



# THE OCTAGON

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



**Since 1957!**



Aviation Museum Tour  
Large photo: Andy Preston  
Inset: Mark McGothigan

## March 2022

St. Paddy's Day Tour  
on March 16. See  
page 3

## About *The Octagon* and the MG Owners Club

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

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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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### 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). 2022 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, 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.

### 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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## ***St. Paddy's Day Tour, Wed. March 16, 2022 To Moylan's Irish Brewery & Pub for lunch***



**Date:** Wednesday, March 16, 2022 **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 9:30 for a 10:00 departure



**Tour:** This year St. Patrick's Day falls on a Thursday so we're holding the tour one day early. We will be driving the backroads of Marin and Sonoma and finishing up an authentic Irish Pub, Moylan's Brewery and Pub in Novato for lunch. Corn Beef and Cabbage is on the menu. 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 and past the Nicasio reservoir. Our first stop will be at the Petaluma Creamery and Ice Cream shop for a short break and enjoy coffee, snacks and of buy some wonderful cheeses.

We will leave Petaluma Creamery, and drive through the Chileno Valley, which is one of the most scenic areas of West Sonoma and Marin especially at this time of year. Our final destination will be Moylan's Brewery & Pub in Novato.

**There will only be one check so please bring CASH.**

**Please RSVP:** to Andy or Marla Preston at 707 795 3480 or [marlapreston@hotmail.com](mailto:marlapreston@hotmail.com) by March 10<sup>th</sup> so we can confirm lunch reservations.



# From the Editor

Welcome, Spring!

24 February 2022

As I sit bundled by an electric heater, I do think of Spring soon to arrive. (38 degrees this morning.) This old man's thoughts turn to car events. We are planning a trip to the Bay soon but cannot get away for the St. Paddy event. However I plan to get to the Sorry Safari Wine Tour, Lord willing. I am making plans for the GOF West and considering the MGA meet in Colorado. I would love to drive to the GOF Central in Wisconsin, too, and combine that with visits to my father and family. That may be too far and too much.

I have been working a bit on the two MGs. The big news is that my car-painter brother-in-law has re-sprayed scarred areas of the MGA coupe. Looks great! I have gotten most everything working on it after its transplant and been on some shakedown runs. I am unhappy with the distributor and may try to go back to an original points unit. Perhaps I am just used to them and have a lifetime supply of new point sets.

Happy trails (trials?) to you!

**Dan**

**HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY**



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APR09



50 years ago! - teenage Dan with first British sports car as purchased, 1972  
Broken down at Abingdon, Illinois  
(Properly diagnosed as a bad coil)  
1961 TR3A - Loved my 1st car.  
**What a face! What did the other guy look like?**



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# Clubs Tour to the Oakland Aviation Museum

## Feb. 26, 2022

What a wonderful treat it was to visit the OAM & park our MGs adjacent to those fabulous airplanes. It was a long drive, in a vintage auto, from Marin County but so well worth it!

I was told that you would appreciate photos of the MGs & airplanes. Here are a few. There were other MG folks taking photos, one with a high quality camera.

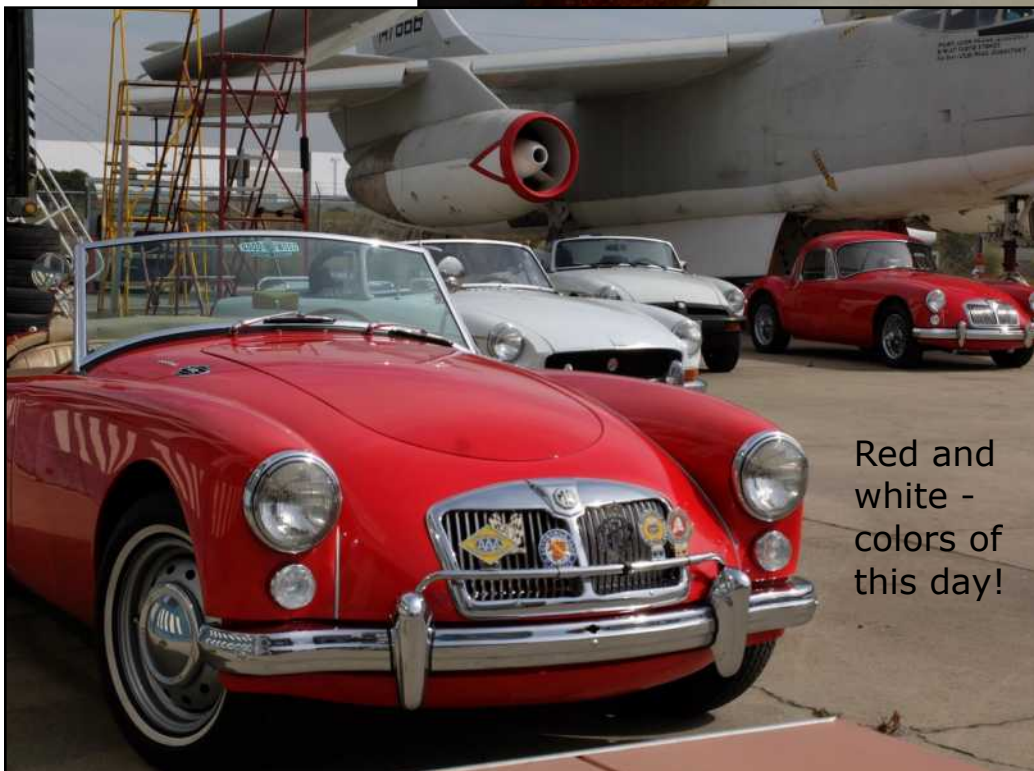
If you surmised that the red 1962 MGA 1600 MK II, with all the badges, is my mine, you would be correct. You may use any of these as you wish. That is my present to you for keeping this history alive.

Cheers, Marty Rayman  
MG Owners Club, Sorry  
Safari Touring Society

Below: Marla and Judy  
by Andy Preston



Historic planes  
inside museum



Red and  
white -  
colors of  
this day!



Kirk and Amy  
Pics by Marty Rayman





Geoffrey Locquenutte & Nelson: On the Road

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ANN LANDERS

## Car Obsession Is Driving Her Nuts

**D**EAR ANN: I've been married for three years to the most wonderful man. I would not trade him for anything. But there's one thing about this guy that bothers me a lot, and I'm afraid to bring it up.

"Luke" owns a car. It's old, it's ugly and it hasn't run in years. I'm sure that at one time it was pretty sensational, but it would take a lot of time and a ton of money to make it that way again. Before we were married, this car took up space in his parents' garage. We towed it to our first residence and then had it towed again to our present home, where it sits in the garage.

