing began to blossom as other vintage racing clubs and organizations sprang up. SVRA, VSCDA, VARAC, HSR, CVAR, VARA, etc - as well as special vintage racing events like the Lime Rock Historics, the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix, and the Monterey Historic Races. With this growth, ***Victory Lane Magazine*** came on line with its first issue in April 1986. MGVR supported its founder Dewey Dellinger, by helping to distribute Victory Lane’s first issue at the VSCCA vintage race event at Lime Rock Park in April of that year, and by sending MG racing articles into the magazine to support it.

Now back to the 1970’s for a moment. The MGTD was NOT even an eligible race car with the VSCCA back then! So when the New England MG ‘T’ register announced their own MG ‘T’ races at Lime Rock Park for 1977, I decided to enter my MGTD in it. I had never raced before! Requirements: only a seat belt, a helmet, and \$35! It was a six hour endurance race, where my brother Barry and I sharing the driving, doing 189 laps of the track! It got me hooked! It was a blast! Next I expanded my racing in 1978 to VARAC the Pennsylvania Hillclimb Association (PHA), and the T Register’s event again. In 1979 I petitioned the VSCCA and got the MGTD accepted as an eligible race car with them, as I began entering more racing events with my MG. VSCCA fears of MGs taking over the club vanished when all four of us showed up with our MG T’s to race! And I have been vintage racing that same MG ever since in well over 100 racing events!

MG Vintage Racers Newsletter Founded

In my first few years of vintage racing there were few MGs racing, and I met different MG racers at different events. So as a way to connect us, I proposed the “***MG Vintage Racers Newsletter***” in 1981 to all the MG racers I could locate in the US and Canada. Response was very positive. So I composed the first MGVR Newsletter and mailed it to 40 MG racers that December (35 years ago!). Its purpose and philosophy was simple, and it continues to today. A grass roots newsletter, independent of any racing organization and without advertising. In that first issue I laid out my philosophy:

(MGs & Vintage Racing – Continued)

"There is a need for a tie between MG vintage racers that existing club do not fulfill. I hope that this newsletter will serve that purpose. This newsletter's format is low keyed and hopefully it will create a close camaraderie between its members. ... We are a small group and everyone will be expected to contribute at one time or another."

That first MGVR newsletter included a feature article by Tony Roth on SVRA's "Atlanta Vintage Grand Prix". {VL-R-4} That event featured the "**MG Safety Fast Championship Races**" where 24 MGs – mostly T series (including mine) – competed.

The newsletter's initial goal was just to make it to "Issue # 2". No long term plan! Would it even survive? In 1981 no-one foresaw the future growth and changes ahead for vintage racing. It took root as it began to grow and influence vintage racing. "Strength in numbers" to some extent I guess. The newsletter tied MG racers together and fostered MG racing camaraderie. In 1982 I met **Stirling Moss** at the VARAC races in Canada and later I sent him a copy of the newsletter. He graciously replied in a letter to me: *"Thanks very much ... for your MGVR newsletter. I congratulate the club on having such a good newsletter ... It is true to say that the fastest I have ever been on four wheels was thanks to an MG at Utah when I achieved something 240 mph. When I was sixteen, my dad purchased a 1940 MGTD coupe. ... I was able to use it for some of my "important dates". I do hope that MG enthusiasts will continue to "Maintain the Breed ..."*

Through the newsletter MG racers shared their thoughts, technical information, sources, race articles, upcoming events, etc. - and even philosophy of their sport, like when David Kuhn tragically died racing his MGTD at the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix in 1993 in a freak accident. We all grieved over it and reflected on our sport with each other through the newsletter. It was a sad time. Was our hobby worth the risk? Because of this, some MG racers would never return to the track again. But time heals. Life has risks!

MGVR Grows and Gets Involved

As the newsletter grew it coordinated with various vintage race organizations to encourage them to have "**All MG Races**" at their events, and was quite successful in its efforts. In the early 80's, SVRA had their "**MG Safety Fast Championship**" at Road Atlanta, Georgia. In 1985, with the support and input of MGVR and the Collier family, SVRA revived the spirit of the Collier brothers at Watkins Glen, with the creation of the "**Vintage Collier Cup**" race for MGs. At my suggestion, it became a "spirit award" and not a race winner's award. In 1994 sixty MGs came to race in it. For that event Victory Lane Magazine awarded Joe Tierno and myself their "**Spirit of Vintage Racing**" award for our work in supporting it. 72 MGs raced in it in 1998. And this race continues today, over 30 years later! More vintage race organizations were forming with time all over the US and Canada. MGVR also worked to get all MG races included in events like the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix, and with the VSCCA at Lime Rock Park. In 1995 the MGVR Newsletter was awarded the Moss Motors "**Journalism Award**" as an outstanding club newsletter. MGVR - and MG racers - were earning the respect of the vintage racing community! In 1996, MGVR's "**Focus Events**" began at Waterford Hills, Michigan. MGVR did not sanction races. It started selecting one vintage race event every year as its "**Focus Event**" and worked with the race sanctioning body to get all MG races included. MGVR would then encourage all MG racers to attend that event, and would compliment it with their own dinner, special guests, their own awards, and other fun MG stuff at it. This really helped bond the MG racers and their crews! Competitors

(MGs & Vintage Racing – Continued)

on the track – buddies in the paddock! The idea took hold and grew! This helped produced record fields of MG's racing at places like: Pittsburgh, Lime Rock, Watkins Glen, Waterford Hills, Mid-Ohio, NHIS, Road Atlanta, Mosport, VIR, and Road America to name a few. MG was back in the racing spotlight! MGVR started their own annual award – the **“MGVR Spirit Award”** to be awarded by a vote of the MG racers to one MG racer who best embodied the **“Spirit of MG Vintage Racing”**. In 1998 the Vintage Racing Automobile Association of Canada (VARAC) established an annual **“All MG”** race for the **“Simms Cup”** in 1998. With time MGVR added several other awards to their list, including the **“Bill Parish Memorial Award”**, presented to the MG racer at their annual Focus Event who was **“Having the most fun – without any concern for winning”**! Supported by both Ford Heacock and MGVR, it honored the memory of MGTC racer Bill Parish who was all about having fun at vintage races!

