



# 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!*



## ANNUAL BRUNCH!



Modesto folks Walt and Atlanta (center) join Joyce and Tony in cozy Midget



# February 2024



# 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.

## DIRECTORY of MGOC OFFICERS for 2024

President: **Kirk Prentiss**, [kirkprentiss@gmail.com](mailto:kirkprentiss@gmail.com)  
Vice President: **Andy Preston**, [andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net)  
Treasurer: **Marla Preston**, [marlapreston@hotmail.com](mailto:marlapreston@hotmail.com)  
Secretary: **Mike Jacobsen**, 415-333-9699, [MikesMuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:MikesMuseum@yahoo.com)

## BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

Member-at-Large: **Mark McGothigan**, 510-633-1981, [markmc3us@yahoo.com](mailto:markmc3us@yahoo.com)  
Member-at-Large: **John Hunt**, [huntsails@comcast.net](mailto:huntsails@comcast.net)  
Member-at-Large: **George Steneberg**, 510-525-9125, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)

## APPOINTEES

Commercial Advertising: **Rick Anguiano**, 209-617-8492 [webmaster@mgocsf.org](mailto:webmaster@mgocsf.org)  
Corresponding Secretary: **George Steneberg**, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)  
Archivist: **Mike Jacobsen**, 415-333-9699, [MikesMuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:MikesMuseum@yahoo.com)  
Photographer: **Rick Anguiano**, 209-617-8492 [webmaster@mgocsf.org](mailto:webmaster@mgocsf.org)  
Registrar: **Steve Kellogg**, 408-355-4125, [webmaster@mgocsf.org](mailto:webmaster@mgocsf.org)  
T Register Director: **Jim Carlson**, 408-224-3992, [mgjim@comcast.net](mailto:mgjim@comcast.net)  
*The Octagon* Editor: **Dan Shockey**, 309-696-0803, [magnut\\_dan@hotmail.com](mailto:magnut_dan@hotmail.com)  
Webmaster: **Rick Anguiano**, 209-617-8492 [webmaster@mgocsf.org](mailto:webmaster@mgocsf.org)  
Regalia: **Andy Preston**, 707-795-3480, [andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net)

## CLUB ADVISOR PROGRAM

Feel free to call these members, who have volunteered to help with purchase, repair, and restoration of various M.G. models, etc.  
MGB: **Steve Lilves**, 415-924-3173, [slilves@sbcglobal.net](mailto:slilves@sbcglobal.net)  
MGB Early & Originality: **Don Scott**, 707-942-0546, [Don@napanet.net](mailto:Don@napanet.net)  
MGB V8 Conversion: **Tony Bates**, 408-666-6174, [avbates@yahoo.com](mailto:avbates@yahoo.com)  
MGC: **Tom Doyle**, 530-546-9924, [wtdoyleii@gmail.com](mailto:wtdoyleii@gmail.com)  
M.G. Midget: **Christian Rowcliffe**, 415-359-6319, [Car@rowcliffe.com](mailto:Car@rowcliffe.com)  
MGA Coupe: **Andy Preston**, [andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net)  
MGA & Twin Cam: **George Steneberg**, 510-525-9125, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)

Z-Magnette Saloon: **Eric Baker**, 510-531-7032 [mgbp36@yahoo.com](mailto:mgbp36@yahoo.com)  
T-types: **George Steneberg**, 510-525-9125, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)

Pre-war Midgets-Magnas-Magnettes: **George Steneberg**, 510-525-9125  
PA/PB Midget 1934-36: **Eric Baker**, 510-531-7032, [mgbp36@yahoo.com](mailto:mgbp36@yahoo.com)

## COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING IN *THE OCTAGON*

Direct all questions about advertising to **Rick Anguiano** at 209-617-8492 or [webmaster@mgocsf.org](mailto:webmaster@mgocsf.org). 2024 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.