Ann, Luke hasn't worked on this car in years. Because of money constraints and the possibility of having children soon, I don't believe that he will ever get this piece of junk running. Meanwhile, it takes up space we could use. Luke's family and I have despaired of bringing up the subject without risking a big fight.

I know this car represents something important to my husband, but I wish it weren't such an albatross. How do I persuade him that it's time to let it go?

—TAKE MY CAR, PLEASE

**DEAR T.M.C. PLEASE:** Accept the old Katrinka as a permanent albatross. You don't have to feed it. Sounds as if your husband has an emotional attachment to the old rattletrap that defies logic.

Some differences between man and wife just aren't worth fighting about, and this is one of them.

Lifted from the **Abingdon Rough Rider Review** - from one of our members? My wife?



# President's Ponderings

## Oakland Aviation Museum

Many thanks to Kirk and Amy for organizing the wonderful tour of the Oakland Aviation Museum. As Kirk indicated, we were able to park our MGs on the tarmac next to some tremendous planes and get some fabulous photos. My favorite was the BOAC (British Overseas Airways Corporation) Flying Boat, which we were able to go inside. This plane was used in the movie "Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark" with a very young looking Harrison Ford. Several memorabilia of the movie are on display inside the plane. Thanks again to Kirk for a wonderfully organized day.



## "If it ain't broke don't fix it"

I'm probably one of the worst offenders of my own adage. Even when things are running well I just have to try and improve them even when they don't need it. Fact in question; I retrieved my MGA Coupe from its winter nap for Kirk's tour on Wednesday. It started right up and ran great. Marla and I drove to Sonoma and back around 40 miles and it never missed a beat. However, I decided to check the dwell and timing. The dwell (points gap) was  $66^\circ$  and it should be  $60^\circ \pm 3^\circ$ . I tried to adjust the points in the car but that didn't work so I removed the distributor and adjusted them on the workbench to 15 thou. The dwell was perfect at  $60^\circ$  but the timing was way off so I adjusted that  $12^\circ$  BTDC at idle and the car ran like crap. It was coughing and spluttering and missing like crazy.

Why didn't I leave things along, what have I done? Like Dan, I have a life-time supply of points and condensers but found something better a couple of years ago. It's a "new points plate" with all the components attached so you just swap it out and everything is new again. This way you're not fiddling around and replacing one component at a time. Voila! it worked and the car runs fine again. In fact we've just driven over 250 miles in the last couple of days. These points plate and other distributor parts are available from 'British Vacuum Units' and are only \$39.95 each. I have no personal interest in this vendor but think he provides a good product.

## Club Advisor Program

If you haven't noticed, on page 2 of the Octagon is a list of members who are willing to help answer questions on particular cars. We have recently added some new advisors so if you need help please don't hesitate to give them a call. Getting help from other members is a wonderful resource of our club.

## St. Paddy's Day Tour

This is always a fun event and we have a wonderful route planned out for you and at this time of year, the hills are wonderful velvet green. The tour is on March 16; and for more information, see the flyer in the edition. BTW, if your MG isn't running or if you prefer to drive a modern car that's OK. We don't care; we just want to see you.

## 1952 Cars; MG TD needed



The Bon Air center in Greenbrae lets us hold our **MGs by the Bay** car show on their parking lot every year for free! They also supply all the tents, tables and chairs and power for free! This year they celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and would like to showcase 70-year-old cars as part of their Birthday Party celebration. They have contacted me to see if any of our members would be willing to participate in their celebration. It's on May 7<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 2pm. It would be great if we could help them out. Please contact me for additional information.

Hope to see you on the road!

**Andy**





# Gasohol Attack! - New Floats

By Dan Shockey

With my old MGs, it seems that they run great for quite a while but periodically go through a 'stage' where problems seem to layer and multiply. I encountered such a stage with my 1935 MG PA last spring. You would think that an 87-year-old would be past having such stages.

The MG would start and run fine but poop out after 2-3 blocks. After hopeful starts, I made several turn-arounds at the same place while debugging the problems. First I discovered that the fuel pump was weak and would not keep up with demand except at idle or for a few minutes of heavier running. I had been running the old pump for 20+ years so I had purchased a spare pump to be ready for the old one to fail. However the new pump included a diode in the top cover that caused it to interfere with the carburetor. I had trouble remounting the pump but finally determined I could mount it at a bit of an angle to gain just enough clearance.

I continued to have running problems despite the stronger pump flow. I checked the fuel filter and other common problems and worked to ensure that the float levels were set correctly. I have heard that the change of fuel properties affects the level required for good running. I removed the pistons to observe the fuel levels. Just below the bridge is good, 1 mil or perhaps 2mm if you have gone metric.

I should mention that the P has only 35hp so that any poor running is immediately apparent. I tried different float shut-off needles. I had the nitron tip needles installed but have heard that these can be a problem with the high alcohol fuel. The Gross jet needles gave me fits in the past, probably also due to fuel. They would often stick closed. One time I found that both were stuck at once in Bob Wall's GT! So I put back some old solid metal needles.

I still had problems and upon further investigation found that one float had some gas inside. It wasn't much but I could slosh it around and could see the difference in float height and resilience compared to the 'dry' one. I got a new float from eBay and that really helped. However the other float soon took on some gas as well. I was getting frustrated! I got another float but heard that high levels of alcohol in the fuel will attack the soft solder sealing the brass floats and cause leaks. But I also heard that Burlen makes a solid float that cannot take on fuel. (The 10% alcohol/gasoline blended fuel in Britain is known as "E10.")

So while I had Mr. Toad, my P-type, running strong (a relative term in this case), I didn't want to face this problem again. The Burlen floats are spendy but I ordered a pair while they had them in stock. Total price with shipping was about \$100 for two. I was pleased with the service and response. Of course, I have not got around to replacing them yet.

The P uses the small T1 size floats as used by early Sprites and similar cars. The T2 size is the one for T-types, MGAs, and early MGBs. Burlen offers these and also floats for HS and HIF carbs. Check their website, <http://sucarb.co.uk>, and you may want to email their customer service to make sure you get the right part and that they have stock. I saw that some were 'temporarily' out of stock. The UK has gone to 'E10' gasohol (10% alcohol) so are seeing problems now as well.

What 'phase' will what MG go through next?

We list AUE 897 which is the T1 Stay-Up float. This is made from a closed cell foam material, these floats are also puncture proof which removes the problem of the floats sinking. These are also resistant to the modern ethanol.