MGVR For MG Vintage Racers

In support of its members, MGVR sends out a newsletter; has its web site of MGVR.org; and has a group chat site for exchanging thoughts and information. They also published their **“Tech Tips”** on race preparation of vintage MG's, which was a collection of tech article from their past newsletter. In 1990 and 2000 they did a comprehensive survey of MG racers. After seeing the 1990 census, Victory Lane editor Dan Davis commented: *“One of the best members surveys is the recent Census of the MG Vintage Racers – a real grassroots view of the sport.”*

Editorship (and thus leadership) of MGVR was turned over by Greg Prehodka to **Mark Palmer** in 1995, and then to **Chris Meyers** in 2006. With their leadership, the group has grow from 40 MG racers to over 250, all with the common bond of racing MG's. In 1998 at Watkins Glen, 72 MGs showed up to race. In 2001 MGVR celebrated its 20th Anniversary at their “Focus Events” at Road America with VSCDA's vintage race festival. With that race as a backdrop, they produced a 20th anniversary video about themselves. MGVR's **“Focus Event 2004”** was held in conjunction with SVRA's **“Zippo Vintage Grand Prix”** at Watkins Glen, where the 50th Anniversary of the **“Collier Brothers Memorial Trophy MG Race of 1954”** was celebrated. With MGVR's support, a record breaking **143 MGs**, of all vintages, showed up to race! Even the Collier's famous Leonidis (*that raced at Le Mans in 1939*) and their historic K-3 MG were there! In 2006, to celebrate MGVR's 25th anniversary they staged an **“All MG Race Weekend”** at the Hallet, Oklahoma racetrack. MGVR has continued to support its members, MG vintage racing, working with vintage race organizations, and will continue to do so. In several of the past years they even expanded to having both East Coast and West Coast “Focus Events”. **{VL-T-4}** MGVR is about racing MGs, and welcomes anyone who shares in that interest. Its slogan is: **“we few, we happy few, we band of brothers ...”**

Vintage racing has changed so much over the years, but has it peaked? Is the next generation of vintage racers in the wings? What is its future? Only time will tell! One thing is for sure - the days of only needing a seatbelt, a helmet and \$35 to race is only a faint memory!

MGVR is the oldest single marque vintage race support group in North America. It is non-profit, staffed by volunteers, and focused on its members and MG vintage racing. For more information go to their web site: [**MGVR.org**](http://MGVR.org)

Tire Loads and Speed Ratings.

The first Tire Rack link has interesting information on Tire loads and Speed Ratings. It explains why the speed rating MPH numbers are always an odd number like 186 MPH.

<http://www.tirerack.com/tires/tiretech/techpage.jsp?techid=35>

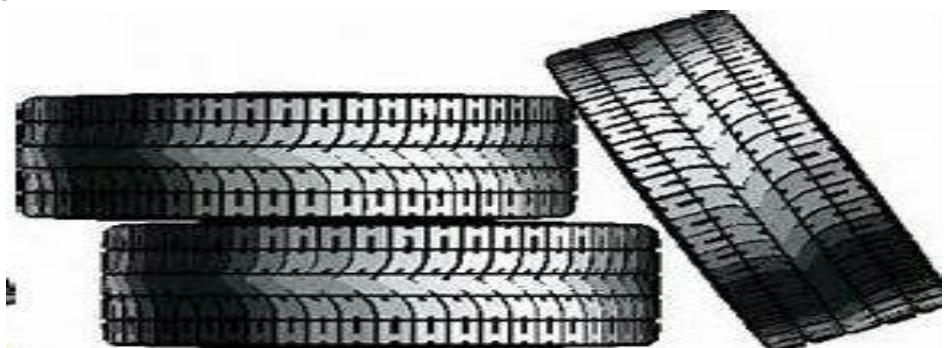
Reminds me of Law Enforcement in the 1960's In those days the 428 CID Ford and the 440 CID Plymouth sedans could reach and sustain 145 mph. However the tires (Likely N or P rated) could not sustain speeds over 110 mph. There were also far fewer officers to cover the rural counties. On a long run it was common to lose a tire at 125 MPH. Troopers got used to this problem and became quite good at installing the spare tire to get to the incident scene as quickly as possible. The sedans certainly had lots of wheel well damage when we turned them in at 70,000 miles.

On one run I was responding at top speed to a shots fired officer down call about 10 miles away. On M-53 freeway I crested a hill and saw an aluminum extension ladder fully covering both lanes. Hitting the ladder blew both front tires. The car began to swap ends, but I was able to counter steer both left & right 4-5 times until the car finally went straight at about 70 mph. The steering corrections got me safely under a freeway overpass and still on the roadway. PS: The officer was taking gun fire, but was prone in a defensive tactic. He was not injured.

