



# MG Car Club—Florida

#88

OCTOBER 2008 NEWSLETTER

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS: by Dave Alexander

The weather is turning a bit cooler so I encourage all to enjoy your LBC's. September was busy for some can read about our monthly event orchestrated and reported by our master Ed Price, and the report on Southwest British Car Festival in Dillard, Ga. by John Spadaro.

Well, October has a "please don't miss" event in the form of a short parade put on by Florida Institute of Technology, honoring our club's founder, Dr. Jerry Keuper. See below for details on that and an update on our yearly car show, "Brit Bash at Wickham".

## OCTOBER EVENT

This is the ONE event where all members should do their utmost to participate. We would do honor to Jerry Keuper, who kept our now-52-year-old club together for many years until he guided its resurrection back to active status in early 2000 with his selection of Mike Euziere as President. This event is the Florida Institute of Technology's (FIT) Golden Anniversary Parade on Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Keuper was the founder of FIT in 1958. FIT was then known as the Brevard Engineering College (and also Countdown College). (This is a most interesting story but for another time.) Whether you knew Jerry or not, please, we urge you to participate. We would appreciate a call or e-mail to let us know if you'll be there so we can inform the organizers as to the number of cars. (Contact Norman at 772-567-2231 or Dave at 321-213-7051.) We shall meet at 9:00 AM at University Park Elementary School, 500 West University Blvd., Melbourne. The parade starts at 10:00 AM. The route is 1.9 miles long. This event will occur on our regular 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday meeting day. We plan to go to lunch after the parade and then drive to Wickham Park to review various aspects for our upcoming car show "Brit Bash at Wickham, a Celebration of British Motorcars". We need all of you to volunteer for this event (as you have done in the past at Fox Lake) for set-up, registration, parking vote tallying, sales of merchandise, and to help do whatever else might be needed on the day of the show.



## SEPTEMBER'S EVENT by Ed Price



Since we had a number of members out of town, our September cruise was lightly attended. Richard and JoAnne Jensen drove their "back up" MGB, due to their MGA having a fuel leak. Len Coppold arrived in his blue Midget; Ruthie had to



stay at home and prepare for company. Mike Papadopoulos joined us in his screaming yellow TR6, after an extended absence from club events caused by an altercation with a Miami taxi (the TR, not Mike). Betty and Ken Gregory met us at the River Roost Restaurant having underestimated the time it takes to travel up US 1 from Vero in their AIR CONDITIONED! MGB. Saul joined us after dinner in his Midget, having spent the day at a VW car show in New Smyrna. After a tasty alfresco meal we enjoyed an evening drive around Merritt Island in the cool breeze and stopped at the



Merritt Island Dairy Queen for a sweet finish where Len demonstrated that he is an accomplished "Fuzzy" photographer as well as a talented jazz musician! It was an enjoyable evening and we look forward to seeing those of you that missed it at our next event in Melbourne in October.



### THE SOUTHEAST BRITISH CAR FESTIVAL, DILLARD, GA by John Spadaro DILLARD AND THAT SINKING FEELING

Every time I think about taking a long road trip in my 77 MGB I get that strange "sinking feeling". I can only describe this as a gnawing in the pit of your gut with an associated sense of foreboding. It happens when you know something bad is about to happen. It's what you feel when you choose to embark on a 1200 mile trip with a very small 30 year old car. I think you have to be a little insane. Fortunately, most MG owners are.



It was during the GOF in Silver Springs back in April when my good friend and fellow insane MG enthusiast Norm Ridgely asked Sharon and I if we were going to go to Dillard in September (sinking feeling!) We hadn't really thought about it, but maybe?

So, it was about July when Sharon popped up one day and asked, "Are we going to Dillard?"(sinking feeling) I thought, well, Pat and Norm are going to go, so, we should go. So I sent in the money and we were committed. We would drive our little yellow 30 year old car 1200 miles over 4 days to Dillard

Georgia. (Serious sinking feeling going on now!)

