



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!



MG Corral at Sonoma Raceway



October 2023

Photo: Suzy
Savage

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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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.

MGOC.SF.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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Sonoma Tour

Twin Oaks Roadhouse

Sunday, November 12, 2023

First stop: Cornerstone Gardens, Sonoma

Lunch: Twin Oaks Roadhouse, HopMonk Taverns, Penngrove

Date: Sunday, Nov. 12, 2023

Tour leaders: Andy and Marla Preston, 707-795-3480

Meeting Place: Harvest Market, 155 San Marin Dr., Novato, 94945

Have a full tank of gas - no stations along San Marin Drive

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

Tour: We invite you to join us. Meet outside Harvest Market in Novato. We'll head west past Stafford Lake and into the Marin countryside of farms and ranches. 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 restrooms available.

We will leave Cornerstone and drive through the beautiful Sonoma Valley lined with vineyards to our final destination at Twin Oaks Roadhouse in Penngrove. This veteran roadhouse, circa 1926, remains an Old West charm and offers homestyle America staples. We will be eating in their outside courtyard so if it is cool, dress warm.

RSVP PLEASE: Andy or Marla Preston at: 707 795 3480 or marlapreston@hotmail.com by Nov 7th so we can send you final instructions and tour directions.



From the Editor

Happy Fall, MG-ers!

28 September 2023

Another driving season is speeding past. Don't miss it! I hope to get both the MGA and the P-type to events this month. The Big Event is the GOF in Carlsbad, California. I plan to drive the P to that event. (Knock on the rotted wood body frame.) It is only about 70 miles for me but I have to get on the interstate for some of those miles.

On the MGA, I finally tore apart the gearbox cover and discovered a broken electrical connection to the overdrive. With that fixed, the OD now works! That is very exciting and rewarding after all the cost and work to install it in my cobbled-up MGA - with late MGB engine, early MGB overdrive gearbox, MGA clutch and MGB rear gears.



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I do not have the proper shifter for the gearbox - I am using a late 4-synchro shifter* - so I don't have the switches to prevent accidental overdrive in 1st, 2nd and reverse. Leaving it in reverse will destroy it. My short-term plan is to put in a warning light. Long term, I need to create a proper shifter lengthened for the MGA.

I hope we can MG together soon! I am certain that 'MG' is a verb not a noun.

Safety Fast!

Dan

*I tried a 4-synchro shifter with OD switches but they didn't line up right. Close.

Below: To Balboa Island with the Vintage MG Club



Home

Schedule

Location



Marques

Register

About



All British Motor Show go to the Blackhawk Museum Sunday, Oct 15, 2023

8:00AM TO 2:00PM, FREE TO THE PUBLIC

See over 180 fine automobiles and classic motorcycles from the British Isles at the Blackhawk Auto Museum in Danville. Major proceeds of the All British Motor Show go to the Blackhawk Museum's Children's Education and Transportation Fund.

The show is free to the public, from 9:00am - 2:00pm Sunday, Oct 15, 2023.

The All British Motor Show has been presented by Mini Owners of America since 1991.

British Motor Show
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Registration fee \$35.00 per vehicle - lunch included - Silent Auction
Boys & Girls Club of Truckee Meadows to benefit from event.

RENO BRITISH MOTOR SHOW 2023
September 30th
Rancho San Rafael Park



Info and non-gaming lodging options:

<https://renoallbritish.org/renobritishmotorshow/>

First MG Sold - 1923: A Re-Creation

The following photographs come to us courtesy of Simon Dix, member of the St. Louis MG Club.

Simon attended MG 100 at Gaydon and the MG & Triumph 100 festival at Silverstone in June and took several fabulous photos of the Raworth recreation by an unnamed but highly appreciated craftsman. The car appeared at both shows.



President's Ponderings

Greetings my fellow members! Time to ponder for another edition of ***The Octagon***.

Here we are officially in the season of Fall. Where did the Spring and Summer go?!! As the expression goes, "Time waits for no one..." and this year has been no exception to the rule.

One last big trip in the MG this year for me. I will be joining the Cypress British Car Club for a drive from Monterey to Cambria the end of October. It fits within the "new rule" for my long distance trips - under 300 miles from home. After a couple to trips to Oregon last year, the distance was a bit much for this old man. 300 miles seems to be long enough, but not too long. Yes, I know that many others travel way more than that in a LBC (Little British Car). However, I don't bounce back like I used to of twenty years past, so why push it and have the result be misery? Hence the adoption of the 300 mile rule. Beyond that will require towing the LBC to an extended destination. The distance thing was the reason for not attending the GoF (Gathering of the Faithful) at Carlsbad this year. I'll leave those many mile trips to the younger guys...

The Fall is a great time for back road drives in Northern California. Tourist traffic is minimal and mostly the weather is fairly predictable. Andy & Marla Preston will be having their November Marin County drive, and that one is not to be missed.

As for me, the "Winter" project is to exchange the seats in the Magnette. As lovely as the original seats are, they do not afford a "larger guy" like me any comfort. They have been re-padded, and that helped some, but not enough. They truly are bucket seats! The bottom and back are solid steel and do not have any adjustments, and the seat bottom is very short, creating discomfort on the back of the leg. Hmmm. My dilemma was to find replacements that have recline adjustments and a deeper base, and most importantly to not look like seats from another car. Many Magnette owners have used Honda, Volvo, and Miata seats. For me these are too different for the look of the Magnette. I have landed on MGB seats as my replacements. They have enough recline adjustment, deeper bottom, but still small enough to not look like they don't belong. Of course once I fabricate attachments to bolt them down, I'll have the seats upholstered with a similar pattern to look as closely as possible to the originals. Fingers crossed!!



