



# The Breakdown

Serving all Sides of the Marque since 1983

## Letter from the President

by Peter Calabrese

### In this Issue

- President’s letter.....1
- Tech Talk.....2
- Upcoming Events.....3
- My First Car.....4
- Restaurant Review.....5
- Classified Adds.....6
- My First Car Cont’.....7

Pete 2.0 (or re-Pete)      Oops! I did it again. I offered; someone nominated me; the members voted; and now I’m at the wheel of the Buffalo Octagon Association (BOA) for a reprise performance of presidential duties.

The last time I was president of the BOA, the calendar year began with the numeral “one”, pump gasoline without ethanol was still available at \$1.19/gal, motor oil contained generous PPMs of that extreme pressure additive zinc dithiophosphate (ZDDP) and Al Gore had only recently invented the internet. Times sure have changed!

In opening, let me take the time to thank our outgoing president Dan, who along with the assistance of his wife, Anjie, has steered the club these past years when strong leadership was tantamount to its continued sustainability in the ever evolving local car culture.

Together with the elected BOA officers, committee members, and unsung volunteers, Dan (and company) brought unflagging enthusiasm and vitality to a full slate of club activities. They did this in outstanding performance of their duties having successfully guided it down the road when other clubs (and shows) had run off the road into the ditch, so to speak.

Now that the membership has entrusted me with the immediate future of the club, let’s all ask ourselves what can be done to build on Dan’s good work and continue to make the club fun, economically viable and culturally relevant? The world has changed so much in the past 20+ years since Al Gore invented the internet, that dare I say, “I don’t recognize it!” Restricting my observations to just the car scene (for sake of keeping this message to within the printed space allotted), who could have imagined the mega-mainstays of the local car show scene (think Tri-Five and Ford Lords shows) would cease happening? Or that “virtual” car clubs could exist on Facebook without any formal, traditional organizational structure, dues or meeting schedule?

Change is always inevitable, and it needs to be a friend we embrace within the club. I wish to point out that discussions are already taking place among our car show committee members to redefine our signature event for this year- the Autumn Sports Classic (ASC). Similarly, the best minds of the BOA should discuss all other club functions. Good ideas are within all of you waiting to be let out. I’ll be listening. Contact me directly, if you’d like (my email is below).

In closing, let me state as part of my first message, I intend to focus on three specific goals during my tenure... One, make the club fun, because fun is what it’s all about. Two, run a well-attended ASC, because our annual show is the barometer of club well-being. And three, attract new members, because new members are our legacy, and perhaps one of them can become president in two years!

Peter Calabrese (MGcarnut@aol.com)

## Buffalo Octagon Club

**President** - Peter Calabrese  
president@buffalomg.com

**V.P.** - Vacant at the moment  
vicepresident@buffalomg.com

**Treasurer**-Larry Vito  
treasurer@buffalomg.com

**Secretary** - Beverly Rice  
secretary@buffalomg.com

**Membership** - Anjie Grzybek  
membership@buffalomg.com

**Regalia** - Jim Borkman  
jimborkman@yahoo.com

**Newsletter Editor** - Dan Grzybek  
newsletter@buffalomg.com

## Tech Talk

by Jim Pelletterie

Our cars will be ready to roll within a few weeks so as a public service I'd like to remind you to check your tires. Not only for inflation but for the date they were made. Tires that are over ten years old could be a hazard even if there is plenty of thread left. Rubber deteriorates over the years although they look like new. New tires for our MG's are not expensive and well worth a hard look.

Used MG parts have really dropped in price especially the easily obtained items. The reason is our cars are driven less and the parts are not wearing. Don't get the impression that every part is going down. Parts for T Series or MGA's especially the limited production models are commanding premium prices. Unless the part you're looking for is not reproduced or made of unobtainium, quality used parts should be somewhat reasonable.

