



# THE OCTAGON



Newsletter of the M.G. Owners Club  
The Northern California Centre of the M.G. Car Club



**Since 1957!**

Sports Cars Illustrated Jan 1957 35 cents

**Planning Meeting Saturday Jan. 5!  
Annual Bruch Sunday Jan. 20!**

**Winter and a young man's thoughts turn to the Salt Flats**

**MG Rewrites The Records**



# January 2019

# About *The Octagon* and the MG Owners Club

The M.G. Owners Club, formed in 1957, is the Northern California Centre of the M.G. Car Club, formed in England in 1930. The Peninsula T Register was formed in 1973 and is now an informal sub-group of the MGOC. We receive a copy of the MGCC's *Safety Fast*, available to members on loan from the Corresponding Secretary. The club is also associated with the North American MGB Register, the North American MGA Register, and the New England MG T Register. The MGOC holds a business meeting each month at an event known as the "Natter and Noggin" in the style of English clubs. *The Octagon*, our newsletter, is published monthly by the MG Owners Club. Opinions expressed in *The Octagon* are not necessarily those of the MGOC, its members, or Board of Directors.

## DIRECTORY of MGOC OFFICERS for 2018

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Treasurer: Marla Preston, [marlapreston@hotmail.com](mailto:marlapreston@hotmail.com)  
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## CLUB ADVISOR PROGRAM

Feel free to call these members, who have volunteered to help with purchase, repair, and restoration of various M.G. models, etc.  
MGB 1962-74: Steve Lilves, 415-924-3173, [slilves@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slilves@sbcglobal.net)  
MGB 1974-1980: Ed Adams, 510-483-6821 [AdamsEddie77@yahoo.com](mailto:AdamsEddie77@yahoo.com)  
MGB V8 Conversion: Tony Bates, 408-666-6174, [avbates@yahoo.com](mailto:avbates@yahoo.com)  
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M.G. Midget: and Overall Auto Technician: Craig Kuenzinger, 925-934-3130, [mrcraigk@aol.com](mailto:mrcraigk@aol.com)  
MGA/Coupe/Twin Cam 1955-62: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)  
Z-Magnette Saloon: Eric Baker, 510-531-7032

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## COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING IN *THE OCTAGON*

Direct all questions about advertising to Mike Jacobsen at 415-333-9699 or [MikesMuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:MikesMuseum@yahoo.com). 2005 rates are: monthly (yearly): full pg. \$25 (\$240), half page \$18 (\$175), third page \$12 (\$120), business card \$8 (\$75).

All ads expire on Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, and fees for a partial year will be pro-rated to that date. Deadline for ad materials is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. The MGOC makes no claims as to the reputation or quality of work performed by businesses advertising in *The Octagon*.

## MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO *THE OCTAGON*

Your stories, photos, tips, questions, and anything MGOC-related are always welcome in *The Octagon*. Please make your contributions by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the issue in which you want them to appear. Please email all contributions to [magnut\\_dan@hotmail.com](mailto:magnut_dan@hotmail.com) or send them to: Dan Shockey, 10 Willis Rd., Scotts Valley, CA 95066.

## RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

Have you helped recruit any new members lately? The club roster is available from Steve Kellogg upon request.

## MGOCSE.ORG

Upcoming events, MGOC history, photos, membership forms, *The Octagon*, and helpful links are posted on the Club Web site at <http://mgocsf.org>.

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# MGOC Planning Meeting

## Saturday, January 5

### 10:00 a.m.



*Please join us!*

We need your help to plan our events and activities for this New Year. Everyone is welcome especially new members and anyone who has any ideas for new or old events. All ideas are welcome and there are lots of people who are willing to help you.

**Date:** Saturday, January 5, 2019, at 10:00 a.m.

**Location:** Elaine's house at 115 Pinehurst Way, San Francisco

**Event:** At this time we'll plan the dates and locations for our monthly meetings, tours and events. The club will provide tea and coffee, donuts and pastries.

**Please RSVP** to Andy Preston 707-795-3480, [andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net)



## From the Editor

**A Happy New Year to you!** We had a very nice Holiday Tea. A good group, old friends and new, and lots of wonderful food. I enjoyed it immensely. A hard rain started midway through the event. However Thuy and I cut across Berkeley to avoid I-80 and got home in decent time.

We started thinking about 2019 events. The Planning Meeting will very soon be upon us. Do think about what you would like to do as a club and come to the meeting if you can. We discussed some ideas to change our annual show and perhaps do more collaboration with other British car clubs. (Like the shared tour with the Jag club.) Perhaps we could challenge the Triumph and Jag clubs to get the most cars to an event? I'd still like to attempt to replace the Palo Alto Brit Meet in July or August – when the Peninsula is cooler than other areas.

We wouldn't need our club if everyone shared our enthusiasm for the MGs. But it seems we now need the clubs more than ever! I believe that the difficulty of driving a collector car far on the Bay roadways is a major hindrance to event participation. I find it hard to face a drive to the Sonoma Valley for a tour, for example, from my home near Santa Cruz. Clubs that are more regional seem to be doing the best. There is the North Bay British club, the Santa Cruz British club, the Sorry Safari focused on the East Bay and Livermore, and the Triumph Travelers in the South Bay.

The Octagon seems a major focus of my life just now. I know it is mostly read once and tossed but it is hard for me to just throw it together. It may look like it!

Auld lang syne!