Kirk



Photo: Mike Jacobsen

While you're looking, consider sipping an Arkell Brewery special brew to honor MGs 100's anniversary!



Brighten Your Days (and Nights)

from Mike Jacobsen

Recently I swapped my MGA's generator for an alternator. This made the car's electrical system negative ground and opened up the possibility of modern conveniences, like LED lights.

My first change was to replace all the dash lights with LEDs. What a difference! I can easily read the gauges at night now, plus the light for the fuel gauge doubles as a map light (that you can't turn off) under the dash.

The next step was LED tail lights. There were a couple of ways to go here. One was to install replacement bulbs that were covered with surface-mount LEDs. They're easy to install, requiring no changes to the lamps or wiring. But I'd seen those and decided not to go that route because their visibility seemed to vary depending on the angle you looked at the light from.

Instead I went with small circuit boards covered with LEDs. I'd seen those too and they seemed to match the light pattern of the original bulbs, just with more light. The board fits underneath the lens, but I had to remove the incandescent light socket to make room.

I bought the Moss kit for this. The instructions were great and the boards were pretty easy to install. Remove the lenses, take out the bulbs, and unplug the wires. Then comes the modification to the base where you remove the bulb socket. In retrospect I probably could have done this on the car with a hand drill but I was too worried about the drill slipping with catastrophic results to the deck lid, so I removed the bases and drilled out the rivets with a drill press. (The R B G on the base is not a tribute to the late Supreme Court Justice but an old reminder to me for which wire went where on the original setup.)

The LED boards came with long wiring pigtails and the instructions suggested removing the plinth and making the connections inside that or back in the fender.

Being lazy, I decided to make the connections in the light itself, so I shortened the pigtails, soldered on bullet connectors (included in the kit) and used tube connectors (also included) like the rest of the harness has. Shortening the pigtails let me tuck the wires under the board.



Once the board pigtails were ready I plugged them into the tail light leads. The board wires were colored red, blue, and black, so you'd think that the connections would be red to red and black to black. Nope! It's board red to car green, board blue to car red, and then black to black.

Since the boards don't mount directly to the light base you need longer screws than the originals. The kits came with sheet metal screws of the correct length, but threading one of those into the plinth's machine-threaded holes bothered me, so I used longer machine screws.



Attaching the boards required routing the wires & connectors around the back of the boards and then screwing them down. Then lenses go back on. Since the brake lights on my car don't double as turn signals I didn't need to change the flasher unit. Now it's time to test.



The left-hand light is an incandescent while the right-hand light is an LED board. Note the difference! It's a worthwhile improvement.

A Great Track Day! - Reports

The MGOC provided an MG Car Corral to support CSRG's 20th Annual vintage charity races. All the classic cars on the Sonoma Raceway track were a sight to behold. MGs were mainly in groups G1 Sports and GT Cars as raced prior to 1963 and G2 Small Displacement Production Sports Cars. MGAs, MGBs, MGB-GTs, and MG Midgets ran with the pack. The best views were atop the grandstand where most of the track was visible. Member Beverly Morgan sang the national anthem. Tom Morgan stopped by and shared insights.

At 12:30 pm the MGs lined up for parade laps as scheduled. The MGs and other classic sports cars lapped the track three times at a nice pace led by a Huffaker Engineering MGB that followed the track race lines. MGOC's Car Corral and the MG centennial were announced over the loudspeakers throughout the day with prepared text. Locke de Breville spoke during the lunch break. He has been racing for decades, is former president of CSRG, and worked at Huffaker back in the 70s, when Huffaker dominated SCCA with their MGs.

Much thanks to CSRG for putting on the event and inviting the club, Sonoma Raceway staff, the race drivers and crews, track flaggers and personnel, and Ray Morgan for bringing the RV from Santa Rosa.

MGOC Car Corral Lineup: MG-TF roadster member Andy Hunt, red MGA, green RB MGB roadster, yellow RB MGB roadster, blue MGB roadster, yellow MGB-GT Tom Sheldon, racing number 48 light-blue MGB roadster with hardtop #4 of all half million plus MGBs built, red MG midget, bracken RB MGB roadster, row 2: Racing Morris Mini Cooper, red Triumph GT-6, black Jaguar soft-top. I'll take my tent trailer next time.

Cheers, Mark McGothigan

This past weekend was a memorable one for MG enthusiasts and racing aficionados alike. Ty Rollins and myself packed up our RV and the beloved MG, setting our sights on Sonoma Raceway for an event that promised excitement, nostalgia, and a whole lot of horsepower. What transpired over the course of this weekend was a heartwarming blend of automotive camaraderie, cherished memories, and the opportunity to relive the glory days of racing.

As we made our way to Sonoma Raceway, memories of my childhood camping experiences at what was then known as Sears Point came flooding back. Camping at a racetrack was never my favorite pastime back in those late 1970s days, but this weekend promised to be different.

After a few hiccups along the way, we finally got our trusty MG, and our RV "Lady Shamu," parked in the designated area with a perfect view of the racetrack. Parked next to Ray, we decided to kick off the weekend with a few Margaritas, sharing stories and laughter as we eagerly anticipated the MG meetup scheduled for the next morning.