We have plenty in stock, priced at £30.39+vat and shipping.

Customer Services Advisor

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E10 is a vicious solvent and will eat into your carb bodies, corks, lead solder on your floats, and so on. It is heavily hygroscopic and so will also rot the bottom out of your mild steel fuel tank. - Rich, Vintage MG Parts (UK)

The new adjustable height StayUp® float is resistant to modern ethanol based fuels and has a military spec closed cell construction making it puncture proof. The ability to adjust the float arm allows for quick and easy minor alterations to float levels where required.

The material specified was used by the S.U Carburettor Company for military installations in the 1980s where a guaranteed fail safe operation was critical. Due to the close link between S.U and AMAL today (both owned by Burlen Fuel Systems Ltd) the secret behind the material has been released and upgraded for the manufacture of this float making it virtually unsinkable.



# How Does the MGC Compare to the MGB?

By William T. Doyle, MGOC Member

## Introduction

The arrival of the MGC in the fall 1967 was greeted with very mixed reactions from both car enthusiasts and the British motoring press. The introduction of the MGC can be described as one of the most controversial sports cars ever produced by the British Motor Corporation (BMC) in Abingdon, UK during its short production life (1967-1969). The arrival of the MGC was partly due to the weakening sales of the Austin Healey 3000 and the fact that the original design of the MGB monocoque structure was capable of taking a larger power plant than the 1800 cc engine used in the MGB.

When the automotive engineers at BMC decided on producing a 6-cylinder MG, they decided to utilize



the same unibody of the MGB to save on production costs while beefing up engine bay supports for a larger and heavier engine it would eventually have.

## The MGC and MGB Power Plants

The biggest difference between the two MG models is that the MGC has a 2912cc inline 6-cylinder motor whereas the MGB has an 1800cc 4-cylinder engine. Although the 1800cc motor did have several variations over its lifespan, the inline 6-cylinder motor of the MGC remained basically unchanged throughout its short-lived production years in the late sixties. The MGC has an output of 145 HP @5250 rpm compared to around 95 HP @5400 rpm for the MGBs. The MGC's most recognizable feature is the motor under the bonnet and the bonnet itself. Two bulges on the bonnet were necessary to allow for the clearances of the forward repositioned radiator and the centering of the twin 1 ¾"HS6 carburetors on the intake manifold. Due to the larger engine, the weight of the MGC was increased up to 600 pounds over the MGB. A torsion bar suspension using a wishbone design and conventional shock absorbers was utilized, as well as standard 15" road wheels rather than the 14" wheels on the MGB that made the MGC handle very differently than the MGB.

## Automatic Transmission

Although an automatic transmission was offered on later MGBs as an option, nearly 30% of the production run of MGC had a Borg-Warner type 35 automatic transmission. And nearly all of the automatic MGCs were exported overseas. To allow for this device, the engineers at British Motors had to enlarge the transmission tunnel and this design change was inherited in the production of the MGBs from 1967-1980. In fact, the front structure and engine mounts had to be redesigned for the larger and heavier MGC engine and the design changes were inherited in MGB models from 1967-1980. Because of the larger transmission tunnel and beefed-up engine supports, these engineering changes allowed for installation of the Rover V8 engines produced between 1972-1976 with relative few body design changes for the MGB GT V8.

If you didn't want an automatic transmission on your MGC, a four-speed manual was offered with electronic overdrive as optional equipment. The MGB also offered electronic overdrive as optional equipment. However, I have never seen an MGC without overdrive where as I have seen many MGBs without overdrive.

Above: The author's red MGC/GT vs. his orange MGB. Photos from the author.

### Other Differences Between the MGC and MGB

While most of the body panels and interior items are interchangeable, there are a few items that are not readily interchangeable. A one-inch larger diameter steering wheel made the MGC turning a bit easier. The seat frames were lower to the floor than in the MGB due to the clearance required from the torsion bars located directly below the seat rails. While most of the instrument panel is similar, the gauges for tachometer and speedometers are slightly different. Dual brake servos were used on the MGC to provide better braking assist, again, due to the added weight up front.



The production numbers of the MGC were 8,999 with manufacture split almost equally between the Tourer and the GT. During the same productions years, BMC produced 85,147 MGBs in both Tourer and GT models.

I did find some differences between UK and export models of the MGC. Besides the obvious left vs right side driving setup, the UK models had a glove box on the left side where as the export models had a padded dash (also called the "Abingdon Pillow") on the right side. This was due to US Department of Transportation regulations drafted in 1967 for padded dash board stating all import vehicles need a padded dash board. However, BMC engineers decided to adopt this safety feature starting with their 1967 models for both the MGB and MGC. Head rests were offered in 1969 models for the MGC and MGB as options as well as shoulder seat belts. Therefore, you may see some MGCs with no head rest and only lap belts installed or some other combination of these safety devices.

Another difference between the US and UK MGCs were the tail lights. For the UK and European models, the top part of the rear taillight was amber and the lower part was red. Whereas for the US models, the rear taillights were entirely red.

### Summary

One of my frustrations with owning and showing my MGC is that to the novice classic car enthusiast the MGC often mistaken for an MGB. In fact, I entered my 1969 MGC/GT in a local show in 2020 and was lumped into the same class as the MGBs, again adding to my frustration over this confusion. In either form, the Tourer or GT models, they do look very similar but upon further inspection the MGB and the MGC are very different vehicles.

I love my 1969 MGC/GT and feel the model gets a bad rap even to this day. However, I have never regretted owning one. I owned two MGBs before purchasing my MGC in 2018 and I never felt 100% safe in those cars on the interstate because I was always concerned the lack of power in the MGB to pass trucks and slower vehicles. That is not the case with my MGC as it has enough power to do what you need to on the highway. I also installed Pirelli P7000 185/R15 tires on my MGC. These have nearly eliminated the understeering issue it may have had.

Above: The much longer MGC motor vs. the compact MGB unit.



## Brief technical specifications of the MGC

Engine Capacity: 2912cc

Number of Cylinders: 6 in line

Bore & Stroke: 83.34mm x 88.9mm

Compression ratio: 9.0:1

Valve Gear: Pushrod overhead valve

Max. Power: 145 bhp @ 5,250 rpm

Max. Torque: 170lb/ft @ 3,400 rpm

Carburation: twin horizontal 1 3/4" SU's type HS6

Clutch & Gearbox: Four speed all synchromesh with single plate Borg & Beck 9" clutch. Optional Laycock overdrive.

