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

North American MGB Register

Since 1957!

Pete Thelander with his ultra-rare MG NE race car, one of only 7 built. New restoration of a 1934 MG PA behind. Shockey photo

November 2023

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 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.

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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: **Steve Lilves, 415-924-3173**, ***slilves@sbcglobal.net***
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MGB V8 Conversion: **Tony Bates, 408-666-6174, *avbates@yahoo.com***
MGC: **Tom Doyle, 530-546-9924, *wtdoyleii@gmail.com***
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COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING IN *THE OCTAGON*

Direct all questions about advertising to Rick Anguiano at 209-617-8492 or *webmaster@mgocsf.org*. 2023 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. 1st, and fees for a partial year will be pro-rated to that date. Deadline for ad materials is the 10th 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 15th of the month preceding the issue in which you want them to appear. Please email all contributions to *magnut_dan@hotmail.com* or send them to: Dan Shockey, 12632 Edith Dr., Garden Grove, CA 92841

RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

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

MGOCSF.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 & SSTS invite you to:

Sonoma Tour - New Lunch Venue (Café Bellini)
Sun Nov 12, 2023

CORNERSTONE GARDENS our first stop

CAFÉ BELLINI for lunch

Date: Sunday, November 12, 2023

Organizers: Andy and Marla Preston 707-795-3480

Meeting Place: Harvest Market, 155 San Marin Dr, Novato 94945, with a full tank of gas, there are no gas stations along San Marin Drive.

Time: Meet at 9:30 for a 10:00 departure

Tour: We will meet outside Harvest Market in Novato. We'll head out west past Stafford Lake and into the Marin Countryside of farms and ranches, before turning east towards Sonoma County. Our first stop will be Cornerstone Sonoma Marketplace, 23570 Arnold Drive, Sonoma, where you can browse the eclectic shops and stroll around their beautiful gardens. Coffee and bathrooms available,

We will leave Cornerstone and drive through the beautiful Sonoma Valley countryside lined with vineyards to our final destination Café Bellini, for lunch. Café Bellini is one of our favorite local restaurants and is located at 100 S. McDowell Blvd, Petaluma and is just off Hwy 101. This is a family friendly restaurant and we will be eating in their private dining room. Your lunch choices include: Reuben sandwich, Cheese Burger, Fish and Chips, Cobb Salad and Veggie Sandwich, Iced Tea, Lemonade and water. Sandwiches and Burgers come with French Fries. Cost is $30 per person including tax and tip.

Please RSVP: to Andy or Marla Preston at 707-795-3480 or marlapreston@hotmail.com by Nov 7 so we can confirm lunch reservation and send you final instructions and tour directions.

From the Editor

Happy All Saint's Day, MG Saints! 29 October 2023

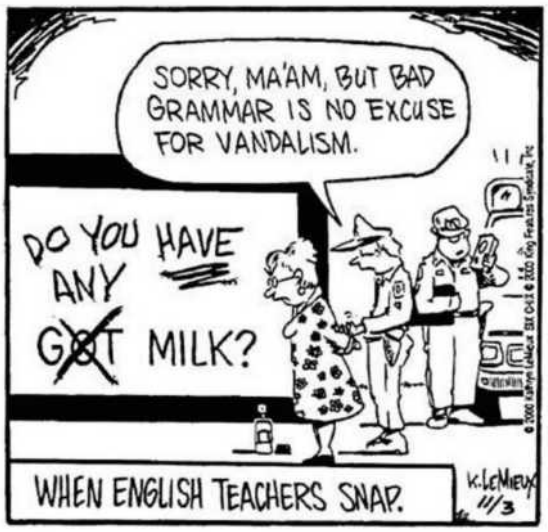
My dad is right, when you get older, the holidays get closer together – but the bathrooms get further apart! Hallowe'en, Vet's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas… Driving season has become holiday season. We still have a couple events, most notably the popular Sonoma Tour by the Prestons.

I took the P-type to two events in October, the TC clubs' Conclave in Paso Robles and the GOF in Carlsbad. I used the tow dolly to pull it to Paso then drove it to the GOF. It was 70 miles each way and I could travel with a caravan of T-series MGs. I also drove it on the rally which stressed both me and the MG. Hot weather and climbing steep hills. But such fun with the 88-year-old MG singing along! The Conclave tour was just perfect.

I worked some issues with the P-type, a loose front hub the most difficult. I began collecting parts for a possible conversion of the MGA to front disk brakes (eBay and used parts). I have also been working to make the current brakes more effective.

Happy Holidays!

Dan



Holiday Tea Party

And Toy Drive - Saturday, Dec. 2

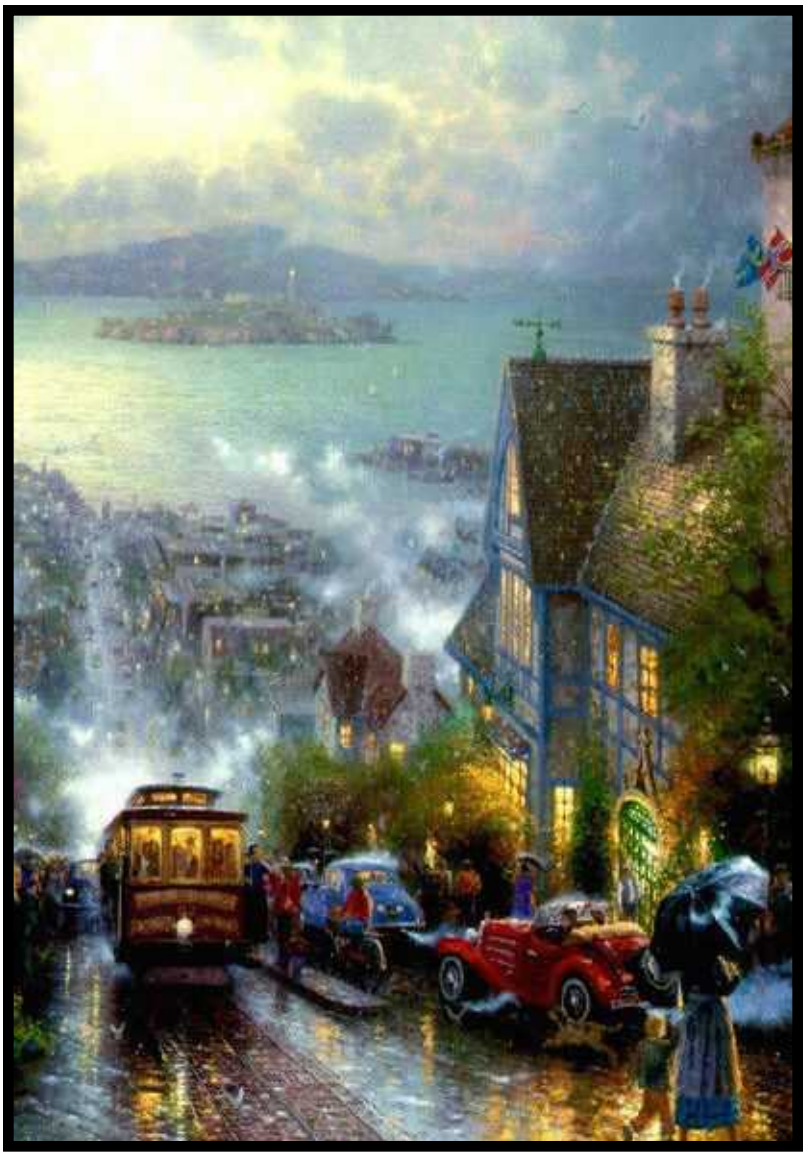
In San Francisco!

