



Flywheel:

Memories of the Open Road

April 2020

President: First, to everyone, a Happy Easter. It will certainly be one we all remember. While NBCC activities are suspended, the show must go on and the executive remains active in other ways. We are discussing how to stay informed and connected with members.

Like everyone, we are listening to the news and assessing how that affects the NBCC in the future. To be sure events are postponed, but that just means we have to be creative to have fun in other ways.

A newsletter is one of many ways. If anyone has a poem or short story that is inspiring or humorous or insightful, please share it as a contribution to the newsletter and it can be shared with the club. Trip reports are always an interesting read, especially if they have pictures.

Sustenance is required by all. Who doesn't enjoy a good recipe? Of course the family recipe must remain secret at all

costs, but I'm sure many have come across a recipe that exceeded expectations and wouldn't mind sharing.

And of course, there is nothing better than pairing a wonderful dish with a beverage. Wine, beer, spirits and, yes, even non-alcohol beverages such as homemade ice tea or lemonade, etc. What is your favourite pairing?

Spending quality time at home is treasured by all. However, we may find the pantry is stocked, the faucet is fixed, the puzzles are done, and it's too soon to prep the flower beds. Some might be spending more time in the thinking room with the Moss Catalogue than we care to admit. At least if we run out of toilet paper, the older catalogues could be a potential substitute? But I digress. Flipping through the pages, thoughts conjure possibilities: Will this make our LBC look better? Will that make it run better? Will this make it a little more comfortable? Some quality time with our LBCs is always encouraged. And if you run into any trouble, take a picture and tell us what the issue is. Maybe another member can help out with an easy solution?

Remember, the NBCC is still active and strong in 2020. We welcome your ideas and contributions and look forward to sharing them with others...

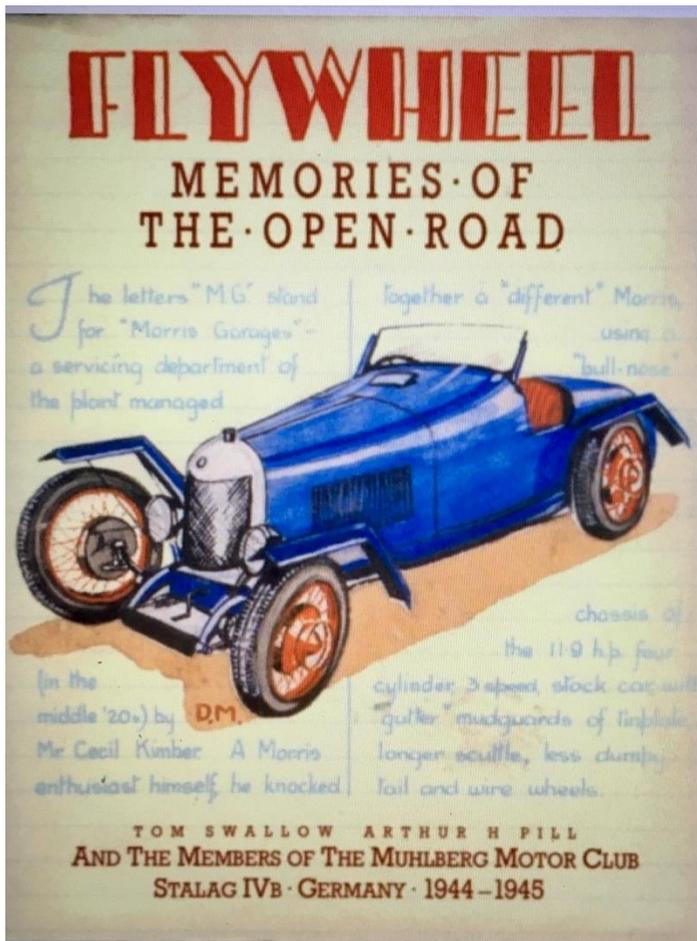
—Sean

Editor: Welcome to our first newsletter for 2020. I echo Sean's wishes for a happy and healthy Easter. As I sit here wondering if Rain-X can be used as hand sanitizer, I hope this finds you and your loved ones well and with things to do. Those of us with hobbies to fall back on have a leg up in that regard, and Cheryl and I have been doubling down on ours. For many of us though, our primary hobby interest remains our LBCs. As they come out of hibernation (just in time), I foresee a number of highly polished and detailed steeds once our group runs resume. This downtime will be a good time to sort out all the little things on our cars that have been bugging us.

—Jim M.