Suspension: Independent front by wishbone and adjustable torsion bar. Anti roll bar and telescopic hydraulic dampers.

Rear; Live axle, half elliptic leaf springs and hydraulic lever arm dampers.

Brakes: Girling front disc and rear wheel drum with vacuum servo assistance.

Wheels and Tires: Pressed steel disc with five stud-fixing. Optional center lock wire spoke wheels. All with 5" rims.

Tires: 165 HR 15 radial.

Dimensions: Front track; 4'2". Rear track; 4'1.25".

Wheelbase: 7' 7".

Number Built: 1967-1969. Roadster; 4,542. GT; 4,457 for a total of 8,999

Performance: 0-60 in 10 secs.

Top speed: 120 mph.

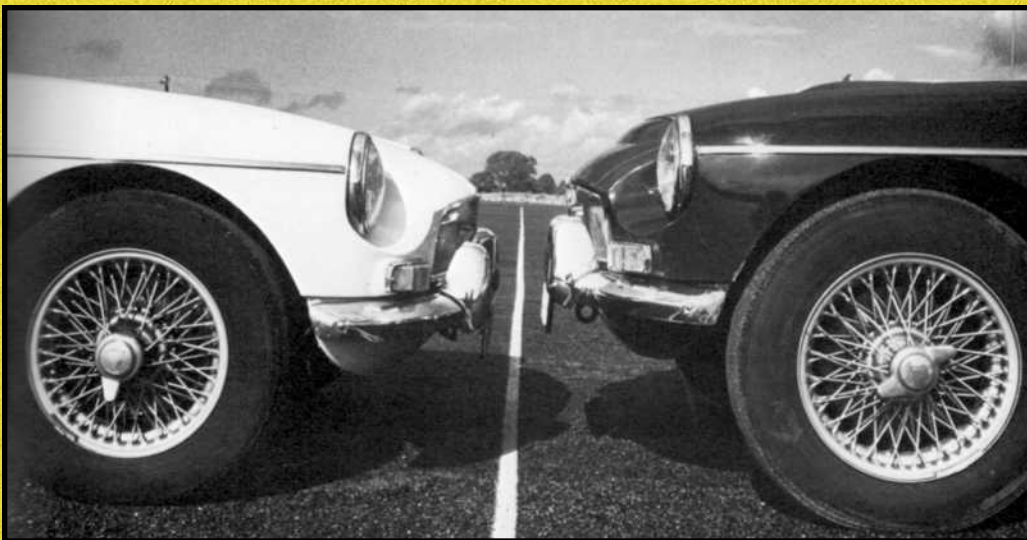
Fuel consumption: approx. 19.3 mpg.

Price new in 1967: Tourer; £1,102 (\$1,491). GT; £1,249 (\$1,690)



Many thanks in preparing this article to Keith Sanders' book, **MGB the Illustrated History**, and the MG Owner's Club.

*William T. Doyle, "Tom" is the proud owner of the 1969 MGC/GT. He has owned three MGs since 2009: a 1978 MGB Roadster, a 1976 MGB Roadster, and an MGC/GT. Tom lives with his lovely wife Heidi on the North Shore of Lake Tahoe and belongs to the MG Owners Club of Northern California, The Reno British Car Club, the American MGC Register Association, and the North America MG Register. He enjoys writing about British sports cars but would rather drive one than write about them!*



The revised front suspension, bonnet bulge and taller wheels, 15" vs. 14," make the MGC look larger. From **MG by McComb**

**Subject:** Good Deed for a Green MGA

**From:** MARK DARLEY <markdarley@mac.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 24, 2021

I was in Napa one day when a woman walked up to me and told me that her father had 3 MGAs while a pilot. She then noticed the wing decal on the windscreen and exclaimed:

"What an amazing coincidence. That is the airline my father worked for. Who owned this car?"

Turns out her father and the former owner of my car, a remarkable woman named Doris, knew each other.

When I drove up to his care home in Napa to take him for a ride, she presented me with a brand new airline decal that he had found clearing his loft. It replaced the ratty one I had on the windscreen.

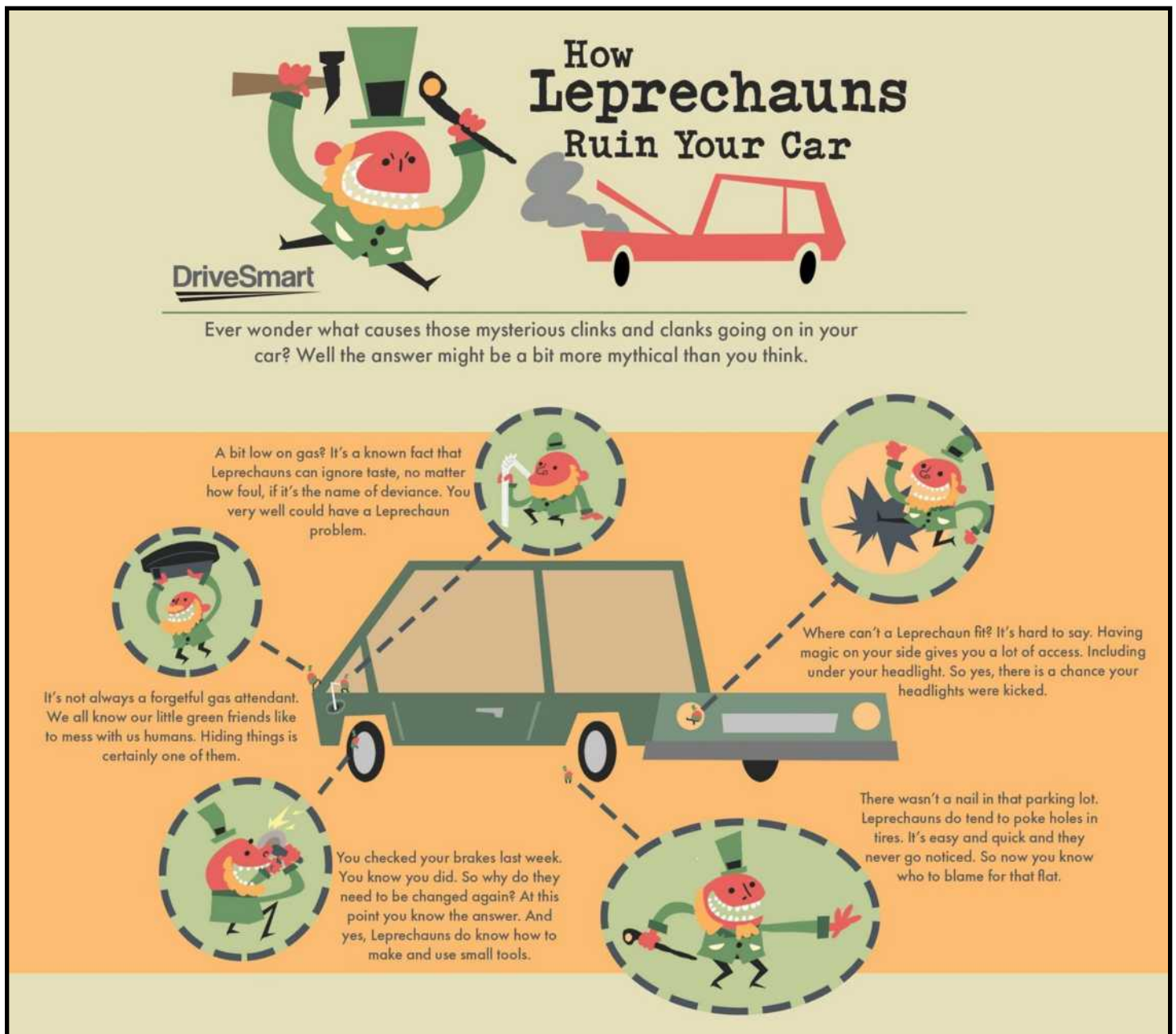
I took him for a ride, and a burger and beer, and all were happy!