Hosted by Elaine Chan. Bring your favorite tea, teapot and favorite food treats (optional - come anyway!)

Bring a toy to share through the Toy Drive

When: 1pm to 4pm, Board meeting at 12:30pm

Where: 115 Pinehurst Way, San Francisco



Real Brits drink tea! This is a popular annual event.

Do join us!

Art copyright Thomas Kinkade and cropped from a larger image. Mr. Kinkade did many “city-scapes" with automobiles and trolleys, and many San Francisco scenes. They are available from specialized art dealers in all media and price ranges

Saturday, Nov. 25th 2023. 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

Largest U.S. All MG Parts Exchange

Location: Searchlight Ministries Parking Lot
2311 E. Chapman Ave. Fullerton, CA 92831
(739 B6) (East of State College Blvd, on Chapman Ave.)

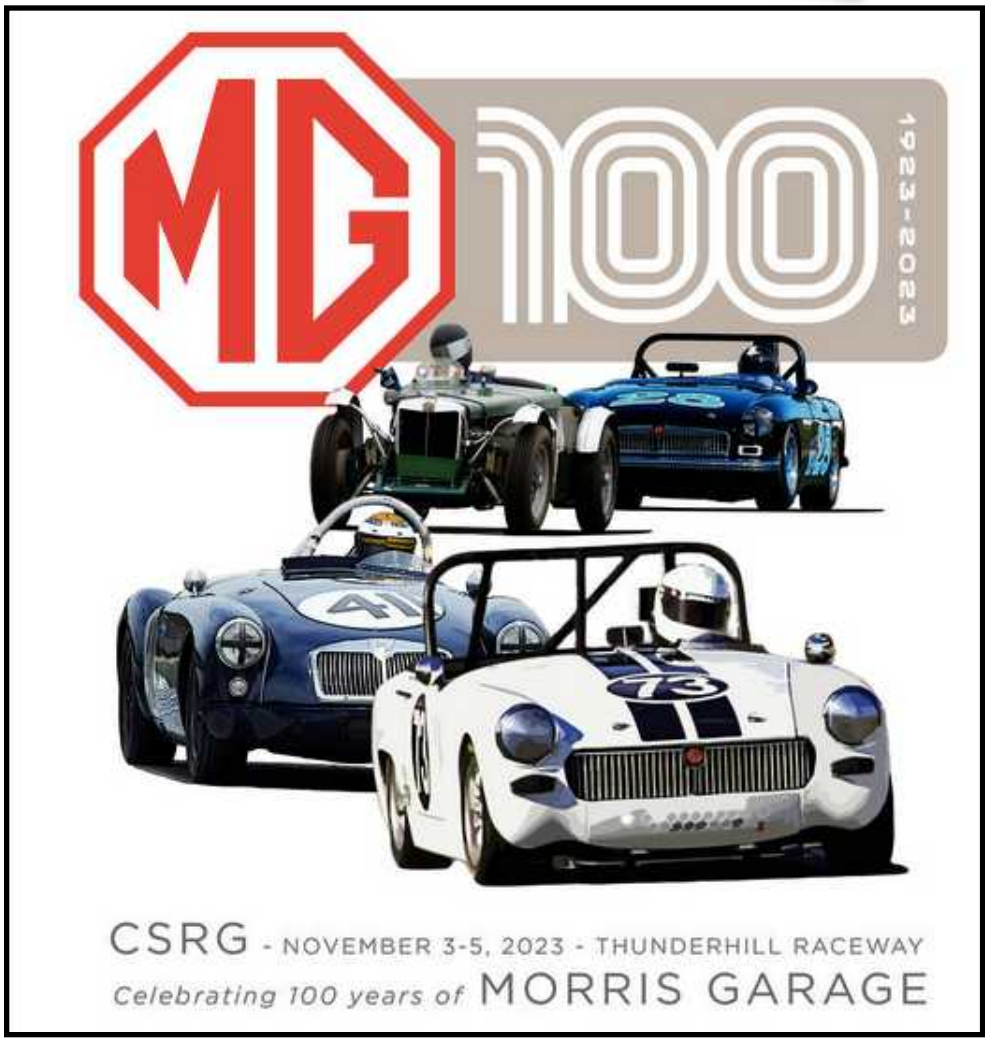
Near 57/91 Interchange. Exit Chapman Ave. off the 57 Freeway. Head East. Past St. College Blvd.

Restrooms Open!

ADMISSION:
General: $ 5.00
Vendors: $30.00
(initial space)

Not nearly so large as it was. It used to be an annual pilgrimage for me.
- Dan

SCRG event features the Sprite-Midget Challenge and other racing MG events.



President's Ponderings

Where does the time go? It's already the beginning of the Holiday season with Thanksgiving just up around the bend. The club Holiday Tea is in December which is not to be missed. YIKES! Big weather has yet to hit us so there have been lots of day drives around the Bay Area while we still can. Andy and Marla's upcoming Sonoma County trip will hopefully be under dry conditions (fingers crossed).

I would also like to remind members that board elections are also coming. Don't be bashful if you would like to throw your hat in the ring. I am open to staying in the President role for next year unless someone else would like to take the baton!

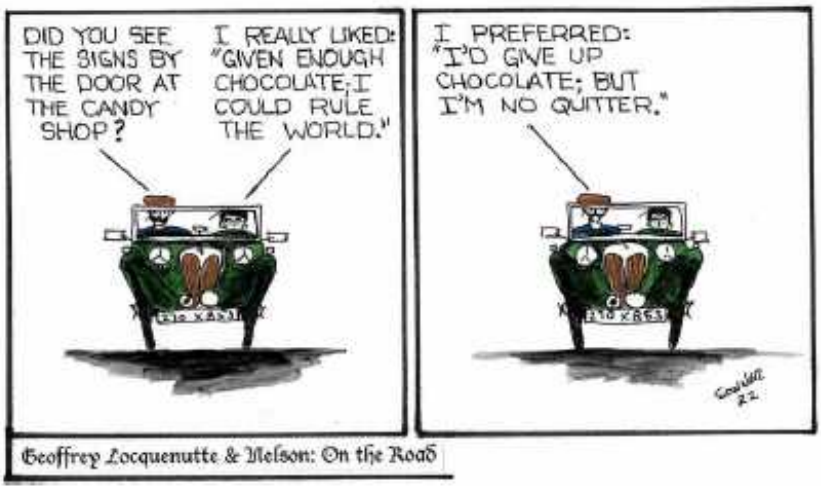
And, before you know it, our annual planning meeting in January will need your participation. Volunteer to lead a tour! So get ready to do so now for YOUR event in 2024!

Photo: Rick Anguiano

Kirk

This past week, Kirk and Amy were down at Cambria with the Cypress British Car Club (Monterey area) while Andy and Marla were at Morro Bay with the Jaguar club! These longer events are great fun.

Car-toon by Brian Sonner of Placerville



Happy Hallowe'en!

