



# THE OCTAGON



North American MGB Register



**Since 1957!**

Photo: Andy Preston, March 2017



This groundhog likes the sunshine and his MG!

The Emerald Hills of Ireland - in Sonoma County. St. Patrick's Day Tour on March 16. Page 5.



## February 2018



# 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 subgroup 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.

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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.

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[AdamsEddie77@yahoo.com](mailto:AdamsEddie77@yahoo.com)

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MGC: Kent Leech, 925-253-9757, [kent@kentleech.com](mailto:kent@kentleech.com)

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MGA/Coupe/Twin Cam 1955-62: George Steneberg,

510-525-9125, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)

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PA/PB Midget 1934-36: 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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**BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!**  
The February Rainy Day Tour!

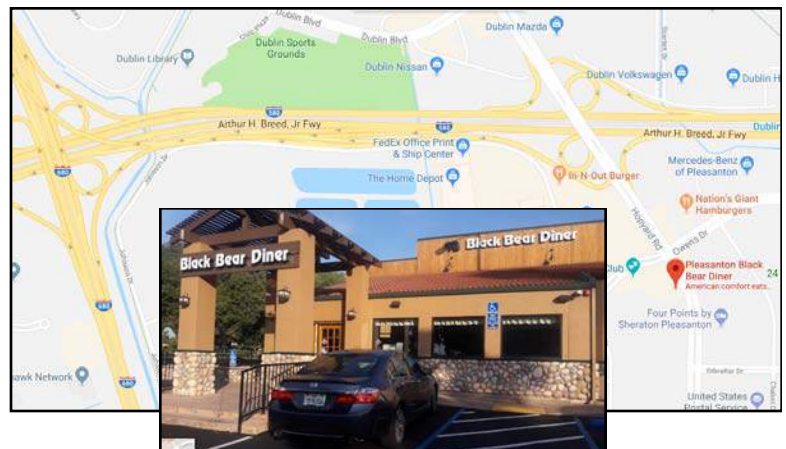
**Tuesday, February 13th**

**MEET:** 9:30 AM  
Black Bear Diner  
5100 Hopyard Road  
Pleasanton, CA 94588

**DEPART:** 10:00 AM

Be sure to have a full tank of gas before departure!

**RSVP:** Rod Schweiger at 650-296-1108



# Week Day Tour!

# From the Editor

## My Comrades in Cars,

The events are chosen, the dates are set, get your MG ready to go to this year's tours and shows. I have been driving the MGA but it really needs some work. I have to completely refill one of the front shocks each time we get it out. The radiator leaks.

I'd like to take the 1935 MG on tours but I don't feel safe driving it around the Bay. It is slow for freeway use. I have a small tow dolly and may try to tow with that. I would have to tow the MG backwards. I sold the small 8' trailer since the MG hung out over the back a couple feet. There are ready-made 10' trailers that would work. But I don't have a good tow vehicle either since I blew my Blazer engine. Towing seems hazardous. I could get a long van that would carry it inside - but that means getting

it up fairly high on ramps - another safety concern - plus the costs of owning the van.

I drove the 1935 MG from Scotts Valley over 17 to San Jose once last year. We had a small gathering of the pre-WWII MG guys. It was a Sunday morning when the traffic was light. I drove back home staying off the freeways - but that made for long trip with lots of traffic lights. Maybe the best solution is to drive to an event early on a Saturday morning, stay overnight and return early on Sunday. Beat the heat that way, too.

I have made some real improvements to driving the PA - new tires and wheels, improved steering and toe-in settings, wheel track fixed, an added side window in the hood (eliminated a blind spot), new side screens, and some carb work, plus the new dynamo (generator) and regulator. I can run the head lamps now!

We really appreciate Dave Marsh taking on three tours again this year. It has gotten harder for the clubs to find people willing to plan and lead tours. Don't miss the Rainy Day Tour this month. Sue Schweiger must have forgotten she swore never to lead that tour again.

We've combined more events with the other area MG clubs. We can increase participation and offer more options to members. We do better in some regions than others. In the past, we have done tours with the Triumph Travelers Club in the South Bay.

We have included a master calendar for the year. Get these written on your personal calendar and make plans to attend. Meet other folks who share your enthusiasm. Find neat places in the Bay Area. Get some enjoyment of your collector car.

Halloween 2013  
January 26, 2018  
Happy Trails!



Dan

## MG

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## *Pre - St. Paddy's Day Tour*

### *Friday March 16, 2018*

*This is a Rain or Shine tour so if raining drive a car with wipers.*

**Date:** Friday, March 16, 2018 Green is the color of the day.

**Organizers:** Andy and Marla Preston, 707 795 3480

**Meeting Place:** Bagel Street Café, 208 Northgate One, San Rafael

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

**Tour:** This year St. Patrick's Day falls on a Saturday so we're holding the tour a day early to avoid the Saturday traffic and cyclists. We will be driving to the Farmhouse restaurant in Olema on the Pt. Reyes Seashore for our St. Paddy's day lunch. The tour starts at the Bagel Street Café, in San Rafael so it's an easy meeting point from the east or south bay.

We will head out along Lucas Valley Road, past Sky Walker Ranch and through the small hamlet of Nicasio. Our first stop will be at the Marin Cheese Factory where we will take a short break and enjoy coffee, snacks and of course sample some wonderful cheeses.

We will leave the Cheese Factory, heading Northwest through Chilen Valley, which one of the most scenic areas of West Marin especially at this time of year. We will join Hwy 1 at Tomales and then follow the Tomales Bay shoreline through Marshall and Point Reyes Station to Olema for lunch. We will have a private dining room and open menu.