**Dan**

Dec. 20, 2018



Surely ye'll be your pint stowp!

And surely I'll be mine!

And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,  
For auld lang syne.\*

We twa hae run about the braes,

And pou'd the gowans fine;

But we've wander'd mony a weary fit,  
Sin' auld lang syne.\*

\* Loosely translated "For old times' sake" -  
hoping to preserve the oldest, most important  
relationships in life

And surely you'll buy your pint cup!  
and surely I'll buy mine!

And we'll take a cup o' kindness yet,  
for auld lang syne.

We two have run about the slopes,  
and picked the daisies fine;

But we've wandered many a weary foot,  
since auld lang syne.

Here's another shot of Meg Allen's ride in the 1935  
LeMans race. A "stock" MG PA with 200 hours of  
factory prep time! **Source: MG publication**

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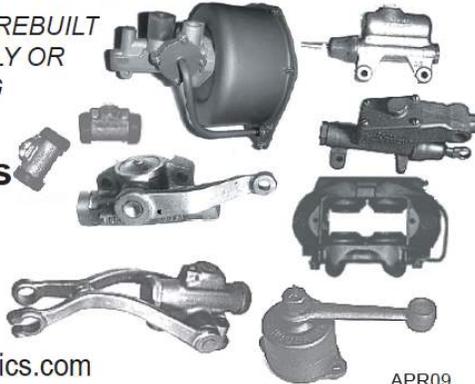
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# MGOC Annual Brunch

Sunday Jan 20, 2019

Beginning at Noon

This year the Annual MGOC Brunch will be a *Champagne Brunch* and held at the Historic Moss Beach Distillery in Moss Beach. We have a private room overlooking the Pacific and the *Brunch* is rated #1 in the Bay Area.

Your *Brunch* will include; Fresh baked pastries, cup of seasonal fruit, your choice from 4 entrees; Salmon, Skirt Steak, Pulled Pork Rancheros or California Coastal Omelet, Tea, Coffee, OJ and of course Champagne and Mimosas included!

**12:00 Noon, Sunday, January 20, 2019**  
**Moss Beach Distillery, 140 Beach Way, 94038**

On the Coast Highway 1 south of San Francisco and just north of Half Moon Bay

\$25/person (MGOC members) and \$45/person (non members) paid in advance



RSVP by January 13, 2019, with your check made out to the MGOC and mail to:

**Marla Preston, 7305 Rebas Way, Rohnert Park, CA, 94928**

Questions: Marla or Andy at 707-795-3480, marlapreston@hotmail.com

To pay through PayPal go to the website at: [www.mgocsf.org](http://www.mgocsf.org) and under Announcements click on "read more" under the Annual Brunch.

**Less formal than past MG club dinners**



“The 4:50 From Paddington” - Agatha Christie PBS shows featured MGs.



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## Member Update

Well my MGC is in the final stages of work but I need a little advice from either of you. Heidi is finally excited to have the new MG as she wasn't too keen on a MGB convertible even though it is a great car.

When I purchased the MGC from John Rogers he had vented the hood and painted it with a black (see attached photo). I didn't like this look and wanted to go for a more traditional look. Collins Classics was able to find another hood which was in good shape except the chrome metal nose piece was missing.

Thanks and have a great holiday tea.  
Regards, William T. Doyle, "Tom"



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## President's Ponderings

Here we are at the end of another successful year for the MGOC and I'm pleased to say that it was a very good year with lots of car events for everyone to participate in. First of all I'd like to thank Marcia and George for hosting the Holiday Tea which was a great success with many members in attendance. BTW Marcia made the best Cucumber Sandwiches ever and a wonderful curried chicken salad to die for. **Thank You So Much!**

At the Holiday Tea we tallied the votes for the Official Ballot and the incumbents were all re-elected, the club Bylaw changes were approved, and MGs by the Bay was voted to continue, although other location and venues will be investigated. We also talked about combining it with another car show to make it larger and more varied. We'll continue these ideas at the planning meeting.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank everyone else who organized an event this last year so we have something on the calendar every month which is one of our goals. However, we need more members to get involved and help us plan activities for this coming year. We have the Planning Meeting on Saturday January 5, 2019 at Elaine Chan's house in SF and that's where we get together and plan activities for the coming year. We need YOUR HELP in order for the club to continue to put on fun events that you can participate in. So please join us and if you can't, but have any ideas please give me a call and we'll add them to the calendar. I'd like to see some tech sessions which always seem to be popular, so ideas please.

Fast on the heels of the Planning Meeting is our Annual Brunch which we have moved to The Moss Beach Distillery at Moss Beach this year following the closure of Hs Lordships for reasons unknown. This is a champagne brunch that is subsidized by the club so it's only \$25 each and if you've never been there you'll be amazed at the location overlooking the Pacific. This is something not to be missed. See the flyer for more information and please sign up early.

Back in my garage I'm working on a couple of projects. I removed the rear window from the hatchback door of my E-type in order to replace the vinyl covered lower panel. I did that a couple of weeks ago but now the weather has got too cold to stretch and glue the vinyl to the inside of the window opening so it'll stay that way until it warms up a bit.

On my MGA, I noticed that I had a small gas leak dripping from the rear banjo fitting on the carbs. So I replaced the fiber washers only to find out that wasn't the problem and the hose to the carbs was leaking at the crimped fitting which is very unusual. This fuel hose is only 4 years old so I wonder if it has anything to do with modern gasoline formulas affecting the rubber especially when cars sit for some time.