2024 Officer Nominees

President: Kirk Prentiss, Incumbent

Vice-President: Andy Preston, Incumbent

Treasurer: Marla Preston, Incumbent

Secretary: Mike Jacobsen, Incumbent

Please send or email other nominees to Mike Jacobsen

MikesMuseum@yahoo.com
320B Monterey Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94131-3141
(or reply to any other club officer)

FRONT SUSPENSION REBUILD

By Steve Strublic, Arizona MG Club, with permission

The last remaining 'rebuild' job on Alice (his MGB) was the front suspension. She drove well enough, but felt a bit loose and bobbed and weaved more than I'd like going around corners and when braking.

I decided to peek at the front dampers to see if there was anything I could do in the interim. It turns out the front right damper was empty! Well, that's an easy fix, I thought... I filled it up and the situation improved quite a bit. Until I saw the stream of oil finding its way down the front subframe, that is... at that point, I knew why the damper was empty.

That is also a relatively easy fix. Worldwide Auto Parts in Madison, WI, is a premier rebuilder of many British car front Armstrong (lever) dampers, and I've used their stuff on Gidget (his Midget). I rang them up and soon had newly rebuilt dampers zinging their way across the country to my front door. But that just meant I had to follow through, and rather than just replace the dampers I decided it was time to get the rebuild off my to-do list. The challenge was that I had just one day to finish the job... or I'd have to wait a month for another free weekend.

So, here we go! I'll describe the driver's side rebuild and let your imagination fill in the details for the passenger's side.

Figure 1

The area doesn't look too bad, right? There's a ton of old grease and crud hidden behind that rotor. Those rotors and pads are almost new and the brakes work very well, so at least I didn't have to worry about that...

Disassembly was the name of the game here. With 47 years on the clock (figuring this hadn't been done before), I was nervous but hopeful that Lady Luck would continue to smile upon me. Most things have come apart on this car with relative ease, even after it being an Illinois and Virginia resident.

To start, I supported the car on a frame rail with a jack stand as I would need my jack to safely lower and decompress the spring. I removed the tie rod end followed by the brake caliper, and suspended the caliper so it wouldn't yank on the brake hose. Once I dismounted the hub and rotor, I then jacked up the stub axle underneath the lower trunnion (being careful not to shear off the grease fitting) and freed the upper trunnion from the damper arm. **(Figure 1)** I then lowered the unit carefully and removed the now-decompressed front spring.

That actually went pretty well. Mmmm, look at that old grease and crud!

Once the spring was released, it was an easy job to remove the lower A arm by heating up, then undoing the four bolts that hold the arm to the subframe. My luck held and everything came loose. **(Figure 2)**

Finally, I unbolted the rebound buffer and the damper. I was less fortunate with the rebound buffer, as one bolt was chemically welded to the spacer - but who cares? I had a replacement buffer and spacer. Let’s just say it came off and leave it at that.

Figure 2

Then I cleaned everything I could. I did not do a full restoration on this, but at least it's free of grime and looks like someone cared.

I decided that in the interests of time, I would not drop the subframe. I looked at the body mount pads that join the subframe to the shell and decided they looked okay. It would be a major effort to unbolt the steering rack and drain and remove the front brakes, and I just wasn't able to tackle that. I have the urethane body mount pads and if I find in the future it needs doing, I'll plan accordingly.

But enough of that... on to more disassembly!

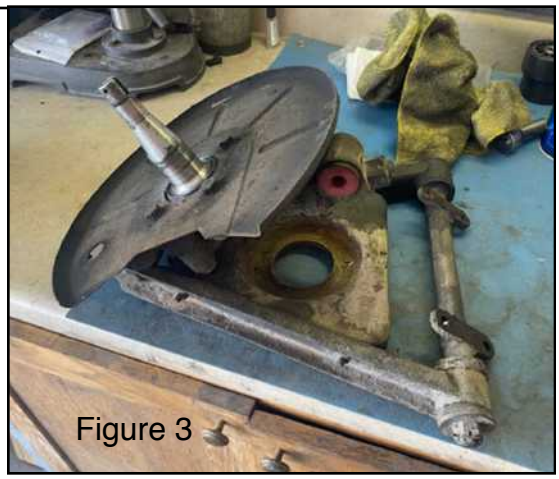


Figure 3

Now I had the driver's side front suspension as a unit on my workbench (which I cleaned just for this job). **(Figure 3)**

Yummy. I removed the dust shroud and stared at the kingpin for a bit. I crossed my fingers and put the assembly in my trusty vise, and a miracle occurred. The trunnion nut came loose! I removed the nut, tapped the bolt through and removed the stub axle. Then I removed the spring pan by undoing the four bolts that hold it to the A arms, followed by the arms themselves. And I noticed something.

Do you see what I see? Those look like polyurethane bushings! **(Figure 4)**

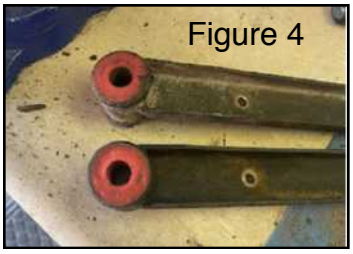


Figure 4

So maybe I had good reason to believe the subframe body mounts were in good shape. Someone's been here before. I looked again and the body mount pads look like they're urethane too. I did note that the lower trunnion bolt and assembly did not look like they had been touched, so I suspect that to be the source of the looseness and noise I was hearing.

Well, I'm here now, so everything's getting replaced anyway.

Once I had everything apart, it was time to clean. This is a filthy job! But it could be worse... it could be raining. I also had to deal with the fact that the pins on which the A arm bushings rode were not in the best shape. I cleaned them up as best I could and they'll do, though they aren't perfect. **(Figure 5)**

I cleaned and cleaned and cleaned for at least an hour. I used a couple of different scrapers to pick the decades of grease and gunk off the stub axle, spring pan and A-arms, followed by brake cleaner to re-move the last of the gunk. Once clean, I hit the A-arms and spring with a light coat of black semi-gloss paint. I was going for that 'cared for' look without it being perfect. These items would all have to be replaced to achieve a restoration quality job. However, the difference is impressive. **(Figure 6)**

I also did not disassemble the stub axle. There was no appreciable play in the kingpin and my initial attempt to remove the upper trunnion nut convinced me I should leave it well enough alone. **(Figure 7)**

While the parts dried in the sun, I took a trip to my favorite hardware store (Ace) and picked up a mess of replacement hardware for both sides.

Figure 5

Once painted and dry, I loosely reassembled the lower A-arm with its new bushings. Loose reassembly is important as you have to be able to jockey things around a bit for proper alignment during reassembly.

Now, the fun began! it's always fun to put clean and new parts back together. And good thing, too. I had been at work for about 6 hours (minus that half hour at the hardware store).

First, I bolted the new damper and rebound buffer in place with a new spacer. I have found that the rebound buffers need a bit of 'adjustment' (tweaking in a vise) to get them to fit properly to the subframe.

Next, the A-arm went in with four new bolts to attach it to the subframe, followed by attaching the stub axle to the A arm with new kit. (I had previously installed the new trunnion bushings and greased the stub axle.) I inserted the spring and carefully jacked the axle up until I could attach the upper trunnion to the damper. This was a bit of a struggle, though it was eased by the fact that you can loosen a bolt that holds the damper's arms together to give just enough clearance to insert the trunnion with bushing installed.