These cars have great stories to tell!!!

Best regards

Mark

*P.S. If you know of someone with MGA steel wheels to sell, please let me know. Mine are running out of meat in the lug holes.*





# Overcoming Trials in an MG

By Dan Shockey

"Trialling in the 1920s and 1930s in Britain was the motor spectator sport of the day, be it the event for motorcycles or for cars. Up to 3000 people would stay for five or six hours on each hill to watch the antics of the riders, drivers and passengers. The events were then fully reported in the local papers and the national motoring press. Thus for a particular make of vehicle to do well was excellent advertising." (Mike Dalby, 'The MG Midget's Competition Debut,' *The Triple M Yearbook*, 2009)

With the rushed introduction of the MG M-type Midget, the immediate item of business was to prep four pre-production cars for the first major trial possible. This was the 1929 Motor Cycling Club's **Land's End Trial**. Chassis were yanked from the production line and bodied on a rush basis. Assembly of the second, third and fourth Midgets ever built started just a few days before they embarked on this Trial.

Remarkably all four Midgets finished the event with two gaining gold medals and two gaining silver. Gold medals

were awarded for penalty-free runs. The other two failed the Bluehills Mine trial section. "So for Cecil Kimber and the first MG Midget, it was a triumph of publicity and paved the way for the popularity of the car." (Dalby)

The trials included both long timed road sections and rough hill climbs. These are known as, "trials hills," and were often little more than a sheep track up a steep slope with sharp bends. Unpaved, they featured loose dirt and rock, and often ledges and boulders, much like you would associate with 4-wheel-drive events today. But they were run with fairly standard, often bog-standard, cars with road tires. If the hill wasn't slippery enough, the organizers sometimes would

water the course. And often made you stop and start again on the middle of the steepest part of the climb!

The cars were run two-up with the passenger acting as "bouncer." His or her job was try to gain extra traction by bouncing the car at the best time to avoid getting stuck or bogged down. Some of the allure was watching the bouncer at work, trying to assist without bouncing out of the car!





With these rough tracks on farm ground, the car often had to ford running streams as well. These "water splashes" remain popular for period MGs today.

MG was very successful at these events, probably the most successful of any manufacturer despite the low horsepower of these cars.



By the mid-30s, lightweight specials were showing up, often with (Ford) V8 power. MG could not be

involved directly but assisted private owners to succeed. Three-car teams were popular additions to the sport. Nearly all models of MGs participated with J2 Midgets common even after WWII. TA models were later used with 1500cc VA engines, some bored out to 1700cc. Most MG trails 'team' cars were supercharged.

The two famous MG teams were the "Cream Crackers" and the "Musketeers." The "Crackers" were named for a popular snack cracker with the same colours as the cars. They started with PA Midgets, then PBs and later TAs. The "Musketeers" often ran the larger 6-cylinder MGs but occasionally the Midgets as well and later switched to TAs. The cars were named after the Three Musketeers: Athos, Porthos and Aramis. More than half of all these team cars survive. In the 1936-1938 period, the Musketeers won 26 team awards, 59 individual awards and 83 first class awards, thus keeping MG in the sporting forefront despite its withdraw from racing.

Today trials are still popular in Britain and many of the old cars still compete, both in regular events and in historic events, often run on the old hills. "Softer" club events are run on bumpy, grassy fields, with a water splash whenever possible. I tried to get interest in something like that when I lived in Oregon but only found one other guy interested. Lots of suitable land there. MG owners were not willing to take their prizes off road and I caught it if there was even any gravel on a tour.

Previous page: One of the 1st four Midgets on the Land's End Trial.

Trialling today in a similar Midget, and in the water splash and in mud.

Above: Trials were popular in Australia, too. This lady 'benefits' from spectator assistance in a period trial.

Midgets are still trialling. Like my oft-quoted father says about doctors, "they are still practicing."







# Keep Planning for 2022



Morgan has updated their 3-wheeler and uses tall skinny tires, now 20" instead of 19," mimics move by BMW from 19" to 20" for its i3 electric car. Same tires?

See page 18.



## SPRING

Sat., Mar. 12: Winery Tour (SSTS). MGOC welcome

**Wed, Mar. 16: St. Patrick's Day Tour, Marla & Andy Preston (See page 3)**

March 18: Pub Night, Morgan Hill (See below)

March 22: Clovis Brit Car Round Up (See February)

April 22-24: Sierra Tour (Sorry Safari Club)

**Fri, Apr. 29: Marin Drive, Bundy/DeMayo/Rayman**



## SUMMER

May 22: Dixon All British Meet

June 6-10: NAMGAR GT in Colorado Springs

**June 27 - July 1: GOF West, Buellton near Solvang. 50th Anniversary. (2023 will be in Stockton.)**

**July 16: MGs by the Bay, Bon Air, Greenbrae**

July 11-15. GOF Central & NAMMMR Annual Meet, La Crosse, Wisconsin

## Pub Night! Mar. 18 - *Virus permitting!* On The Road Again - Morgan Hill

16840 Joleen Way, Unit G4

Our next Pub Night of the season will be Friday, March 18th. Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship. (6pm to 9pm)

Please bring some wine or beer to share and we will provide snacks. Please confirm the event on our web site.

