

Tag! You're it!

Bill Tells His Miata (And More) Story

by William Best

It seems that I have been tagged for a story for this month's Open Road. I'm sure this is an attempt by our illustrious President to beg out of writing a monthly article.

A tag article has the effect of forcing a number of members into writing something for the newsletter that they may otherwise fail to get around to doing. Personally I think it is a good idea, so I shall give it a go.

My first introduction to the wonderful world of roadsters started when I was around four or so when my teenage cousin/baby sitter took me for rides in her early 60's Triumph. I thought it was incredibly cool then, but let's face it, at that age we are all easily amused. A few years later when I had matured to the ripe old age of ten, give or take a year, my father drove up to our house, (with no prior notice), in a shiny yellow 1968 MGB roadster. It was love at first site for me, which being ten, was not much of a shock to my father, but my adoration for the car did little to bend the rules of driving while pre-pubescent. I was left with riding right seat whilst my father ran errands, or in the absence of that, sitting in the car in the garage making zoom-zoom noises, as kids will do. Oh, wait. I still do that, albeit in a somewhat lower pitch. Lynne still laughs at me when I go down to the garage to say good night to my car.

Fast forward to age sixteen when my father finally decides to upgrade to a newer model, and purchases a red 1974 MGB. (Not much of a browser, my father.) He then agrees to sell me the 68, and I am then the proud owner of my first roadster. The car was a bit tired, and had a rust issue, but I cared little about those problems, and proceeded to address the fundamentals. I tuned the car up, added new tires, and put the top down. I was more than pleased just to be driving what was at that time, a British roadster of some acclaim. Not too much in the horsepower department, but a roadster just the same.

A couple years later I left Indy and moved to the desert southwest, Tucson Arizona to be exact, and sold the MG. This was stupid, because what the hell is better in the desert than a roadster? Well, at least one with AC.

Fast forward again, some fourteen years. At this point, I had gone through a rotary Mazda mini truck and three motors for it. It was incredibly fast for an import mini truck, as it could take a 280Z until the Datsun's higher gearing took over. I had a couple of Audi coupes, and miscellaneous other trucks, cars, and motorcycles were on my ownership list. During this time, I also did a one year stint as manager of an import auto shop in Denver. I had also forgotten that I had no real money, so I



decided to get my pilots license, always a great idea for a carpenter.

Moving back in my home town of Indy, I eventually find myself wanting another roadster. Having come to what could laughingly be considered my senses, I decided that slightly used roadsters and very used sailboats were far more affordable than aircraft. That may well be one of the more logical decisions of my life, and I have as of yet not regretted it. I am still the proud owner of a 1999 black and tan Miata, and I still grin every time I drive it! I must admit to really having enjoyed doing a few modifications on the car, and more are to come. Nothing radical (yet), just more zoom-zoom. I could go on, much to all of your chagrin, but then I would have nothing left to tell the next time I get tagged.

I hope to see you all on the road just as soon as the weather warms.

And Craig Johnson, I just tagged you to write an article for the March issue of the Open Road!

State Troopers To Start Crack Down On Speeders?

Phil Callahan sent in the following information he received concerning Indiana State Troopers cracking down on speeding and other moving violations.

Per their Superintendent, they are going to start issuing citations for: 1) Six miles over the speed limit. 2) Failure to Yield. 3) Improper Lane Movement (which includes not signaling 300 feet before you change lanes if traveling over 50 mph or not signaling at all). 4) Following too close. 5) Passing an Officer.

This is a good reminder that we should use our turn signals and observe the rules of

the road. And when you're driving your OTM (Other Than Miata) vehicle, watch your distance to the vehicle in front of you. We all know how it feels to look in our rear view mirror and see nothing but a grill or headlights of the huge truck, SUV or car behind us.