Once the upper trunnion bolt was in place, I tightened the spring pan bolts and attached the tie rod end. I then lowered the jack and admired the view. But not for too long - I had miles to go before I could sleep! **(Figure 8)**

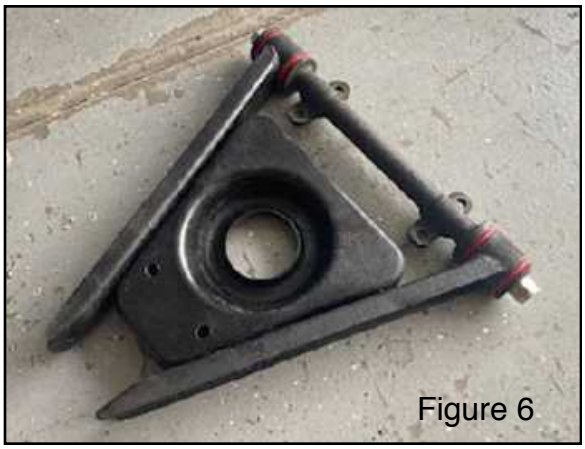


Figure 6

Finally, I installed the dust shroud and remounted the hub and rotor. I took the opportunity to repack the front wheel bearings, too. I reinstalled the caliper, and the job was done!

Boy, that looks better. It looks like it has some age, but was taken care of. That's all I was after.

That was a 7-hour job. The passenger's side went about the same, but a bit quicker as things tend to do when you have done them before. The one thing I did fight with on the passenger's side was that lower trunnion bolt. The nut stubbornly refused to come loose, so I cut it off and drove the pin out with a punch. Aside from that, it was a straightforward but very messy job. **(Figure 9)**

All in all, I spent 12 hours on this job from start to finish. But was it worth it? Oh, you betcha!

After I cleaned myself up and changed, I went for a short test drive. The difference is remarkable! Before, corners were a chore and it felt like I was fighting to get around a turn. Now, Alice is happy to take them. I won't say it's "go-kart-like handling," but it's miles better than before and is very predictable. Stopping doesn't exhibit more than minimal brake dive. Everything is quiet, and the annoying steering wheel shake I was getting at 60-65 MPH is gone. Even going over heavy bumps doesn't get her unsettled.

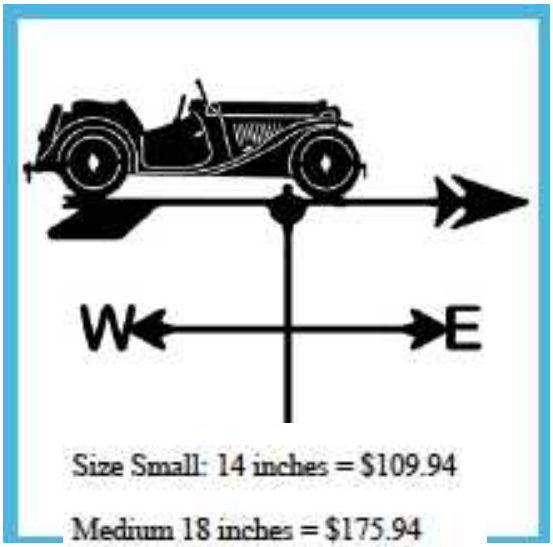
Alice now rides and handles like the sporty car she is meant to be.

I would have preferred to have taken the whole weekend for the job, but it was probably best to have gotten it all done at once as I was incredibly worn out the following day. This is not a job for the faint of heart, though it is not terribly difficult given proper tools and patience. MGB front suspensions are simple affairs and will last for years if serviced regularly.

Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9



Size Small: 14 inches = $109.94

Medium 18 inches = $175.94

Size Large: 24 inches: $219.94

Size X- Large: 30 inches: $285.94

Email: garykrukoski@yahoo.com

1964 Monte Carlo Rally – Surprise MG Win!

Compiled by Dan Shockey from sources listed

The Monte Carlo Rally was a very major sporting event in the 1950s and 1960s. It received great press coverage and drew top competitors from across the globe. In Britain the BBC provided update reports every evening. From America came a determined effort by the Ford Motor Company with their powerful Ford Falcons. Plymouth Valiants were entered as well. The top rally teams from Mercedes, Volvo, Saab, Porsche and others were driven by the best drivers. The rally was 2700 miles in length over some of the toughest mountain roads in Europe.

The British Motor Corporation, BMC, identified that the Mini Cooper presented the best chance for an overall win (under the handicap system). They had some success with sports car for class wins. The Austin Healey ("big" Healey) was developed for this role and some success by the Sprite and Midget and by the MGA and other BMC cars.

Prevailing racing classes were not a good fit for the MGB. It was too heavy and not powerful enough as a sprint racer. But the MGB was a good car for endurance and rallies. Plus a lot of development already had been done. Also the vast majority of racing mods could be purchased through the Special Tuning Department allowing a consumer tie.-in

With the introduction of the MGB, BMC in Abingdon prepared 3 racers in 1963. These were painted red with white hardtops and christened (license plates) 6 DBL, 7 DBL and 8 DBL. These MGBs were run at Le Mans, Sebring and other races and rallies in 1963. 7 DBL had strong success at Le Mans, finishing in 12th place despite spending 85 minutes stuck in a sand bank.

The racecars were built with some alloy (aluminum) body parts – front fenders, doors, bonnets and boot lids. Fortunately BMC had considerable experience running the "B" series engine and went with standard race upgrades: reworked head, special cam, special manifolds, a single Weber carburetor and a close-ratio gearbox. For Le Mans, 7 DBL achieved 132 mph on the Mulsanne Straight and an overall 92mph average despite the sand excursion.

Following Le Mans, 7 DBL was entered for the 10-day Tour de France Automobile, a road race of 3600 miles in length. The MGB ran very well, amusing the French with the little MG mixing it up with the Ferraris and Porsches. The MGB beat all competitors on the tortuous Col d'Aubisque and Tourmalet hillclimbs, beating the top Ferraris by 32 seconds! This was a jaw-dropping performance. 7 DBL was running in 4th place when it was crashed into a rock face at night, with driver fatigue a major factor. (However a privateer MGB finished in 7th place.)

1964 was the height of Beatlemania. The Beatles were to appear in Paris from where the Minis were to start the Monte. Ringo Starr had business in England and was traveling later than the rest of the group. A story was concocted that Ringo had been left behind. So a BMC rally car would speed him to Paris in time for the concert. After a photo shoot with a rally Mini at the Paris airport, Ringo actually traveled in a Rolls Royce to the concert.

7 DBL was repaired and rejuvenated for the Monte Carlo Rally in January, 1964, driven by twin brothers Donald and Erle Morley. The Morleys started the rally in Oslo but encountered a leaking radiator. The problem was compounded when the service team spare water can was left outside and frozen solid. This was solved by the fortunate loan of water from the Saab team.

They arranged for a new radiator to be brought out but the service car was in an accident and BMC Competitions Department man Doug Hamblin was killed. The Deputy Foreman was killed on his way to Dover. Road conditions were such that they fitted spiked tyres. But the car was unmanageable on dry roads with spiked tyres and before they could make a change

the car slewed into the path of oncoming traffic.