Lunch should be around 1:00 pm and please bring cash.

**Please RSVP:** to Andy or Marla Preston at 707 795 3480 or [marlapreston@hotmail.com](mailto:marlapreston@hotmail.com) by March 12<sup>th</sup> so we can confirm lunch reservations. Seating limit is 30 people.



# HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY



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## New Members!

Welcome Liane and Adrian Szwarcburg of San Quenton with a 1961 MGA Roadster:

Happy to provide some information. My wife Liane and I love cars and motor sports. I restored a 1967 Mustang and a 1952 Desoto some years ago. I sold both cars in the last 2 years to make way for the 1961 MGA roadster.

This particular car is the first car Liane's parents bought after they were married. They drove it everywhere. Unfortunately Liane's dad passed away about 20 years ago and the car sat in her mother's garage. I got it running a few years back but determined it needed a complete rebuild.

In July of 2017 we moved the car to our home garage in Marin. Over the past few months we have been disassembling it. We are getting close to pulling the engine and have begun looking for someone to do the bodywork. We will do the frame and running gear.

I have attached a few photos.  
Regards, Adrian

Above: Liane and Adrian with their family MGA



## President's Ponderings

2018 and it's already the end of January, which is always a busy month for the club. We had a very positive Planning Meeting at Marcia's house and many thanks to all who showed up and it was good to see members that I haven't seen for some time. We have a fairly full schedule of events for this year and if you add in the events from our sister club and good friends at the SSTS there's something going on every month and more. By the way we can always use more events like tech sessions, visits to the track or car collections so if you can think of anything please let me know. Marcia always puts on a good spread and has a jelly donut or two just waiting for me. I treat myself a couple of times a year to this delicious treat! Don't they contain 2 of the major food groups?

The Annual Brunch was well attended again with members coming from far afield. Jim Lucas drove his MG up from Santa Cruz (I wonder if it's chilly wearing a kit in an MG), Dave McCann flew in from Ohio and of course Jennifer O from British Columbia. Many other members drove MGs and George drove his 1932 J2 down from the Kensington Hills. I wonder if he made it back up the hill.

The **Burnt Spark Plug Award** this year went to the founder of the award Ken Gittings for dripping loctite or super glue on his carburetor linkage while fixing something else and then wondering why the car wouldn't run anymore. Been there done that and many more silly things.

There's an old adage "If it ain't broke don't fix it" and I need to start following that philosophy myself. Maybe Ken does as well. I'm constantly tinkering and trying different parts in an effort to make my MGs more reliable rather than leaving things alone when the car is running well.

For instance I recently bought a couple of new distributor caps with brass terminals as opposed to the aluminium ones that our favorite vendors sell. The original caps back in the day always had brass terminals so they must be better, don't you think? I put one of the new caps on my MGA Coupe and the car ran well for several weeks and then started missing but only occasionally. I knew it couldn't be my new super expensive distributor cap so I started replacing everything else inside the distributor and it made no difference. By the way this was over a period of several days. I finally put the old cap with aluminium terminals back on and voila, back to normal. So I learnt a good lesson, leave things if the cars running well. Don't mess with it and "If it ain't broke don't fix it"!

Our next club meeting is on Saturday February 10<sup>th</sup> and we're back at Nations Giant Burgers in El Cerrito. The main topic of discussion will be the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of MGs by the Bay which is scheduled for Sunday May 6<sup>th</sup>, so it would be great to see you there and get your input. BTW Nations serves more than burgers for breakfast! I think they have at least 4 of the 5 major food groups!

Take care and drive safely, *Andy*



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William Charuhas' MGA



## New Member!

Welcome Sabrina Seal of Oakland with a red 1964 MGB.