On behalf of Marla and myself I wish you all a very Happy New Year and may all your MG wishes come true. I hope to see lots of you at the Planning Meeting and the Annual Brunch.

Take Care and drive safely,

**Andy**



## T Series Engine Noises

Charlie Adams, Virginia

I've had instances of strange vibrating/squeal type sounds from the engine compartment over the years which turned out to be the following: loose intake/exhaust manifold nuts (the newspaper rattle in the wind sound), loose radiator (what a clatter from time to time), a wire touching the distributor shaft (high pitched), distributor cap center post disintegrating, starter gear touching ring gear, water pump and belt, tack or speedo cable. The sounds you describe reminds me most of loose manifold nuts.

## Make a Joyful Noise!

Huib Bruijstens, Helmond,  
Netherlands

I once had such noise and it turned out to be the generator fan. Re-fastening that pulley bolt fixed it.

## Rear End Noises

by John Twist

Your car's rear end...

Loose flanges: Clinks - Clunks

Loose U joint: Clink - Clunk - Ringing

Frozen U Joint: High pitched reciprocal squeak at start up to 20mph

Dislodged oil seal flange on diff: reciprocal squeak changing from accel to deceleration

Loose Pinion: Change in diff sound between accel - float - decel -- there should be NO fore and aft / up and down freeplay in the pinion.

Worn Crown Wheel and Pinion: wow wow wow wow wow (You'll say WOW too when you consider the replacement price)

Loose Shock: Clunk over bumps

Loose Shock Link: Clunk Clunk over bumps

Drum too close to backing plate: squeak or shhhh going around corners

Bad Hub bearing: Tch Tch Tch often heard reflected by a building or guard rail sometimes exacerbated by turning

Worn/missing washers on pinion/differential wheels: Clunk Clunk accelerating and decelerating

Bad Wire Wheel splines: Clonk Clonk accelerating and decelerating

Loose tools and things in boot: Clank Jingle Kathunk over bumps



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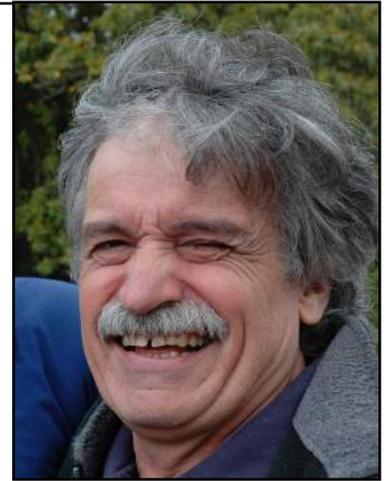
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# Local Legend Phil Frank

## Remembered & Compiled by Dan Shockey

I have republished several of Phil Frank's cartoons in these pages. They display a wonderful creativity and sense of humor plus a love for our favorite MGs. These were primarily printed in *Road & Track* magazine. Phil was an active member of the Abingdon Rough Riders TC club based here in the Bay Area. The Rough Riders rightly claim Phil as their own – although I believe that all of us who loved his work can claim a share, as well. Cancer took Phil from us much too young.



From a story in *The Chronicle* about Phil: "Cartoonist Phil Frank (now deceased), is the pen behind the "Farley" local comic strip in *The Chronicle's* Bay Area section and "The Elderberries" on *The Chronicle* comics page. Phil and his wife, Susan, lived in Sausalito." Phil's automotive autobiography follows.

"I spent my early years in the small town of Holland, Mich. I found myself drawn to cars from the 1920s and 1930s that survived in the back alleys of our town. Most were unlocked, unloved and just collecting dust. I enjoyed sitting in them, relishing the mysterious aromas of mohair, leather, wood, road dust and oil. I often toyed with the idea of one day owning one of these curious vehicles.

"Around 1948, I read a magazine story about a "sports car revolution" taking place in the United States. It highlighted a small British roadster that GIs were bringing back from England after the war. The little car was the MG-TC. I was stunned by the images of this fast little convertible with skinny wheels and classic lines from the early 1930s.

"On the cusp of my 16th birthday, I began lobbying my father and mother to be allowed to buy one of those Model A Ford "alley cars" I was attracted to. I dragged my father to a gas station to look at a 1930 Model "A" Coupe buried in snow. It was for sale for \$200. It was the day before Christmas. The next morning it was sitting in our garage with a red ribbon on the key!

"My clearest automotive memory, however, took place a few years later on a cold morning at Michigan State University when I was walking across a snow-covered campus on my way to class. Suddenly I heard the rattle of an unfamiliar engine. Entering my field of vision was a black sports car. Rooster tails of snow flew up

behind the skinny rear wheels and it entered a four-wheel drift as it made a turn at the corner and pulled up to a university building. A young woman got out of the car and left the motor running. She headed up the stairs of the building and suddenly the car revved up and drove away without her. I wanted to yell to warn her. Then I realized it was a right-hand-drive car. In fact, it was the same car I'd clipped a photograph of out of a magazine 10 years earlier. It was the mysterious MG-TC. I'd finally seen one and I was in love.