As a car club we have quite a few new cars in different stages of completion. Some are MG's and some are diversion from the marque but the builders are members with passion. Just off the top of my head we have a late MGB that was beat up and becoming refreshed again. The MGA Twin Cam was neglected by previous owners and this Twin Cam will again be road worthy. Two other MGA's are undergoing frame off restorations and will soon be back in the sunshine. I cannot forget about the just acquired MG TD that was truly a barn find. There are other non-MG cars that are in the works by our members. The Rambler wagon with the V8 turned out cool as hell when rumbling down the road. And the "tubecar" that I have been pouring everything I have into should be available this spring.

Everyone who has one of these projects has immense passion and talents to take a car that most people think is a piece of junk and make it new again. It takes perseverance time and of course money to make it happen. The feeling of accomplishment is worth all the effort when just one person gives you a thumbs up. The pitfalls are many making the completion of a car project special. How many cars have you heard about that are "under restoration" but never seem to get to the finish line. If you are one of these individuals that have completed your project, I salute you. If you just started or are thinking about it I assure you that with the proper assistance you can get thru anything.

The internet is a great source of answers when doing research on a project but be warned, Not all advice is good. Do your homework and ask questions. Forums are usually supported by enthusiasts like yourself and you might get pointed in the right direction but just from experience if you can hook up with a business that specializes in what your trying to accomplishment you might be ahead. I tried the forums for my own project when I wanted to connect a ignition light. I posted a question on the forums but the answers were vague at best. I contacted a firm that specializes in wiring conversion for the engine that I'm using and with the proper information I was able to make it work without burning up the very expensive engine computer. So if you are thinking about a car project, do your research count the pennies and make it happen.

## Upcoming Events

Always Check The  
Website for full details.  
Buffalomg.com

-Sun Feb. 23rd. BOA Lunch @  
Glen Park Tavern. 11:30

-Feb 28, 29, March 1st  
Calvacade of Cars. Hamburg  
Fairgrounds

-Mon March 9th. meeting @  
Otto's 7:30pm

-April 3-4 Kimber Fest.  
contact Peter Gilvarry

-April 9-11 Buffalo  
Motorama. Bflo Convention  
Center

-Mon April 13th meeting @  
Otto's 7:30pm. Kimber  
birthday celebration

-Sun April 19th Ancaster  
British swap meet

-Mon May 11th meeting @  
Otto's 7:30pm

The 2020 Membership renewals have gone out via email to all members, as well as regular mail to anyone who doesn't have an email. If you didn't get one email Anjie at [membership@buffalomg.com](mailto:membership@buffalomg.com). Please get them in by March 1st to stay current on all BOA activity.

There are a lot of fun activities and events planned for 2020 so be sure to check our website and Facebook page to keep up to date.

As always our meetings are at Otto's Restaurant on Union rd in Cheektowaga on the second Monday of each month.

Buffalo has been selected to host the 2020 Kimber Fest. There are a number of events and speakers that are planned. Peter Gilvarry has been a great ambassador for our city to bring this event here. Contact Peter, [b747pete@gmail.com](mailto:b747pete@gmail.com), or check out [nemgtr.org](http://nemgtr.org) for all event details and registration info if you are interested in attending.

Our annual Autumn Sports Classic is planned once again and we have moved it earlier to avoid the holiday weekend. It is planned for Sunday August 30th. Flyers will soon be available and we need all membership to help promote it at car shows and cruise nights over the summer.



# My First Car

by Jim Borkman

## The "Purchase"

I was 17. At that age what do you desire, a car of course. Believe it or not, my first car was a 1962 MGA MKII. I found the car through a high school friend who grew up in a car dealer family. Rick and his family loved cars, his brother drove a Mustang Mach I and his friend a Porsche 911. I was always drawn to the Porsche but knew that it was beyond my reach. As I began to look for a car to buy I knew I wanted something sporty and unique. Never did I imagine that my life would be so impacted by owning an MG. I was working at a gas station at the time and was always intrigued and excited when a Porsche 911 or Mercedes SL-190 was being worked on in the shop. We didn't see an MG that I recall, but were soon to have one grace the lift; that one would be mine.