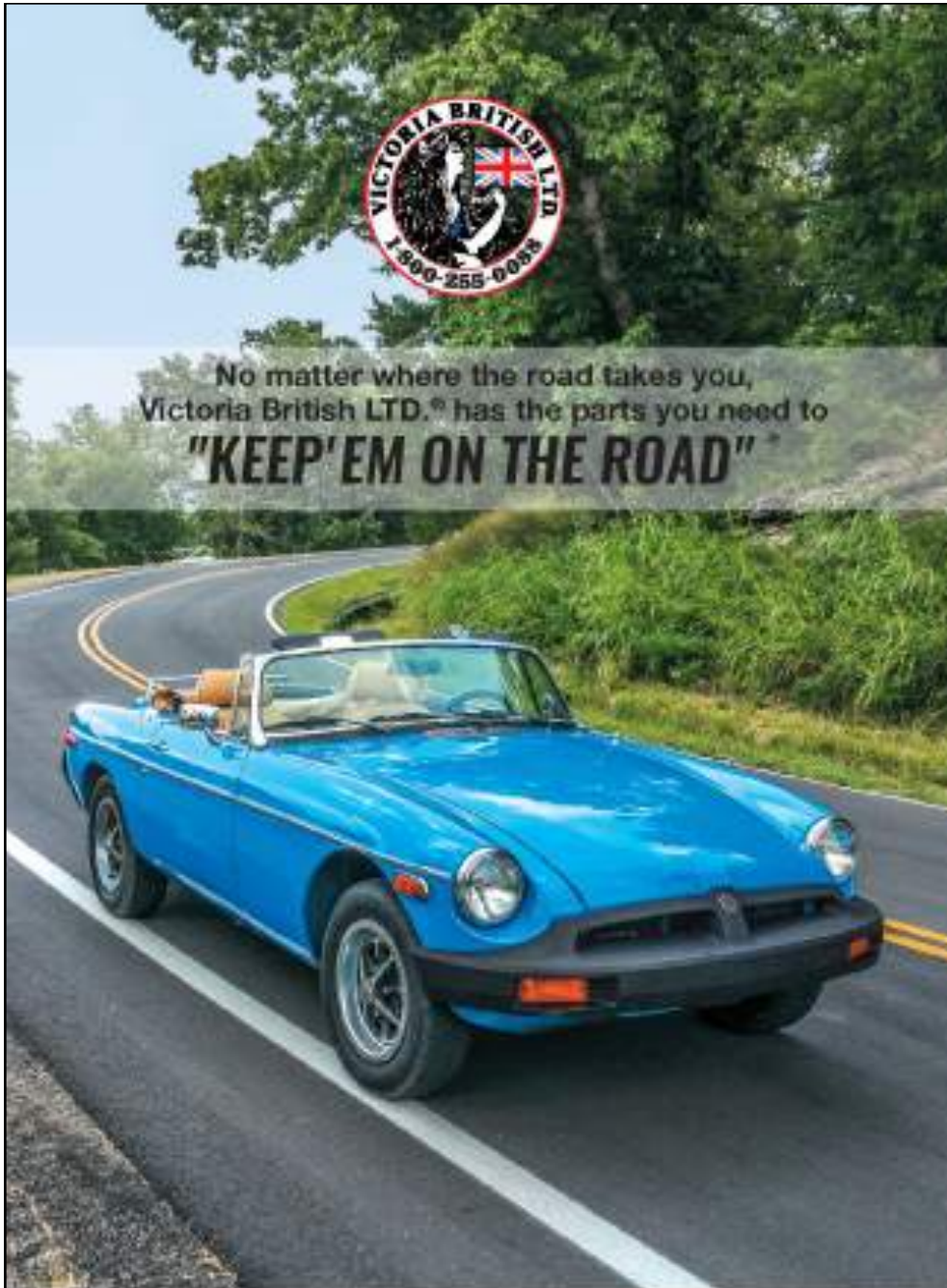
Thanks for the warm welcome and helpful recommendation for a local mechanic. My car is (thankfully) well maintained and in good driving condition at the moment (with extensive work done by our longtime mechanic in Montreal before it was hauled here), but of course, no vintage British car can be without a knowledgeable mechanic for long...

I'll send a picture of me with the car soon — working on getting it properly registered before I can drive it.

My 1964 MGB was bought new by my mother, who passed away in 1975. My father drove it after that, as did my brother and I once we were old enough. I grew up in Montreal, and this car is deeply entwined with my childhood, with many memories of riding in the jump seat as a child, and later, taking the car on road trips myself, often on the winding roads of Vermont.

I moved away from Montreal many years ago, but my father drove this beloved car until the end of his life, just over a year ago. The car was just this past week delivered to me in Oakland. I am looking forward to exploring the local roads and to meeting others in the club in the near future!

Best, Sabrina



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See additional photo page 14



# Preliminary MG Clubs Schedule of Events 2018

**MGOC events in Bold - All dates subject to change.**

Cars at Kaffeehaus, US Bank Lot, San Mateo, every 2nd Sunday

Friday Pub Night at *On The Road Again*, Morgan Hill, Feb 16, Mar 16, April 20, 6-9pm

**Sat Feb 10 Club Meeting, Nations Burgers, El Cerrito, breakfast 9:00, meeting 10:00.**  
(Plan MGsBtB, See back page)

Tues Feb 13 SSTS Rainy Day Tour, Sue & Rod Schweiger, depart Pleasanton, 10am (See p.3)

**Fri Mar 16 St. Paddy's Day Tour, Marin. Andy & Marla Preston (See page 5)**

April 7-8 CSRG Sonoma Raceway; Vintage Car Road Races

**Sat April 14 Club meeting, Nations Burgers, El Cerrito, breakfast 9:00, meeting 10:00**

**Sat April 21 San Juan Bautista Tour, MGOC. Dave Marsh**

Sat Apr 28 SSTS Lenci & Pesek Tour

**Sat May 5 Club Meeting at George's Pub and envelope stuffing for MGsBtB**

**Sun May 6 MGs by the Bay, Danville Livery, Danville**

Sun May 20 Dixon Brit car show by UBSCC. **Caravan from North and South Bay.**

Sun May 20 Friendship Day Car Show, Redwood City (MG participation)

June 1-3 Sonoma Histories Festival; Clubs display?

**Sat June 16 Lundberg Studios and Davenport Road House, Hwy 1, Dave Marsh**

Sat June 16 SSTS Tour, Maris & Don Cowgill

W-Su Jun 13-17 NAMGAR GT43 Richmond VA

M-F Jun 18-22 NAMGBR 2018 Gettysburg, PA

**July TBD Marin Tour, Marin Headlands, Nike Missile site, John Hunt**

July 21 SSTS Tune & Spoon tour & potluck

Aug 9-12 Club T MG Rendezvous, Bend, OR, SSTS caravan

**Sat Aug 11 Annual Picnic at Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland, Marcia and George**

Aug 20-26 Monterey Car Week; Hiland event TBD

Tues., Aug 22 Little Car Show, Pacific Grove (cars under 1500cc), SSTS caravan

Sa-Su Sep 1-2 Scottish Games, Pleasanton CA. Kirk and Amy Prentiss

M-F Sept 10-14 GOF West, Lake Tahoe, NV Tom Doyle. MGOC & SSTS Caravan

**Sat Sept 29 Gizdich Ranch Tour (Pies), Watsonville, Dave Marsh**

Sa-Su Oct 6-7 SSTS Sierra Tour, Keith and Pam Shukait

F-Su Oct 12-14 Conclave, Fish Camp, CA (TC clubs)