It was typical Monte weather, snow-covered roads. 1964 wasn't so cold as in 1963 when the ferry was breaking ice all across the English Channel! (See ***Octagon*** article, January, 2022.) Many more competitors made it to Monte Carlo un-penalized due to less harsh weather and fewer impassable roads. The MGB was consistently placed among the top 6 and on the 14-mile Col Saint Martin stage they were only 12 seconds behind the leading Falcon.

With so many un-penalized competitors, the 82 miles of special stages, the final mountain circuit and the somewhat inappropriate race on the GP circuit were to determine the results.

The MGB was running against the mighty Falcons, the giant-killer Minis, the Saabs of Erik Carlsson and Pat Moss, and Mercedes and Volvo contenders for the outright win.

Ringo & Mini at Paris Airport

Although classified 17th overall, the MGB actually finished 5th overall on a scratch basis (i.e. in real time without handicap). A truly superb drive in a remarkable production sports car!

Still the MGB won the GT category outright, beating all other sports cars. This included Porsche Carerra, Triumph TR4, Alfa Romeo, and Morgan. The MGB also defeated all Ford Cortina, Lancia, and Alpine racers.

The overall winner was Paddy Hopkirk in the Mini with other Minis in 4th and 8th place. In second place came a Ford Falcon Sprint. Third went to famous rally driver Erik Carlsson in a Saab 96.

"To appreciate the significance of the Morley's Monte performance, the equivalence formula of that year has to be taken into account. This tended to favour smaller-engined cars, and certainly not the GT cars, thus the MGB suffered an overall 5 per cent handicap." (Mike Allison and Peter Browning)

BMC Publicity Photos

Morley Brothers and 7 DBL on the Monte 1964

A racing Valiant on the Monte!

An analysis from driver Don Morley:

"The MGB was not really seen as a rally car in the same way as the big Healey. The main thrust of Stuart Turner's programme was that the Mini should be the main contender in the rally effort supported by the big Healey. The MGB was the choice for long-distance racing at which it performed very well. As for the 1964 Monte, Erle and I had thought about taking a big Healey – Timo Makinen and Christabel Carlisle had managed a class win the year before – but we decided we were not ready to die yet!

"The MGB was totally different to the big Healey. With the big Healey you had to tame it. You really had to take it by the scuff of the neck because if you had not got the measure of the car it would be impossible to drive. The MGB, on the other hand, was a complete contrast – lovely to drive, comfortable, spacious and very forgiving. And what a difference to the MGA which was very cramped in comparison."

"Although overshadowed by Paddy's outright win, the drive by Donald Morley was no less of an achievement." (Brian Moylan)

Brian relates the stories of two celebratory dinners after the Rally, the mechanics party at a café they used whenever they ran the Rally. The hostess was a great jokester. Usually there was a fake cheese on the cheese board that squeaked when you cut it. On this occasion, upon opening a walnut a condom sprang out, delighting the hostess. The next night was the official BMC dinner attended by Alec Issigonis. At this event, team member Doug Watts came riding into the restaurant on a donkey. There was much to celebrate.

Sources:
Works Rally Mechanic by Brian Moylan
The Works MGs by Mike Allison and Peter Browning
MGB The Complete Story by Brian Laban
MGB Including MGC & MGB GT V8 by David Knowles
MGB The Illustrated History by Jonathan Wood and Lionel Burrel

Embossed alum., 17" wide, Celebrate the MGB!

On the Monte Carlo waterfront - BMC

Scalectrix slot car model

See dash photo p. 21

Keep Planning for 2023!

Painting: Ian Cook

FALL-WINTER

Nov. 3-5: **MG100 Celebration**, Thunderhill, CRSG, Sprite-Midget Challenge, Season Finale

Sun., Nov. 12: Sonoma Tour, Marla & Andy Preston, See page 3

Sat., Nov. 25, MG Parts Exchange, Fullerton, p. 6

Sat., Dec. 2: MGOC Holiday Tea, San Francisco

2024

Fri., Dec. 8: SSTS Holiday Lunch, Dublin

Jan. 6, MGOC Planning Meeting, Kensington

July 15-19, 2024: NAMGAR GT-49 at Mt. Hood, Oregon

Oct., 2024: GOF West, Folsom, CA

A different piston ring!

All British Show at Blackhawk

Photos and Notes from member Don Scott

Fewer cars on display, sad to say. An event official said that they were lacking sponsors, and that affected the turnout. I really liked that Sprite, as the owner/restorer had redone the tunnel in rubber to simulate original, which looked nearly as good as original. The Bullnose Morris has a top speed of 25 mph according to its owner. The Jensen is one of three, all owned and restored by the same enthusiast. The one in the photo he said was the last one made when the company was running out of money, which he made changes to that simulated what the factory intended, but was not able to do. The lifted 4 w.d. Jaguar was of course tasteless, which goes without saying. Not many MGs, but here are two Mk1 MGBs. And a row of MGs. (See back cover.)

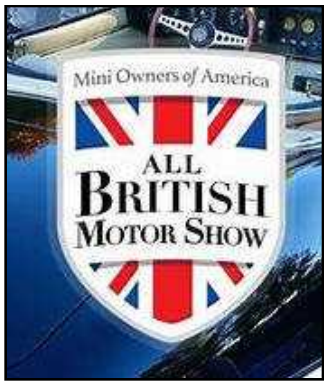
Yes I did attend. I took the Morris Cowley Bullnose and took first in my class and Best of Show! It was great beating out Rolls Royce's, Bentleys, Jaguars, Lotuses and all the other marques!

Member Ray Davis

Ray Wins Again!

MGOC and SSTS member Ray Davis won the Best Overall award at the Blackhawk All British Car Show with his 1923 Morris Cowley. It was the only 100-year-old car there. And a lovely MG predecessor.

Photo: Ray Davis



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Keep it bright—it deserves that.

Wear it modestly—it speaks for itself.

The medallion rewards MGB's overall win in the Grand Touring Category in the 1964 Monte Carlo Rally. It can be mounted on every new MGB—standard equipment, you might say. And deservedly: You too, can command the 1798 c.c. engine that put-down Ford Falcons, Plymouth Valiants, Porsches, Triumphs and Alfa Romeos (among others). It turns up road speeds in excess of 105 mph without breathing hard.

You can experience the G.T. dependability of race-tested non-fade disc brakes, the extraordinary control of rack and pinion steering (3 turns lock-to-lock) and the instant reflexes of twin carbs and 4-speed gear box.

You can enjoy such amenities as contoured bucket seats upholstered in English leather, stowaway convertible top, padded dash...plus the other refinements which make the Grand Touring car the most luxurious machine in fast motoring.

Getting back to that medallion, read it now and then: "1964 GT Winner Rallye Monte-Carlo."

Quickens the pulse.

Boosts the ego.

MG

DISC BRAKES vs. DRUM BRAKES

By Barney Gaylord, MGA Guru, http://www.mgaguru.com/mgtech/

MGA 1500 has four wheel drum brakes, and they work quite well. MGA 1600 has front disc brakes, and they work quite well. MGA Twin Cam (and "Deluxe" cars) have four wheel disc brakes, and they work quite well. In spite of the fact that all of these brakes work well, there is occasional argument (sometimes bordering on religious war) over the need or desire to convert the 1500 cars to front disc brakes. The first compelling fact is that for concours show originality, any of the cars must retain original parts. Otherwise you're free to change pretty much anything if you so desire. After due consideration, I will insert my three cents worth of opinion.