The sun rose on Saturday, and the Sonoma Raceway was soon buzzing with the arrival of MGs from all over. The camaraderie amongst MG enthusiasts was immediately apparent. As the a couple of the first spectators approached, they spotted my MGB/GT and started reminiscing about their own MGB/GTs from yesteryears. Inviting one gentleman to sit in the car and even start it up brought tears of joy to his wife's eyes. It was a heartwarming start to an incredible day.

After a delightful morning with fellow MG lovers, we took our four-legged companions for a stroll through the paddock area. This provided a fantastic opportunity to admire some truly remarkable cars, each with its own unique history and charm.

The time had come for me to decide which car to choose for the charity run. The options were numerous, each more enticing than the last. Eventually, I settled on the MGB/GT, eager to experience a ride in a car similar to my own.



Photo: Jeff Sheldon

Before we knew it, the MG club was lining up for three parade laps around the renowned track. What made this moment extraordinary was having my father, Lee Sheldon, present. He was about to drive our 1970 GT, a car he had owned for many years. As we waited for our turn, my father shared stories of his racing adventures dating back to 1957 when he first brought his MGA to this track. His tales painted a vivid picture of the track's history and his own racing escapades. As we drove the course together, he continued to regale me with tales from his past. It was a bonding experience I'll cherish forever.

In the end, this weekend at Sonoma Raceway exceeded all expectations. Thanks to the MG Owners Club for organizing this fantastic event that brought together MG enthusiasts and racing fans alike. It was a weekend filled with cherished memories, heartwarming stories, and the enduring thrill of the racetrack—a time capsule of racing nostalgia that we will carry with us for years to come.

Jeff Sheldon

Mark, Chris, John, Andy, Dan,

Many thanks for all the help and support this weekend. It was an all around awesome day! A big thank you to Chris & CSRG for hosting and extending an invite to MGOC and all your work coordinating all the details for us. Also, a big thank you to all involved for taking the time to think, plan the program to make sure we had all then bases covered race day.

Due to all that work, everything ran smooth and everyone had a blast. Mark, John, Andy many thanks for turning up the hospitality wagon to the next level.

Mark, that was so cool having RV shade center and chairs for everyone and support with planning all the details and being event point person.

John, thank you very much for everything. Your scones with cream and jam where delicious. Also. the sandwiches were great. So nice to have them, ready for anyone at any time.

Andy, a big thank you for all your support getting MGOC involved here, bringing drinks for everyone and your on going support developing.

Dan, what can we say here. You are Mr MG. Sorry you couldn't join us this time. Your insights helped us stay on track. Also, your help with marketing this event was a great help.

Cheers, John Hunt

I had a great time! I love going to the track and I enjoyed putting on a lunch for the two clubs. I particularly enjoyed the talk by Locke deBrettville. Brought back lots of fond memories of Huffaker Engineering. Who put that together, THANK YOU very much. I hope everybody enjoyed the food,

John Hutchinson

Yes, thank all for making this happen. I got many comments from racers and CSRG folks in general how happy they were that MGs were there in force.

Let's do it again next year!!

Chris Patterson

I will add my thanks. I managed to get some good footage of my drive around the track and my dad's comments was that I was like a Cheshire Cat with a smile from ear to ear..

Andy Hunt



John Hunt



John Hunt



Mark McGothigan

John Hunt



Photo: Jeff Sheldon

William Dodson



John Hunt

John Hunt



John Hunt





William Dodson



William Dodson

Photo: Jeff Sheldon



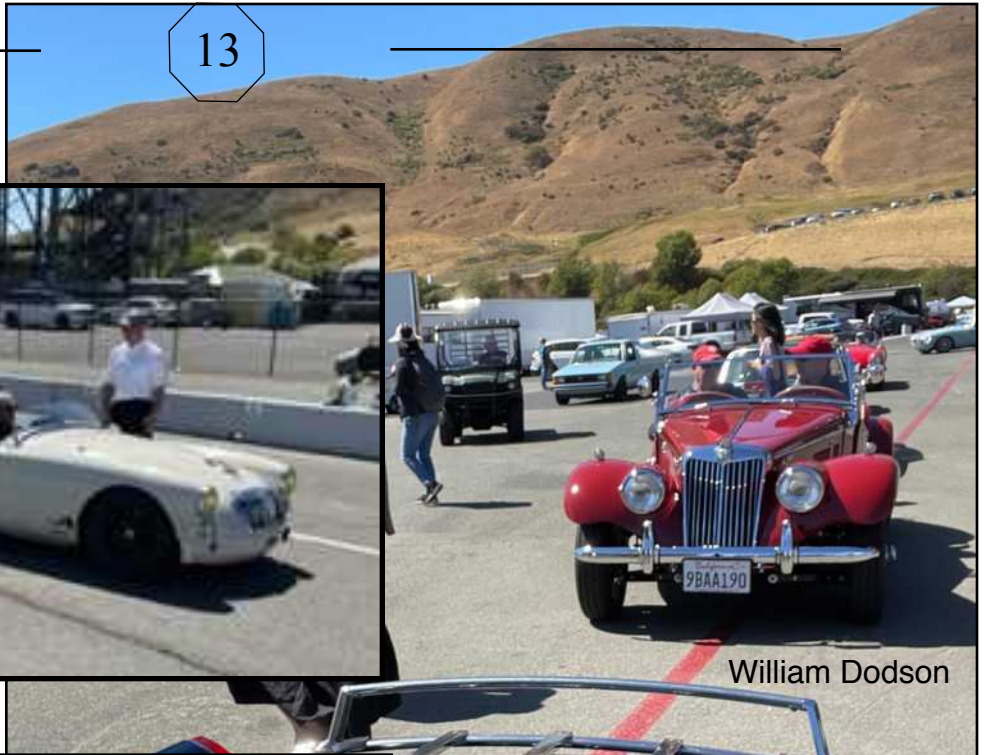
John Hunt



Photo: Jeff Sheldon



William Dodson



William Dodson



William Dodson



William Dodson



William Dodson



Keep Planning for 2023!