The second Link will explain the TIN number and it's importance to DOT tires that we use.

http://www.tirerack.com/tires/tiretech/techpage.jsp?gclid=ClOa1uPKuNACFcZLDQodwg0C3Q&techid=172&s_kwcid=AL!3756!3!72454648093!e!!g!!dot%20tire%20codes&ef_id=VsUwBgAABRZqICQ1:20161121002406:s

Dave Smith
MGVR Technical Editor



MG VINTAGE RACERS' NEWSLETTER

PURPOSE: *To maintain a close camaraderie and open exchange of information among active MG vintage racers, and to encourage the sport of MG vintage racing.* Material is contributed by subscribers, and exchanged through the Newsletter. The Newsletter does not organize or sanction any events, is not affiliated with any club, is non-profit, and does not accept paid advertising (items of value to the members are run free of charge). We are low-key and welcome first-time racers as well as 40 year veterans. *All subscribers are encouraged to submit their fair share of material for publication.*

HISTORY: The newsletter was founded in 1981 by active MGTD racer **Greg Prehodka**. With Greg's capable leadership as Editor, it grew from a handful of enthusiasts to over 150 subscribers in 1995. Greg's Newsletter was awarded the prestigious "**Moss Motors Journalism Award**" in 1994. Major MG vintage events (such as the Collier Cup at the 50th Anniversary of Watkins Glen) have been promoted and coordinated through the Newsletter and its subscribers. In 1995, Mark Palmer assumed the Editor's post upon request from Greg. During Mark's tenure, the MGVR Newsletter grew to over 200 subscribers, while the 'Focus Event' concept became *the* annual race where MG Vintage Racers gather to share the camaraderie they are famous for both on, and off the track. In 2005, Mark turned Newsletter editorship over to Chris Meyers. 2006 marked our first ALL MG FOCUS EVENT at Hallett, Oklahoma. In 2008 we joined our West coast MG friends at Laguna Seca for our first West Coast Focus Event, followed by our second West coast Focus event at Infineon in 2011! **2014's** Focus Event at Watkins Glen marked the 60th **Collier Brothers Memorial Trophy** race! Our 2016 Focus Event at Waterford Hills marked 20 years of MGVR Focus Events-our first event was at Waterford Hills in 1996. This year we also celebrated our third West Coast Focus Event and second event at Infineon Raceway with CSRG! **MGVR celebrates their 35th Anniversary in 2016!**

SUBSCRIBER QUALIFICATIONS: Subscribers must actively race a vintage MG or MG-powered car (e.g. Lester-MG, Tojiero-MG). "*Actively*" means race at least once a year, or be in preparation for racing within a year. Subscribers are surveyed annually to maintain the mailing list. Currently, there are approximately 270 subscribers, including complimentary issues to clubs and other organizations.

COST: There is a small initial fee. Subscription fees are requested occasionally, only as required for solvency.

REGALIA: See our Regalia Page elsewhere in this issue.

WEB SITE: www.mgvr.org **Chris Kintner** is our Web Editor and maintains the site, usually using articles from the newsletter and contributions from members. He also posts information & notices about upcoming events, etc. It's worth checking this site every few months just to see what's new.

E-mail list: For those new to the internet, an e-list is a way to communicate with a large number of people by sending a message to just one address – the group address. To be part of this, you have to sign up for the e-list (also called e-group). When you sign up, your e-mail address is added to the list, and you will get all the messages that appear on the e-list. It is not "live chat" or a chat room (which wouldn't work for us anyway), it's just a way to exchange email messages conveniently. **To sign up**, simply send a blank e-mail message from your own mailbox to: MGVR-subscribe@yahoogroups.com If for some reason that doesn't work, then do the following: go to <http://groups.yahoo.com>, go to "new users", and sign up for a Yahoo I.D. (there is no cost to do this). Then from the Yahoo Groups home page, click on "Join a Group", and then type in MGVR and do a search. The search result will be our e-list (MGVR), and you then click on "Join this group". After you've joined, you can begin sending messages to the group. Simply send your message to MGVR@yahoogroups.com, and everyone else on the e-list will receive your message. So be a little careful about what you send out, since 250+ of your best friends will see what you said! The best uses for the e-list are to ask technical advice, talk about upcoming races & find out who's going or how to enter, etc, or give a short informal report on a race you've just attended. You can also discuss "issues" and ask people's opinions. Your MGVR Editor uses our e-list to communicate with fellow MG vintage racers. If you have any problems joining or using the e-list, contact **Steve Konsin** at stevekonsin@gmail.com.



CSRSG Charity Challenge

MGVR West Coast Focus Event 2016



NOT an MG





CSRG Charity Challenge MGVR West Coast Focus Event 2016



Not Jim Weissenborn photo

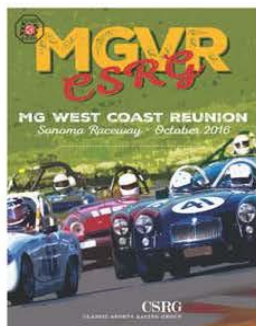


Not Jim Weissenborn photo

Pics by Jim Weissenborn unless noted



"Great having our MGVR leader of the pack and Julie make the trip out to Sonoma ..Big effort by our Canadian MGVR Gang...making the trip from Toronto and Vancouver BC.. " Jim Weissenborn-



CSRG Charity Challenge

MGVR West Coast Focus Event 2016



Warren Pierce/Pebble Beach Sports Car Club congratulates Ralph Zbarsky for his continued support of West Coast MG Focus Events!



Julie Meyers standing next to her upcoming Charity Ride.



Event Chair Scott Brown donated his BGT as pace car for the weekend's All MG Races.

Not an MG



West Coast British Racing WINS Vintage MG Racers "All MG Race" on Sunday Oct 2nd, 2016



Starting from the 2nd row, Michael Green of Livermore, California in his 1964 MGB racer dominated the wet conditions on Sunday taking the lead seconds after the green flag was waved to win the Group-9 All MG sports car race.