## 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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## **St. Paddy's Day Tour, Thur. March 14, 2024 To Moylan's Irish Brewery & Pub for lunch**



**Date:** Thursday, March 14, 2024

**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 is always a fun drive with lots of MGs so we look forward to seeing you again. This year St. Patrick's Day falls on a Sunday so we're holding the tour on the Thursday before to avoid the traffic. 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. 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, and passing through San Geronimo, Lagunitas Forest Knolls, and the glorious redwoods in Samuel P. Taylor State Park. 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.**

**Leprechauns  
Welcome!**

**Please RSVP:** to Andy or Marla Preston at 707 795 3480 or [marlapreston@hotmail.com](mailto:marlapreston@hotmail.com) by March 9<sup>th</sup> so we can confirm lunch reservations.

# From the Editor

Happy Ground Hog Day!

29 January 2024

This is a significant occasion in Cold Country when any sign of Spring is eagerly awaited. Right up there with April Fools Day. Perhaps we were desperate for any holiday. Cabin Fever is a real disease.

I enjoy using clip art for holidays. For me, it is a tie to the old time newsletters when that was about all the art we could reproduce. It may be only irritating to you, so I will try to control my enthusiasm. Maybe we could make the newsletter look mimeographed? (*Barely legible blue ink.*)

I want to express my sincere appreciation to Kirk and Andy for agreeing to lead us again this year. They are each natural and skilled leaders of men and we are indeed blessed to have them.



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[www.ontheroadagainclassics.com](http://www.ontheroadagainclassics.com)

Time to plan the MG year ahead of us. I have some winter projects started finally. First will be to improve the brakes on the PA and get the wipers working better on the MGA – may still need them. The PA has cable brakes with hard brake linings. I have new soft linings to try.

Happy trails!

**Dan**



**Leap Year!**



Geoffrey Locquenutte & Nelson: On the Road

by Brian Sonner of Placerville



**Valley British Auto Club**  
presents the  
**21st Annual Clovis British Auto Roundup**  
**March 23 & 24, 2024**  
**Celebrating 100 Years of MG!**



**... First 80 Cars ...**

**\$35 1st Car, \$20 2nd Car, \$20 Motorcycles**

**...Charity Raffle - Major Donors...**

**\$600 Driving School by Vintage Auto Racing Association**

**\$500 Firearm Package by Aguilar Distributing**

**\$2000 Electric Bike by Electric Envy**

In Conjunction With B.O.O.T.  
10:00am Saturday Drive and Lunch  
9:00am Sunday Show and  
Antiques Street Fair  
All Marques, Models, Years  
Proceeds Benefit  
"Central Valley Veterans"

Register Online at:  
[www.motorsportsreg.com](http://www.motorsportsreg.com)  
or Visit Our Website at:  
[www.valleybritish.org](http://www.valleybritish.org)  
Jon Brothers, President  
559-765-5364

I'd like to extend an invitation to the MG owners in California to attend our 2024 Clovis British Auto Roundup, March 23 and 24, 2004, in Clovis California. This year's car show will focus on the celebration of "100 Years of MG" and, as a special part of the show, we will have a dedicated MG car corral. - Jon Brothers, President, Valley British Auto Club

# MGOC Planning Meeting

## 10am Saturday January 6, 2024 - Minutes

**Call to Order:** Kirk Prentiss at: 10:19

**Attending and introductions:** Elaine Chan, Marcia Crawford, Doug Hollander, John Hunt, Mike Jacobsen, Steve Lilves, Mark McGothigan, Kirk Prentiss, Andy & Marla Preston, George Steneberg  
Steering cord wrap? BT

### REPORTS

**President's Report:** Kirk Prentiss: Would like to have more events with other British car clubs.

**Vice President's Report:** Andy Preston: Nothing to report.

**Treasurer's Report:** Marla Preston: Only 23 signed up for the Brunch to date.

**Secretary's Report:** Mike Jacobsen: Brought some old pictures from club events in the hope that at least some of the people pictured could be identified.

**Registrar's Report:** Steve Kellogg: Report by email.

- 167 Number of Regular Members
- 49 Number of Regular Family Members
- 216 Total Regular and Family Members**
- 10 Number of Corresponding Members
- 3 Number of Corresponding Family Members
- 13 Total Corresponding and Family Members**
- 229 Total Membership**

The letter Renewal Dues letters are ready to be printed up and sent out to the membership owing. Give me the go and I can send them out this week. I would expect like years past we will have about a 25-30% drop-off. I will give them until the end of February to pay and if I get nothing, they'll be dropped from the roster.