"Old MGs and Model A's became a pattern for me. When I am behind the wheel of either breed I feel transported to



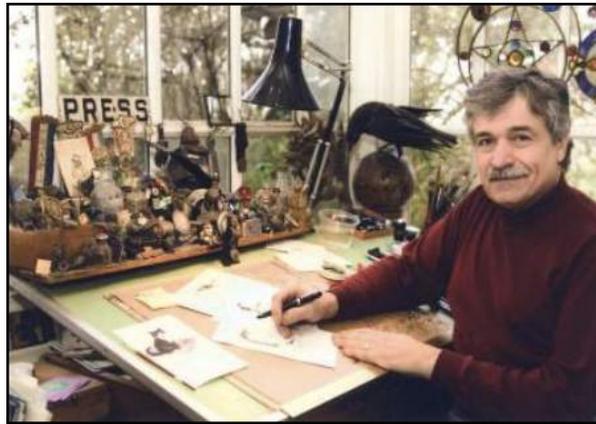
another era. The more rural the landscape, the better. Thirty years ago, Susan and I packed up our 1928 Model A Ford with our two children, Philip and Stacy, and did a cross-country trip, almost all of it by secondary roads, from California to Maine. We didn't have many problems until we hit the Rockies on our way home. The car's engine blew up. We ended up in Walsenburg, Colo., for a week while they located another Model A engine, pulled our broken engine out of the car and installed the new one. Then we fired it up and headed south around the Rockies.

"I sold my last Model A -- a 1929 cabriolet -- four years ago and committed my switch from Detroit iron to British tin. I'm now on my third MG-TC and, with my friend Terry Sanders of Oakland, recently completed a 12-year restoration of a rare four-passenger 1937 MG-SA drophead coupe. I am now restoring an early 1960s Jaguar currently in the paint shop in

"My current MG-TC, still British license plates (FUN three I've owned over the last 30 its own right. Along with my have been doing cartoons for *Track* Magazine, including a named "Nigel Shiftright - Nigel is an Anglophile, loving imagining himself to be an British royalty living in the spindly-wheeled old cars at his estate on Flapping Bonnet Lane. Nigel refuses to ride in any "sports car" that has electric windows. He also has personal conversations with his vehicles. The magazine did a six-page story about the car last year titled "Four Angry Cylinders."

"I drive my MG-TC daily around southern Marin County and occasionally venture to San Francisco in it. Inevitably, when I fire up the MG, I imagine that I am motoring off along a hedgerow-edged road to a temporary airfield on an estate north of London, not far from the English Channel, where my Spitfire fighter is being fueled and tuned. The year is 1944. That's the way it is when you're driving a time machine."

Phil's adopted hometown of Sausalito has chosen to remember Phil by a life-size statue being placed sometime this year. I submit this story in my own desire to remember and honor this man who has brought such joy to so many.



Mark II saloon that is San Rafael.

running its original post-war 504), is my favorite of the years. The car is famous in writing buddy Joe Troise, I nearly 20 years for *Road & feature about a character Automotive Anachronism."* all things British and unrecognized member of United States with a fleet of

Stories about Phil are legend within the Rough Riders. Many sources for his cartoons were real life experiences. He lived his life with the same gusto and joy shown in his work. His studio was the pilothouse of a moored tugboat in the harbor at Sausalito. He and Susan had a small property at Bolinas where he joined in with locals in trying to hide the town from tourists. The Club picnicked at this property. Anything larger than a TC was precluded by not being able to pass between trees to enter the property. Phil is missed.

# Holiday Tea!

We had a great group for our traditional Holiday Tea. A fun addition this year was Marla and Andy's grandson Max, alias 'M.G.' Moder. Oh yeah, and Max's mother came along, too. Marcia's home has a lovely view of the Bay but we could not see so far as the Golden Gate Bridge this time, and not far at all once the hard rains lashed at the picture window. I felt at the coast, or at sea.

Everyone brought gifts for the toy drive so we hope this fun party was not just enjoyed by those present. Thank you to George and Marcia for being fabulous hosts.



Dan Shockey



Santa and his Elf found time to attend. Photos: Dan or Thuy





Rapt attention at the business meeting. Photo: Thuy Nguyen



12/16/2018

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# New Members!

My father had a British Motor Cars dealership when I was growing up, 1956-1976. It became British Leyland in 1970 and Honda was added in 1973. The aqua 1972 MGB was bought for my wife as an engagement present in 1986. It's been off the road and on the road as we raised our two daughters and worked long hours. Now one more quick engine pull and its back on the road (I think a failed new release bearing). I also have a 67 XKE FHC and a 76 Triumph Bonneville. Growing up I loved going to Laguna Seca and Sears Point, and watching the MG's and XKE's race. I went through SCCA drivers school in a MGB and raced a Formula Ford. - **John Hutchison of Lafayette**



Yesterday, I received an email from the previous owner in Wisconsin and part is below:

"I hated to part with it but we purchased a Mustang and we do not have garage space for four cars. I purchased the MG from a private party but MG Limited in Milwaukee handled the transaction. MG Limited had built the car to the specifications of the party I bought it from.

"MG Limited rebuilds or restores a car or two during the winter off season when not doing service work. They are not a new or used car dealer. They take a clean MG strip it down to the body and start from scratch. They use the original parts if possible and use parts from other MG's or new if parts are not reusable. If I remember correctly I purchased the car in 2003. I was going to have them build a car for me and the 1978 became available. It was probably restored between 2000 and 2003. I was told that the person I was buying it from had health or financial issues, can't remember which.