As the date of departure approached, Norm called me. He has surmised based on his calculations that it is an 11 hour drive. We will not be able to leave on Friday because we will not get there in time for the evening meal. We would have to leave on Thursday and spend a night on the way up. Not a big problem. Norm called me again later in the week prior to departure with really disheartening news. His trusty 67 MGB/GT had let him down (it knew it was about to be thrashed for 1200 miles). He had a serious transmission problem that could not be resolved prior to our departure date, so good ole Norm being the kind of guy who will always take one for the team, bit the bullet, instead of his MGB/GT, he will take one of the most advanced sports cars made, with lambs wool seat covers and AIR CONDITIONING, his BMW Z3. I felt really bad for Pat and Norm as Sharon and I were driving a car with years of fine British heritage while they had to endure the AIR CONDITIONED Z3. I hope they can handle it.



On Wednesday, I spent the entire day going over my car: oil good, brakes good, lights good, tires good, on and on. By the end of the day, I felt that I was ready to go. (sinking feeling!)

At 1400 on Thursday Pat and Norm came by our house in Eustis. After a few pleasantries, we were ready to go. We belted ourselves into our trusty machines and headed for the wide open American road. My car started (this is good) and we were off. My first anxiety attack occurred with the first right hand turn. I had no right hand turn signal! I had checked that yesterday and it worked fine. The Lucas gremlins were invading my B. Not to worry, it's a minor problem, I will use hand signals for right turns until I get a chance to investigate. This will be OK. (sinking feeling!)

Norm decided we should go I-75 to make better time. I was really not on board, but hey, I'm a team player so I-75 it is. We had about 50 miles of surface roads to get to I-75 so I took the lead since I knew the way. I crossed over a rather rough intersection. When I looked at my dash I suddenly realized that my speedo was reading zero. This can't be, I'm moving! Due to my brilliant mechanical insight I was able to determine that being that I was moving and being that my speedo was indicating zero, I deduced that I had a serious malfunction: maybe a broken speedo cable. Oh well, at least I was still moving even though my fine Lucas gauges were telling me otherwise. I also had an ace up my sleeve. I knew, from years of perusing MGB workshop manuals, that when in overdrive, for every 1000



rpm on the tach, I would do 22 mph. So, 3000 rpm should be around 66 mph, piece of cake. Let's ride.

We finally got to I-75. I stayed in front. Norm was concerned that being that the best I could do was about 70 mph (with a tail wind) he would stay behind me. If he were in front, I'm sure he would have driven that Z3 the way it was meant to be driven and left me in the dust. We were now in the arena doing battle with the big boys, the trucks. I mustered up all the horses my little engine had and put them to work. She was roaring like an Indy racer, and I was actually keeping up with most of the traffic. With Norm watching my back, we were cruising along at about 65 mph. Life was good. But it was not to last. After being in the zone for about 30 minutes, I noticed when I lifted my foot from the accelerator, my little yellow B did not slow down. I kinda always wanted cruise control, but to my knowledge, I didn't have cruise control until now. (big sinking feeling!) I glanced at Sharon with that "I've got everything under control look" when in reality, this was really not good. I gingerly place the toe of my shoe under the accelerator and pulled up and the B began to slow (thank god) but wait!, I'm on I-75, you can't slow down, are you kidding! So I backed down on the accelerator. I found that where ever I pushed it, that's where it would stay. I had cruise control and I had a serious problem. I continued to finesse the gas pedal until we finally came to a rest stop. I was off the road. Upon examination I in fact had broken my accelerator return spring. Now I carry a myriad of spare parts in my trunk, but of course, no springs. But alas, all was not lost. Dangling from the attachment point by the intake manifold were the remnants of my failed spring. With a little MacGyver engineering I was able to fabricate what was left into a functional component. I had control of my carburetor back. Let's ride.



Back on the road, life was good again. However, the big trucks were really making me nervous. I got behind one that was going rather slow, even by my standards. So I checked carefully to my left and eased out into the center lane. I encouraged my B to step up to overtake the behemoth to my right. As I moved ahead, a big rig appeared in my rearview mirror. He was bearing down on me like a falcon after a chicken. As he approached he began motor braking. (sinking feeling!) I think he

wanted to give me a rise. Well he succeeded. The staccato of the loud motor braking was rattling me, he got closer, right on my tail, still motor braking. I looked to my right and saw nothing but spinning lug nuts and huge wheels. The grill of the big rig filled my rear view mirror and we still heard the awful motor braking sounds. Finally my B developed a head of steam as I passed the front of the monster to my right. The motor braking combined with the roar of my meager 86 horsepower made the moment seem surreal. I eased over in front of the big rig to my right at which point the motor braking ceased but was replaced by hard loud acceleration of the big rig whose radiator had filled my rear view mirror just seconds before. The big rig came screaming by like an angry rhino at full charge. Seconds later he was gone. I regained a semblance of calm but I decided at that point that once I got off this road I would not get back on.