Oct 13-14 British Fall Classic Morgan Hill, Bill Hyland

**Sat Nov 10 Sonoma Tour, Andy and Marla Preston**

Nov TBD Castille fr Rosa, SSTS tour

**Sat Dec 15 Holiday Tea and toy drive, Marcia and George, Kensington.**

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

**Sat Jan 19 2019 Annual Awards Brunch, Hs Lordships Berkeley, Marla and Marcia**

Sat Jan 19 SSTS Planning Party, Guidry's

# Fixing a Flat

by Mike Jacobsen

If you have an MG old enough to have a tool kit, you may have a couple of tire irons. The irons are flat steel stock, about eight inches long and an inch wide, and often stamped “DUNLOP”. They’re meant for removing a tire from a rim, just like the ones you would use on a bicycle, only larger. I’d always been told that they were much too short to be useful and break the tire bead loose and then lever the bead over the wheel rim.



Friends, the common wisdom is wrong. When MGOC member Dave McCann discovered a flat on his MGB, he resolved to fix it himself instead of trying to find a shop that was both open on a Sunday afternoon and able to work with wire wheels.



He pulled the wheel off the car, set it on the workbench, and removed the tire’s valve core. Once the air pressure was relieved, he began to pry, and pretty soon the tire was free. He didn’t remove the tire from the rim because he only needed to be able to reach into the casing and pull out the tube.

Sure enough, there was a pinhole in the tube, but no matching debris in that position on the tire. Whatever made the hole must have fallen out and gone searching for

another victim.

I patched the tube for reuse while Dave installed a new tube, liberally doused with talcum powder.

We pumped it up enough to seat the tire, and then let out the air before pumping it up again fully. That was to get any wrinkles out of the tube. The wheel went back on the car and didn’t lose any air after a ten-mile drive, so we think it’s good.

So remember, if you have a tool kit with tire irons and tires with tubes, you too can fix your own flats.

Or you can call Dave.







As Dan knows (Neu's?), the truth is less romantic. From Marty Rayman in Brooklyn, Jan. 10, 2018

## MG in the Snow

East Coast Member Dan Neu:

It snowed here in the south today (North Carolina). Yes, I took my MGB out in the snow. I love seeing MGs in the snow. Especially T-series cars. I remember seeing a TC with its luggage rack loaded with Christmas presents in the snow once. It was quite a sight.

You recently got one of those racks for your PA. Please, next time it snows there, could you decorate your car's luggage rack with wrapped gifts with bows and take a photo of it? Bonus points if it is actually snowing and the car has snow on it.

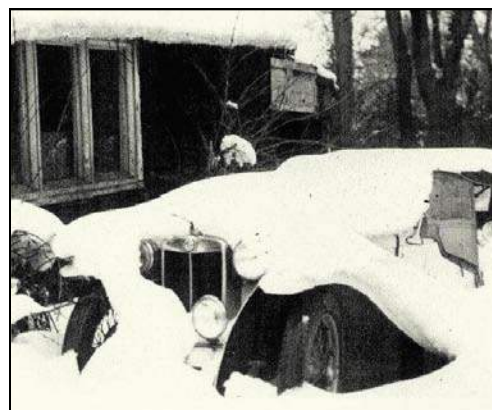
Thanks. ~Dan

P.S. Maybe you could share this with other owners of pre-war and T-series MG's

*Ed: Might be awhile before it snows here but we do get a slushy rain once in a while that briefly looks white like snow.*

*To me a red color with a black top especially looks great in snow.*

*Snow might be possible above the GOF at Tahoe in September!*



Color of no consequence for this poor P-type MG.



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# The Royal MGs

*Reprinted from The Telegraph, 14 APRIL 2016*

When the young Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, naval officer, wino and dined the future queen of England (Elizabeth II), he did so in an MG TC. Whether you're a royal fan or not, if you just enjoy a good British drama, check out "The Crown" on Netflix. Not only are the story lines and actors engaging, you will also find a number of MG cars whisking around. In later years, Prince Philip was known to dash around London in an unmarked black London cab when he wanted to travel incognito.

The Queen and Prince Philip were pursued in his MG TC sports car by paparazzi through the streets of post war London during their courtship, a letter from the then Princess Elizabeth has disclosed. Details of the chase are revealed in a rare handwritten note due to go on sale detailing how the Royal couple fell in love.

The personal letter written when she was a 21-year-old princess details their shared love of dancing and Prince Philip's love of fast driving in his MG sports car. Written on sheets of paper with a Balmoral letterhead, it recounts when they first met and the early stages of their romance. The letter was written to Betty Shew, an author, just months before the Queen and Prince Philip were due to marry in 1947.

Mrs Shew was writing a book called *Royal Wedding* as a souvenir of the marriage, and the then Princess Elizabeth agreed to share details of her relationship. In the letter, Princess Elizabeth recalls how she first met Prince Philip in 1939, describes his love of riding and how the couple danced at nightclubs Ciro's and Quaglino's. The letter recalls how the pair drove each other round London and were at one point chased by a photographer.

She wrote: "Philip enjoys driving and does it fast! He has his own tiny M.G which he is very proud of – he has taken me about in it, once up to London, which was great fun, only it was like sitting on the road, and the wheels are almost as high as one's head. On that one and only occasion we were chased by a photographer which was disappointing."

She said the first time she remembered meeting the Prince was at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, in July 1939, just before the war.