The "All MG" race was promoted by *Vintage MG Racers* and run with the *Classis Sports Racing Group* of Northern California at Sonoma Raceway during the CSRG's Charity Challenge weekend. This special race is made up of anything MG, and as you'll see our winners initials are such as well! Michael's father, Dickie Green, joined the Works MG/BMC racing team for the 1955/56 season. Dickie helped build & test EX182's and took them to LeMans in 1955. The EX182 would become the MGA. In later years Mr Green would be Service Manager for the Western US at British Leyland, based in Brisbane, CA. Our winner Michael Green, is a long time multi championship winning motorcycle racer (1972-2008) in both motocross & road racing, having won numerous races at Sonoma on two-wheels!

MGBs at the VDCA 2016 Season Finale

By John Fontanella

MGBs were well represented at the VDCA 2016 Season Finale at Roebling Road Raceway 9-11 December. Six Bs (Hap Waldrop, Rick Starkweather, Tom Coryn, Mike Morrison, Stan Heath and I) were on the grid for all 3 practice sessions (Friday and Saturday) and Saturday's Feature race and everybody finished all four events! To put it in perspective, 10 of the 30 entrants either did not start or did not finish the Group 3 Feature race. Even better, all of the us mostly finished in the top half for all 4 sessions. Stan, Mike and Rick also entered Sunday's Enduro.

Frankly, when I went to the grid for session 1, I wasn't sure what to expect because there were 6 Mazda Miatas in addition to the usual cars. Yes, it has happened. Early 1600cc Miatas are now 25 years old and VDCA allows only those small motor versions to participate. I was relieved (o.k. happy) that they mostly finished in the bottom half.

Practice session 3 was a bit tense. I guess that people were still jockeying for starting position. Early in the session, one of the Miatas hit a wall at the beginning of the straight. I was two cars behind and came through as car parts were flying across the track. The driver wasn't hurt but the car was. We were black-flagged but the session resumed later. After a few laps I was behind a Corvair who didn't make the turn at the end of the straight. Mike Morrison had just passed him. He bounced back across the track but fortunately, I missed him. Later in the session I came around a turn just after two more cars had gone off the track. A Morgan was sitting off the track on the right and a GT6 (I think) was off the track on the left. However, Safety Fast was the rule of the day for the Bs. In fact, I'm not sure if there was any metal-to-metal contact at all during the races. This is probably because at the Driver's Meeting, the race director and Grand Wazoo of VDCA, Mike Jackson, read us the riot act saying that "there will be no metal-to-metal contact." He went on from there to explain those words. Some of you may be aware that, despite the importance for vintage racing, this policy is not in effect, or at least is not enforced, for at least one of the vintage organizations that I know of.

VDCA's Season Finale is a must-attend event for the vintage racer. It is tempting to say that it is a party where racing also happens. However, the racing is too good for that to be accurate. The event is just plain super fun. Perhaps the best example of that is one of the awards that was given out during the barbeque. (On Saturday, they roasted 2 whole pigs and served oysters on the side not to mention some excellent brews and wine.) They gave an award for VDCA's Happy Hour Bracket Challenge Race. It's a team race (4 cars) with several scoring categories including creative team names, Happy Hour-themed decorations (paddock, car, driver, etc.), "bribing" of the race officials and, oh yes, lap times closest to predictions. *What was unique about that award is that the race never took place.* While we were waiting on the grid as daylight was fading, a BMW (We were sharing the track with BMW CCA.) exploded on the straight and spread a very impressive oil slick on the track

(MGBs at the VDCA 2016 Season Finale)

. It was getting dark and, when it became apparent that the clean-up would take too long, the race was canceled. True to the spirit of the event, the award was given anyway. The VDCA-powers-that-be applied some slightly modified criteria for the race. I think that they said that it had something to do with the dates of birth of the team members. Most excellent! It's probably obvious that this is a multipurpose race

For example, it's a great chance to meet people. During the weekend I had several interesting conversations with a teammate whom I met at tech while signing up for the race. By the way, VDCA awards are usually whatever trinkets Mike and Sandy Jackson can find on their way to the track.

Finally, there's the track itself. I've been told that it's one of two in the US that is owned by an SCCA club. It's a very busy track. In addition to the racing, segments for Motorweek are sometimes filmed there, the Bertil Roos school holds sessions there, etc. It's a fast track and well worth the drive (both to and on the track). Certainly, the six of us enjoyed it and we're looking forward to next year. Finally, even though I consider racing to be about as good as it gets, I hope that at next year's Season Finale there will be another awards ceremony for a race that wasn't.





HMSA at Laguna Seca 2015

#121 is Mike Green's BGT

The black BGT is Scott Brown's

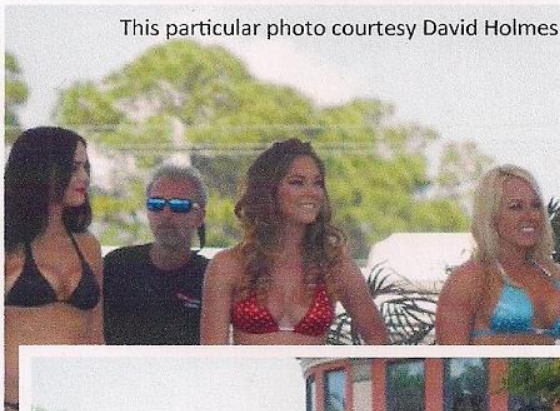
The black roadster is Mac McGarry's

Mike Hayworth claims ownership of the MGA. Not sure who owns #86

Photos and info courtesy Warren Pierce

12 Hours of Sebring 2015

This particular photo courtesy David Holmes



Larry Smith Bob Watkin Miss Sebring David Harrison



Burriss MGA

Spankey

Plowden MGA



Pirate

Miss Sebring

MGVR at Canadian Historic Grand Prix

By Dave Good

VARAC's **Canadian Historic Grand Prix** was held at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park (CTMP) /Mosport June 17-19. As most know, CTMP Mosport is one of the "iconic" tracks in North America-home "in the day" to F1, Can Am, Trans Am, F5000, Indy Car, etc as well some great sports car/ club racing.