FALL



William Dodson

Sat., Sept. 30: Reno British Motor Show, p. 5
 Sun., Oct 1: Central Coast British Car Show, Oxnard, p. 5
 Sun., Oct. 15: All British Motor Show, Blackhawk Museum, Danville p. 5
 Oct. 16-20: GOF West, Carlsbad, CA. Not too late to attend!

FALL - WINTER

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

Nov. TBA: SSTS Tour, Ray Davis

Dec. 2: Holiday Tea, San Francisco

Jan. 6, MGOC Planning Meeting, Kensington

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

Highland Games - Barbara Tapp



Fun at the Highland Games

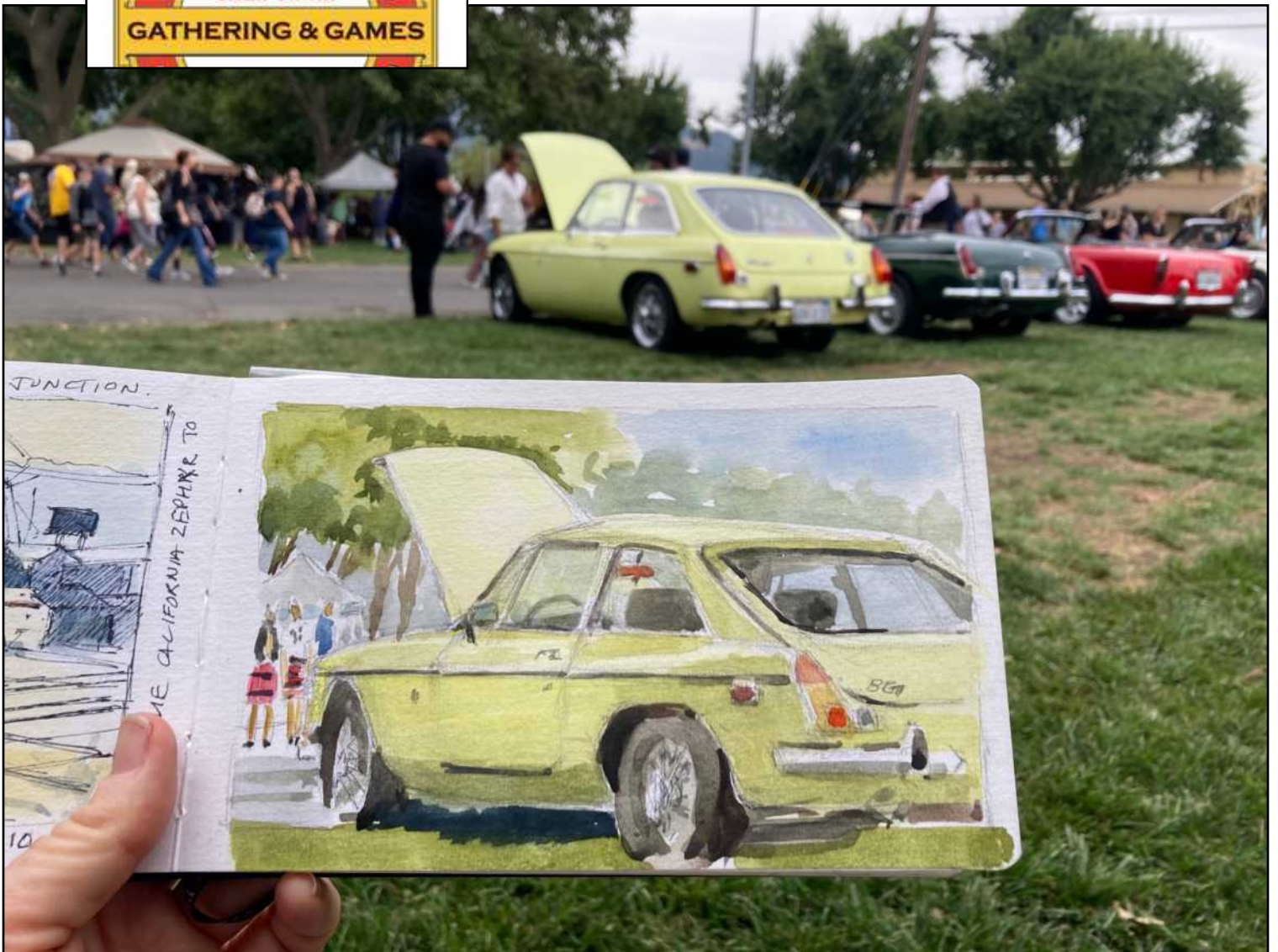
From Barbara Tapp

I joined Russ Taft and the Morgan Car Club on Saturday Sept 2 at my first Scottish Highland Games. When RB Ward from the Morgan Club opened the hood of his car I joined him and from there on had lots of people peering inside and at one stage three kids piled in the car, too.