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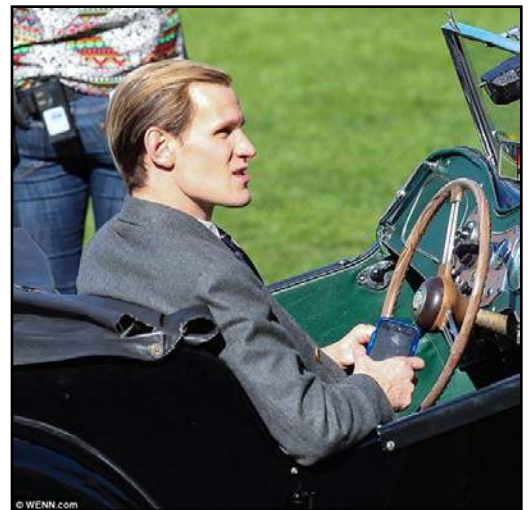




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Actor portraying the Prince in the recent PBS series, *The Crown*. They used a TD instead of a TC. Easier to drive?



"I was 13 years of age and he was 18 and a cadet just due to leave. He joined the Navy at the outbreak of war, and I only saw him very occasionally when he was on leave - I suppose about twice in three years.

"Then when his uncle and aunt, Lord and Lady Mountbatten, were away he spent various weekends away with us at Windsor. Then he went to the Pacific and Far East for two years."

## Royal MG TC Information

Here's a little more info on the TC:

- > Registration number – HXD 99
- > Purchased on 25th September 1946 – new
- > Colour – Black exterior w/green interior
- > Chassis number – TC1362, Engine number – XPAG 2024
- > Production date 11-September-1946

One report says that the Prince purchased the car new on 25-September-1946, and that it was sent for sale to the Car Mart Limited, Euston Road, London NW1 in November 1948. Another says that he traded in the TC for a TD when the car was introduced shortly before his father-in-law's death. King George's date of death: February 6, 1952.

The TC has been on the UK T Register records for many years but there has been no further reports of its survival or subsequent ownership. When the Duke of Edinburgh reviewed the MG Heritage Festival at Windsor in 2009 he stated in his message "I am much looking forward to the parade of MG cars at Windsor Castle. It will bring back happy memories of the MG TC which I bought in 1946 when I came home from serving with the Royal Navy in the Far East"

Peter Thornley's biography and memoir of his father, Mr. MG (2003), notes on p. 44, "While Prince Phillip owned an MG TC, he was courting our future Queen, John [Thornley] maintained that there were in existence some accident photographs that common courtesy dictated should not be published!" I see no reason to doubt that this is why the car has disappeared. Certainly, Thornley, of all people would know. (Tom Lange, MGT Repair)

## Royal MGB

The Queen's sister, Princess Margaret, in the 1960's dashed through the English countryside in a white MGB roadster.

## Royal MGC

When young Prince Charles went off to Trinity College, Cambridge, he drove a 1967 MGC GT in cobalt blue. Thirty years later, he passed down this car to a young Prince William.

Prince Charles owned the first production MGC GT. BL had lent The Prince a demonstrator and as a result the first new model was delivered to Sandringham on 18th January 1968. According to the Prince's helpful Press



### Royal MGC (Continued)

Officer, the Prince chose Mineral Blue with blue upholstery and extras including wire wheels, an electric aerial and a special steering wheel.

Obviously impressed with big-engined sports cars, the Prince drove the MGC until 1970 when he replaced it with an Aston Martin. Another report says Prince Charles took delivery of MGC GT (SGY 766F) in 1967. He passed it down to Prince William 30 years later. It has been restored and is often on display.



Lee and Tamara Shadbolt of Tucson finished in the muddy SCCA Rally-Cross National Championship in Kansas. Some competitors got stuck. The correct tires were critical. Their class was won by a 1971 Super Beetle over 911s, BMWs and Miatas. - Beetles float!

Photo & info from *Grassroots Motorsports* Magazine

**2.** One strategy for the mud: Run wide. MGB pilot Tamara Shadbolt finished 14th in Modified - Rear Wheel Drive, one position behind co-driver Lee Shadbolt.



Every bit as Royal:

Sabrina sent this great photo of her mother washing her new 1964 MGB - in 1964!

A photo - and a car - to treasure.





# MGOC Annual Brunch

Unless you are presidential, you must wear a funny hat, a beard and a kilt to get your photo published.



Pres Andy - Steneberg photo



Photo: Thuy Nguyen



Photo: Thuy Nguyen



VP Keith

BSP Giver & Winner  
Steneberg Photos





# Keep Planning for 2018 ...



## SPRING

**Club Meeting, Nation's Burgers, Sat 2/10**  
**SSTS Rainy Day Tour, Pleasanton, Tues 2/13**  
**Pub Night, On the Road Again, Morgan Hill, 2/17**  
**Pre St Paddy's Day Tour, Marin, Fri 3/16**  
**Vintage Car Races, Sonoma, Sa-Su 4/7 - 4/8**  
**Club Meeting, Nation's Burgers, Sat 4/14**  
**San Juan Bautista Tour, Dave Marsh, Sat 4/21**  
**SSTS Lenci & Pesek Tour, Sat 4/28**



## SPRING - SUMMER

**Club Stuffing Meeting, George's Pub, Sat. 5/5**  
**MGs by the Bay, Danville, Sun 5/6**  
**Dixon All-British Show & Swap, Sun 5/20**  
**Friendship Day, Redwood City, Sun 5/20**  
**Sonoma Historics Festival, Fr-Su 6/1 - 6/3**  
**NAMGAR GT-43, Richmond, VA, June 13-17**  
**NAMGBR MG2018, Gettysburg, PA, June 17-22**  
**GOF West, South Lake Tahoe, Sept. 10-15**

## Pub

## Night! Feb. 16

### On The Road Again - Morgan Hill

16840 Joleen Way, Unit G4

Our next Pub Night of the season will be Friday, February 16th. 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





## Perseverance: On the Road to GT-42 with Dave McCann

# Famous Dave's MGA Massacree

(Feel free to hum Arlo's guitar tune along with this story as you read it.)