MGVR was well represented with **29 MG's entered**. Hilites included 2 T Cars -Frank Mount with his TC and Ed Cronin-TD ; 2 MGA Twin Cams- VARAC regular Jim Holody with his always immaculate No 51 & Evan Holmes with the Holmes Racing beautiful "clamshell" Twin Cam Special (details in our previous newsletter). Unfortunately Evan's weekend ended early with engine problems.

Ed in "the mix of things" (**Photo courtesy of Drake White Photography**)
We had 3 great days of racing-lot's of track time & the Mosport weather gods gave us excellent weather. Our fearless leader, Chris was present, with Julie (and Jack & Gordie—although Gordie seemed to be "in the doghouse" most of the weekend). Chris had MG Central up & running, fueled Thurs night by the traditional "Shifty Six" keg of local Hockley beer. Friday night was a paddock crawl - 3 stations with wings, subs and ice cream—and lots of Steam Whistle beer- Steam Whistle, a Toronto craft brewery, was the event beer sponsor

Saturday night was the banquet, but for more fun there was an outdoor concert inside corner 8, by the Mudmen, a "gaelic –rock" band- concert put on by the track workers. Surprisingly a bunch of Steam Whistle found its way to the party. Lino Baggio, with his fine ear from tuning his SU's thought one of the bagpipes was "slightly out of tune". Larry Smith, our MGVR music guy, won the weekend endurance award for hanging in till the end.

Yeah-there was some racing—hilites : **Richard Navin** in his 246 MGB , a usual frontrunner chased issues all weekend—in his words:

" we had many annoying challenges this weekend that kept the car from going properly. After changing every component in the electrical system, we made continuing improvement each track session, then adjusted fuel pressure up and finally found the second missing link. Chasing 2 issues is always difficult. After 5 track sessions I finally had the car going, although 10 seconds off my usual times at Mosport from threading my way past 13 cars in less than 2 laps, when piston #4 decided to retire. Inspection proved it to be a fatigue failure, hardly surprising after about 150 track sessions.

Even so, this is such a great weekend, just being at the track, seeing racing friends and playing with my MGB. Plus social activities every night make it an all day grinfest."

Jim Holody ran well all weekend –his comments: *"The heat was hot and the racing was hotter..."*

The 2016 version of the CHGP was a good one!

With Ted Michalos consistent email updates while at the track, to Friday night's great food, beverage and entertainment, and to Roger's short form version of track talk on Saturday morning, it was all good!!

Plus having Chris Rupnik giving us live TV coverage in his paddock of Le Mans and the F1 race was an added bonus...thank you Chris and your Bell Canada billing statement for 28 hours of data feed!!

(Canadian Historic Grand Prix – cont.)

I had some excellent on track battles with the hard charging MGB's of John Kinnear and Dan Wilson. Also some close side by side racing with Chris Creighton in the #105 Alfa but he was just too much for me on the back straight.... I was pounding on my twin cam as hard as I could in the Sunday afternoon feature, but the best I could do was a 14th behind rocket man Dave Good's MGA....

Thank you to everyone including the organizers, sponsors and participants, it was a good one! “Harry Vetger worked on some nagging issues with his immaculate MGB-GT with Jim hard at it

Hello all,

My son Tyson and I had a great weekend all around great program and very well organized, free beer, great food, great people, Roger's concrete wall blend line illustration with perfect weather! Many thanks to all the organizers and all people involved.

Did the test day on Thursday and had somewhat a frustrating start of the weekend when the car still had the same misfire as last year under load on the back straight but no more oil pushing out from the breather tank. Burned three fingers changing the battery [welded the wrench stuck between the battery posts] but from then on things went better. Traced the misfire down too fuel starvation of the frond carburetor. Managed to run all the races [except the last race on Sunday had to pull off due to a fan belt failure] had some great little battles with several competitors and even managed to keep Joe behind me for almost 2 laps as he worked his way through the field in the Sunday morning race I'm sure he was just teasing with me as he blew by me in turn 3

Thanks for a great weekend!!

Bob Eagleson 09 and Harry 117 “tooth & nail” in

David Holmes ran very well all weekend –probably hoping for rain so he could put his great wet driving skills to work and blow by all of us, which is his custom at Mosport.

Robert Bork had his beautiful A on track and was making great progress but ran into some engine issues.

Joe Lightfoot, in his newly repainted B, recovered from a blown head gasket Sat, which put him at the back of the grid to run his usual blistering pace Sunday, Joe was awarded the Fastest “large bore” MG Award.

In the small bore class, **Nick Pratt**, in his Midget, ran extremely well and was awarded top small bore MG. Nick holding of a Mini

Bob Eagleson, our overall 2015 VARAC Champion, had his B-GT flying all weekend, Bob was awarded the Tony Simms Trophy for the MG which shows the best combination of preparation, vintage spirit and on track performance.

Congrats to all the winners and congrats and thanks to all who participated! It was a great weekend—lots of great racing, great parties and socializing at a great track—we extend a warm welcome to all for 2017!