I loved hearing the bagpipe bands and even saw a world record broken by a girl in the hammer toss, For afternoon tea Russ and I enjoyed eating a delicious variety of baked goodies from the Caledonian Ladies Auxiliary group as I sat and sketched Little Bee for the first time. I hope we are invited next year.



Photos:
Barbara Tapp





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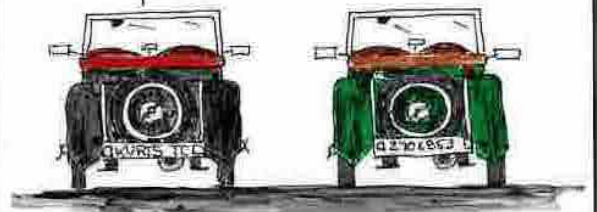
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The Little Car Show

Report by Mike Jacobsen

Car Week on the Monterey Peninsula is famous for vintage races, high-end auctions, and shows like The Quail, Legends of the Autobahn, the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, and of course the Little Car Show. Wait, what?



Want to make your TC look large? Park next to an Isetta!

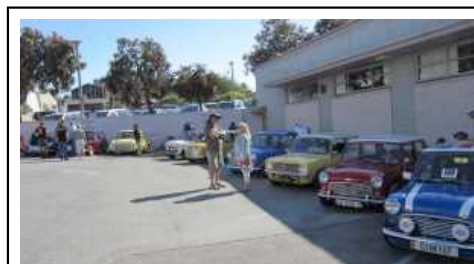
There were a lot of some models – there were so many original Minis that they had their own parking area – but there may have been more MGs than any other make. There were several MGAs and one Magnette, along with a selection of Midgets and T-series cars. MGBs were eligible for the first time this year. I only saw a couple, but watch out next year!



Ever heard of a Brubaker Box? Me either, but that's understandable since only three were built. I learned this at the show where 1/3 of the production was displayed. Not sure if you should paint your TD's grille to match the body or the interior? You could find examples of each and pick the one you liked best.

It wasn't all about cars, of course. There were also pets, mostly dogs but also at least one iguana. The dogs were generally on leash and walking around with their people, but some were guarding their cars. (Or they just jumped in and were waiting to go for a ride.)

NAMGAR was well represented. Andy & Marla Preston's coupe was out, along with Scott & Cathy Johnston's Twin Cam, the Tomlin's and my 1600s, and Kirk & Amy Prentiss's Magnette.



Half of the Mini corral.



The gang's all here...



Preston



Johnston



Tomlin



Prentiss

It's a fun event. You get to see cars you don't normally see at other shows, it's very informal, and while there are a few awards there's no voting so you can spend your time just walking around. And since you're in downtown PG there are lots of restaurants and coffee shops if should you get hungry or thirsty, and all sorts of stores if you want to do a little shopping. It's possibly the most relaxed car show in the world, and it's all at our scale.



Larger Views of Mike's Photos

These guys have it made!



Monterey Car Week

From Andy Preston

Marla and I drove the MGA Coupe down to Car Week for the **Classic Motor Sports Show** on Tuesday and the **Little Car Show** on Wednesday both in Pacific Grove on Lighthouse Ave.

The Classic Motorsports show is becoming one of the more popular events because it is for all cars from all countries. This year there were 3 blocks on American Cars, 2 blocks of German cars, 2 blocks of Italian cars, 3 blocks of British cars and one block of Japanese cars. I think there were around 400 cars overall so there is something for everyone.

Marla and I were very pleased when our little MGA Coupe took the award for **Best MG** which also included a \$150 gift certificate from Moss Motors.

On Wednesday the Little Car Show takes center stage on Lighthouse Ave and features all cars that have a small engine - which they increased to 1800 cc this year. This is a great little show but unfortunately there were fewer cars than last year which is probably due to the lack of advertising and promotion by the organizers. One of the great things about these shows is meeting and connecting with other members and friends that you haven't seen in quite a while and of course making new friends as well.

Photos: Andy Preston



The De Havilland - M.G. Sprint Special

From *Motor Sport*, Oct., 1955

Interest has been lent to this season's sprint contests by the appearance in some of them of T. Dryver's remarkable De Havilland-M.G. — remarkable because this car has a D.H. Gipsy aeroplane engine in a surprisingly small chassis.

During the war Cecil Clutton had an article in *Motor Sport* discussing the possibility of such an engine in a road car, the conclusion being that if adequate cooling could be arranged and sufficiently high gear ratios installed, a 100-m.p.h. car needing major overhauls once every 100,000 miles would result. The feeling was that something like a 3-litre Bentley chassis would be required, with special gearbox, and even this might need strengthening.

What Dryver has done is to get a Gipsy aeroplane, engine into a Q-type M.G. Midget chassis, a quite outstanding accomplishment, although, as his car is a sprint special, the cooling problem is reduced.

The car was built in the owner's home garage and on the kitchen table, assisted by his 19-year-old son, in, as he says, "the old Shelsley tradition." An absolute minimum of machining and welding was "farmed out," yet construction occupied only about six months, working evenings and weekends.

Dryver's aim was to have a lot of fun without spending a fortune and he reckons that his D.H.-M.G. cost him only £135 to prepare for this year's Prescott Testing Weekend, and about £150 to date, inclusive of modifications and repairs after "blow-ups."

The engine is the faithful D.H. Gipsy Major air-cooled, in-line, 118 by 140-mm. four-cylinder, normally of 6,124 c.c., but this one has been rebored to a slightly greater size. It normally gives 130 b.h.p. at 2,350 r.p.m. on a compression ratio of 5.25 to 1. It weighs complete about 3½ cwt., including flywheel and clutch.

