

## NOVEMBER EVENTS 1998



Ice cream Nov. 12 at 70th and Van Dorn, Lincoln. 7:30 P.M.

Breakfast at Mahoney State Park, 9:00 A.M. Nov. 14.

Fish will be Friday, December 4 at 6:30. There is no fish the last Friday in November because of Thanksgiving.

Cooper. The price was very reasonable; the catch was that he had it mostly apart with wheels and suspension removed. Additionally the car had been stored in his mother's basement garage for many years and would be very difficult to access.

If I were to buy the car, it would my task to clear a path and devise a scheme to get the car out to the street. Naturally I bought it!

I built the skid from two sheets of plywood and seven two-by fours. I was sure glad to have my Makita power drill! The plan was to raise the Mini, slip the skid under, and pull it out with my Jeep Wrangler.

The Mini gave no resistance to extraction and saw its first sunlight in many years after just a few minutes of tugging. I made the sharp turn OK, and stopped by the end of the lane to winch the Mini up onto the trailer. First stop was the car wash to remove the layers of dust and dirt; then on to the building to fully enjoy a true <sup>3</sup>out-of-the-barn<sup>2</sup> moment.

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## THE LAZARUS MINI

by Frank Grover

Editor's note: During our annual car show Frank Grover approached me and said "I just bought a Mini. The only problem is it is in a basement." I offered Frank any help he needed, and asked him to keep me informed on his progress. A few weeks later a letter arrived which contained a letter and photos of the project. Thanks to Frank for this fine article.

A fellow came by the building several weeks ago to ask if I was interested in buying a Mini

After some thought, I felt a skid/sled would work best to get the car out of the garage, down a slight grade, and then up a gravel path to the street. But first I had to remove many years of growth from the not-used-in-many-years lane.

With chin saw, weed whacker, lawn mower, and large pruner; the clearing work proceeded without a hitch. After three trips to the trash hauler, the debris had been removed and I was ready for Phase II.

A check of the serial number proved it to be correct for a Mini Cooper. However, the motor I got out of the basement was from a Morris 850; so I had doubts.

**PART II**

What do I really have? Or from the significant other's perspective - Why did you buy that?

A book entitled Mini Coopers The Real Thing by John Tipler gives a lot of good hints on determining authenticity. It lists correct numbers for the carbs, head, engine, distributor, transmission, body and engine. As I subsequently found out, the original engine and transmission for the car had been stored on a porch and they proved to be Mini Cooper along with the distributor and carbs. I also checked the manufacturer dates on the safety glass and they all indicated third or fourth quarter 1961. So the car was early in the production run which started in July of 1961. Since most Mini Coopers had a dual paint scheme, the respray had covered the original black top which was revealed through a few chips in the paint!

So where I head from here has yet to be determined; but my close encounter with a Mini Cooper has proved to be most challenging and educational! I have a nice start for an SCCA GT-5 club racer or a car to drive to future A-H club events.

It took nearly half a day to sort, identify, assess damage and wear, note missing, check manufacturer's numbers, clean, tag, and bag all the parts that came in the seven boxes. The 997 head was missing. It had been taken to a machine shop 15 years ago. A check with Ace Mead, the owner, turned up nothing! The rear subassembly was rusted extensively and must be replaced. A quick call to Mini Mania got a quote of \$200 for the Sheet metal only. The generator had been loaned to an Austin owner - it might turn up.

I checked through my collection of books and literature on Austin Minis and turned up the following:

- *Mini Cooper the Real Thing!* by John Tipler
- *How to Modify Your Mini* by David Vizard
- *The Austin Seven Driver's Handbook*
- *1100/1300 Workshop Manual* by BMC Service
- *Vintage Racing British Sportscars* by Terry Jackson
- *The Complete Catalogue of British Cars* by David Culshaw and Peter Horrobin.

While BMC 1100/1300 Service Manual had the most pertinent information for a restoration project, I decided to obtain an original Mini workshop manual. In Hemmings Motor News (HMN), Voss Motors of Michigan lists a factory original for \$40. They also had mechanical and body parts books at the same \$40 cost each; but I'll wait for these! I got the manual in less than a week and much to my disbelief it also contained the Australian 7Supplement. That sure brought me back from my doldrums of a Nebraska football loss!

