

Bay State MGA Club goes to GT-39 OTTAWA

Our plans to make this GT started soon after NAMGAR announced the location in 2013. Many preparations were made during the months preceding the trip to get ready to make the four day back road, 1,000 mile round trip to Ottawa. Nancy would not commit to making the trip due to our daughter having her first child two weeks before the GT....so I had planned to go solo. Brother Steve was to ride shot gun with me until he decided to drive his TR6 as there was an "Other British" class offered. Judy Pruitt, Jim and Ellie Guyot also decided to make the trip.

As my car had been having turn signal issues for a couple of months, it was time to delve into that. A few simple tests revealed the flasher to be the culprit which took two new units before it was resolved. Also the driver door latch was having issues; all new parts installed took care of that. Some spare ignition parts and an older restored SU fuel pump were thrown in the boot just in case. (Going solo left plenty of extra room!)

Steve had been experiencing battery/alternator problems since last year's trip to British Invasion. The battery checked out. Suspecting the alternator he installed a new one thinking he had the problem solved. Jim had purchased and installed a freshly rebuilt 1500cc engine and put a few hundred miles on it in his preparation for the trip. Judy's MGB got a fresh oil change and two new front shocks then experienced and fixed some headlight switch/turn signal wiring/ground issues.

Sunday, July 13 arrives and it's a beauty. Steve leaves from Franklin on his two hour ride to the meeting place in Fitzwilliam, NH. Once there, pulls up and refuels, car won't start afterward....what? Judy departs Jamaica Plain for Fitzwilliam and gets there before all of us (this is a first!). I leave Gloucester to meet up with Jim and Ellie in Haverhill to follow them to Fitzwilliam. The first leg completed we were excited about the rest of the trip.

After some fiddling checking ground connections under Steve's hood we theorized that the reason that the car had been starting and running fine on short trips was that he had been keeping a battery charger on it. The two hour trip to Fitzwilliam drew the battery down dead and we thought that maybe the new alternator was defective. Very disappointed, and not wanting to deal with this issue for the next week, he reluctantly turned back to return home. An hour later he called to say that the car completely quit on him and that AAA was on the way. He contacted Moss Motors technical department. They had him check the red ignition light on the dash...he hadn't noticed but it was out. That bulb must be operating to complete the charging circuit. Problem solved but too late to catch up with us in Ottawa.

One down the three of us continued on Rt. 119 and Rt. 9 to Brattleboro then Bennington, VT where we stopped for a pizza lunch break. Tops up, it started raining as we crossed into New York. Staying well north of Albany we followed Rt.30 into the Adirondack Mountains. The rain got heavier and required another stop to install the side curtains. At about 6PM we were wet, tired, hungry and needed fuel. Not finding motels or gas stations in many of the small towns we went through, we decided to take a chance and push on another 75 miles to Tupper Lake. A few miles after making that decision we came to a little 10 room retro motel with a "vacancy" sign in Speculator, NY...on the shores of Lake Pleasant...with a gas station....and a couple of restaurants...we're on it!! It

turned out to be a great find. We had the gazebo at the beach to ourselves and had a little party knowing that the next day was going to be a long hard push to get to Ottawa.

After breakfast and fuel on Monday we headed north on Rt.30 to Indian Lake, Long Lake and Tupper Lake where we turned north west to Ogdensburg, NY. Here we stopped for lunch and fuel before crossing the St. Lawrence into Ontario where gas was \$1.33 a litre (that's well over \$5.00 per gallon!) The stop at the Canadian border was easy as many MGAs had been pouring into Canada and everyone seemed to know why we were headed to Ottawa. With approximately 90 miles (don't ask how many kilometers) of back roads through gorgeous farm and hill country we finally arrive in Ottawa.

The hotel was fabulous with underground parking. What a sight to see such a huge number of our little MGAs all parked down there safe and secure. After checking in and refreshing, we WALKED to a mall about a kilometer up the street for dinner. Back at the hotel we had a few drinks and met some new friends in the hospitality suite. On Tuesday we boarded buses to the capital buildings. In addition to tours of these historical legislature buildings there was to be a changing of the guard performed on the grounds. Well after waiting over an hour in the drizzling rain they cancelled it due to the weather! Back at the hotel we changed Jim's rear tail light assembly which had not been working the entire trip. Those halogen bulbs seem to produce enough heat to seize everything in there. That done we cleaned up and got back on the buses for a short trip to the Ottawa River with a cocktail hour on the dock before boarding the River Queen for a dinner cruise. We cruised up and down the river as we ate a buffet style meal and waited for the sunset. We enjoyed renewing our old friendships with the boys from the old Connecticut MG Club.

Returning to the hotel we closed the evening at the hospitality room. Wednesday (show day) Jim and I were up to get an early breakfast and to beat the line at the hotel's car wash area...I think we were third or fourth in line. Then MGAs started lining up in the hotel parking lot for the short drive to the Science and Technology Center for the car show. After finding our places on the show field we perused the classes of over a hundred MGAs....wow!

A tour of the warehouse at the Center was offered. They had many examples of everything from antique farm equipment, boats, cars, bicycles to entire steam locomotives. After the show the ladies went shopping and Jim and I returned to the hotel to watch the funkana which was taking place in the parking lot.

Thursday we decided to pass on the scheduled driving tour for a self-guided driving tour to Gatineau Park in nearby Quebec. After a walk through the property and preserved buildings, we had lunch and headed back to the hotel. The dinner banquet was held that evening at which multiple NAMGAR officers spoke and car show awards were presented. I thought we had a long drive...there were MGAs from all over the country as far away as California and British Columbia...I think the long distance award was for 4,000 miles!!

Friday we were on the road early as we wanted to make it back to Bennington, VT by days end. Early in the day one of Judy's rear tires picked up a nail and went flat. We put on her spare and pumped it up with a bicycle pump Ira Cohen had insisted she take along

- just in case. A very nice person in the office of a school where we stopped gave us directions to a tire shop in Williamsburg which could work on wire wheels and was on the way to the border. Crossing the border to Ogdensburg, NY we fueled up and had lunch. Then back through New York until we reached Tupper Lake where Jim's car began leaking fuel under the hood....not good. Fortunately it was simply a stuck open needle valve in the front carb causing fuel to pour out of the non-existent overflow pipe. While we were pulled over making the repair several locals stopped to see if they could help or tell us stories of MGAs they owned in their earlier days. We lost a precious hour here. Following some directions a local gave us to get to Bennington we added another hour to our trip....a beautiful ride...arriving after a very long ten hours and 300 miles in the MGAs at 8:30PM. Fortunately we had made reservations for this night's stay. We stayed at the Paradise right across the street from Hemmings Motor Museum (some of you might remember staying there a few years back with the Connecticut group).

Saturday after a breakfast at the famous Blue Benn Diner we were off on our final leg to Fitzwilliam, NH where we said our goodbyes to Judy, and Jim and I headed back to Haverhill and Gloucester arriving at about 3PM. What an adventure. The little Glacier Blue MGA I restored 23 years ago made the trip and made me proud.

Dick Fabrizio
Vice President, Bay State MGA Club