In the chassis the engine is upside down, as it would be mounted in an aircraft, and also back-to-front, rotating anti-clockwise, so that the flywheel can be mounted on the propeller boss.

The engine is virtually standard, but a simple tubular inlet manifold has been made up, in the home workshop, to take two 1 7/8-in.-bore horizontal S.U. carburettors. A simple wet sump was also made up, which holds 1½ gallons of oil, to replace the dry-sump lubrication system used in the air. Basil Davenport advised the use of 2-in. diameter in place of 1¾-in. diameter inlet valves and these, together with an advance in ignition timing of the magnetos, is thought to have put the speed above 3,000 r.p.m. and the power output in the region of 150 b.h.p. Incidentally, plastic oil pipes are used, so that there is visible evidence of oil flow without the need for a gauge.

Originally the clutch was modified Vauxhall Fourteen, but this couldn't quite cope with the power, so a 30-h.p. Ford V8 flywheel and clutch were adapted, retaining the Vauxhall bell-housing and toggle arms but using the Ford thrust-rod. A simple clutch shaft was made up, incorporating a steel disc and rubber universal joint, to convey the drive to a separate gearbox.

The gearbox is from an Alvis of about 1931 vintage, mounted back-to-front to provide upward instead of downward gearing! Dryver uses first (ex-top) and second (ex-third) on full throttle without qualms, but third (ex-second) is reserved for long straights and top (ex-first) will never be used as there appears to be a possibility of the gearbox bursting and the driver does not, in any case, fancy the speed at which the propeller-shaft, immediately beneath his seat, would then be turning. This shaft is a short, home-modified Hardy Spicer, taking the drive to the Q-type M.G. back axle, in which the differential assembly has been turned upside down to counteract the anti-clockwise rotation of the crankshaft.



The chassis and body are monoposto Q-type M.G., strengthened where necessary but modified as little as possible to preserve a decent appearance. The total weight is 11½-12 cwt.

The De Havilland-M.G. clocked 53 sec. on its very first appearance, at the B.O.C. Prescott Testing Weekend. It was entered for the Nottingham S.C.C. sprint at Whitsun but snow and rain on a winding, undulating, narrow course resulted in a risky but satisfactory run, the driver then making fastest saloon-car time in a Daimler Conquest.

At Shelsley Walsh in June the car was motoring very well in practice when coming out of the S-bend the clutch sheared the pins of the pressure-plate housing, bending the clutch shaft, chewing-up the thrust mechanism, and even loosening the flywheel. The bell-housing split into many pieces and nearly removed Dryver's feet. In the best Shelsley Walsh tradition, with the kind co-operation of a Great Whitley garage, the three enthusiasts toiled most of the night, the next morning and late into the afternoon, returning to the hill in time for the second runs, when an exhausted driver did a disappointing 54 sec. in heavy rain, getting wheelspin most of the way.

An all-night tow behind a Ford Zephyr took the D.H.-M.G. to Rest and Be Thankful, where it made four runs, including practice, entirely devoid of trouble. The second run, which seemed the fastest, was missed by the timekeepers, but the third, accomplished in 69 sec., was deemed quite pleasing in view of the pot-holes and many bends. The car was running better than ever before.

Its owner finds the rear ½-elliptic suspension satisfactory, the brakes very fair, but finds the steering uncertain, largely because the front wheels have a saucy habit of leaving the ground after a slow corner! Alteration of the very stiff front springs and stiffening of the chassis frame will probably effect a cure. At present it is neither a drive nor a ride on dry roads but a fight, and being near-suicide in the wet it puts the "S" back into sport, says Dryver.

The whole point of creating a "special" such as this is that you make it yourself instead of buying it, and cars of this kind are certainly welcomed by spectators and make those sprints which are still organised well worth while to the clubs concerned with them. — W. B.



On Craigslist:

Buyer beware!

1968 Ferrari 488 GTB

\$1,200

☺ Driven 62,000 miles

⚙ Automatic transmission

📍 Listed 6 days ago in Falmouth, KY

Member Notes

Update from Marja:

The August 27 Santa Cruz tour to Carmel Valley was the first drive of the year for me! Winter was particularly bad and the cool weather lingered until late April. Road conditions were not great in the San Lorenzo Valley with many partial and several full closures. Bear Creek Road finally opened on the Santa Clara side of Summit in late June. The road washed away near the former Presentation Center. And for a few months the Santa Cruz side was closed also near Hopkins Gulch. Hwy 9 had issues near Saratoga and all along SLV. It was quite a mess. For a while the only way to Santa Clara from Boulder Creek was via Scotts Valley and Hwy 17!

The wind storm that hit at the end of March toppled many trees and there are huge piles of wood chips and in many cases wood rounds all over the place. The rounds are slowly disappearing - firewood. So all in all it was not conducive to get out in the MG for quite some time.

When conditions improved I changed the oil and filter and topped up the radiator then took the car for a test drive only to discover I had little brake pedal movement. After consulting several SSTs folks I bought a master cylinder but postponed doing the job as I had my entire fence replaced - I lost most of it in the wind storm along with my tool shed. The house also had roof water issues... (Now finally all is fixed and the fencing near the MG carport was pushed out so that space is 2ft wider now.)

It was nice to drive the TF! I've missed getting out and about in it...Covid and bad weather... it seems like it's been sitting too much.