Photo courtesy of Drake White Photography

MGVR at Canadian Historic Grand Prix



(photo courtesy of Kinsey Good)



Canadian Historic Grand Prix 2016



New MGVR Member: **Michael Silverman**

Born in 1957 to Jan and **Syd Silverman**, raised in White Plains, NY. BS in Journalism, Northwestern University 1979. Career in newspaper and magazine publishing, including showbiz trade papers *Variety*, *Daily Variety* (Publisher 1988-92), *Arizona Republic*. Currently Publisher/CEO of *Vintage Motorsport*. Vintage racing since 1999, when my first race car by default was my father Syd's **1949 MG TC**, when the Healey 100-4 I was entered in blew up at Summit Point.

"Why am I starting in the back of the grid?"

Crew guy: **"Because you didn't qualify in this car."**

"But it has bicycle tires, the steering wheel's on the right side, and I'll be shifting with my left hand!"

Crew guy: **"You'll adjust to it, don't worry."**

"Any other keen advice?"

Crew guy: **"Yeah. See those two 80-year-olds in prewar BMWs in front of you?"**

"Yes, I see 'em."

Crew guy: **"If you can't pass them, don't even think about coming back...."**

Happy to report I finally did get by the Bimmers (*just barely*) and became completely infected by the virus that afflicts all vintage racers. Was lucky Dad had way too many cars and not enough drivers, so got to occasionally race a slew of terrific (*thankfully British*) race cars, including AC Bristol, Austin-Healey 100-4, Allard J2X (*turned my hair grey overnight*) and my favorites, the Lister-Jaguar. Syd hung up his helmet in 2008, so I had to finally get my own race car, a nifty 1957 MGA roadster. A West-Coast SCCA racer from the '60s-'80s, driven by a father-son team, restored by Scott Brown and Huffaker Engineering in 2005 and raced with much success in CSRG, HMSA and other Western events, including Monterey Historics. Built to '67 SCCA specs, it's a regular at Road America and Monterey. Love to drift it through the corners on those skinny bias tires! If you see this MGA at the races, chances are I'm in the *Vintage Motorsport* booth trackside when not on track. Stop by and visit anytime!

- Married to Adrienne since 1982; one son (Bryan) and one dachshund.
 - My other British cars: 1968 Jaguar E-Type roadster (since 1988!) and 2009 Jaguar XF 4.2L.
 - Favorite food: Adrienne's chili or her spaghetti
 - Favorite band: The Who (English, of course!)
 - Favorite driver: Jackie Stewart
 - What people don't know:
 - I have an identical twin brother.
- Big golfer, better than me.

What I tell him on the 1st tee:

"I'd rather have a great lap time than a great tee time...."

Mike



Number 42: History of a MGA Sebring Type Coupe, Tribute Car

by: Bob Coleman

The story began with a phone call from Jim Alcorn, a true MGA Twin-Cam aficionado. We had told Jim we wished to build a "tribute" car or replica-type vehicle, since none of the originals were for sale, the originals being the five factory coupes the MG Abingdon Competition Department prepared for the Sebring 12-Hour Endurance Races in 1961 and 1962. He was calling from California to advise of such a vehicle, located in Gallup, New Mexico. It was rough, but solid, and had a 1600cc pushrod engine, just like the two 1961 'works cars.' This was interesting and exciting, but Gallup was over 1300 miles from Franklin, Tennessee, with a driving time of nearly 20 hours. After considerable thought and consideration (at least 30 minutes), my good friend and soon-to-be-partner in this venture, devised a plan, as he always did.

Carl George, a/k/a The Chief, was an executive with the mammoth hospital company, Hospital Corporation of America (HCA). As such, he had access to many parts of the country, including California and the Southwest. His plan was simple in concept, but not so simple in execution. He would fly to Albuquerque, get to Gallup some way, make the deal, buy the car, and take it back to Albuquerque, where he had a friend who owned a horse barn and stable. He'd leave the car in his friend's barn, return home, and fly back at a later date. Then, he'd borrow a truck from the construction site at HCA's hospital, flat-tow the car to Shawnee, Oklahoma, Shawnee being about half the distance to Franklin, where I would tow it back to Tennessee. Believe it or not, this worked, but not before some very anxious moments!

The Chief then sprang into action, all the while holding down his day job in HCA's Development Division (the division that buys and sells hospitals. He contacted Bernie St. Germain, the car owner, who was a railroad man, and away from home a lot. Bernie had planned to restore the car, a 1959 MGA Twin-Cam Coupe, all the while acquiring many new parts and spares. But, like so many of us, he just never got to the task, and agreed to sell the car. Carl then went back to Albuquerque borrowed a truck, drove to Gallup, had a good meeting with with the seller, and bought the car for a good price, including all the new parts and spares.

When his schedule permitted, he flew back to Albuquerque, carrying a metal tow bar with him on the plane. Remember, this was 1986. Again, he borrowed a truck, drove to Gallup, attached the car, drove back to Albuquerque, deposited it in his friend's barn, and flew home.

A fairly short time ensued before he had to attend a Board meeting at the hospital. He was, of course, dressed in his best business attire and, naturally, the meeting ran later than expected. He got the truck and headed for the barn to retrieve the car. So far, so good. But you'll get the picture if you ever tried pushing a 2000 pound car, with low tire pressure, all the while slipping and falling on horse manure. By then it was getting late, but he finally got underway. bought himself a Walkman to keep awake, and headed east through the badlands of New Mexico and the Texas Panhandle. Somewhere in the middle of the Panhandle, catastrophe struck.

He didn't hear anything, but saw in the mirror that sparks were coming from behind the car. With a stroke of luck, he was fairly close to an exit, pulled off, and found a west Texas cinder block mini truck stop. Then, he realized the tire had gone flat, ruptured, ran off the outer rim, leaving only the inner rim to be

(History MGA #42 continued)

detached from being wound around everything. He was still in his business suit, white shirt and tie, plus there were rats as big as cats, running all under the car. Fortunately, he had borrowed a wire cutter from the little truck stop. He was a mess, and was running out of time to make it to Shawnee and back. But, make it, he did, depositing the car in the parking lot of a Holiday Inn, and talked the hotel clerk into storing the tow bar in the office. Thankfully, he had a spare tire and wheel to get him that far. He tried to grab a couple hours sleep, drove back to Albuquerque, and flew home. The car was now in Shawnee, and my turn!