Manual drum brakes in good condition can lock up the tires at any speed (even the sticky race tires). It is just a matter of conscientious driving and heavy enough foot. In 200,000 miles driving MGA 1500 cars with drum brakes, including 100,000 miles of trailer towing (no trailer brakes), I have never rear ended another car. With cool brakes and a single stop, I cannot imagine why there would be any difference in stopping distance between drum and disc brakes (unless you might have some defect in balance between front and rear brakes).

In 10 years of serious weekly autocross competition with SCCA, I have never had any brake fade when doing single laps up to 90 seconds duration. Several years ago I ran hot laps around Blackhawk Farms track (1.9 miles with several turns), doing several consecutive laps at a time aggressively with race tires and heavy braking, and no noticeable brake fade. This would of course be different with higher engine power, higher speeds, and more braking time in competition.

I have been able to make the drum brakes fade in two different circumstances. First was a brisk run down a mountain road with many switchbacks and repeated braking from speed. Second was during a brisk road rally with maximum acceleration and braking for a sharp turn at one mile intervals. The drum brakes began to fade after 3 or 4 consecutive applications from over 60 mph. At that point it is a matter of common sense to slow down a little and use lower gears and less brakes for deceleration.

As an additional minor point, the disc brakes have slightly higher unsprung weight than the drums, which may adversely affect handling when braking on a rough surface. I take that into consideration when autocrossing. For myself, I have never had the impulse to spend the money to convert from drums to discs, simply a personal evaluation of cost vs. benefit. Sometimes "good enough" really is good enough, and maybe we don't need to modify or modernize everything on a vintage car.

Changing from Drum Brakes to Disk Brakes

When I changed the engine in my MGA 1500 from the 1500cc engine to an MGB 1800cc, the conventional wisdom is that I should also upgrade the brakes. I suppose they think I will be driving the car harder or faster or something. Now going to an overdrive gearbox, that might well translate to higher speeds and a need for more effective brakes. Of course, I did both.

Besides the MGA Guru’s considered thoughts above, which I agree with, I thought to ask a couple other guys in the club for their thoughts. – Dan Shockey

I put front discs on the Magnette and it didn't make any difference in normal driving. It gave me more confidence in wet weather as discs clear themselves of water faster than drums, but the car didn't go out in the rain much. I was also unlikely to be charging hard enough in it to worry about brake fade. I'd leave the drums in place for now and just keep an eye out for the necessary pieces from a 1600 for a future conversion. – Mike Jacobsen

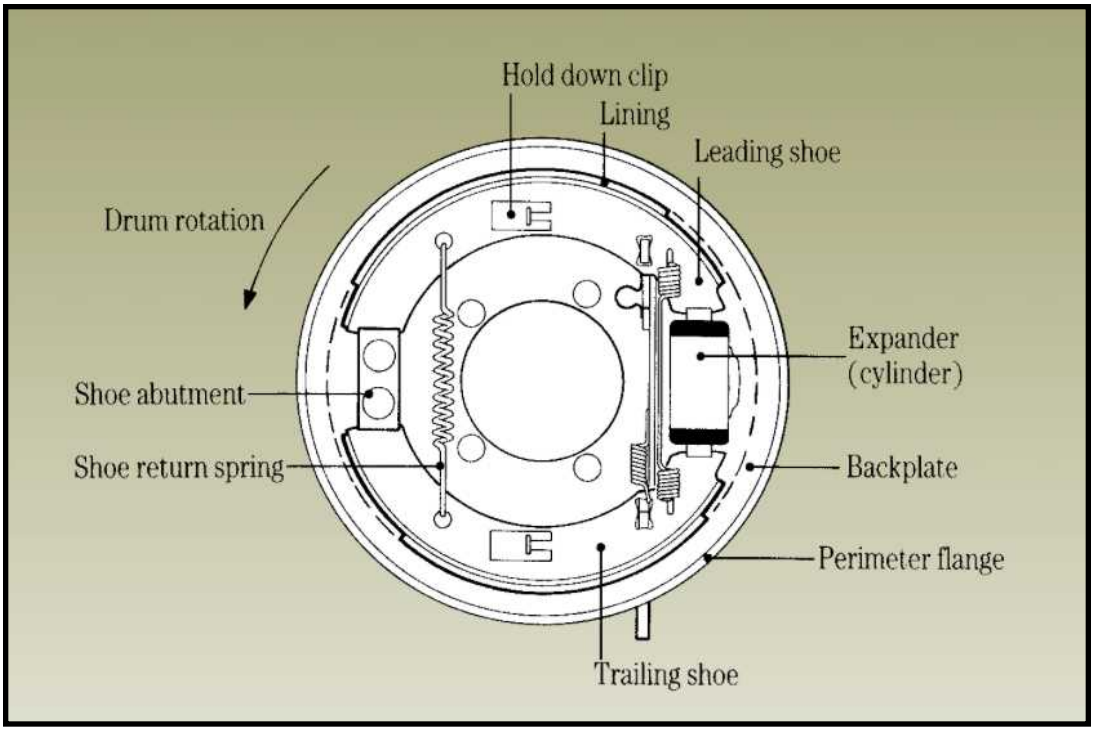
I'm with Mike on this one. I put MGB rotors and calipers on my TF and am disappointed in the braking. I thought it would be way better but it isn't. Maybe it has something to do with the master cylinder which I didn't change. Don't get me wrong it still very good and I can lock up the front brakes very easily but I thought there would be less effort required.

Perhaps I should experiment with different pads but I don't drive the car enough to worry about it. If you decide to go with disks, I think I'd just look out for a set on eBay and then rebuild them. Rotors are cheap. – Andy Preston

One note is that the MGA and TD/TF all use front front brake drums that have a double leading shoe. There are two brake cylinders putting out much more force than the single leading-shoe brakes as used on the rear. Much better than my 1965 Mustang with drum brakes. - Dan

WHAT IS A DRUM BRAKE?

A drum brake for road vehicles consists of a number of lined shoes located within a drum that rotates with the wheel. To slow or stop the vehicle the shoes are pressed against the inside surface of the drum to create a friction force. (Single leading shoe version shown.)
Correct drum brake geometry is important in order to ensure that:
· Brake linings wear evenly.
· Brake output torque is appropriate to the application.



TC Motoring Guild TCs meet in Santa Barbara to caravan to the Conclave in Paso Robles. Shockey photo

GOF West 2023

Summary and photos From Dan Shockey

The GOF was at Carlsbad this year, just north of San Diego. As a result, we had a lower participation from the Northern California clubs this year. Next year we should make it up with the event at Folsom in mid-October.

From the MG Owners Club (and Sorry Safari), Eric Baker and Doug Hollander joined me at the event. There were some Rough Riders there, too. Sue and Barry Swackhammer drove their TC to the event from the Delta. Wow.

I drove my 1935 MG PA to the event and all the way on the freeways. However my trip was only 70 miles. I also drove the rally/tour that was also 70 miles and made it all 70 miles back home again, too. A couple things came loose but nothing fell off.

The hotel had good facilities for the cars and trailers and activities. Eric and I went cheap and stayed at the Motel 6 down the road. It was quite nice for a Motel 6. The car show was on a parking lot which was hot but not unbearable.

I most enjoyed seeing old friends and making new ones. We spent some time with a fun couple from Australia. I was able to drive down in convoy with members of the Vintage MG Club.