Thanks, Rachel



# Sebring Success, 1961

## 'MGA' and Sprite successes in the Florida 12-Hour Grand Prix of Endurance

Reprinted from *Safety Fast*, May, 1961

Sebring, a punishing 12 hours of racing in the high temperatures of Florida (85 degrees, this year *in March*) with famous makes from all over the world competing in the only American event that counts towards the World Sports Car Championship, and attracting top-rank drivers of every nationality.

That is what 65 starters faced on March 25 last. Two of them were 'MGA' 1600 coupes prepared by the B.M.C. Competitions Department at Abingdon and entered by the British Motor Corporation (North America): they took first and second places in their class. Two of them were Austin-Healey Sprites (*Bug-eye - before they also became MG Midgets - consider them MG Midget prototypes!*), prepared and entered by the Donald Healey Motor Company: they took second and third places in their class.

The leading MG covered 175 laps to win the 1600 c.c. Grand Touring Class and was driven by two Californians, Jim Parkinson and Jack Plaherty (who took fourth place with a Twin Cam at Sebring last year). Two British drivers, Peter Riley and John Whitmore, covered 173 laps to finish second in class, against stiff competition from Elva and Sunbeam Alpine.

The highest-placed Sprite, driven by Joe Buzetta/Glenn Carlson, covered 174 laps as runner-up in the 1150 c.c. sports class. Next, with 161 laps completed, was the Sprite driven by John Colgate (co-driver of the class-winner Sprite at LeMans last year, and a native of Oyster Bay, Long Island, and Ed Leavens (from Canada, and one of the drivers of the highest-placed Twin Cam at Sebring last year). A third Sprite was driven by Cyril Simson and Paul Hawkins (John Sprinzels's business partner) and covered 144 laps.

*There were differing body configurations for the Sprites entered. Some were fairly stock and run without hardtops. Some wore a special low-drag nose and streamlined hardtops. Perhaps the hardtops allowed them to compete as 'GT' cars rather than as 'sports cars.'*

There was some confusion about the first announced results, and the Sprites would have scored a 1-2-3 win in their class (Sports Cars, 851 to 1100 c.c. class) had it not been amalgamated with the 1150 c.c. class, which was won by a Lola. (*Hmmmm....*) Confirmed results show that the MGs were 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> overall, the Sprites 15<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and 37<sup>th</sup>, with the highest placed Sunbeam Alpine in 17<sup>th</sup> place. Overall results for all Grand Touring cars gave fourth and fifth places to the two MGs.

Once again, the 12-Hour Race was preceded by a 4-hour Grand Touring Race, and this time a Sprite finished third overall to two Fiat Abarts. It was driven by Walter Hangsten, of New Jersey. Fourth, Fifth and sixth, seventh and eighth places also went to Sprites. Third (Hangsten), fourth (Bruce McLaren), sixth (Ed Leavens) and eighth (Briggs Cunningham) went to cars entered by the Healey Company. Stirling Moss came fifth and his sister Pat seventh, co-driving with Paul Hawkins, in cars entered by John Sprinzels. (*A lot of famous drivers! - Ed.*)



Photos from the 1961 Sebring race. #65 "Midget Prototype" above finished 25th driven by Colgate & Leavens



# Member Notes

Photo: Marty Rayman



## Anniversaries from Dan Shockey:

Have you thought more about whether the MGOC should recognize our 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year? Also, MG is approaching its 100<sup>th</sup> year sometime soon. There is debate on what year that should be recognized. Maybe as early as 2023 or as late as 2029. I THINK folks will use 2025 as the year. (First year a car was advertised as an M.G.)

## Reply from Kirk Prentiss:

Very cool! Hopefully some additional members can step up and assist in the efforts to put something on. It would be good to have the recognition.

## And from Mike Jacobsen:

Donning my cold water/Devil's advocate hat here, 65 isn't a round number sort of anniversary. Does it matter that much?

## From Andy Preston:

Well, I think it's a pretty big thing, but what to do is the question and do many members really care? We should have 65th Anniversary on the awards for **MGs by the Bay**. We need to come up with a good idea. (**Member inputs?**)

## From Don Pttenger, Editor AZ MG Club:

Another great issue. I always wondered why I can't wear a baseball hat when driving our MGA; now I know. I'd love to reprint your article on, "Analysis of Airflow around an MGA."

## Reply from Marty Rayman:

I had to wait for a perfect time to read & savor "Analysis of the Airflow Around the MGA Roadster." I wonder where J.J. Cornish, III, of the Aerophysics Dept, Mississippi State Univ. got funds in Oct. 1963 for this study? After driving around in my recently acquired MGA, I really appreciated the airflow analysis. I agree with the TD article and Dan's last note. I did love driving TeD but Gary (MGA) is sooo much better to drive. I do miss looking down the bonnet at the radiator cap, telling me where my right front wheel was.

## p.s. from Marty:

Bob Bundy & I are looking forward to treating the MGoC & Sorry Safari folks to a delightful drive around the roads of Marin County in April.

## NAMGAR GT Caravan from Mike J.:

The Tilburys in B.C. are organizing a caravan to the GT. I hope the border issues are gone by then! I'm expecting I'll end up traveling solo. (Dan is considering it. Anyone else?)

## Update from Amanda Spielman in Wisconsin:

I have been ill with no energy. But I have been in touch with the Chicagoland MG club. Asked them to consider LaCrosse as a rally meet. Said they had already done it. Anyway, I will certainly want to be at the (GOF) meet in July.

There is a lot to do here, paddle boats, kayaks, riverwalk and concerts every week at the river. Good beer, coffee, fun place to be. You can even rent your own pontoon for eight and travel between the locks. Couple of nice restaurants to tie up to.

## Show news from Andy:

**MGs by the Bay** is a GO! I just heard back from Audrey and Bon Air have added our show to their calendar. It's also the 70th Anniversary of Bon Air so Audrey was hoping that we could showcase some 1952 cars. I think it would be a great idea if we could have a 1952 MG as our Poster car. Does anyone in the club or SSTs own a 1952 MG?

## Oakland Airport Tour from Kirk:

No flyer, just an email. And this is a joint club event. I hope to have 10-15 cars, and probably be lucky to get that many! (Hoping that some big weather event doesn't roll through - fingers crossed!!) Cheers,

## From Dave Marsh:

I'm hoping to move to the Eldorado Hills area (near Sacramento) this spring. The exact timing of the move is unknown.