We intended to make it to Madison Ga. on the first night. I think that was a little enthusiastic. We found ourselves in Dublin Ga. at about 8pm. We decided that was enough for one day and stayed in Dublin.

We got a fresh start Friday morning. The weather was cool in the morning. So up 441 we go. This is a nice ride. 441 runs the entire length of Georgia north to south. It has two lane and four lane sections. The speed limit is 55 to 65 and there are bypasses around most towns. It's a very pleasant scenic ride. We stopped for lunch in Commerce Ga. at a "Sonny's". As Sharon and I peeled ourselves out of our rolling bread box Pat stepped out of the Z3 looking like a movie star. She promptly proclaimed that her feet were cold. Sharon and I looked at her with our hair looking like we had been riding in the bed of a pick up truck and the rest of our bodies already coated with sweat and road grime, we were wishing we had cold feet. We were not too sympathetic towards Pat and her cold feet.



We made it to the Dillard House at about 2pm. The Dillard House sits on a high bluff in the small town of Dillard Ga. It's about the only thing in Dillard. We checked in and found that our rooms were very nice albeit rather pricy. The rates were 99 to 109. I suppose that was the special rate due to the event so I don't know what they would be if you just stopped by. But the rooms were very nice. We made our way to the registration area. This event was sponsored by the Peachtree Registry out of Atlanta. Everyone associated with the club were very friendly. The hospitality room was the usual, cookies, pastries, soft drinks. everything you would expect. There were items to look at that would be auctioned later on. There were also two raffle items for which you could buy tickets. I find that the people at these events are always friendly. The Peachtree group went out of their way to insure that we had everything we needed. After checking in we wandered through the parking lot reacquainting ourselves with familiar faces of the folks we had seen at other British car events.



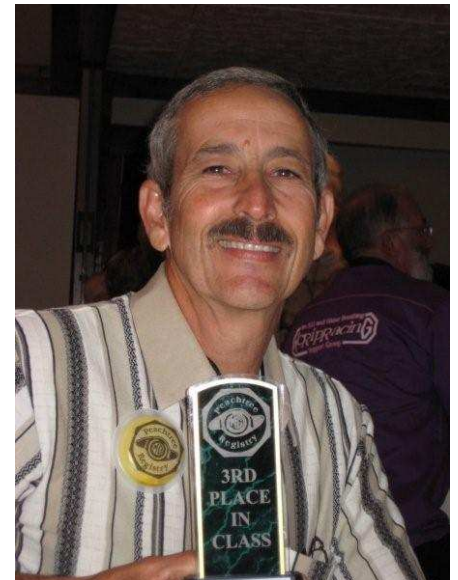
Went down for the BBQ at 6pm. Sharon and I as well as Pat and Norm have attended a bunch of these weekend events but I can honestly say I have never seen a buffet spread like the Dillard House put on the table. I was impressed that the MC for the night insisted that non-club members be the first ones to get in the buffet line. I feel like they wanted to recognize us for participating in their event. At the beginning of the buffet table was fresh fruit. I'm talking about strawberries, cantaloupe, watermelon, raspberries, blueberries, honeydew melon all sliced in a magnificent display. This was followed by at least 8 different cold salads: cucumber salad, avocado salad, coleslaw, potato salad, macaroni salad, sliced tomatoes, sliced onions. This was followed by hot entrees including baked beans, green beans, corn casserole, and sweet potato

casserole. The main meat dishes were roasted chicken, fried chicken and ribs. The dessert table was a cornucopia of gastronomical delights: cakes, pies, and a chocolate fondue fountain with fresh strawberries. I'm sure that I forgot a lot of stuff. Not only did the food look good, it also tasted really good. In addition to the buffet was a wait staff who kept the sweet Georgia ice tea coming as well as water and coffee. There are not enough superlatives to describe this meal. It was just great.