"Your car was originally blue and it is now Jaguar green. The 1978's had rubber bumpers and yours were replaced with chrome like the 1974's and earlier. The 1978 front bumper was a combination rubber bumper and grille. The grille on your car would be the same as an early MGB. The 1978 MG had a single carb. Your car has twin SU carbs. The wheels have also been replaced. The original wheels were probably steel. The ignition on the 78's was electronic and it was redone with points and condenser. I replaced



years ago and added the LED headlights two years ago.”

Unfortunately, they stripped out all the smog equipment so it is scheduled at the end of the month to have the components re-installed so I can get it smogged and registered. Any advice and guidance from other members would be appreciated.

I was born in England and remember these cars well as I left the country in 1976. When I lived in Hong Kong, I had a TR6 and my friend had an MGB, so we would swap cars occasionally. We have now lived in the Napa Valley for the past 30 years and I am a real estate broker in St Helena. I look forward to “commuting” up Highway 29 from Napa in the summer.

I plan to participate in some of your events once the car is registered. Regards, **David Barker of Napa**

## One of the famed M.G. Dancing Daughters

By John Hunt - *Rugged independent women are nothing new to MG!*

In our last *Octagon*, I discovered a link to [www.speedqueens.blogspot.com](http://www.speedqueens.blogspot.com), a blog by Rachel H-G. There are numerous stories of amazing women drivers of the past. Please see below a copy of a post of Margaret Allan who has a famous link to the world of M.G.’s as well as a wonderful life story:

Margaret Allan (“Meg”) was born in 1909 in Scotland. She had the good fortune to be born into a wealthy family where women were encouraged and expected to be accomplished and useful people. Her mother and aunt were Suffragettes. Her mother encouraged her to learn to drive, and she was soon acting as the family’s driver, in their large Lagonda. She became very interested in driving and cars in general, which led to an interest in motorsports. Apparently unimpressed by the trials drivers of the [Women’s Automobile and Sports Association](#), she was allowed to enter the family car into one of their events, which she won. The event was part of the London-Gloucester Trial in 1930. Margaret continued to compete in the Lagonda, and entered her first Brooklands races in it. It was too slow and cumbersome to be competitive.

It was replaced by another, supercharged Lagonda by her father in 1932. Apparently, she entered it into that year’s Brooklands Inter-Club Meeting, but the result has been lost. However, she is listed as a finisher in both the RAC and Scottish rallies in this car, starting at Bath and Glasgow respectively. Her first rallying experience had come in that year’s Monte Carlo Rally, as co-driver to Eve Staniland, who finished tenth in the Light Car class, in



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a works Riley. Some sources have Margaret as winning a Coupe des Alpes and Glacier Cup on that year's Alpine Trial. She certainly took part that year, in a Wolseley, but her results have proved hard to verify.

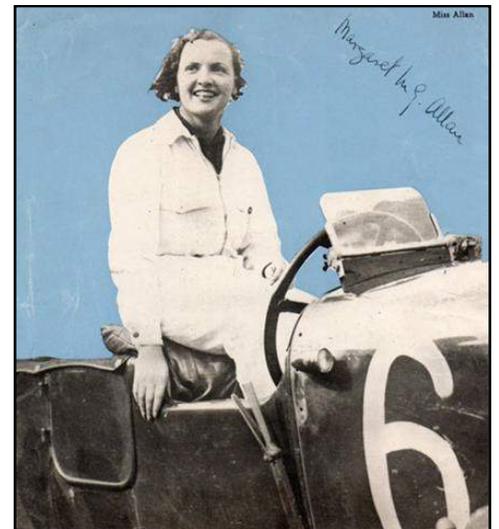
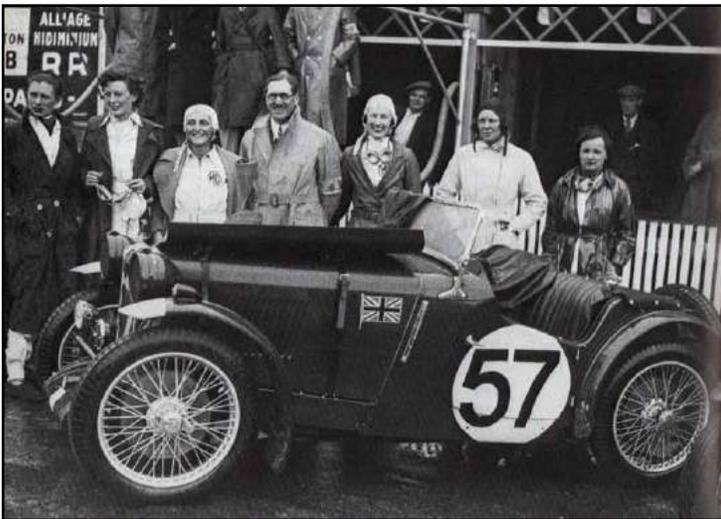
In 1933, Margaret acquired the first of a series of big Bentleys, a 4.5-litre model. She was particularly successful in this car, winning the Junior Handicap at the Inter-Club meeting, and coming third in a JCC handicap. She also won a Ripley Long Handicap at an Easter meeting, in 1933 or 1934. The Bentley even proved effective as a rally car, netting Margaret a twelfth place in the Large Car class of the Scottish Rally.

For most of 1934, she abandoned big Bentleys. Her main exploit at Brooklands was finishing third in the Light Car Club's annual relay, driving an MG Magnette. Her teammates were Doreen Evans and Irene Schwedler. This led to an entry in the 1935 Le Mans 24 Hours, despite gamesmanship from Kay Petre's Singer team that won them the official Ladies' prize. Elsewhere, Margaret drove a Triumph in the Monte Carlo Rally, starting at snowy Umeå in Sweden. She was 60th overall.