This all started several Mondays ago, actually on Monday a couple of months ago. I was planning my trip to GT-42 and had a few destinations along the way in mind. Up to this point, I had driven MGs in 45 states and D.C., which left three easy states to add to the list and two that remained less easy. There are also Canadian Provinces and Territories, but I'm not even a third of the way through those. With this in mind, I set out with a loose plan to drive through two of the three easy remaining states on the trip out and the third easy state on the way back. Also, I wanted to see Glacier National Park (the U.S. one) and the Grand Coulee Dam (along with the Grand Coulee itself).

I'm not much good at planning ahead or leaving on time, so I had spent the first weekend of my vacation finishing up a few things and getting packed. Finally, Monday afternoon I set out from Springfield, Ohio with the intent to get to somewhere in northern Illinois. The hotel I had targeted didn't work out, and I ended up with a reservation in a place near the Wisconsin Dells. Because of this and the late start, it was quite late when I got in.

I had noticed a bit of a pull to the left toward the end of the drive that first day, so the next day I checked the tire pressure (I'd been aware that the Schrader valve on that wheel was a bit flakey), but the tire was only about a pound and a half down from when I filled them during trip prep a couple days before. A couple pounds isn't enough to cause a pull, so I set off that day without knowing quite what was wrong. Several stops ruled out brakes and there didn't seem to be anything wrong with the tires that you could see or feel from the outside (or not easily anyway).

After about an hour of driving with no obvious cause to the pull and no improvement, I got off the highway again and spent some more time considering my options. I called a friend for suggestions and contemplated returning home and getting another car. After some deliberation and discussion, I decided to swap the tires on both sides front to back. In the process of doing that, I did notice a bit of a crown in the front left tire that I didn't see with the tire still on the car (or on any of the others), and after getting back on the road it was immediately clear the pull was gone. It was also immediately clear one of the tires was very low on air. It was the bad one, so while it had not been very low at the start of the day, it was quite low now. After spending about an hour playing with the tires under a gas station canopy, I had to pull off on the shoulder and play with them some more. On the plus side, a quick swap to the spare and all was well. And, conveniently, the shoulder at that point was at least two lanes wide, so it was safe enough to swap out the tire even alongside the highway.



Back on the road, and only down a spare, but with the pull completely gone, I was considering what to do long term. One more call to the friend, for an update on the actual problem and its resolution, yielded a suggestion to call Tire Rack and have some tires shipped ahead to a place that would swap them onto wire wheels. The wheels on my MGA are sealed, so I don't need to deal

with tubes, but I still need a tire place that can balance the wire wheels. I had recalled from previous dealings with Tire Rack that they had multiple distribution centers and offered pickup as an option, and a quick check on the Internet showed that there was a location in Minneapolis. That would mean driving a little more than 200 miles that day, but with all the time lost to playing with tires and a storm that was headed in my direction, which was not something I wanted to drive through, it seemed like Minneapolis would be a good place to stop.

The next morning (day three), I got up early and found a place near Tire Rack's Minneapolis location that would put tires on wire wheels. They wouldn't touch the tires on the car, so I needed to take one off the car in their parking lot (and they weren't so happy with that either). Soon everything was taken care of and I had one new tire back on the car and another in the trunk. I waited until the first roadside rest along I-94 before I pulled the spare and put the second new tire back on the car, so as to not press my luck with Norm's Tire Sales there in Roseville.

After the tire adventure, I was at least half a day behind, so I decided to skip the US 2 route I had initially planned on and continued across I-94. I thought about taking a picture of a Wells Fargo bank in Fargo, but the bank looked like it could have been anywhere, so I didn't bother with that. I stopped in Bismarck and found the Space Aliens Grill & Bar. They had a BBQ special that night which was filling if not exactly great food. The theme of the place was somewhere between '50s aliens and carnival aliens, and although it wasn't the best food of the trip, it was the most unique place I ate at.

I was into Montana (and a state count of 47!) before stopping for the night. The next day I got off the highway and headed down Montana 200 and then US 87. Somewhere along the way in the middle of Montana (aka nowhere), I started experiencing the ignition dropping out. It was only happening for about half a second, just long enough for the electric tack to drop about halfway to zero; i.e., enough to be annoying and foreboding, but not long enough to cause problems. But it happened enough to tell me it wasn't going to go away and might get worse. I stopped on the side of the road (much less shoulder than that stop in Wisconsin, but also much, much less traffic). I didn't



see any obvious cause of the problem, but did notice the rivets holding the terminals on the coil were loose. This coil did not have the threaded stud terminals, but instead had two pairs of male blade terminals riveted to the coil, one pair each for positive and negative (or CB and switch, if you're pedantic).

A bit of playing with terminals and rotating them so they felt more solidly connected, and I set off again. That seemed to do the trick and I didn't have any more trouble with that issue. I did pick up a coil (threaded stud terminal type) at the next opportunity, but never got around to installing it.