September 24: I drove 200 miles in the TF in "dapper attire": I participated in a 100 mile drive with a small group in Monterey for the Distinguished Gentleman's Drive <https://www.gentlemansdrive.com/> - a global fund raiser for prostate cancer and men's mental health. Friends and family donated \$1600 of the nearly \$4000 our little group raised. I suggest our MG groups participate next year, **September 29, 2024**, as we love driving our cars and the money goes to a worthy cause.

PS - I appreciate your Octagon write-ups! I miss getting a monthly wind Machine, but I so understand the effort the publications take! How you find the time I do not know. Thanks again!

Tom's Racing from Bev Morgan:

It's not easy for Tom to be "sidelined" at a vintage race. We went to a CSRG event in the spring and watched the afternoon races from above Turns 7 and 8. I asked "How are you doing?" and he replied, "Put me in, Coach," (from the John Fogerty song "Centerfield").

E-type Update from Andy Preston:

The engine will be ready next week if all goes well. I've installed the evaporator into the E type and installed the 2 AC hoses that connect to it and done all the wiring and it works! Well, the fan works on all 3 speeds. It's very slow going as I fit everything and then remove it and reinstall it.

I'm going to do a trial fit of the 5 speed into the E type tomorrow. There's going to be a lot of massaging and metal trimming to make it fit.

Now I've had the 5 speed in and out 3 times and do a little more metal trimming and panel massaging each time and almost have it. I do a little more hammer work tomorrow and then I think I'm done.

OD from Mike Jacobsen:

I remember that after I put the 5-speed in my car I expected to see the previous road speeds but at lower revs. What happened is that the revs stayed the same and I just went faster.

MGs (not) in Portugal from Andy:

I haven't seen any MGs in Portugal but saw this TR4 in Lisbon.



Marja in Dapper Attire



Editor Notes



MiGi kit cars
pictured above.



Lucas Oil Engine Stabilizer is good stuff. Their new gear oil may be worth a try for noisy or hard shifting gearboxes.

New Lithium Source

The world's largest deposit of lithium has been found in Utah. Good news for the US and for electric cars - allowing for all the water and fossil energy and heavy-metal ground clean-up required to mine it!

I fear the Beetle is worth more than a kit TD these days. We may see people converting kit cars back to Beetles. Someone stored these boxes for decades!

Classified Ads

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

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.rococoart.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 MGOCSE.org



Distributor Woes

From MG Experience web blog

John Griffiths, Fairfax, CA

Can you help? My trusty MGB/GT 1967 has been running well but last week they let me down. It started to lose power so that I could barely pull away and when I restarted it, it just popped and banged backfiring. It would turn over just fine. A friend helped me diagnose the problem and we think it may need a new distributor.

I do have a replacement engine in it and wondered how would I find the correct distributor for it. Currently has a traditional distributor with points. Any thoughts or suggestions on replacement distributors and if I should try electronic one? Any thoughts or suggestions appreciated

Bill Masquelier, Santee, CA

Before you buy anything else- go to NAPA and buy an el29 condenser and replace yours with it. You may be surprised!

Joseph Baba, Fresno, CA

Yes, to be really BLUNT< that distributor is pretty nasty. The Vac unit looks like it is a hundred years old. When was the last time, you did a tuneup, and replaced the points, or at least adjust them? The distributor ITSELF is 'INFINITELY REPAIRABLE' no need to replace it. Just service it.

Armand Breard, Monroe, LA

Try Jeff Schlemmer at Advanced Distributors. He rebuilds Lucas distributors, and has a large inventory to work from. His work is of high quality. Also, British Vacuum unit is good.

Allan R, Randlay, Telford, Shropshire, UK

If that's an original Lucas distributor. KEEP IT. As said, they are infinitely repairable and rebuildable, and what's more, far better than most of the eastern imported rubbish.

The vacuum units are rebuildable too!

Jeff Schlemmer, Shakopee, MN

If I had to guess, your points closed up until your timing was so far retarded that you fouled the spark plugs. Treat the ignition as a system. Its not just a distributor.

Go to Napa (nowhere else) and order in new points, condenser, and a cap that fits a 69-74 MGB - not 62-68. Get a set of NGK plug wires or Moss's Cobalt wires. Order a new set of NGK BP6ES spark plugs and gap them to .025". BPR6ES is NOT a suitable replacement IMHO.

Now, adjust your valve lash per the manual and either clean and lube your own distributor or get it rebuilt (in which case you don't need to buy new points/condenser.) Most new distributors are not made well. By buying new, you could be trading a dirty Rolex for a clean knock-off Timex from Walmart.

Mike Dolimpio, Phoenix, AZ

Your best bet is to have Jeff, rebuild yours, The outcome is amazing.

<https://www.advanceddistributors.com/>

Sam Gwynn, Beaumont, TX

While you're in there, I'd suggest replacing the heater control valve. If it's leaking it'll eat up any distributor.

Some folks asked about resistor spark plugs in our MGs. Response:

Jeff Schlemmer, Shakopee, MN

Well, for a few years, that's all that was available. Added resistance in the HT circuit heats the coil and can cause failures is the short answer. Our cars prefer 500-1000 Ohms per wire and non-resistor plugs, like NGK or Cobalt wires and BP6ES plugs. Originally they were designed for 0 Ohms per cylinder with copper wires and non-resistor plugs. Then we added resistive wires which can range from 500 - 10k Ohms each. Remember that value doubles with the coil wire being used for all cylinders. Resistor plugs start at 5k Ohms, can be 7.5k or 10k+. Most of the coils on the market are of unknown origins - hidden by the resellers because they are made in countries we don't like to talk or hear about. Pair a new Lucas coil with some mediocre wires and resistor plugs and you'll have a short life expectancy. I've found that 5k Ohms per cylinder is enough to start causing drivability issues, and that's where resistor plugs start. I'm simply not a fan, and when the alternative is available, why not use them?