Her motorsport year in 1935 appears to have been dominated by her Le Mans appearance, the only one she made during her career. She was part of a semi-works MG team, led by George Eyston and comprising of six female drivers. Margaret shared her MG Midget PA with Colleen Eaton. They were 26th overall, the last of the "Dancing Daughters" over the line, but their measured race helped MG to the team prize.

Away from Le Mans, she finished the Monte Carlo Rally once more, driving an AC to 40th place from Umeå. 1936 was a busy year for Margaret. She started with a record run at Brooklands in a Frazer Nash, and managed to set a new Outer Circuit record: 127 mph. This preceded a move back to Bentley power, in the shape of "Mother Gun", a 6500cc single-seater, so-called for the loud bangs its engine produced on a regular basis. Margaret was rather fond of, and adept at driving, very large-engined, powerful cars. This was in contrast to many of her female contemporaries such as Doreen Evans and Kay Petre, who competed most often in little Austins, MGs and Rileys.

Her earliest outing in Mother Gun, the March Short Handicap, resulted in her almost winning a Brooklands 120mph badge, although she was not able to keep up with the leading drivers. She won the badge, a rare achievement, during the Whitsun Long Handicap, which she also won. One of the abiding images of Brooklands is Margaret in this car, tackling the banking with one front wheel off the ground.



1936 was her last full year of competition. As well as her heroics in Mother Gun, she drove a Frazer Nash at Shelsley Walsh, and possibly in some Brooklands events. In 1937, she married Christopher Jennings, another racer, and started a family shortly afterwards. However, this was not the end of her motoring exploits, as she carried on as an automotive journalist for many years. Her road tests remained in demand until she was in her eighties.

During the war, she drove ambulances and worked at Bletchley Park as a code-breaker. In 1950, she drove in one last rally, the Circuit of Ireland. She won the Coupe des Dames. She died in 1998, aged 89.

(Margaret third from left in photo at left)

To see this and other posts for M.G., please go to: <http://speedqueens.blogspot.com/search/label/MG>

# Start Planning for 2019 ...



## WINTER

MGOC Planning Meeting, 1/5/19, San Francisco  
 MGOC Annual Brunch, 1/20/19,  
 Moss Beach Distillery

Photos: Base in England; Monte  
 Carlo Rally, 1996



## 2019

GOF West, Prescott, AZ, Aug. 12-16, 2019

Prescott is in the mountains, August high averages 84 degrees, low averages 55. Travel at night & morning.

Photo: Not just top-down but windscreen down. A hardy bunch, these MG folk.

## Pub Night! Jan. 12

### On The Road Again - Morgan Hill

16840 Joleen Way, Unit G4

Our next Pub Night of the season will be Friday, January 12th. Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship.

Please bring some wine or beer to share and we will provide snacks.

By Bill & Mary Hiland



# Case Drips • Dick Pike

## *Speedster Madness*

Volume 35, Number 6 • Porsche 356 Registry

*I find myself writing an editorial introduction over an older introduction. Dick was active in the NorCal MGA Club, had an MGA then, and began with an MG TD. He spoke fondly of the TD always and of getting another one. Dick had a unique career as a NASA geologist preparing for the moon landings and later studying landslides in California. Dick and wife Linda live in Atherton. Besides writing, geology and sports car tech, Dick is skilled at being a good friend, something always to be celebrated and cherished. This is an account that reminds us of the love we share for the special times and special sports cars of the 1950s and 60s. Porsche 356s and MGs share a common appeal to many folks. - Dan*

Among the many items streamed across the ether to my virtual desk, one caught my eye. Dick Pike wrote to say his Speedster was back on the road. Dick Pike!

The name may not ring a bell if your membership only spans the last decade or two, but real old-timers will remember Dick's columns that appeared under the "Case Drips" title for some 14 years. His subjects were far-ranging, often self-deprecating, usually funny and always intelligent. Many times, his subject was the trials and tribulations of keeping his own 356s running. On this page, we present Dick's first column from 1978. It was the beginning of a restoration adventure whose final outcome remained a mystery when his last column appeared in early 1992.

In that final piece Dick wrote about helping a friend move a 356 of questionable mechanical integrity across town. The friend had intentions of repairing the brakes – which made the trip an exciting one – and other maladies sometime in the future. Dick thoroughly enjoyed the day. The final sentence was telling: "And perhaps the best part of it all was that neither of us asked the other when his car(s) would be done."

Happily the answer to that un-asked question is on the following pages. I am pleased that Dick agreed to share his story and I join other long-term members in welcoming him back to the pages of this magazine. We wish him many happy miles in 86420.

### **Gordon Maltby**

*"The morning sun when it's in your face.  
Really shows your age:  
But that don't worry me none,  
In my eyes you're everything."*

Rod Stewart. 1972

It took ten of us to lift 84620, or rather what was left of it, up out of the weeds. We carried it, shedding clods of dirt and trailing more weeds, down the hillside through a small fruit orchard toward the waiting trailer. Despite missing floor (and



much else) the old steel body was heavier than we had expected, and the three green 2 x 4's creaked and cracked ominously. Seven men sweated under a warm winter sun up in the Santa Cruz Mountains as they stumbled over uneven ground. Although the procession resembled nothing so much as a low-budget cortege for a fallen Druid warrior, it really celebrated a resurrection. We hauled the carcass onto our rented flat-bed, lashed it down with half-inch manila, and carefully packed in the detached doors and lids. One more Porsche Speedster saved from the junk yard!