Later in the day, I stopped for a meal in Great Falls, and decided on a Chinese restaurant with a high rating. I noticed on the menu that they had a small section of Korean, and I figured since this was Montana that probably meant they were Korean instead of Chinese, so I tried something from the Korean section. The Pork Bulgogi I had was excellent (in general, not compared to other Pork Bulgogi, as it's not something I've had before), and it will be something I'll try again (although not likely in Great Falls, but if I'm ever there again I'll go back to that place). It's called Maple Garden and is on the east side of Great Falls if you're in the area and looking for Korean food.

The day was not over; I was headed for a night in Kalispell, so I continued on and went past the west entrance to Glacier National Park before getting into the hotel in Kalispell. I knew I would be in too late to go through Glacier that night, but I found better accommodations in Kalispell rather than east of the park. I also ran into some rain as I headed over the Rockies that evening, but not enough to put up the top. I get so much water up through the rockers in that car that it's rarely worth putting up the top, although I did end up doing so the next day.

I had found out a few days before when I looked into what to do in Glacier National Park that it was not completely open yet. Apparently mid-June is too early even in a good year and this year had more snow than average. So, I really didn't see much of the most spectacular parts of Glacier, but I did spend several hours around the McDonald parts of the park (Lake, Lodge, Creek, Road, Falls). After several hours of pictures and sightseeing, I headed on across US 2 into



Idaho and through Bonners Ferry, Sandpoint, Coeur d'Alene, and into Spokane for the evening.

The next day the plan was to see the Grand Coulee Dam and the Grand Coulee. A coulee is a high and dry riverbed, and the Grand Coulee was dammed to make a reservoir for irrigation purposes. The Grand Coulee Dam is not what makes that reservoir; it instead dams the Columbia River. The other dam is the Dry Falls Dam. I set off that day from Spokane and headed to the Grand Coulee Dam. I spent some time there taking pictures and going through the visitor center, and then headed off to drive past the Grand Coulee itself. It was at this point, after a stop to get some pictures, that when I took off, I heard quite a noise from the transmission.

I had noticed earlier in the trip that I was hearing more noise than usual from first, second, and third, but not fourth or fifth. It

was info that I filed away, but not significant enough to make me turn around, and there wasn't any way to deal with it other than replacing things. I was spending most of my time in fifth anyway, so first, second, and third weren't getting much use. There was a history with this transmission; on the trip back from GT-39 I had run it out of oil. One shortcoming of the Ford Type Nine five-speed is that it's sealed and does not have a drain or a dipstick. I had considered replacing it after GT-39, but putting oil back in it seemed to make it okay and it did work fine for three years and possibly as much as 10,000 miles. I had checked it before the trip and it seemed full as the oil came back out the fill hole right away (as best I could tell anyway). Also, I had not seen any evidence of leaking before or during this trip. Ultimately, I don't think it was low on oil, I think it just had damage to a bearing that eventually got worse.



But back to the trip in progress: After hearing the noise and remembering that it had been quieter in fourth and fifth, I shifted to fourth and the noise went away. I tried fifth, but that brought it back. Third also, was noisy. And when I say noisy, it was not just an annoying noise, it was clear something was seriously wrong in there. However, whatever the problem was exactly, it didn't seem to be an issue when driving in fourth. It's also worth noting the drivetrain in the car is an MGR 1800 (See *Famous Dave*, p.20)





## Classified Ads

**Ads are free to MGOC members and \$6.00 per month for non-members. Some ads this month are from other clubs. May be of interest to members:**

Two Project TDs: in Arnold, 150 miles east of the Bay Area. Rough shape. One has TC wheels. With extra parts. Info from Allan Chalmers, (415) 566-9796, [allanchalmers@yahoo.com](mailto:allanchalmers@yahoo.com) (Posted 2/18)

MGA Disk Wheels: (4) wheels, (4) hub caps and (3) tires. Late 1500 style. Recently replaced. \$140 for all. Member William Charuhas, [williamcharuhas@gmail.com](mailto:williamcharuhas@gmail.com), 925-462-1565 (Posted 2/18)

1960 1600 MGA Roadster: Red with steel wheels; Was owned by a woman in the Oregon clubs. Asking \$18,000. Sale by son-in-law Bryant, 503-803-2454; [bryant.jackson@comcast.net](mailto:bryant.jackson@comcast.net) (Posted 1/18)

1936 MG NB: Two-tone Cambridge/Oxford blue combo. Frame off restoration. Very rare 6-cylinder MG. In California. Asking \$95,000. (Email Dan for contact info. Posted 1/18)

1971 MGB GT: One owner. Original blue paint (see below), 100k miles. Sell for health reasons. \$8000. Vern, Oregon; 503-705-5200; [vern@riferdev.com](mailto:vern@riferdev.com) (Posted 1/18)

MG TF Replica: Black with tan. Custom frame, Moss parts, MGB drivetrain, Wire wheels, Photo below. Bend. Oregon, \$9000. Clarence, 541-947-4362 (Posted 1/18)

Vintage Luggage: Suitcase with travel decals. Size is: 16" x 13" x 5". \$25. Don Davis, Los Gatos, [fstcobra@hotmail.com](mailto:fstcobra@hotmail.com) (Posted 12/17)

MGA parts: Front frame extension, 5 Hoods (bonnets), 2 Trunk lids (boots), 4.88 rear end, Driveshaft for 1500 cc motor, Gas tank, Oil cooler, Fiberglass racing valance, Brooklands racing windscreen, Misc. "trinkets." Call Tom Morgan at 650-740-4116 for details. (Posted 12/17)

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,**





(From *Famous Dave*, p18) with the aforementioned five speed, and a 3.9 MGB differential. I recalled, while driving in fourth and trying to figure what to do, that US 2 from Spokane was free of all stop signs until near Spokane, which only had a few traffic lights leading up to the hotel I had been in the night before. So I decided to get back on US 2 and head back to that hotel before figuring out what to do. Fourth continued to work without apparent issue, and I even chanced a stop on a down-hill section of road, so I could try to call a friend to see if they could check out where the U-Haul places were in Spokane and what hours they were open. It was afternoon at this point, and a Saturday, but all were open until 7 p.m., so I had plenty of time. Getting started again was not an issue. I might have slipped the clutch a bit more in first, but not enough to matter, and the clutch disc only had to last until I pulled the transmission which was going to have to happen to get this problem fixed.