Update: They made $5000 from the auction of donated parts and memorabilia.

Old News - New News

MG Celebrity Owner Petula Clark!

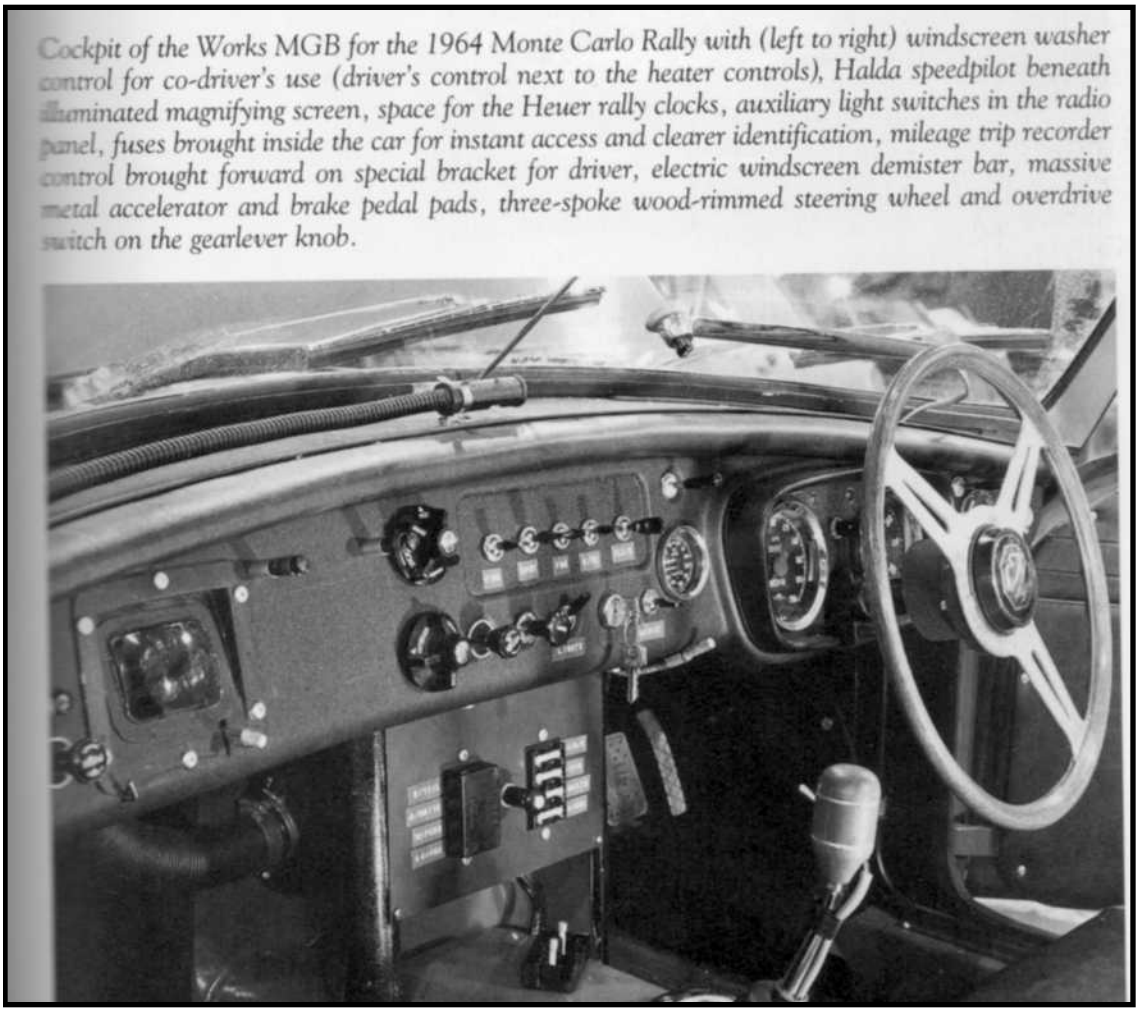
MG Enters Indian Market — North America to Come!

Automotive News

BLOOMBERG

An MG Midget on display next to an ad for the MG Hector SUV during the Hector's launch at the Morris Garages flagship showroom in Gurugram, Haryana, India, on June 27, 2019. The Hector debut marked the first Chinese entrant in a notoriously difficult market where General Motors, Ford Motor Co. and other foreign automakers have struggled. MG and parent SAIC are most likey 5 to 8 years out from selling in another tough market, the U.S., our author writes.

More Monte 1964!



Left: Cockpit of the winning MGB of the Morley brothers, 1964 Monte Carlo Rally

Rallying is a complex sport!

MG 100 Commemorative Beer

I missed the big connection between the 1st MG sold and the Arkell's Brewery Petrel Head Beer that honors MG's 100th anniversary. Buyer #1 was a certain young man, John Oliver Arkell, grandson of the founder of this Swindon-based brewery. Following the death of Oliver's father, James, the business was run by Oliver and his two brothers.

On August 11, 1923, Oliver Arkell visited the Morris showrooms in Oxford to purchase a Morris Chummy. However Oliver spotted a yellow sports car in the window, an unusual yellow, the color of good butter. Cecil Kimber quoted a price of 300 pounds for the MG sports car. On September 5, 1923, it was delivered to the family home, Redlands Court, Highworth, Wiltshire.

wwwgrapeandgrainwarehouse.co.uk/shop.htm

MGB Sports Truck

These trucks just didn't survive - mostly because they were never made. A nifty conversion of an MGB/GT in the UK.

Classified Ads

Ads are free to MGOC members and $6.00 per month for non-members. Some ads picked up from other clubs.

From other clubs & the CSRG site, service to members: (posted once only)

TD For Sale: California car. Blue, Wire wheels, Runs great. In Santa Barbara. Steve, (805) 331-2184, $15k (other club posting)

1971 MGB: Original overdrive car. 98k miles. Engine overhauled in past. Hydraulics just rebuilt. New tires. Street roll bar. Minor rust, interior worn, needs paint. $4850. Ken Kirk (415) 307-9017 (CSRG)

Sprite Race Car: Regional champion in 1975. Stored since 1977. Racing upgrades and log book included. Mike Hayworth. $3000/obo. (831) 596-4303 (CSRG)

MGOC Ads:

1959 MGA Roadster: Good red paint with black interior, wire wheels, new top windows, side screens, manuals, extra parts, in Alameda,. Transition car came with 1600 tail lights on 1500 car. $14,000. Member Richard, (650) 207-6506,)www.roccoart.com/mga. (Posted 8/23)

MG TF: Mechanically perfect and reliable, 15k miles on rebuilt engine, Ford 5-speed, red paint – won 2nd place at GOF. In Orinda. $20,000, SSTS member Bill Oldham. Text or email: 510-917-0877, Orindabill@gmail.com (Posted 10/23)

TC Parts: New walnut wood dash panels, $30 each, Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, *MikesMuseum@yahoo.com* (Posted 8/23)

MGB Parts, Parts, Parts: Lots of early MGB parts. Let me know what you are looking for. These are from Ken Gitting's collection. Many are ceramic coated. Member Lynn Bryant at Lynnnberta@sbcglobal.net (Posted 7/23)

We list ads for 3 months. Advise if you want them extended. For additional ads, see prior issues of *The Octagon* or MGOCSF.org

Member Notes

Felix Lee update from Mike Jacobsen:
I heard from Felix Lee. His XK140 is stuck in the paint shop so he bought a Porsche 356C Cabriolet to tide him over.