I was excited far beyond what could reasonably be expected for any sane adult. For 84620 was only a hulk stripped bare save for wiring, some suspension parts, and a couple of control cables rusted too tight in the dash to remove. Just one mall shred of fabric remained. There were some unwanted extras, like the gash torched in a front

### *Speedster Madness, Continued*

axle tube where too-hasty hands had sought to salvage the ZF box. But I wasn't at all sane, and rather than being a family man only a few months shy of the watershed age of 40. I felt a carefree and callow 18 - when I saw my first Speedster in the flesh (still have that Kodachrome), or perhaps 20 - when Herb took me around the block in the new Speedster he bought upon finishing college (wonder where it is now?). Or even two years older - when I got a much faster ride around Thompson Raceway in a four-cam Speedster. I didn't much care about 84620's partial Bondo overcoat or even the evidence of collision damage not quite acceptably repaired. Nor did I worry about learning to use the welding rig I wouldn't even acquire for months to come. I felt only the unique unfolding JOY of at last bagging a Porsche Speedster of my own.

"Speedster Madness," I thought out loud, remembering the old film "Reefer Madness," but the intoxicant here was mineral, not vegetable. The euphoria had persisted for two decades already and seemed likely to last forever. Visions of my long-dead idol James Dean tearing up the old airport course at Palm Springs with his Speedster went in and out of focus, as buried adolescent feelings fought their way back through my memory. Clearly the sap was rising. After a string of four fixed-up 356 Coupes. I wanted something different: 84620 represented possible return and escape into a long-suppressed level of my automobile consciousness - back into sun-dappled autumn afternoons on New England country roads in an open car on the way to or from wherever. Let that sun burn the bridge of my nose once again! Only this time it would be in a Porsche Speedster and not in that MG TD with the kamikaze crankshaft, and what was more - I was going to rebuild the car myself. There would be plenty of me (there'll have to be!) in that redone Speedster. I could share in the act of creation.

"It's Speedster Madness," I had confided to the owner of 84620. A car man if ever there was one (with a restored Speedster, among other things), he understood immediately and completely. To his credit, the man tried everything to dissuade me from buying the empty hulk (it had been his parts car).

"I don't recommend it," he had urged over the phone in response to my newspaper query.

"I can't afford anything nicer," I parried.

"Are you sure you want to do this to yourself?" was his dismayed retort to my excited crawling in and out of the dilapidated car. At first I wasn't sure at all. But after seeing what else was available to the insolvent Speedster fancier in those parts. (groan...) I spent another long afternoon in the orchard inspecting the Porsche carapace slowly rotting under a thoughtful slathering of Rustoleum primer. It was rigid and it did seem straight; doors and lids all hung OK; and little besides floor and cowl showed really advanced rust.

"Yes." I decided, emerging from the fruit trees. The man raised the plug wrench from the red (what else!) Ferrari coupe he was tuning and wagged it at me.

"Alright, but don't tell anyone you got that thing from me!" No, folks, he didn't hand it over for free, but the agreed-upon tab was about what I had in mind - and could afford.

"You can still get out of it," the comedian sang out from under the Ferrari hood (a different one this time) a week later when we drove up to load the trailer. "Only you'll have to lug it back up there." he gestured gleefully toward the orchard. No way.

"People will laugh at you all the way," he said later, viewing the corpse roped to the trailer. I said I could handle that. Finally he quit ribbing me. "Yeah, they'll just say, 'There goes one of those.'" His words came out thoughtfully, almost with reverence. We left and hauled 84620 down the mountain toward better times.

***Next month: The rest of the story!***





Dick Pike with his prize, January, 1977. Separately collected engine parts at right. "Plays well with car parts." Pike Photos

## Classified Ads

**Ads are free to MGOC members and \$6.00 per month for non-members. Some ads may be from other clubs.**

Early NAMGAR newsletters: Donated by a club member. These are Vol 13, No 5&6, Vol. 14 No 5&6 and all of Vol. 15. Free to good home. Contact Mike Jacobsen (Posted 11/18)

1976 MGB: Orange/Black Roadster with 4-cyl 1798cc Engine (95hp). 33,000 miles. New Retro Radio. All maintenance records. Won the Premier Class twice at MG-by-the-Bay. 12 awards from other regional car shows. Featured in the SF Chronicle and other national car magazines since. Condition between 1 and 2. Tom Doyle at 520-220-6228, [wtdoylei@gmail.com](mailto:wtdoylei@gmail.com) Asking \$15,000. Purchased an MGC! (Reposted 1/19)

1934 MG PA. Matching numbers traced through original factory info. Beautiful two-tone red paint as original. Engine completely rebuilt with modern internals. Price now \$40k. Located near Kansas City. Don Bonar at [don35pa@gmail.com](mailto:don35pa@gmail.com). <https://mykcclassiccar.weebly.com> (Posted 12/18)

MGB Radiator: New from Moss 3 years ago and as far as I know it is as good as new. It has a booster fan attached to it and the radiator has been modified to include a drain cock. Make Offer. Dave Marsh, h) 650-964-2341, c) 650-823-9938; email: [marshes1@yahoo.com](mailto:marshes1@yahoo.com) (Posted 1/19)

