Report on Spring Tech Session and NAMGAR “Drive Your MGA Day”

Saturday, May 1, 2021 started with a nice sunny day and warm enough not have to be all bundled up. John and Bernie Hall arrived early and we chatted until Don Tremblay arrived to help me get set up. I pulled all my cars out of the garages to provide space for car work in case of bad weather, but we were able to work outside on most projects. Everything was in place by the time the other club members started arriving around 10 am. John drove his MGA which did not need anything, but he was able to show it off. My two MGAs were out for people to look at as well. Some members drove their modern cars as they are still in the process of getting their cars on the road or long term restoration. Dana Booth brought his MGA that we had worked on a couple years ago and this was the first time it had actually been out on the open road. It still needed a little sorting, so we troubleshot why the fuse to the brake lights kept blowing. Also Don used his dial gauges to adjust the carburetors for synchronization.
New member Bill Yoder brought is freshly restored MGA 1600 MKII and showed it off. It did not require any work. Dick Fabrizio drove his MGA 1500. Don synchronized his carburetors as well and then we put it up on the lift for an oil change, lube, and underside inspection. Paul Robinson brought his rear shock absorbers to be evaluated before putting them back on his MGA Coupe restoration project. One was bad, so, I found a good spare upstairs so that he has a good pair now.
Dana had brought coffee and donuts as well has John Hall bringing donuts, so, we had plenty to snack on until lunch. Bob Freerksen, who sold his car a number of years ago came to enjoy the company of other club members and also donated a box of plaques and awards in case anyone was interested in any of the items to hang on the garage wall. As I looked through the box after the day was over it brought back a lot of memories of club events over the past 34 years and more. Judy Pruitt came without her MGB as it was not running well and is planning on having it delivered for me to take a look and see what is going on with it. Ira Cohen was planning on checking a few things first. He did not have his MGA ready either, so, they both drove up in modern cars. John Gill drove his MGA 1500 over for a short visit. This was Jan’s former MGA and she was happy to see it again! Roy Crane drove his freshly restored Austin Healey 100 BN1 and it drew quite a few members over to see his handiwork.
Around noon I started grilling sausages and hamburgers and we all adjourned to the back deck for food. There was plenty to eat and plenty of conversation catching up on what each has been doing since we last got together in 2019! It was nice having my wife, Jan, here this time as she usually goes out with a friend during the tech sessions. She was happy to spend time with members she had not seen in a long time.
I was going to present a technical discussion about screw fasteners and screw drivers but by the time we were finished working on things most members had departed. So, Ira Cohen and I had a discussion about the difference between Pozidriv, Phillips, and Prince & Reed screw drivers and fasteners. I had samples of each driver and screw. MGAs use Pozidriv and many people don’t know that it is best to use the correct driver in order to not damage the screw head. A Phillips driver will not engage properly and will “cam out” (as designed) and ruin the Pozidriv screw.
While troubleshooting Dana’s fuse blowing problem we did not have the British fuses, so, we substituted US type fuses. I did some research afterwards and discovered that there is nothing wrong with using US fuses in the proper amperage. The fuse that was blowing was the one that fuses the ignition to the green wires on the car which control the fuel gauge, turn signals, brake lights, and blower motor. This is a 17/35 amp fuse. The 17 is the “hold” amperage for normal operation and the 35 is the “instant blow” amperage when overloaded (shorted). American fuses do not use this rating system. The amperage indicated is the hold amperage and they are designed to blow at 200% of the hold amperage. In the US we call these “Slow Blow” fuses. Thus, a 17 amp slow blow American fuse will operate the same way as the British fuse. It may be difficult to find a 17 amp fuse, but usually 15 amp will work just fine. So, a 3AG15 slow blow should be OK. For the other fuse (for the horns) a 3AG25 slow blow will work fine. This information came from Dave Dubois, may he rest in peace, and I found it on the MG

Experience website. The AG in the number means “auto glass”. These is great because you can visually check to see if it is blown. As far as I can tell, those fuses with a strip of metal are Fast Blow. Those with a little coil of wire are Slow Blow. Do your own research and make sure you are getting the proper type for best results.
After everyone had left Dennis Eklof came by and we chatted for a while. He is still working on getting his car back together. He has the engine and transmission in now. Overall, we had good weather and a good time eating and socializing along with a few chores on the cars. One other report I got back later on was that Dave Beckwith had his MGA out for a drive on that day, so, overall we had eight of the club’s cars out for NAMGAR “Drive Your MGA Day”. Not a bad turnout for both events. We hope to have more events this year to drive the cars and enjoy each other’s company.

Safety Fast,
Jack Horner
President, Bay State MGA Club