



MG Car Club—Florida

#93

MARCH 2009 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS: by Dave Alexander

Calling all members! Don't be shy, contact a board member, give them some idea of what you want from the club. I am sure if we take a moment to think about it, we all have something to contribute. Some ideas that come to mind- newsletter items and info, interesting sightings, tech tips, jokes, any and all ideas are welcome. We are always looking for places to go and things to do with our LBCs, places to visit and things to do. Events don't have to be LBC oriented, things that come to mind, miniature golf, the outlet mall in Vero, Old Town in Kissimmee, arts/craft shows, ice cream/dessert places. If you have a place you would like to visit, I am sure we can find an interesting route to take us there. Just let us know.

MARCH TOUR & LUNCHEON – Second Saturday, 3/14/09

“ The Jerry Keuper Tour”!! To honor the memory of the club’s founder and our Chairman Emeritus, Dr. Jerome Penn Keuper, who passed away this month in 2002, we will do a tour of central and south Brevard County that will include a personally guided tour of the botanical gardens he established at the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT), which he also founded in 1959. Our FIT tour guide will be Hedy Von Achen, a former club member with Jerry. The tour will terminate in Sebastian with lunch at the Pig and Whistle on Indian River Drive. We will meet at 0930 at Frank Kingston’s office building, ABS Engineering, at 700 E. Melbourne Ave., Melbourne. This is one block south of New Haven in Historic Downtown Melbourne on the corner of Grant Place. We are expected at FIT at 1000, and they have set aside reserved parking for us. Should be a fun day, so plan on being there.



DESERET RANCH TOUR A SUCCESS!!

Saturday, February 14th, 24 members and guests gathered at the IHOP off I-95 and SR 192 in



preparation to drive west on 192 to Deseret Ranch, about 15 miles. Those in attendance were Len Coppold, Linda Knoblock & Michel Senical, Al & Pat Allen, Saul Klein, Norm & Pat Ridgely, Ray & Mary Pollack, Rich & Pat Jablonski, Jim Griffin & Virginia Raisovich, Richard & JoAnn Jensen, Art & Yvonne Floyd, David Alexander & Gail Gilbert, Frank & Helen Kingston, and Kievin Hoffman & Carol Gradwell. Tom Bowman was at IHOP to help kick tires, but was unable to join us. Upon arrival at the ranch, we were greeted by our tour directors who divided us into two groups; one group boarded the ranch bus for an hour tour of the nearby area. The other group was presented with a talk in the visitors' center about the origin of the ranch, which was started in 1950, by the Mormon Church. When the bus group returned, the two groups switched. Later we all gathered on the porch of the visitors' center for a picnic lunch. Many brought food to share with others, and Dave Alexander (our Prez) and Gail Gilbert presented all the ladies with boxed chocolates, as it was Valentine's Day. Mary Pollack thoughtfully had brought Valentine stickers for everyone. JoAnn Jensen gifted the ladies with lovely artistic heart-shaped ornaments (she made them, just beautiful!) holding chocolate kisses. The Jensens also won the picnic basket challenge. It was a beautiful day with congenial company.

THIRD & FINAL INSTALLMENT – A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MG CAR CLUB – FLORIDA AND JERRY KEUPER OUR CHAIRMAN EMERITUS by Tom Bowman

(Editor's Note: We all owe Tom Bowman our utmost gratitude for his enormous effort in writing these three installments of the background of our club and his memories of Dr. Keuper. I personally wish to thank him, and hope the final result met with his approval.)

From the book "The MG Car Club: the First Seventy Years", Jerry continues: "In 1984 the Florida



Centre organized the first M.G. Jamboree and it was held on the campus of Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne.