## Nineteen-inch Radials for new BMW and MG TC! Bridgestone – 155/70/19R

Some years ago in the US, I spotted a new small car with skinny 19" wheels. It turned out to be a BMW i3 electric car. On return to Australia I did some research, to find the tyres were 155/70/19"R. Over subsequent months and years, whenever I located these tyres, there was always only one available in the whole country.

Meanwhile, my Dunlop B5s were rapidly wearing thin, then we got the news that no more were to be made, and my experience with the several copies available has not been good. I don't mind 16" wheels on my Café Racer but not on my 600,000+ mile TC which, apart from a few sojourns across Australia and back has always been on 19" wheels in the 62 years I have owned and driven it.

This led to a renewal of interest in the BMW tyres known to me as Bridgestone Ecopia 500 155/70/19R. My local Bridgestone outlet (on Canning Hwy Victoria Park) was most helpful in finding some 23 of these tyres in South Australia. Armed with this information I bit the bullet and ordered one to try. Off came the old Dunlop B5 and on went the 19" radial, an easy fit. It looked the business although the diameter was a bit smaller and it did look a bit modern, but overall, I liked it and ordered the other 3. A week later they arrived and all 4 went on to TC/9491. The tyre itself was soft and compliant and needed the minimum of balancing weights. Spinning them up on the front of the jacked-up car was the first revelation – they were round! A tentative brisk run around the block and a brief run down the freeway had me convinced they were going to be good.

A club run followed on the weekend involving a spirited 60 miles or so over undulating, twisty roads. Running with 30psi front and 32 rear, I could not believe the difference: It was like riding on air, the car felt like it was on rails (to coin a phrase), more stable than I've ever experienced, and pulled the car up beautifully when a panic stop presented itself. I've yet to try them in the wet, but I bet they are going to perform better than anything in my Dunlop past.

**Michael Sherrell, author of "TCs Forever"**

Editor's note: I Google'd the BMW i3 electric car and sure enough there it was, standing on its 19 inch wheels and skinny tyres. I tuned in to one of the video reviews where it was said that the car "has big 19 inch or 20 inch wheels and super thin (narrow) tyres to give the car a lower contact road resistance". The car was launched in 2013. I think the 19 inch wheels were on the early models and the 20 inch came later.

MG T Society, See:



<https://ttypes.org/nineteen-inch-radials-for-the-mg-tc-bridgestone-ecopia-500-series-155-70-19r/>

These 19" radial tires are intriguing, especially for a TC. They even come in Blizzaks for winter driving.

<https://www.1010tires.com/Tires/Bridgestone/Blizzak+LM-500/001626>

What looks incredibly skinny on a new BMW looks wide on an old MG. I wonder if I can find a used one to try? But I may never wear out the tires I have on my PA now. Coker sells some radials made for racing in narrow 19" sizes. (But smallest is 500x19.) - Dan



**PRODUCT INFORMATION**

Specs:	155/70R19
SKU	001626
Product Code:	001626
UTQG:	
Speed Rating:	Q
Load Index:	84
Sidewall:	BSW
UPC:	092971242145

**From \$228.00/ea**

Qty:

Availability: Yes

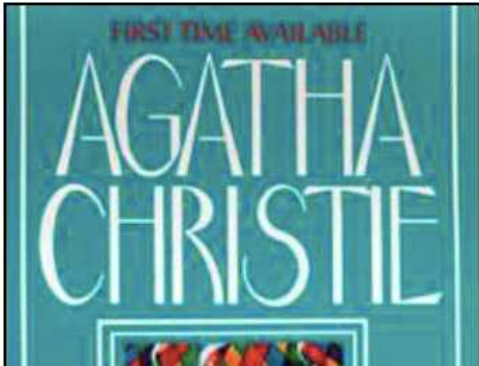
Item(s) Total: **\$912.00**

**ADD TO CART**



# The Harlequin Tea Set (short story)

## Valentine's Day



"Mr. Satterthwaite clucked twice in vexation. Whether right in his assumption or not, he was more and more convinced that CARS nowadays broke down far more frequently than they used to do. The only CARS he trusted were OLD FRIENDS (cars) who had survived the test of time. They had their little IDIOSYNCRASIES, but you KNEW about those, PROVIDED for them, FULFILLED their wants before the demand became too acute. But new cars!...."

Above: Thanks to the Wind Machine & Kirk Prentiss.

An MG YA Sedan used in an Agatha Christie TV mystery shown on PBS

## St. Patrick's Day

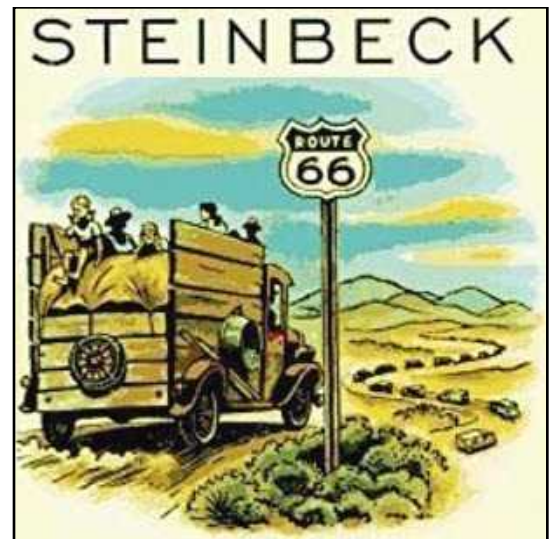


## The Grapes of Wrath

John Steinbeck in "The Grapes of Wrath" could have been thinking about how most of us drive our old cars. Does any of this sound familiar to you?

"Al, bent over the wheel, kept shifting eyes from the road to the instrument panel, watching the ammeter needle, which jerked suspiciously, watching the oil gauge and the heat indicator. And his mind was cataloguing weak points which might be the rear end, dry; and he listened to the tappets lifting and falling. He kept his hand on the gear lever, feeling the turning gears through it."

"Listen to the motor. Listen to the wheels. Listen with your ears and with your hands on the steering wheel; listen with the palm of your hand on the gearshift lever; listen with your feet on the floorboards. Listen to the pounding old jalopy with all your senses; for a change of time, what a variation of rhythm might mean. That rattle – that's tappets. Don't hurt a bit. Tappets can rattle till Jesus comes again with no harm. But that thudding as the car moves along – can't hear that – just kind of feel it. Maybe oil isn't getting someplace. Maybe a bearing startin' to go." (Michigan Rowdies)



**From:** Felix Wong, former Editor, *The Octagon*

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 23, 2022

**Subject:** MG in the UK

Last week we went to London for a couple days. The main reason was because my Spanish residence visa start date was February 10, but I had arrived on February 5. So in order to receive a residence card over here, I had to leave the EU and then come back after February 10 (with passport stamps to prove it) to be within the parameters of the residence visa. London was only two hours away and because of Brexit is not in the EU.