No other issues came up; even the traffic lights were cooperating. I pulled into the back of the parking lot of the previous night's hotel in Spokane. A few calls from the hotel lobby led me to find that while I could rent a tow-dolly, I could not, in Spokane, rent a truck to pull it as they were all taken already. I contemplated buying something cheap, but didn't see anything on Craigslist (and wasn't really serious about that option anyway). I thought about leaving the car at the hotel, flying to SFO (San Francisco), and getting another car to take to the GT, but wasn't really happy with that option either. I did consider that I had just driven 100 miles without any issue other than a bit of trouble starting in fourth. I scoped out a trip to Portland (what route, easy off/on gas stops, hotels near PDX), and decided that I could just drive the 350 miles to Portland and reconsider my options at that point.

I really wanted to get ahold of someone in Portland that I could leave my car with so I could fly to SFO from there and then come back after the GT and deal with the car, but I was unable to track down anyone I knew well enough for that. Also, during the second gas stop when I was setting up a hotel reservation, I decided that everything had gone well up to that point and it was about another 300 miles on top of the first 100, so I should be able to drive to San Francisco where I keep another car. It was 650 miles from Portland, but I'd done 400 in fourth, so I was feeling good about my chances. I got to the hotel in Portland without issue, although a bit late again. I slept in the next morning and then spent some additional time scoping out the trip to San Francisco.

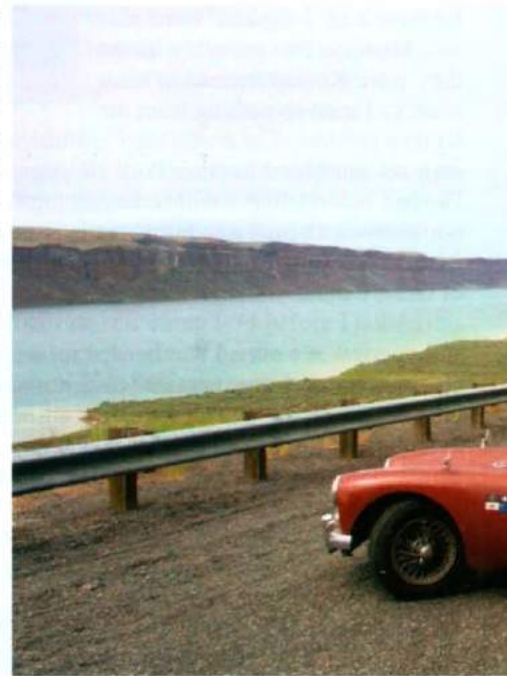
By the time I left for the day, it was near lunch time and I decided to chance a trip up the hill to a place in Gresham. This was not the best decision I've ever made, but it only cost me a bit more clutch and a few dirty looks when I took off from a couple of stop lights uphill in fourth. After that, I got on the freeway without too much of an issue, but had a bit of trouble with stop and go traffic in and around Portland (on a Sunday afternoon!). South of there, I already knew where to stop for gas and only had the mountains to concern me. The big mountain at the California line was where I was expecting the most trouble, but that was not an issue at all. I had had more trouble between Roseburg and Grants Pass on a hill when a slow truck was passing a slower truck (Oregon doesn't have extra lanes, and the slowest truck didn't realize it's legal to drive on the shoulder).



I was barely over 1000 rpm for at least a mile, but I did make that and was able to get back up to speed at the crest. The only other issue was when Caltrans closed I-5 for road work. I spent some time on the road shoulder there also. After about an hour and a half, things opened up, and I was able to get going again.

My target that day was the garage I rent in South San Francisco for my

MGB. It's about a twenty dollar cab ride from SFO, and I'd been working in San Jose for most of March and April, so I've been driving that car all spring and knew it was in good shape for a road trip. When I arrived, I parked the MGA on the main road near the garage. The parking on the side streets is always full, and I was even parked in a 20 minute spot on the main road, but it was two in the morning at that point so I didn't expect any issue with time. There can be issues with access to my garage and I'd been thinking, as I was getting close, that if I couldn't get the car out I would just drive the MGA to the GT. I'd driven 1100 miles in fourth gear at that point and other than a bit of clutch wear, the car didn't seem any worse than when the bearing died (I'd decided it was a layshaft bearing that was bad).



To be continued next issue! Stay tuned....



## The Back Page

William Charuhas sent another image of his dog Codee (center). Codee is larger than I imaged, apparently, and played with a friend on the Golden Gate Bridge. I am glad he likes MGs - I think!

Where will we see him next?



Wine qualifies as an excuse to Get Away. Sent by Dan's sister Sally. Anyone know the car? Lovely.



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San Francisco, CA 94131-3141



## MGOC Meeting Nosh 'n 'Natter Saturday, February 10



**Date:** Sat, Feb 10

**9am: Breakfast**

**10am: Meeting**

**Nation's Giant Hamburgers**

**6060 Central Ave., El Cerrito**

**510-528-8888**

**More Info:** Andy Preston

**[andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net)**

***We look forward to seeing you!***