Brake Drum Balancing?

A member of the Vintage MG Club reported that he had to get one of his front brake drums (TD) balanced to eliminate a persistent vibration. The following report from the UK confirms this as a possibility when you can't find that elusive shake.

Wheel wobble, despite balanced 18" wire wheels, proved to be my limiting factor at speed. Subsequent testing upon returning home revealed the "wobble culprit" to be the brake drums themselves – I sorted this via static balancing using Bob Schapel's finely balanced and friction free hub and bearing. Two drums needed 70grams of lead weight fixed between the fins and the other two 50 grams each. Subsequently checked on road testing and later at Winton confirmed resolution of the shaking problem.



Ed: Ceramic tire beads will compensate for some imbalance.

New Members!

Welcome Robert Silva of Alameda with a 1969 MGB/GT



Balancing brake drums...

Source: MMM Register

Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!



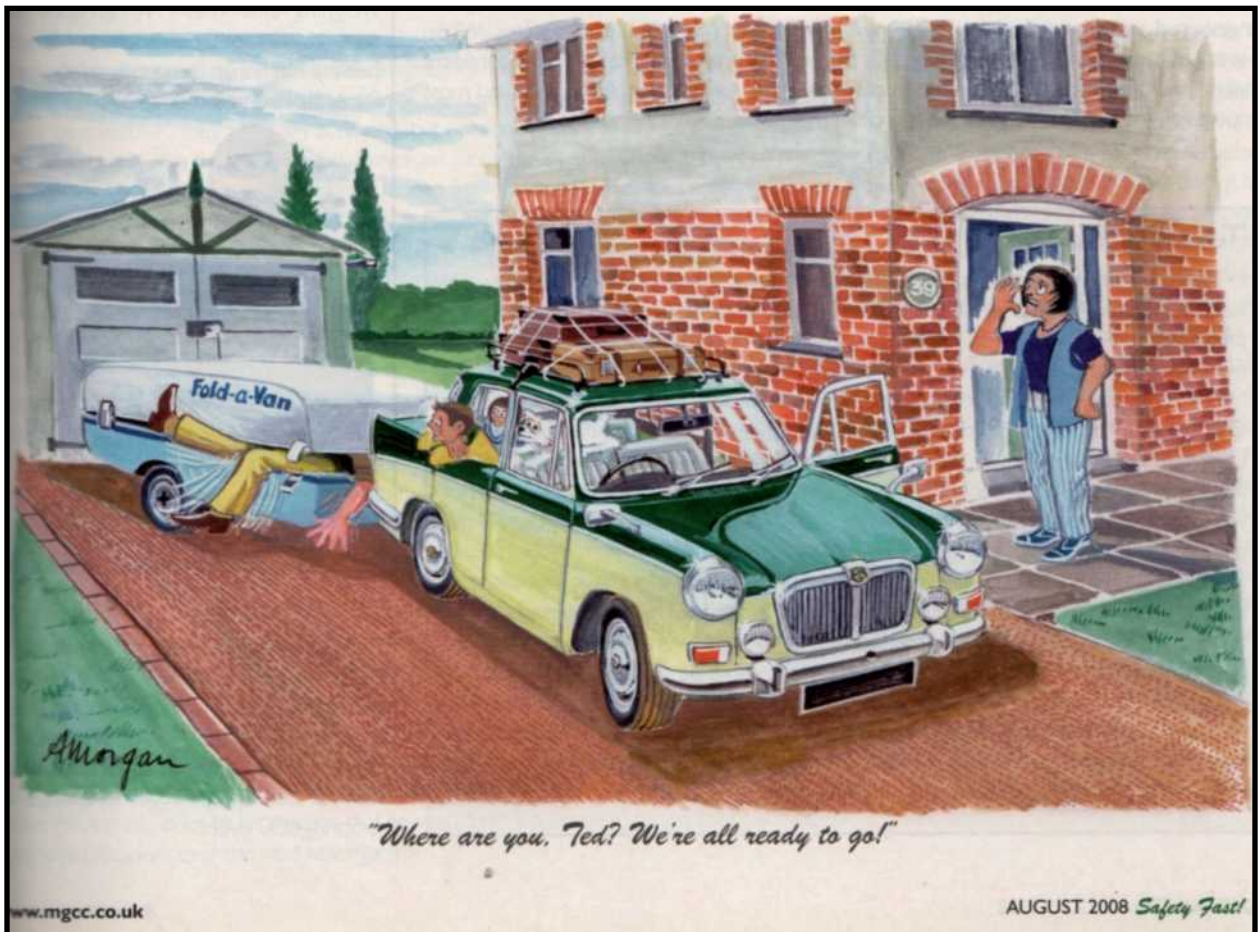
Join over 2,000 enthusiastic owners in the restoration, preservation, and sheer enjoyment of driving an MGA, Magnette, or variant of this noble breed. You'll receive six bi-monthly issues of MGA!, our full-color, award winning magazine, invitations to National and Regional Get-Togethers throughout the 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.



North American MGB Register



from
**Safety
Fast**
magazine



Brian Linke rides with
Chris Patterson
Photo: Suzy Savage

