

Old Friend Comes to the Aid of and Old Friend

This story begins in the mid 1970s when a young man, yours truly, got a part time job. It was at a repair/filling station that consisted of pumping gas, washing the windshield and checking the oil for customers. I know at least some of you remember those days. Eventually graduating to some tire repair and very basic tasks. Lucky for me the proprietor of said shop was very much into older vehicles, especially that of the British variety. This was at a time when all of my friends were caught up in the world of rock and roll and the end of the muscle car era. My interest leaned toward these quirky cars with only a small portion of engine displacement and horsepower. While my peers were driving around in Novas and Chevells sporting Cherry Bomb exhaust with air shocks in the rear, I became enamored with Jaguars, Triumphs, MGs and Healeys. This was prior to the first gas crisis when parking lots were filled with Mustangs and Camaros that were more concerned with cubic inches and straight-line performance than fuel economy. Never being one to conform to society's norms, a '71 MGB became my first car and a lifelong appreciation of sports cars began. Thankfully, I must not have made too much of a nuisance of myself as I was allowed to spend sometime hanging around the shop, helping with what I could and attempting not to injure myself or others in the process. Seeing a plethora of relatively obscure marques pass through the bay doors of the small shop piqued an already healthy interest so when the chance to acquire a 1958 MGA presented itself I jumped at the chance. At the time it was just a 20 year old English sports with anemic performance that most people would consider obsolete. But I just adored the car's sweeping lines with all of its idiosyncrasies, and the sounds and smells that we have all come to know and love. This became my daily driver for several years at a time when you couldn't put five dollars worth of gas in the thing because it wouldn't fit. By the early 80's my beloved MG was relegated to the garage due to a stint in the military as well as a marriage and two kids. With each passing year I would promise myself 'This is the year I will get that car back on the road'. That became my mantra for many years because, as we all know, life has a habit of getting in the way of the best intentions. House, kids, orthodonture, divorce, collage, weddings, grandchildren all take precedence. In the words of George Harrison "Obla Dee, Obla Da, Life goes on." For 25 years I told myself that I would have that car resurrected by the time I turned 50 and somehow I couldn't even manage to get that to happen. I was able to maintain possession of my old friend through it all and kept it garaged, where it collected dust as I collected parts. Some thirty years later, with children grown and a new wife, our family was hit with a good deal of medical issues when various forms of cancer attacked three generations. Being one of the fortunate few who has the support of their spouse, my lovely wife insisted that work begin on my old project as a distraction from all of the negative events of the year. Having made meager attempts in the past with very little success, I decided to take a chance and contact the same person who sold me the car in the first place many long years ago, fellow BSMGAC member John Hall. His shop had moved but was still in the same town where I grew up, and he was familiar with my family as they all remained or returned there to live. Eventually I called the garage to ask John if he may be interested in taking on the project. Not knowing the condition of the car and considering the length of time it had been sitting idle, he respectfully declined and another attempt ensued and failed. As time continued to pass,

at the insistence of my extremely supportive wife, I placed another call to John. Due to his good nature and big heart this time he was much more receptive. In short order the car was on a trailer heading east and John was able to do in a couple of months what I hadn't been able to accomplish in many years. He even allowed me to come back, hang out and lend a hand in anyway I could. It was like going back in time and what began as business with an old acquaintance, developed into camaraderie with a "new" old friend. For me, the project became cathartic; a new beginning; something positive during an extremely difficult time. Thanks to John's patience and expertise, by the end of the summer, 2012, my car was road-worthy, reliable and with a little more sweat equity became very much alive once again. After many years of attending the historic races at Lime Rock Park I was actually able to arrive with my very own car, park in the British corral and take to the track for several parade laps with my wife honking the horn and whooping it up the whole way around. If you haven't taken the opportunity to do this I would highly recommend you do. Without a doubt it was the highlight of the weekend. In addition my son asked if I could deliver him to his wedding in the MG. This was also a very special moment for me as in his 29 years he had never even had a ride in the thing before.

The premise behind me sharing this story is to thank John for all of his effort, support and friendship. Needless to say I could not have done any of this without him and in fact spent more than half of my life attempting to do so. While I appreciate having my old car back, I am truly grateful for the rekindled relationship. This experience has been a true testament to the type of people you meet in this community. Like-minded individuals with at least one thing in common; what I commonly refer to as PLUs. You see in today's world there are two kinds of people: PLUs – People Like Us and PLTs – People Like Them. I am thankful for all of the PLUs in this sports car world of ours.

It generally doesn't matter what you drive or where you come from, the common denominator is enjoying the camaraderie and the cars. A world that I have felt on the periphery of for all these years and now feel as though I have at least one foot firmly planted in once again.

Thank you John Hall, your involvement in this process has been as important to me as the end result itself. I am more than happy, as well as extremely grateful, to now have two old friends back and hope to maintain both for more years to come.

Cheers to you and all the PLUs!

Scot Padgett

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The MGA restored



John Hall (Left) and Scot Padgett (Right)



Scot and his son on his son's wedding day