I still had a day job, too, and wouldn't retire for another 10 years. Talking one of my colleagues, our company CFO, into riding "shotgun" with me, we headed out. Mike Patterson wasn't too hard to convince, as he had grown up in Detroit, loved Corvettes, and was a certified gear head like the rest of us. We headed west for Oklahoma in Carl's van and some more used tires, arriving about 5:00 PM, CST. Panic struck when, at first, we couldn't locate the car in the parking lot. Then, we spotted it, looking like a British version of Christine, sitting all alone with no other cars near it. It was a mess, too, with at least two coats of faded paint over the original white, looking like a shark with no grille, and tires that looked to be the 1959 originals, and may have been. Then, we saw what looked like .45 caliber bullet holes in the rear fender, not knowing what happened. They were from the rivets that exploded from the outer rim tearing away.

The same lady was on the front desk, as when Carl had arrived. She said: I talked to your friend; seemed very nice, but he looked awful, and I don't think he got any sleep. Let me get this straight, she continued. Your friend towed this THING from Albuquerque, and you guys have come all the way from Tennessee to get IT? Boy, it must be some kind of special THING! We simply muttered, yes, mam, it is. She gave us the tow bar, and we headed back as far as we could get, before the black Oklahoma night overtook us. Before we left, we stopped to get gas and check the tire pressures on our tow car and the Twin Cam.

A young kid on his first day of work at a service station put too much pressure in one of the MG's tires, it exploded, rubber gashed his head above the eyes, and while his girlfriend was rushing him to the emergency room, another worker mounted another of the old spares we brought, all the while saying I told that idiot not to put too much air in those old tires. I had cautioned him, too. Then, Mike and I got the hell "out of Dodge" (Shawnee) as fast as we could, before suit papers could be served on us.

Our trip home was uneventful but, upon entering my subdivision, we thought it eerily quiet, with no one in sight. My wife contended it was because the mothers saw us coming with another relic in tow, and they locked up all their kids. I'll admit it was a sad looking thing, and the shark-looking opening, where the grille once resided, grew more "Jaws like," with each passing mile. I had sold my yellow TD, which the Florida Gang had dubbed Old Yaller II, so I had a vacant bay in my 2-car garage. The Twin Cam from New Mexico was now ensconced in its new quarters, awaiting the restoration to a Sebring Type Coupe.

I'll spare the gory details, because anyone who has undertaken such a project will understand, and have dozens of similar horror stories to relate. I have to say, though, I was dumbfounded that after putting it up on jack stands, checking the oil, plugs, fuel, battery, etc., etc., that long-sitting 1600 engine started up and warmed up to a pretty smooth idle, the cobwebs in the SU carbs notwithstanding. I don't think my partner believed me, when I told him I had it running. Then, the real fun began.

It was now late fall and early winter in middle Tennessee, and the nights were

(History MGA #42 continued)

getting cold. After stripping off the 3 layers of paint, and setting off the smoke detector from the chemical fumes, I quickly opened the garage door, because everything was beginning to take on a fuzzy appearance. Once all the paint and crud were removed, a car with virtually no rust was revealed, thanks to the New Mexico climate where it had lived its life. Only the screw heads that held the wooden floor were rusted, but all that was removed in favor of new wood, as we wanted to maintain the (original) look as closely as possible. Having read about Bob Olthoff's Twin Cam catching fire from oil and grease on the exhaust tailpipe, a thin piece of aluminum was fitted to the underside of the wooden floor. After we had a rolling chassis, a roll cage and fuel cell were installed. Now, it was time to take it to our friends at Cumberland Motor Works for the final restoration and pre flight.

Not knowing the factory cars weren't British Racing Green, we found a VW green we thought was. In the shade, it looked like BRG but, in the sunlight, it had a slight yellow tint. Not until Peter Thornley, son of John Thornley, the iconic General Manager at MG/Abingdon, told us in Atlanta the factory cars were NOT BRG and our color was the perfect Brooklands Green, did we know we'd stumbled on the correct color for the car. Peter also asked which "works" car this was, and after we told him the history, he commented: "My dad would be proud." We were, too. The mechanical masters completed the job, but didn't install the engine that came with it. We saved it by installing another 1600, and this proved prophetic, as I promptly broke a crank at Road Atlanta on a subsequent outing. It was buttoned up, including a J. Alcorn close ratio gear box, a Comptune head, and sporting a beautiful wood-rimmed steering wheel, donated to the cause by Bill Davis. After a bit of a shakedown on River Road, aptly named, it was now ready for its coming out party at Road Atlanta.

It was almost 1-year to the day, when we finished the restoration and unloaded #42 in the red Georgia hills; don't like to brag, but it was a big hit, crowd pleaser and conversation piece, with the amber signal light on top, the side lights to illuminate the numbers, and the so-called "beehive" taillights. I won the first ever MG Handicap Race, and the car took first place in the concours "most original preparation" class. As for the Handicap Race, The Chief has never forgiven me for costing him second place in his original black MGA. When the yellow and red stripped caution flag came out, I slowed too much. I had either forgotten, or never knew, it merely meant there was oil or other debris on the track, and to be cautious. I overcompensated, allowing our friend, Blair Engle, to pass Carl for second place, and almost nipping me at the finish. Carl finished third; sorry, partner!