After the meal came the auction. If you recognize that this is a fund raiser for the club it's easier to get through it. The MC was a jovial guy who made it fun. It went a little long but it was good time. The Peachtree club donates a portion of their proceeds to a charity that takes care of really sick children so the rest of the family can go on vacation. I thought this was a nice touch as the Peachtree club is giving back to their community. The party ended at about 10 pm.

Saturday was the usual fare. The cars were on the display field by 10am. Voting was conducted by all participants. What was a little unusual was that instead of voting for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, you just voted for one car in each category. In the afternoon there were valve cover races. At 3pm the display field was closed down and there was a guided driving tour if you cared to go. The club had also handed out three different driving tour routes you could do on your own. Pat and Norm took the Z-3 up to Highlands, North Carolina on one of the tours. They said it was a beautiful ride with lots of winding roads, waterfalls and pretty scenery. In the afternoon I went to an auto parts store and got me a spring. I also found that my signal light had a bad ground, so I'm doing well other than still no speedo. At 5pm there was a wine and cheese party. Everyone brought their own wine and the club provided the cheese. There was plenty of wine and everyone shared. It was a very nice social get together.

The banquet Saturday night was the same fare as last night with the addition of Georgia country smoked ham, breaded pork chops and hand carved prime rib. There were so many varieties; you didn't have to eat any of the same things. Everything was scrumptious, and don't even get me going on the dessert table. It was a wonderful meal. Dinner was followed with the awards presentations. First, second and third place awards were given for each category. I am proud to announce the MG Car Club Florida took home the third place award for MGB 741/2-80. Yes, my little yellow B, a daily driver, was recognized for what it is, a great little car with a lot of heart! Sharon and I are very proud of our third place award. The night ended with the raffle for a nice basket with cookies wine and cheese and a GPS navigation unit for your car.



Sunday morning we were out of there at 8am. We decided we would make the trip all the way home in one day and headed back down 441. The only mishap was at an intersection where Norm decided he would go south in the northbound lane. To make this even worse, another car and I followed him! We realized our error right away and rectified things and went with the flow. We wanted to blaze new trails, but that was taking it too far. In Pearson, GA we lost Pat and Norm. Norm wanted to get on I-75 to make better time. They had to go all the way to Vero Beach which is about 3 hours further than we had to go. It was with great regret that we parted ways. Sharon and I continued down the back road through North Florida down to Eustis. We got in at about 8pm.

This trip was not for the squeamish. I don't think there is any question that you have to be a little insane to take these cars on the journeys that we do. It was a hard trip for Pat and Norm in his modern BMW Z3 but in the MG it almost defies logic. I will continue to drive my little yellow B as long as the open road calls. I will continue to make roadside repairs and one day my great little car may be on a hook. When and if that happens, I will rent a real car and continue on my journey. Life is not about how many days you live, but how much you live each day. Don't let that "sinking feeling" get to you. It's just the insecurity we all have when we cannot predict the future. Get out

there.

Safety Fast.....John Spadaro

### **BRIT BASH AT WICKHAM- November 1st**

The clock is ticking. November 1<sup>st</sup> is fast approaching. The show committee has had numerous



meetings, taken many actions to prepare for this forthcoming premiere event, all under the competent leadership of Danica Perhacs. As always, we cannot put this event on without a lot of volunteers. So, please try to attend the wrap-up meeting at Wickham Park at 1 pm on October 18<sup>th</sup>, following the FIT



parade. You can select an assignment and everyone will be brought up to date on the new venue. If you cannot attend, please contact Danica after October 18<sup>th</sup> for assignments. (Call Danica at 772-770-0083 or email [BritBash@Comcast.net](mailto:BritBash@Comcast.net). And, do not forget the Meet & Greet Friday evening from 6 to 8 PM at the host hotel, Hampton Inn, 130 Sheriff Drive, Viera. It's just off Wickham, east of I-95. More details, Registration Form, etc. are on our club's website at- [www.mgcarclubflorida.org](http://www.mgcarclubflorida.org)

### **MGCC-F UPCOMING EVENTS:**

October 18<sup>th</sup> FIT 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Homecoming Parade – see article above.