# Flatwater Austin Healey Club Newsletter

*Austin Healey* CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.

HMN "A" and "M" sections listed several "Mini" parts suppliers. I ordered catalogs from two: Mini Mania (California) and Mini City LTD. (New York). The Mini Mania monthly flier had a page headed "Friends of Mini Mania." It lists 14 sources for parts, service and advice to include Huffaker Racing, Fortech, and Speedwell Engineering. I know from racing experience that Comptune of Ohio (Dave Tabor) builds one heck of an engine. "The Real Thing" book lists many parts sources in England. I'll check these if needs arise. I found general sources on the Internet but they mostly contained club information and some had not been updated for over a year. Mini Mania has an active web site. Tipler's book lists five Mini clubs/originations in the USA. I sent letters to all five requesting a copy of their most recent publication and information on joining. The SCCA-GT5 racers' group puts out a monthly newsletter. As about a third of the 150 members are associated with Mini racing, I sent my \$10 for a one-year subscription. My thought was, these guys must surely have accumulated an abundance of parts as they like to remove most original suspension components from their race cars.

Also, there must be a lot of technical expertise to help solve any problems I might encounter!

My next challenge was to construct a cradle/rotary device to place the car body on so I could get the Mini off the trailer! I had seen cradles used at Orion engineering (Jack Beck) in Papillion, NE in the restoration and car fabrication processes. They seem an ideal way to move the body around with both the front and rear suspension removed. The cradle would make rust repair and working on and replacing the front suspension a much simpler task! Using Jack's basic design and ideas from HMN I bought two motor stands (\$80), 1.5<sup>2</sup> and 1.25<sup>2</sup> square tubing (\$100), and four swivel wheels (\$56). Twenty-five hours later (that included numerous hours of chop saw and welding time), the cradle was ready for the big test!

I sat on the middle brace and timidly lifted my feet off the ground. The cats did run for cover, but I'm still here to write so all must have ended well.

Luckily, no one was around at that moment to test the rotational aspects. Now all I need is five brave souls to help me relocate the body from the sled/skid to the cradle. Oh well! Where are your kids when you really need them?

Final note: The significant other has never seen the Fortech of Huffaker Minis in Competition at an SCCA national race. A lack of appreciation for a Mini Cooper can be understood from someone without the proper life experiences.

## CONGRATULATIONS JOHN, ANY ONE WANT AN MGBGT?

John Ulrich just bought a shiny new 1969 MGBGT. It is BRG with a black interior, and will soon be getting a Rover V8 to finish it off. (It has something to do with snot nosed kids in Civics and Neons with lead feet. This means his OE71 GT is now for sale. It is a good car mechanically, except for the brakes needing bleeding, but is in need of a bit of work on the rockers. \$1000 to a club member, \$1500 to all others.

## George Butterfield

For those of you in the Midwe area I'm sorry to be passing on the news of George Butterfield's death. George died on the 4th of Oct., and I know he will be missed by all the KCMGCC members.

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## WHAT WAS THE ANSWER REALLY?

The following are a sampling of REAL answers received on exams given by the California Department of Transportation's driving school

**Q:** Do you yield when a blind pedestrian is crossing the road?

**A:** What for? He can't see my license plate.

**Q:** Who has the right of way when four cars approach a four-way stop at the same time?

**A:** The pick up truck with the gun rack and the bumper sticker saying, "Guns don't kill people. I do."

**Q:** When driving through fog, what should you use?

**A:** Your car.

**Q:** What problems would you face if you were arrested for drunk driving?

**A:** I'd probably lose my buzz a lot faster.

**Q:** What changes would occur in your lifestyle if you could no longer drive lawfully?

**A:** I would be forced to drive unlawfully.

**Q:** What are some points to remember when passing or being passed?

**A:** Make eye contact and wave "hello" if he/she is cute.

**Q:** What is the difference between a flashing red traffic light and a flashing yellow traffic light?

**A:** The color.

**Q:** How do you deal with heavy traffic?

**A:** Heavy psychedelics.

**Q:** What can you do to help ease a heavy traffic problem?

**A:** Carry loaded weapons.



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