M.G.s of all years and models were welcomed to participate in the Jamboree. This was a departure from the then statewide practice of admitting only T-Types and earlier cars to the MG Gatherings." Jerry was especially adamant in insisting that all MGs should be invited to participate fully in all MG-centered events, a stance that put him somewhat at odds with the New England T-Register's rules and regulations at that time. (More recently most or all of the GoFs around the country have included classes for all MGs.) (The North American MMM Register mentioned above, which Jerry also founded, is more narrowly focused on MGs from the early 30s and racing, but I don't see that as being contradictory to Jerry's "all MGs" philosophy since they are clearly a special case. Also of interest in view of the preceding paragraphs is that the masthead of their quarterly publication says "affiliated with MG Car Club England").

Many of us who were there harbor fond memories of that Jamboree, and especially the funkhana. It was held on a practice soccer field at F.I.T., since Jerry was still president and no one would have been so bold as to tell us we couldn't do it. We really tore up that nice grassy field! (15 or so years later it was plowed up to make way for a new College of Engineering building, so whatever damage we did was not permanent.) I treasure a photo someone gave me of me and a Healey friend in the Y with the car heeled over at quite an angle, the friend leaning way out of the door to point out the next cone we needed to round (or maybe he was just trying to keep us from tipping over!) and a large battalion of flying dirt clods following us. Those were the days!! Many folks commented, though, that most of the contingent from the Orlando club refrained from taking part and looked on in shock at what we were doing with our precious cars! But of course they had

much farther to go to get home.

Jerry again, commenting on the Jamboree: "Syd and Joan Beer from England were invited guests and Syd spoke at the banquet about his trip to China in a Y-Type. Who could forget the drama the next day during the gymkhana of Mike Dowley from England and Steve Foldhazy from Australia tearing up the field in Keuper's TD. Yes, the Jamboree was a great success." At the bottom of this page of the book was a photo of Jerry's house in Melbourne Beach with 8-10 MGs, from pre-war to rubber-nose Midget, in front of the house parked side by side on the grass.

Rescuing, restoring, showing and driving old MGs was of course not enough for Jerry. He had to start a club for MGs. All MGs. And that's how our club started. Jerry was the first president, and he told me that I had to be his VP whether I wanted to or not. By this time I knew Jerry well enough that there was no point trying to say "no". We had some meetings in the Evans Library on the F.I.T. campus, and also some in area restaurants; I especially remember we had some in the big buffet establishment that used to be located at the south end of the Melbourne Shopping Center, which had a separate room that we could reserve, and some in Palm Bay eateries near I-95. The club also started organizing tours of the local area at an early point in its existence, especially along the Indian River lagoon.

A couple of times we had evening tech sessions at the shop of the late Dick Ostman on the west side of Cocoa. I had met Dick soon after I moved to Florida in 1969, after reading an article about him and his shop in Florida Today, and my first experience with a bead blaster was in his shop when he wanted to show me his new toy. That shop was probably east of US1, but later he moved his shop to a new place near State Road 520 west of US1 that was mostly stuffed wall to wall with Jaguar engines and other Jag parts, with one or more Morris Minors out back. I visited that shop several times looking for parts for my Alfa, and I think I even found and bought a couple of things. He had to move again, and cleared out most of the engines and other car parts and opened another shop, a bit farther west but still close to the north side of 520, and Dick put on two or three tech sessions for our club at that location in the club's early days. His health was not good, and he passed on a little while after that. Fortunately for the club, his son Rick moved to the area a bit later and set up a British car repair shop in the same general West Cocoa area, C.C.C. Restorations, with 'Little British Cars' being the whole emphasis in his shop. In the following years Rick and his shop became the venue for a number of very interesting and helpful tech sessions for our club in the 1990s and later.

Jerry Keuper remained as active in the club as possible in the last years prior to his declining health and eventual death on March 25, 2002, followed by Natalie's death the following year. He and Natalie are buried in Fountainhead Cemetery, which is on Babcock Street between Malabar Road and Valkaria Road, and a visit to their graves is well worthwhile. There's a gorgeous granite bench that his daughter Melanie designed inscribed with their names, the fact that he founded F.I.T., and referring to him as an "MG NUT" with the MG in black letters on a red background, inside a black octagon. Correctly proportioned, of course! (Melanie still owns, and occasionally exercises, his TD, although the three restored MMM cars were bought by Bill and Sarah Richey, who live in Bowling Green and have re-restored the J2, PA, and L1. All have been raking in trophies at national meets, and the L1 won the "Amelia Island Award" at the 2008 Amelia Island Concours.