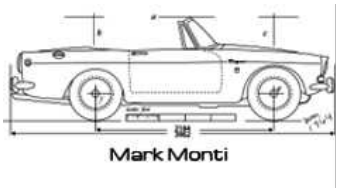
From former editor Felix Lee:
Jag XK140 MC still in primer state after 2.5yrs. I got impatient so started early on my 60s mid life crisis car, Porsche 356C, and found a beauty that is a factory Triple Black original. (Pics below.)

Photo from Don Scott:
British car dealers like this were all over the country, especially California.
Hamer Imports, Volvo/Hillman-Sunbeam/Austin-Healy/Fiat/MG, Mission Hills CA, 1963

Tour update from Andy Preston:
We've changed our venue for lunch to a better restaurant where we can eat inside in case the weather turns nasty. We now have a fixed price menu choice which makes things far easier for everyone.

MGC update from Tom Doyle:
My MGC was in the paint shop. Picked it up from Reno last Friday and it looks amazing. I still need to put the chrome pieces back on the body but that should be done by the end of the week. I changed the color from Damask Red (red wine) to Tartan Red which according to my British Motor Museum Heritage Certificate was the original color. (Pics below.)

New Members!



Welcome Mark Monti of Oakland with a 1960 MGA Coupe, who is looking for someone to rebuild an early MGB overdrive transmission.

"I, too, am a newsletter editor - for the Sunbeam Tiger Owners Association. I know how difficult your job can be at times. My basic story is that my father-in-law bought my 1960 coupe in 1979 and it hasn't been on the road since then. He tinkered around on it for 40 years but I'm having to undo/redo everything that he did since receiving the car 2 years ago. Mine has an 1800 5-main B engine with early B head and high compression pistons. It also has a 3-synchro w/overdrive early B tranny.

"I pulled the engine, tore the car down to a shell and started going through it. I rebuilt the front end and steering rack. I'm currently working on the rear end. I've been renting hanger space at the Buchannan Airport in Concord for 30 years - that is where I've been working on the MGA. Well, yesterday, my landlord told me he needs the space for his personal storage. So now I'm panicked…."

Regards, Mark

Welcome Heidi Stearn of Sonoma with a 1961 MG Midget MK 1

What a nice warm welcome! Yes, this is my first MG Midget and I would love to share a picture and a little information about how I acquired Rosie!

Safe driving, Heidi

Welcome Philip Smith of Los Altos with a red 1971 MGB

Many thanks for the warm welcome. Looking forward to meeting some of you in person! I've attached a photo of my 1971 MGB. I'm from the UK originally and I had an MGB there for a few years before I moved to California in 1978. I'd always wanted to own an MGB again and in 1987 I saw this one with a "For Sale" sign by the roadside in Menlo Park. The young woman who owned her was moving overseas and was happy to sell to someone who would appreciate her, so I rather felt things had come full circle. The license plate was my wife's idea! ("ALLO M8")

Owning my B has been great, and now I'm retired I want to spend more time enjoying just driving her around. But these days it's getting very challenging to find someone local who knows how to properly work on these cars and keep them nicely (and safely) running. Hopefully through the Club there will be some good suggestions, and otherwise looking forward to joining the community!

Cheers, Philip

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MGB

North American MGB Register

From ***Enjoying MG*** magazine

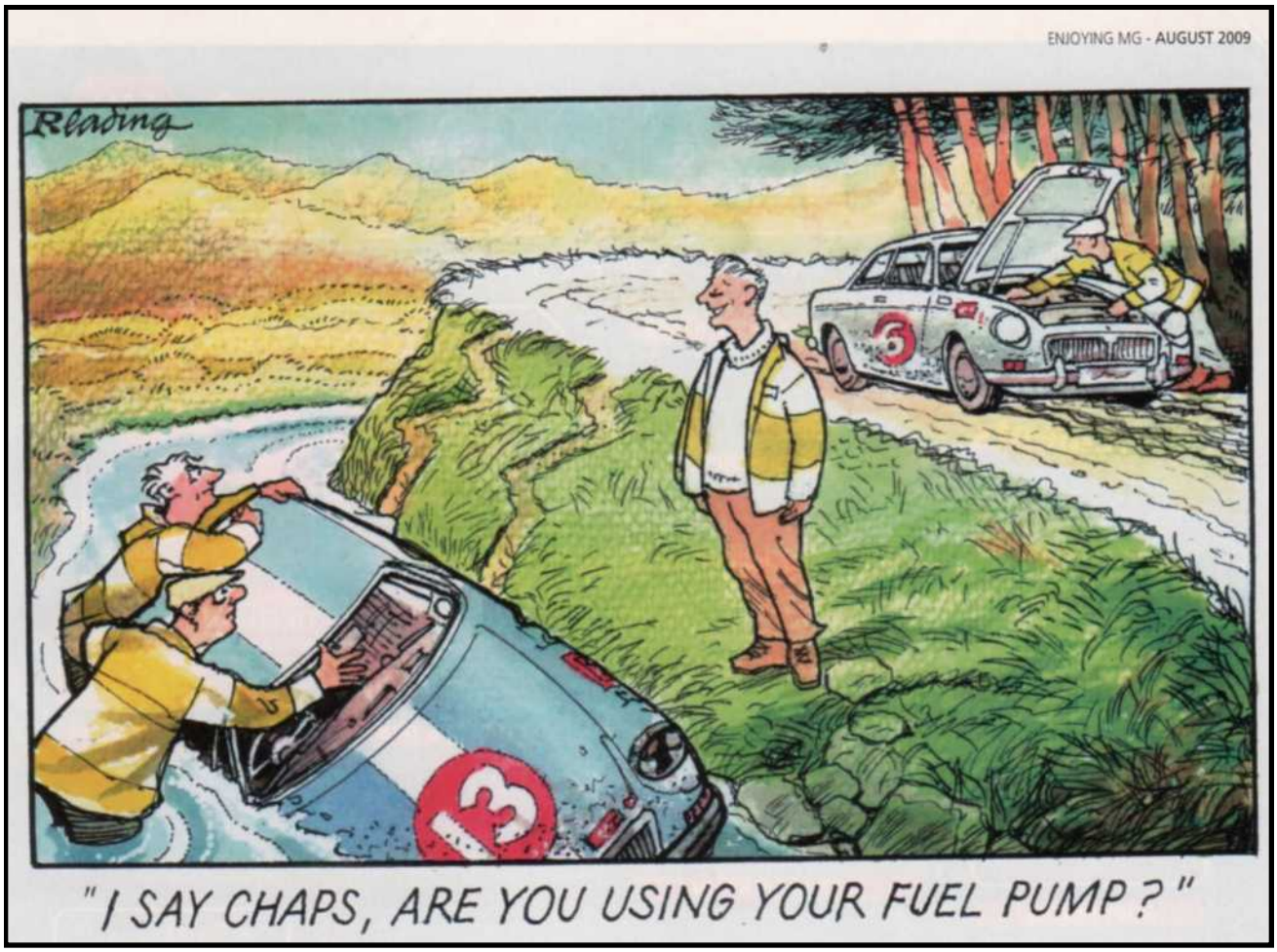

Photo: Don Scott