Over the next several years, the car gave us a lot of happy outings, along with the usual frustrations. We drove it in the rain and stayed dry. We drove it in the night race at Sebring, and we shared the enduros, driving 50/50 laps. It was campaigned at Road Atlanta, Sebring, Mid-Ohio, Watkins Glen, Daytona, Topeka and even Memphis, the latter being, basically, a drag strip, with a little road course tied to each end. Here, the metal fan came off. Fortunately, it went down, and not up, through the bonnet. This was replaced by a plastic fan. No more originality for this item, and since we were not bound by FIA rules, no suitcase was carried either.

As I got too old, my deceptive speed caught up with me (I was always slower than I looked), and I sold my one-half interest to The Chief. I'm happy to say that ole 42 is still campaigning, directed and driven by V. Carl George. The car is much quicker now, and so is The Chief. It just returned from a successful outing at VIR, where I understand it was still a hit. This makes me smile.

(History MGA #42 continued)

One always gets in trouble by mentioning names, and leaving out someone(s). I'd be totally remiss, though, if I didn't mention some people who helped make this project possible, and continue to support Carl and #42. I have to start with Greg Prehodka, the original "Joisy Boy" to us, and founder of MG Vintage Racers publication. He was (is) our friend, supporter, and tech advisor from the very beginning. Then, comes Ford Heacock, founder of SVRA, and his trusty associates – Joe Pendergast and Ralph Whaley who, by the way, is a walking encyclopedia on sports cars and all things automotive.

And where would we have been without the wild & crazy Florida Gang: Tony Roth, Beau Gable, Will Bowden, Blair Engle, et. al.

Now, this could never have happened, without the masters on River Road – James Dorris (JD), Charlie Norrod, Don Grammar, "Red" Grammar and Ken Nixon. JD is gone now, but our friend Ken (Nixon) is still with us, Carl and the car. Thank you, Ken! So, I have to borrow from one of our greatest country songs, and say: God bless the boys, who fix the cars, at Cumberland Motor Works.

Of course, there's the original Zapata Team – Bill Parish, Bob, Carl, Fred Lieb, Bill Davis, Charlie Kates, Dave Rex and Mike Buhl. Mike was our beloved "Spatula," who cooked up so much delicious food, wherever we went. We lost Bill and Mike way too soon. But, we know they are now drifting through the turns on that big road course in the sky.

Finally, so much gratitude has to go to our wives, family, friends and other supporters. A special thanks goes to my wife, Emily, who suffered through a year of my dragging oil, grease and other unsavory materials into her pristine kitchen. She did agree to attend a few races, but she overheated in Atlanta, and never went back. She did love Watkins Glen, though, as SVRA made provisions for side trips for the wives and guests.

To our Band of Brothers everywhere, press on, regardless!

Bob began his vintage racing at Road Atlanta 1981, in a 1953 MGTD, thanks to Bill Parish.

Carl, followed in 1982 at Mid-Ohio, in his 1950 MGTD. Bill Parish opened the door for us in 1980, driving his 1953 MGTD at Road Atlanta. We lost him in 1998, and we still miss him.



MGVR “Official” Regalia

Dan & Jane Leonard

Email: ddl@leonardpaper.com telephone **410-343-0365**

Outer Banks Polo, tan with dark accent
stitched logo, sizes Small thru XL \$30.00

Long Sleeve Blue Denim \$25.00
stitched logo, sizes Small thru XL **NEW LOWER PRICE**

Sweatshirt, Gray Heavy Weight (perfect for Mosport) \$20.00
stitched logo, sizes Small thru XXL **NEW LOWER PRICE**

Gray T-Shirt, MG collage; sizes Small thru XL \$12.00

Tan hat, embroidered logo, one size fits all \$10.00

Ladies Pink Hat with embroidered logo \$10.00

Ladies White Polo \$25.00

MGVR Bumper Sticker \$3.00

Embroidered Patch \$4.00

New Item MGVR Trailer Stickers Octagon 11-1/4” \$10.00*

Small MGVR stickers Octagon 7-3/4” \$2.50*

***NEW LOWER PRICE FOR 2016!**

MGVR Challenge Coin ‘don’t leave home without it’ \$10.00

Twill Button Down Shirt, Blue, or Putty \$32.00

Black Performance Jacket



MG Vintage Racers

Focus Event

2017

MGVR will join the Vintage Racer Group (VRG) at New Jersey Motorsports Park's Lightning Course for VRG's NJMP Historics September 15-17, 2017. The tentative schedule calls for group racing along with Two All-MG Races. Non-racing activities include Thursday evening's MGVR Meet and Greet at MGVR Central, a Saturday evening Craft Beer Tasting at the Millville Army Air Field Museum followed by VRG BBQ at the air museum. MGVR joined VRG in 2008 for their inaugural Historics-we are pleased to join them again in 2017!

MG Vintage Racers

Newsletter

Since 1981

Editor

Chris Meyers
editor@mgvr.org
55 Belden Road
Burlington, CT 06013

Secretary-Treasurer

Larry Smith
lrsmsg@aol.com

Public Relations

Greg Prehodka
MGRacer53@aol.com
Founder, MG Racers' Newsletter

Technical Editor

David Smith,
Mgaracer49@gmail.com

MGVR Yahoo Coordinator

Steve Konsin
stevekonsin@gmail.com

Regalia

Dan Leonard
ddl@leonardpaper.com

Online Editor

Chris Kintner
webmaster@mgvr.org

How the MGB Transmission Works

For the tecki types out there, here is an interesting on-line U-tube video by John Twist of University Motors, on just how the MGB transmission works. About seven minutes

<https://youtu.be/-IAXy3teCLw?t=385>