After Jerry retired from the F.I.T. presidency in 1985 I think he was not too comfortable with conducting meetings on the campus so we met off-campus from then on. In about 1998, he asked me to take over the club presidency, which I did for a short period until we could find someone else. I was "wearing a lot of hats" and doing a fair amount of overseas travel for Florida Tech at the time, and I knew I couldn't do justice to the many obligations that came with running and building up the car club. Fortunately for the club, and for me personally, Mike Euziere appeared on the scene in very short order, full of energy and ideas, and thanks to him and everyone else who has served as president since then the club was off and running and never looked back.

The club started putting out an official "Newsletter" in early 2000, and that was clearly an important sign of maturity after many years when informality ruled. An especially interesting early issue was #14, dated August 2001. Much of the issue was devoted to "our annual car show" coming up at Fox Lake Park on Sept. 22. This was our first show. (I have a trophy from that show). Mike Euziere was the club Chair, his wife Lorraine was the webmaster, and Ed Price was the Treasurer. Fred Wright, who became our 4th president in November 2002, was mentioned in the Newsletter, and Jerry Keuper was "Chairman Emeritus". Various items said "Call Saul Klein" about this or that, so that at least has not changed much in the intervening 8 years!

This issue of the club newsletter also reported on the most recent meeting, which had been held at Rick Ostman's shop in West Cocoa, and commented on Rick's interesting and helpful tech session with 25 attendees. The Newsletter Editor (it doesn't say who he or she was) commented that "we are glad he is healed up and ready to go back to work fulltime". He and Mike Euziere had been injured, Mike more seriously I think, in Mike's MGB while test driving it following work that had been done on it at Rick's shop. Nothing was said in the newsletter about what caused the accident, but something was said about replacing seat belts before they get rotten! Cars for sale included 3 MGBs (1970-80) and a BN1 Healey (55 100-4), and 3 other people were trying to sell MGB parts (a fiberglass hardtop, a 1970 engine, and "lots and lots of MGB parts").

I hope others among our club's old timers will come forward with additions and corrections to this stab at reconstructing some portion of the club's early history, as well as extending the coverage to include more about the years following our founder's death in the spring of 2002.

[HERE'S A BRIEF RECOLLECTION OF THE 1982 GOF by TONY ROTH](#)

Great GOF at FIT. Jerry (Keuper) had a bunch of South African MG owners here on a tour. It was known as the Florida Freebie. We stayed in the dorms free – meals were very cheap. It was in the summer, but it didn't seem hot at the time. There were breezes off the ocean and river. We had an autocross on the baseball field. The ruts got over a foot deep. After a while, no one would drive their cars thru the dirt, so everyone drove my old race car.



(Editor's Note: Tony has been the driving force behind the Classic Mg Club in Orlando for a number of years. He is well-known in the MG world.)

[RENDEZVOUS 2009 IN TALLAHASSEE](#)

If you even "think" you will be going to Tally May 1-3, send in your registration now! Before April 1st. The concern is with the economy as poor as it is, and early registrations are slow, the Big Bend Club might have to cancel if they do not receive more registrations ASAP due to financial commitments on their part. So please go; you'll have a great time. Just ask Pat & Norm, Saul, Helen, or Ben & Danica.

[MISCELLANEOUS](#)

(Saul, I suggest we re-print the MGOB's ODDS 'N ENDS from their March newsletter, page 9.)