November 1<sup>st</sup> – Brit Bash at Wickham car show – Friday night will be a Meet & Greet at the Hampton Inn by the Zoo. Saturday is the show at Wickham Park. We'll need club members to volunteer to help to make this show a success.



November 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> – Roar & Soar at Fantasy of Flight in Lakeland – the club is planning a caravan to the event. Details at <http://www.fantasyofflight.com/roar-n-soar/land/>

December 13<sup>th</sup> – a holiday party for the club members to be held at Al & Pat Allen's home. Details to follow.

### **OTHER EVENTS:**

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month: British Car Breakfast Club 9:00 a.m. at the Golden Corral in Altamonte Springs. It is just south of SR 434's intersection with SR 436 on the east side between Costco and Robb & Stucky.

October 10/11, 2008 – British Car Classic XX – St. Augustine's Kings Head Pub (details to follow)

October 17-19, 2008 – Euro-Fest 2008 at the BMW plant in Greer, SC.

October 25, 2008 – All British Field Meet & Auto Jumble – Crest Lake Park, Clearwater, FL

November 7/9, 2008 – MG Jamboree, St. Pete, FL. This is a fun event. – For information go to [www.fsmgcc.com](http://www.fsmgcc.com)

November 13-16, 2008 – Zephyrhills Auto Fest & Swap Meet, Zephyrhills, FL. - For information go to [www.zephyrhillsestivals.com](http://www.zephyrhillsestivals.com)

June 24-28, 2009 - MG 2009 – MGs in Breckenridge – The annual national meet sponsored by the North American MGB Register, of which we are a chapter, will gather in Colorado: only 98 miles west of Denver in the Rocky Mountains, average daytime temperature is 70 and nights in the 50s, humidity about 30%. Elevation is 9,000 to 12,000 feet. Let's get a group together and caravan out there. It's only about 2,000 miles (one way) so that's about 4 days each way.

For questions on any of the above, call Norm Ridgely (772) 567-2231.

### **MEMBER PROFILES:**

Members are invited to submit interesting articles about their MG or MGs and themselves.

### **FEEDBACK:**

The Officers and Board members would like to hear from members concerning their views on current functions and events (likes, dislikes, etc.) and any ideas for the future. This is your club and we want everyone to participate and enjoy. So, please contact anyone on the list on the last page to have your voice heard. Thanks!

### **CLASSIFIED ADS:**

(5) Tires on rims with trim rings. Firestone FR380, P175/70R14. (2) excellent, (2) decent, (1) spare. \$200  
Please call Ben Stone @ (772) 770-0083.

1974 ½ MGB/GT [last year produced] - dark green with tan interior. Restored. ALL NEW: engine & clutch, front end & springs, brakes, Monza exhaust system; plus windows and windshield, upholstery, custom wheels (MG), new mirrors, beautiful wood steering wheel, floor mats and seat covers, nose bra (MG) and more. Asking \$7,995.00—call Bill Aitken at 321.690.1883.

Ads are free of charge to members, run for three months unless renewed and/or canceled by the advertiser. Send your ad to Pat Ridgely at the link below or P. O. Box 651068, Vero Beach, FL 32965 by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month for publication in the following month's newsletter. In your e mail, please reference MGCC-F ad so it's not considered spam.

We need as many articles written by members as we can get. Submit yours to Pat Ridgely at [pridgely83@yahoo.com](mailto:pridgely83@yahoo.com) or P. O. Box 651068, Vero Beach, FL 32965. Thanks for your help.

### ***Safety Fast !***

Club Officials:

David Alexander 321-213-7051 (President)

Frank Kingston (Vice-President)

Pat Ridgely 772-567-2231 (Secretary & Newsletter Editor)

Helen Kingston 321-773-1455 (Treasurer)

Saul Klein 321-269-0236 (Webmaster & Director at Large)

Al Allen (Director)

Ken Gregory (Director)

Christian Havneraas (Director)

Danica Perhacs (Director, Show Chairperson 772-770-0083)

Norm Ridgely (Director at Large)

Ed Price – Past president

Jerry Keuper Chairman Emeritus (In Memoriam)

MG Car Club – Florida [www.mgcarclubflorida.org](http://www.mgcarclubflorida.org)

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# British Marque Car Club News

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