Flywheel was chosen for our masthead in honour of some very dedicated auto enthusiasts who published their own magazine under that banner 75 years ago. Tom Swallow and Arthur Pill were prisoners of war at Stalag IV-B in the closing years of World War II. They and half a dozen members of the so called Muhlberg Motor Club published an automotive magazine to be shared among the prisoners. There has never been a more heroic magazine or one with a smaller print run.

Of the ten issues produced, only a single copy of each was made. Each was printed on lined note paper using other scrounged materials. Inks were made from dissolved quinine pills from their meagre medical supply. Printing was done by hand, and hand-drawn illustrations of cars, motorcycles and automotive events, all from memory, were



glued to the pages with fermented millet soup. Each issue was eagerly read as it was passed from prisoner to prisoner.

Amazingly, many, if not all, the issues survived and were discovered in Toronto in the '80s. In 1987 they were published into the hard cover book pictured here.

Tom Swallow was a remarkable man. While in the prison camp he wrote to BSA Motorcycles seeking a dealer's license once the war was over. They wrote back an encouraging letter, and after he returned home he sold his Morgan three-wheeler to fund his dealership. Health problems stemming from the stalag would dog him the rest

of his life, but he never gave up his passion for riding. Later in life he trained as a Cordon Bleu chef and opened his own motor court and restaurant. He was widely in demand as a public speaker. When the Flywheel book was published, Tom donated all of his royalties to the Red Cross in return for all they had done for POWs during the war. Tom Swallow died in 2007.

The Flywheel magazine motto was “To keep the works going round on the idle strokes.” Seems appropriate right now, don’t you think?

Club Business: There will be no group activities until we are allowed, but club business proceeds. Current executives President Sean Nakoneczny and Treasurer Pete Moffett met via conference call with past presidents Al Munro, Garry Lemon and myself this past Tuesday. Here are the broad strokes:

- First, all April events are cancelled: the club meeting, garage party, Ancaster Flea Market and the Brave Souls Run. Anne Lemon’s celebration of life is postponed till the fall. Garry will provide more info once everything is sorted. We will go on a month-to-month basis but are not optimistic for May and foresee a quiet summer. Events when they do resume are expected to phase in gradually.

- Treasurer Pete Moffett reports we are solvent and our finances are in good order. He may be more specific in a separate group email. Also a number of members have not yet renewed this year. So thumb your nose at Fate and send Pete some dough.
- Private runs? We have agreed that even though ad hoc runs are possible while physically distancing ourselves, the optics would not be good. These are serious times and the sight of a group of people parading in their hobby vehicles would not sit well right now. Other clubs such as the Healey club are issuing the same advisory to their members. We can't tell you what to do, but if you want to make a solo 6:00 am run, remember that Ontarians have been told "no unnecessary travel." And remember also, if you break down, you can no longer ride with the tow truck driver.
- Keeping in touch with each other: Well, this newsletter is one of the ways we can do that. We are also working on setting up a chat group so members can interact with each other on a larger scale. Once it's up and running to Sean's satisfaction, you will get an invitation to join (it's voluntary) and an explanation of how it works. If you have never belonged to a chat group, you will marvel at how easy it is to connect with one another. Also Sean, Pete, Garry, Al and I have agreed to

split up the membership list and make phone checks to see how each of our members is doing. We encourage you also to ring up club members you haven't connected with in a while.

Tina and Leo VanTuyl did get out last month and put down the Brave Souls Run on paper. We present it here to be enjoyed as a future treat. Tina's printing is so neat we decided to present it as is without transcribing into type. Are we surprised she taught elementary school? Thanks to you both.

Brave Souls Run

Time: approx. 1 hour 15 minutes

Meet at Turner's Corners at 10:45 A.M.
(corner of Hiway 20 and Merrittville)

Leave at 11 A.M.

(0 m)(0 km) Right on Hiway 20. (3 m)(4.8 km)

(3 m)(4.8 km) Right on Allanport Road.
(2.7 m)(4.3 km)

(5.7 m)(9.1 km) Right on Canby. Canby
becomes River Street. (1.4 m)(2.3 km)

(7.1 m)(11.4 km) Left on Biggar Road. Go
through 1 stop sign. (1.5 m)(2.4 km)

(8.6 m)(13.8 km) Right on Moyer Road.
(1.9 m)(3.1 km)

(10.5 m)(16.9 km) Go through lights at East Main.
Moyer becomes Dean's Ridge. (2.6 m)(4.1 km)

(13.1 m)(21 km) Veer right on Miller Road. (Reg.
Rd. 84) (5.2 m)(8.3 km)