SPECIAL NOTICE: We are in jeopardy of losing our suppliers. In an ad appearing in the Southeastern MGT Register newsletter "MG Talk", Lamar Keene of Atlanta Imported Auto Parts stated: "We all need your help, support, your business. We cannot survive without selling parts, that is what we do! No part sales, no business, then we won't survive either. We know the economy is tight, but we all need each other if we want this industry to survive and have parts continue to be available for our cars." He also states Moss has added 150 new products but over 500 were deleted. Many of the small suppliers are finding it difficult to survive and some are not, i.e.: Lucas/Girling, AP Borg, and Crane Cams. So, if you've held off buying that "widget" for your LBC, see if you can spare some money in the budget for the purchase of it now. Lamar's statement applies to all the suppliers we deal with. Let's try to keep them in business now so they'll be here for us in the future.

CLUB BADGES, Ts, POLO SHIRTS, & NEW CAPS – Anyone interested in any of these items can purchase by contacting Al Allen at 321-259-6957 or patalallen@msn.com

For those members who wish to obtain a list of the current membership roster, please e-mail Helen Kingston (hjk@cfl.rr.com) and she will send it to you. We encourage our members to get together outside of our club events; that way they can contract with one another for a casual drive or tour some place that interests them. Or plan to go together to another club's function, such as the upcoming GOF in Crystal River.

MGCC-F UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 14th, See Page 1 for details.

Saturday, April 18th, ***TOUR TO THE PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE*** - This is a tour we have been trying to coordinate for quite some time and have finally been able to work it out. We are planning a trip to this famous lighthouse on the north side of Ponce Inlet. It is approximately 93 miles from SR 192 and US 1 in Melbourne and the drive takes about 2 hours. It is Florida's tallest lighthouse and the second tallest in the nation. You may climb 203 steps to the top for breathtaking views. This National Historic Landmark is one of the few light stations in the country with all the original keepers' dwellings and outbuildings still intact. One building houses two magnificent first-order Fresnel lenses, one from Cape Canaveral and the other is the original Ponce lens. The Admission charge is \$5 for adults, \$1.50 for children. We will have lunch (restaurant to be selected) either prior to our visit or after, depending on our arrival time. So, plan on touring with us. It is still cool at that time of the year. Bring your LBC or another, but please come.

OTHER EVENTS:

1st 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.

Friday – Sunday, March 27-29 – GOF South #42 – Crystal River, FL – www.classicmgclub.com.

Friday – Sunday, April 3rd- 5th - Winter Park All British Car Show at Mead Gardens – www.allbritishcarclub.com

Saturday, April 18th, 2009 – First Annual British Motor Classic at Davis Island, Tampa, sponsored by Nature Coast English Car Club & Sun Coast Classic MG Club in conjunction with Davis Island's "Island Fest". See flyer at <http://britishcarclub.net/BMCReg.pdf>

April 21-26, 2009 – NAMGAR in Key West – the Last Sunset. You don't have to have an MGA to participate. Motel is The Blue Marlin (800) 523-1698. Reserve room now and register when the flyer comes out.

May 1-3, 2009 – Rendezvous 2009 – All British Car Event in Tallahassee, FL – Hotel rooms from \$89.99 – (1-888-299-2208) www.bigbendmgclub.com

May 30th – June 7th – British Car Awareness Week – Drive your British Cars

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.

September 25th – 27th – Southeastern Fall GOF Mk XV – Hiawassee, GA – www.semgtr.org

October 16th – 18th – EuroFest 2009 – Greenville, SC

October 30th – November 1st – SBCC Annual Car Show – Chattanooga, TN

November 7 – MG Car Club Annual Show – Brit Bash at Wickham, Melbourne, FL

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:

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.

1993 Mini Cooper – restored and runs well. Asking \$11,800 – open to offers. 1971 MGBGT parts car for sale \$300 includes engine and transmission (out of the car). Also, MGBGT rear hatch \$200. Contact John Conarro 321-459-3691.

MGB Parts – engine, transmission, etc. – Call Tom at 321-890-6705.

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 25th 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 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

P.O. Box 410471

Melbourne, FL 32941

321-213-7051

For Club Info- Please email Dave Alexander [email](mailto:davealexander@britishmarque.com)



British Marque Car Club News

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