Through his family connections Rick became aware of an MGA for sale. The car was owned by a guy that drove a Jaguar XKE and ran a small repair shop. The car was located in a field, behind the shop, where these fine automobiles were being serviced and stored. I had never seen an MGA, nor did I even know what one was. When I first saw the car I thought it was so amazing. The lines of the MG were superb and a two seater sports car was beyond my wildest dreams. It apparently had been raced, as the MG still sported Firestone Sports Car 200 race tires on it. My initial thought was this thing must be really fast. The car color was a mix of BRG and grey primer. It needed rocker panels (no surprise) and had a significant dent in the right rear fender. It didn't matter; I knew this was the car for me. Of course I still had to convince my father that was the case.

Since my skill driving a standard was limited to driving a truck on a farm where I had worked, the owner offered to take me for a ride which I gladly accepted. Wow, was I in for an experience. Paul had obviously raced this car and took me around the lot. He cornered so tightly I think I may have turned green. I couldn't believe how well the car drove and accelerated. Never had I experienced anything like this before, and to think I could be the owner of this classic beauty.

I'm sure my excitement was evident when I told my dad about the MGA for sale. Now my dad was a pretty easy going guy and when he saw the car he stood there motionless with his hands in his pockets, wearing his signature khaki shirt & pants and plaid vest. After a few minutes he asked if I realized all the work it would require. Finally he agreed, as long as I covered all the expenses and insurance it was ok with him. I think in his heart of hearts he was almost as excited as I was. I bought the car that day for \$250. The best \$250 I ever spent. We used a rope to tow the car home, about 1.5 miles behind my mom's 1966 Buick Special.



Story Continued on page 7

## Restaurant Review

by Jim & Gail Borkman

AJ's on Main  
10250 Main St., Clarence, NY

AJ's is one of several restaurants in Clarence and happens to be the most recently remodeled one. So we decided to give it a try. They did a very nice job remodeling and gave a warm welcome when we entered the restaurant. There are high and regular height tables and well as booths. They have a nice wood bar and wide screen TV's for sports shows.

The menu had all the favorite American favorites including wings, burgers, sandwiches and hot dishes. We ordered the daily special, a hot turkey sandwich. We decided to sit in the dining room. We were quickly served and our house salad was beautiful prepared with arugula lettuce, cucumber, tomato, red onions and croutons. Several varieties of dressings were offered.

Our main meal came quickly with a nice presentation. The turkey was thick, plentiful and very moist. It was served with a nice light brown turkey gravy. The green beans were fresh and andante, just like I like them and the mashed potatoes were real and delicious. Everything here is freshly prepared. This was real comfort food. Prices are reasonable.

We asked about deserts and learned they don't have a dessert menu but prepare deserts each day. They highly recommend their apple pie and I bet it's good.

Although we haven't tried other menu items we were assured every thing is fresh and freshly prepared. We also met the owner Alfonso on the way out as I had asked about A Coachman's Inn sign on the wall.

The Coachman's was a well know restaurant in Clarence in the 70s and 80's. We found out that Alfonso had previously been the chef at the Coachman's so he certainly has the experience to run a quality restaurant. We recommend you try AJ's in Clarence for some good eats.



North American MGB Register

The only MEMBER-RUN organization for MGB, MGC, Midget, 1100/1300 and Post Abingdon Car owners.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP \$30** (\$45 overseas)

- Dash plaque • Membership card • Window decal
- Six bi-monthly issues of *The MG Driver*, a 68-page informative magazine.
- Annual national convention – a four-day MG party!