(18.3 m)(29.3 km) Left on Hiway 3.
(2.6 m)(4.1 km)

(20.9 m) (33.4 km) Right on Sherkston Road. Go through 3 stop signs.
(2.8 m) (4.7 km)

(23.7 m) (38.1 km) Left on Michener Road. Go straight through traffic light.
(2.2 m) (3.5 km)

(25.9 m) (41.6 km) Left on Ridge Road.
(.5 m) (.8 km)

(26.4 m) (42.4 km) Right on Dominion Road. (At the light) (6.8 m) (10.9 km)

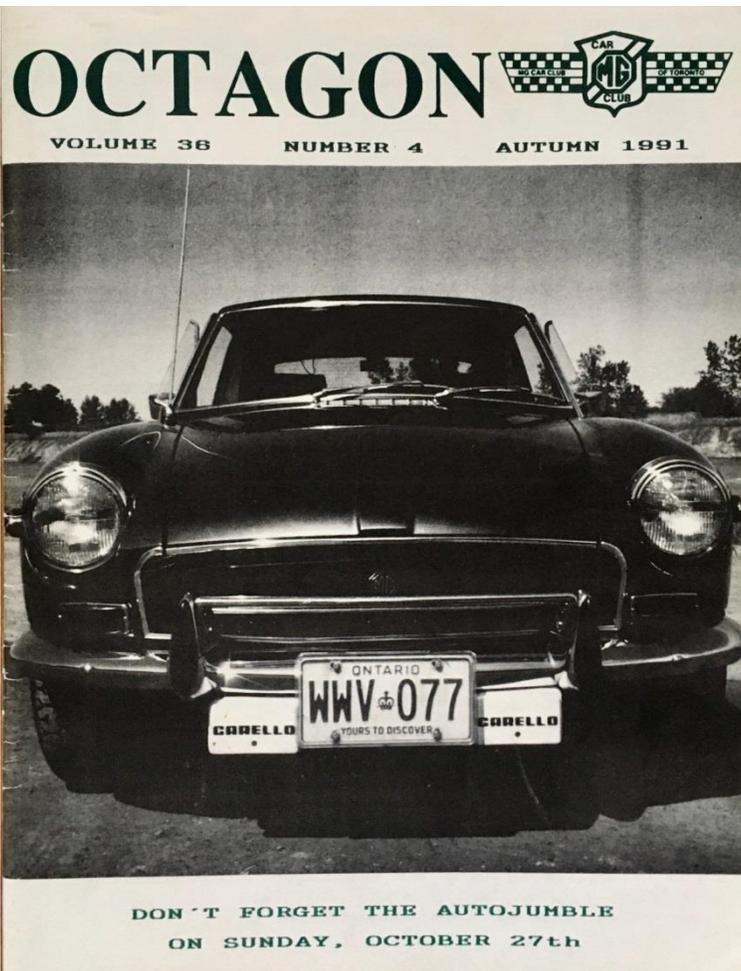
(33.2 m) (53.3 km) Dominion Road becomes Lakeshore at Old Fort Erie. Go straight through the stop sign.
(1.3 m) (2.1 km)

(34.5 m) (55.4 km) Lakeshore becomes Niagara Parkway / Boulevard.
(13 m) (20.8 km)

(47.5 m) (76.2 km) Left on Legends Way.

Lunch Time

Legends on the Niagara
Restaurant



Octagon reprint: At our last meeting we all agreed to share personal stories about our involvement in the LBC hobby, so let's ride the wayback machine all the way to the Autumn 1991 issue of the Toronto MG Club magazine in which I described how Cheryl and I freshened up our

1972 MGB-GT. Unfortunately a lot of spelling errors crept in when they transcribed my floppy disc (remember those?), so here's hoping you'll cut me a bit of slack. Thirty years on, the paint has held up better than I.

IT'S JUST A HOBBY, RIGHT?

by Jim Martin

JUNE 1990... "You know, the paint on the B is looking a little tired. I can probably strip it down in a couple of weeks, the paint and bodywork will take another three or four and I'll have lots of time to get the thing back together for Watkins Glen in September!"

JUNE 1991... "I'll never do this again!" Well, I probably will, but having had my beloved '72 GT off the road for what turned out to be a full year, I'll certainly go into the next job with a better knowledge of my limitations. Limitations? Primarily procrastination and a working speed approaching glacial. What follows is a rough chronology of the events along with some thoughts collected along the way.