Enclosed Trailer for Rent: Enclosed car trailer for rent (16' x 8'). Trailer has integrated braking system and lights, 12 volt Electric Winch. Reasonable rates. Eric Baker (510) 517-2165

**We list ads for 3 months. Advise if you want them extended. For additional ads, see prior issues of The Octagon. Prior issues of The Octagon and other classified ads may be found on our web site.**



# MGOC Minutes – Sunday Dec 16, 2018

*Marcia Crawford's House at 150 Purdue Ave, Kensington*

**Call to Order:** Andy Preston at: 12:45

**Attending:** Elaine Chan, Marcia Crawford, Ken Gittings, Mike Jacobsen, Steve & Gayle Lilves, Ariana & Max Moder, Kirk & Amy Prentiss, Andy & Marla Preston, Dan Shockey, George Steneberg, and Thuy Nguyen

**Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Aug 25, 2018: *Motion:* Mike, *Second:* George

## REPORTS

**President's Report:** Andy Preston: Thanks to Marcia and George for hosting today's tea. We missed including the flyer for the Annual Brunch and Planning meeting in the December *Octagon*. We've renewed our affiliation with NAMGBR, and Mike Jacobsen is the new NAMGAR Registrar.

**Vice President's Report:** Kirk Prentiss: Made it to the meeting!

**Treasurers Report:** Marla Preston:

Account	December 2018	August 2018
Checking	15,772.39	16,343.19
Savings	3,652.97	3,457.60
Total	19,425.36	19,800.79

Since the last Treasurer's Report we have paid for several *Octagon* printing and mailing charges, website hosting, the annual picnic, and received member's dues renewals.

**Secretary's Report and Election Results:** Mike Jacobsen:

The incumbents were all re-elected, the club Bylaw changes were approved, and MGs by the Bay was voted to continue, though other sites will be investigated.

**Registrar's Report:** Steve Kellogg: Absent but reported by email:

144	Regular Members
49	Regular Family Members
193	Total Regular and Family Members
11	Corresponding Members
4	Corresponding Family Members
15	Total Corresponding and Family
<b>208</b>	<b>Total Members</b>

We had **20 new members** sign up in and lost **46 Regular Members** and **7 Corresponding** in 2018. (Removal was from non-renewal of dues, moving out of the area, or not having an MG anymore.)

There was a discussion on whether emailed reminders to renew are often ignored, and that we may want to send reminders via the USPS. No decision was reached.

**Corresponding Secretary's Report:** George Steneberg: Nothing to report.

**Regalia Report:** Andy Preston: Nothing to report.

**The Octagon Report:** Dan Shockey: Nothing to report.

**Website Report:** Steve Kellogg: Absent but reported by email. Website seems to be doing well. I could use some new pictures to post in the gallery. I've added a tab for The Annual Brunch for payment by PayPal on the website.

**PAST EVENTS:** Sonoma tour and club meeting was cancelled due the smoke from the Camp fire in Butte County.

**UPCOMING EVENTS** (MGOC sponsored events are in **bold text**)

**Sat, Dec 29 Spud Joint Crab tour  
Bodega Bay, John Hunt**

**Sat, Jan 5 2019 MGOC Planning Meeting,  
Elaine Chan's house in SF**

Sat, Jan 19, 2019 SSTS Planning Meeting

**Sun, Jan 20 2019 MGOC Annual Brunch,  
Moss Beach Distillery, Moss Beach.** Brunch includes champagne mimosas!

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:** Steve asked why we don't hold more weekday events, since so much of the active membership seems to be retired. It was decided to save this discussion for next month's Planning meeting.

**BUSINESS RESOLVED ONLINE SINCE LAST MEETING:** None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The Prentiss's Magnette is the centerfold car in the current issue of *MGA!*, the NAMGAR magazine. Also, in *Classic Motorsports* first "Classie" awards, NAMGAR

won for the best large marque club, best large club publication, and best website, while the MGA car won as the favorite classic sports car.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting is the Planning Meeting at 10:00 on Sat. January 5, 2019 at Elaine Chan's house, 115 Pinehurst Way, SF. Coffee and donuts will be provided by the Club.

Meeting adjourned at: 1:50

Submitted by: Mike Jacobsen

Red MGBs and lovely ladies seem to go together.

Reminds me of the "Your Mother Wouldn't Like It" ads by MG in the 1970s.



**Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!**



Join over 2,000 enthusiastic owners in the restoration, preservation, and sheer enjoyment of driving an MGA, Magnette, or variant of this noble breed. You'll receive six bi-monthly issues of *MGA!*, our full-color, award winning magazine, invitations to National and Regional Get-Togethers throughout the U.S. and Canada, plus a knowledge base and support group second to none. All this for just \$37.50 per year (North America), or \$52.50 (International). **Get more information at <http://www.namgar.com>, or contact [registrar@namgar.com](mailto:registrar@namgar.com).**




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MGOC *The Octagon*  
320 B Monterey Blvd.  
San Francisco, CA 94131-3141

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## MGOC Planning Meeting

**Saturday, Jan. 5**

**10:00 a.m.**

**In San Francisco**



## MGOC Annual Brunch

**Sunday, Jan. 20**

**at Noon**

**Moss Beach Distillery**



**More Info: Andy Preston**  
[andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net)

**Full info pages 3 & 5**

*We look forward to seeing you!*