**North American MGB Register**

PO BOX 876 • Downers Grove, IL 60515-0876

Toll-free phone: 800-NAMGBR-1

[www.namgbr.org](http://www.namgbr.org)

*If you have an article you would like to provide to a future issue of The Breakdown feel free to submit it to editor at [newsletter@buffaloming.com](mailto:newsletter@buffaloming.com)*

# Classified adds

See [Buffalomg.com](http://Buffalomg.com) for full updates and bigger pictures

FOR SALE  
1970 MGB GT - \$15,000



OUTSTANDING FEATURES

Fully restored MGB GT  
8,350 miles on new engine installed 1997  
New interior/exterior  
Original windows  
New Transmission 2016  
Garaged for 30+ years  
Pioneer Radio/ speakers  
New head liner

Trickle charger hooked up full time to 2 6 volt batteries  
Some grille badges included  
Entire shop manual and restoration photos included  
Covered steering wheel  
Walnut gear shift knob  
Wire wheels/knock off hubs  
Old ash tray included/not reinstalled  
Peerless Radial Tires 165 R14 84S

FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT TONI SPARKS @ (719) 359-2410.

1977 MGB



- \* Very Good Shape!
- \* Garage Stored
- \* Metallic Green Body
- \* Gold MGB Stripes - Brand New in Box
- \* Tan Interior
- \* Full Working Gauges
- \* MG Mag Style Wheels with Chrome Trim
- \* MGB Luggage Rack
- \* Dual Chrome Mirrors
- \* Convertible Top and New Hard Top
- \* Tonneau Cover
- \* Driven and Cared for with Much Love!
- \* Asking \$5000
- \* Please call (716) 698-4196

1976 MGB Parts For sale    Make Offer  
716.632.9001 Larry



Listings on both the website and newsletter are free to BOA members.

Make sure to follow the Buffalo Octagon Association on Facebook and stay current with updates

*The Breakdown Is Published 6 times a year by The Buffalo Octagon Club.  
P.O. Box 236  
Bowmansville, NY 14026*

## My First Car continued from pg4 by Jim Borkman

### The “Restoration”

I guess when your 17 restoration of a car can take on several meanings. With limited funds, and almost no experience, my friends Rick, Dewey and I set out to turn this purchase into something that looked as good as it drove. The car was actually in pretty good shape for being about 7 years old, the mileage I can't recall. We repaired any rusted areas with screen and lots of bondo. Rick spent hours block sanding the right rear fender to restore its curvature. There was no hesitation to use screws or any other hardware to secure the new rocker panels. Those were the days. With little concern for the longevity of the repairs the goal was to get this car finished and on the road. After several weekends of repairs and spray can primer we towed the car up to the paint shop; a little single bay garage behind a liquor store. We provided the paint (BRG of course) and for \$150 we got the car painted. We did minimal hand buffing, it didn't matter, and it looked great to us.

### The “Fun”

Now the car was ready to enjoy. The car was entered in a number of SCCA road-rallys. In fact a friend of mine Roger and I designed a rally and it was called The Only Rally. Once we understood the amount of work involved we decided it would be the “only rally” we would ever organize. It was always fun to be out cruising with the Austin Healey's, MGB's and Sunbeams on back roads. Rally results we pretty good, as I recall; as was meeting up at the end for food, beer and trophies. It didn't matter to us if the roads were dirt and stony, just participating was a blast.

The A was auto-crossed at the Lancaster Speedway. I remember advancing the timing to try to get a little more acceleration out of it for my final run. I wasn't a great driver but adjusting the timing did help and I was able to place 3rd in the event. Cold winter days were not avoided. With side curtains in place the MGA was driven year round in the snow and cold. On those cold winter days I would occasionally sport my leather racing cap to keep my ears warm. I remember being out one night in the snow with no top. The heater never worked, or if it did you didn't know it. The lack of heat was one of the reasons the A was eventually sold, a decision I regret to this day.

Summer trips were usually spent driving the back roads in Wyoming County or driving up to Olcott, NY for fun with my friends, eating at the Seafood Bar and frequenting the beach, bars & bumper cars.

The amount of fun had with that car exceeds what I can write about, but I assure you that level of fun can still be obtained with our LBC's. So this year drive your cars a little bit more, enjoy the rides, picnics, sight seeing, cruises and what ever you want to do in your British sport car. You won't regret it. Memories are still out there, waiting to be made.