When I purchased the car from friend and club member Kevin Pesant back in 1984, I got a car in good, solid shape...well cared for mechanically and cosmetically, with no evident rust. Over the years the paint, a non-stock but attractive Mercedes Lapis blue started to fade and crack quite badly. Body filler on the hood from an earlier minor shunt had started to blister and some rust perforations on the lower front fenders had necessitated some driveway bodywork. As well, my butt had rubbed a hole in the seat fabric, marring an otherwise solid interior. By the summer of last year, things could be put off no longer. Stockpiled parts were dug out... catalogues consulted... and quotes secured for bodywork and fresh paint.

The teardown...in a word, straightforward. Interior and exterior trim was removed, along with seats and all window glass including the front and back. A gallon of Captain Lee's paintstripper was enough for the whole car with the exception of the front fenders. I got enough off those however to discover quite a bit filler up front from the aforementioned shunt. Whoever did the work before had done it well, but thick. After agonizing for a few days, I swallowed hard and ordered new O.E.M. fenders. Off came the old fenders and off I went to get the bodyman. Three

weeks into the project and I was right on schedule.

Paint and body...This is where the schedule started to get elastic. I had figured a month for this phase. I was to learn you can't rush an artist...particularly one who's giving you a good price. The artist in question is a young man who was freelancing at the time while holding down a day job at the local Chrysler paintshop. He now has his own full time shop in St. Catherine's and if you like what he has done for me, his name is Dave Bruntin.

Dave tackled the job with a methodical thoroughness I had never seen before. The body was sanded, minor rust damage repaired and the doors, hatch and hood removed. All surfaces were then primed. Then all doorjambes and edges were sprayed in the final colour and the doors and hatch refitted.

Meanwhile, back at home, my wife Cheryl, assisted by my father, recovered the buckets and dyed the carpeting. I helped by biting my nails a lot as I watched them snip, stretch and glue the virtually unavailable navy blue nylon upholstery. Special Interest Auto in Rhode Island, where I found this set, tells me it was likely the last kit in North America.

By now it was late August and I knew I wouldn't have a nice shiny GT to show off at Watkins Glen. With Dave about to fit the new fenders, I decided the whole job should be done right. Dad and I rushed to his shop, stripped the engine bay and pulled the motor in two hours flat. Now the colour under the hood would match the exterior. Things again ground to a halt and it was late September before the car was delivered back to me. The new covering of Mercedes Blue, in base and clearcoat, looked wonderful.

Some of you may be asking yourselves, "Why did this dummy attempt a restoration in the summer when he could be driving the car?" I have two hobbies...sportscars and model railroading. By early October, MG season was coming to an end and H-O season was beginning. Most of the work on the B was halted for the winter.

Re-assembly...which got underway in early

spring, turned out to be painfully slow as I tried not to put any chips or scratches in the paint. I could happily spend the rest of my life never fitting another windshield or backlight. After about three tries per side I became quite proficient at fitting vent windows and regulators. Putting the engine bay back together was a real treat. In our haste to remove the motor, no notes were taken or parts catalogued. Bolts and clamps were lined up alphabetically according to height and put back by a process of elimination. Maybe its my 20 odd years as a reporter, but I seemed to need a deadline. By 10:15 pm on June 14th, the night before the Wayne McRae Weekend, the car was finished, but untested. The test came the next morning at 8:00 am as we struck out for Kingston. My heart was filled with trepidation...the car was filled with tools.

I'm happy to say the car didn't miss a beat all weekend and has performed flawlessly since.

*Some thoughts...*When you take a car apart, you can't take too many notes. Even simple assemblies can look complex months later.

...When you stack up the carpeting, don't let mice build nests in it.

...If you're pessimistic by nature, you need only boost your original cost estimates by fifty percent. Optimists should use a formula of 2.5.

...Shop Canadian. It's usually cheaper by the time you figure in the exchange, duties and shipping. Besides, we're blessed with many good sources here at home.

...Receipts. Throw them away, otherwise you may be tempted to add them up.

That's the story. I'm gratified by the many compliments our shiny blue GT has received. Special thanks to my enthusiastic wife, Cheryl for going without the car for a year and for the dynamite minilite wheels she talked Santa into giving me for Christmas. I'm a lucky guy...slow, but lucky!



In closing: We hope this little effort has helped to cheer you a wee bit. Most likely we will need at least one more issue, if for no other reason than to tell you what isn't happening. But please stay tuned. Please make an effort to keep in touch with one another, and if you have something you'd like to share for the May edition of *Flywheel*, send it to me at themartins@farnhamhouse.com.

—Jim

May the road ahead open in front of you.