Anyhow, we were walking around near Piccadilly Circus when we saw this MG dealer. The funny thing is I would have totally missed it if Andrea had not pointed it out. We went inside. As you can imagine, MG has a focus on SUVs now. But at least they had an older MG TF in the showroom. They also had some memorabilia for the classics.

For what it's worth, I hardly see any MGs in Spain, just one MGF last year.

- Felix (Andrea in photo at left.)

Note: We've had two editors named Felix. This is the earlier Felix from Y2K.



## Classified Ads

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

**Wanted: MGA steel wheels**, Or 15" Mini-lite style wheels. Member Mark Darley. [markdarley@mac.com](mailto:markdarley@mac.com) (Posted 01/22)

**1967 MGB/GT Special:** BRG. 5-Speed, supercharged (Moss), with Miata seats & power windows. Mini-lite style wheels.. Enthusiast's car. Black license plate: "A 67 BGT" Runs strong. \$15,000. Member Ken Gittings, 510-791-8445 (Posted 2/22)

**1959 MGA Coupe:** Restored, New green paint & cream interior, Panasport wheels, front disc brakes, 5 main MGB motor, weber, more. \$22k on Craigslist. Located in Santa Rosa (Posted 2/22)

**1951 MG TD Mk II:** Owned for 30 years. Last ran 20 years ago but starting to burn oil. The body is straight. It has a new top. \$15,000. And...

**1967 MGB GT:** Modified for vintage racing by Nick Martin. Fuel cell, overdrive, new tires, modified suspension and brakes. With a second engine & second overdrive. Needs paint.\$2,000. Contact: [jnlhunter@gmail.com](mailto:jnlhunter@gmail.com) (Posted 2/22)

**MG TA Tickford:** Member Bill Hiland is selling his very special coach-built MG. Fewer than 40 are believed to still exist. 'Cream Crackers' paint scheme. Morgan Hill. \$75k. (409) 314-2675, [bill.otrc@gmail.com](mailto:bill.otrc@gmail.com) (Re-posted 1/22)

**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* or [MGOCSE.org](http://MGOCSE.org)





## The Real Cost of Charging Electric Vehicles

"They (electric vehicles) are a wonderful driving experience. But at the same time, they're an enormous burden in time and in energy in finding chargers and getting them charged," Anderson said. "And you're not really saving much in terms of charging costs ... you may be paying more." – Anderson, CEO of Anderson Economic Group.

Costs to drive an EV compared with a gasoline car are detailed in a report Anderson Economic released called "Comparison: Real World Cost of Fueling EVs and ICE Vehicles."

The study's findings: There are four additional costs to powering EVs beyond electricity: cost of a home charger, commercial charging, the EV tax and "deadhead" miles. For now, EVs cost more to power than gasoline costs to fuel an internal combustion car that gets reasonable gas mileage. There are significant time costs to finding reliable public chargers – even then a charger could take 30 minutes to go from 20% to an 80% charge.

You typically have to go to a commercial charger and commercial charger rates are two, three or four times that of residential charger rates." Even charging at home on a Level 1 or Level 2 charger is time consuming and expensive. An L1 charger uses a 120-volt supply of electricity and can take 20 or more hours to charge, whereas an L2 charger uses 240 volts and can charge in a few hours. The average cost of a Level 1 charger is \$600. To install a Level 2 costs \$1,600 because it requires hiring an electrician.

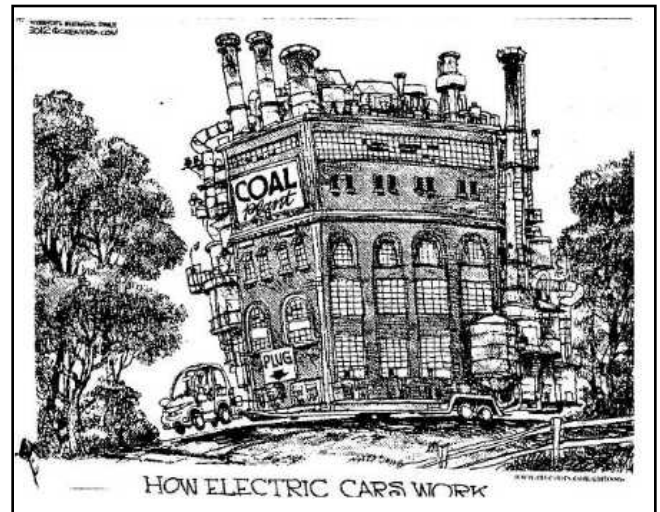
Given all of that, the conclusion is EVs cost more to "fuel" than gasoline cars that get reasonable gas mileage, Anderson said. It all depends on how the car is used and how much commercial charging is involved. A mid-priced internal combustion car that gets 33 miles per gallon would cost \$8.58 in overall costs to drive 100 miles at \$2.81 a gallon, the study found. But a mid-priced EV, such as Chevrolet Bolt, Nissan Leaf or a Tesla Model 3, would cost \$12.95 to drive 100 miles in terms of costs that include recharging the vehicle using mostly a commercial charger. *(Higher gasoline prices affect the comparison, of course.)*

On a yearly basis, assuming the mid-priced cars traveled 12,000 miles, it would cost \$1,030 to drive an internal combustion car and \$1,554 to drive an EV.

For luxury cars that get 26 miles per gallon and use premium gas at \$3.25 a gallon, the cost to drive an internal combustion car 100 miles is \$12.60. The cost to drive a luxury EV, such as a Taycan, Tesla Model S or X or Jaguar I-Pace, is \$15.52 to travel 100 miles. That is using mostly commercial chargers.

"That's apples to apples and includes the extra EV taxes, the commercial charging and the home charging and the allowance of driving to a gas station, which, for most Americans, is very short compared to driving to a commercial charger for an EV owner," Anderson said.

Also, don't plan on ever having a 100% charge on your EV, he said. "It's very difficult to charge it up to 100%," Anderson said. "The chargers slow down and the manufacturers warn you not to do it because there is additional burden on the battery system when you get your vehicle above a 90% charge."



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**North American MGB Register**



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



I find running on E60  
reduces consumption  
appreciably.

60% alcohol (120 proof)  
See page 8. Should  
have tried this in my TD  
sold in Scotland. - Dan

*Happy  
St. Patrick's  
Day*