**Members at Large Reports:** Mark McGothigan, John Hunt, George Steneberg: Nothing to report.

**Website Report:** Steve Kellogg: Website is running well. I have not received that many PayPals for the brunch. When the Calendar is completed for 2024, send it to me and I'll get the dates posted.

### EVENTS PLANNED

- Jan 21 – Marla Preston – Annual Brunch
- Feb – Bob Bundy ~~7 car collection~~ **CANCELLED** collection tour in Oakland.
- Mar 14 – Andy Preston – St Paddy's Day tour
- Mar 18 – Steve Lilves – Rolls-Royce tour to the Pelican Inn
- Mar 23 & 24 – Mike Jacobsen – Clovis Round-Up
- Apr – NAMGBR MG20024 in Katy, TX
- Apr – John Hunt & Scott Pinsky – Fantasy Junction tour
- Apr – Doug Hollander – Skyline Tour to the Sea
- May – John Hunt – "Egg roll" tour
- May 19 – Dixon show
- Jun – Andy Preston – MGs by the Bay
- Jul 15-19 – Mike Jacobsen – NAMGAR GT-49 in Welches, OR
- Jul – Kirk Prentiss – DeRosa tour
- Aug 9-18 – Monterey Car Week
- Sep 13-15 – Steve Kellogg – Back to the Beach
- Oct – Steve Lilves – Annual Picnic at Stafford Lake
- Nov – Prestons – Fall Tour finishing at Cafe Bellini
- Dec – George & Marcia – Holiday Tea
- Jan 11, 2024 – Mike & Elaine – Planning meeting

**NEXT MEETING:** TBD

Meeting adjourned at: 11:19  
Submitted by: Mike Jacobsen

**Thanks, Mike, and all who participated and volunteered!**



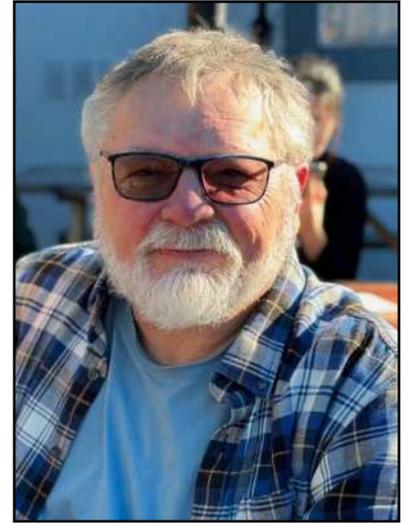
# President's Ponderings

I would like to thank Marcia and George for opening up their home to us for the annual planning meeting. They are THE best hosts - THANK YOU! Speaking of the planning meeting, I think we have a great start on plans for 2024. Thank you to all who have stepped up and volunteered to lead a tour this year.

However, for those who did not attend, remember there is always room for more events on the calendar so don't hold back! Keep them simple. Select a meeting place and from there drive on some of your favorite backroads, and perhaps end up a cafe for lunch. SIMPLE! Many of us are retired so a midweek drive is always a treat. Meet up by 10:00, take a short drive, have lunch and be home by 2:00. Doesn't get any better than that.

For those still working (thank you for your service!) a weekend drive is equally great. So what are you waiting for? After all, you are a member of a car club and driving these special cars is the reason we have them!

Another note about events this year, the GoF will be at Folsom, October 14-18th. Folsom is an easy drive from the Bay Area so I hope that we can participate in a big way at this year's GoF.



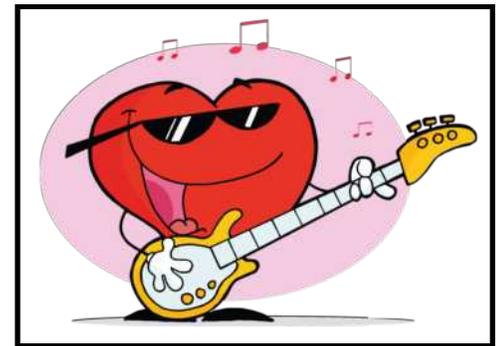
## Kirk

From Grassroots Motorsports, for Valentine's Day, a Hot Pink MGB for your viewing pleasure:

**How a Radically Reworked MGB Clawed Its Way to the Solo Nationals Podium**

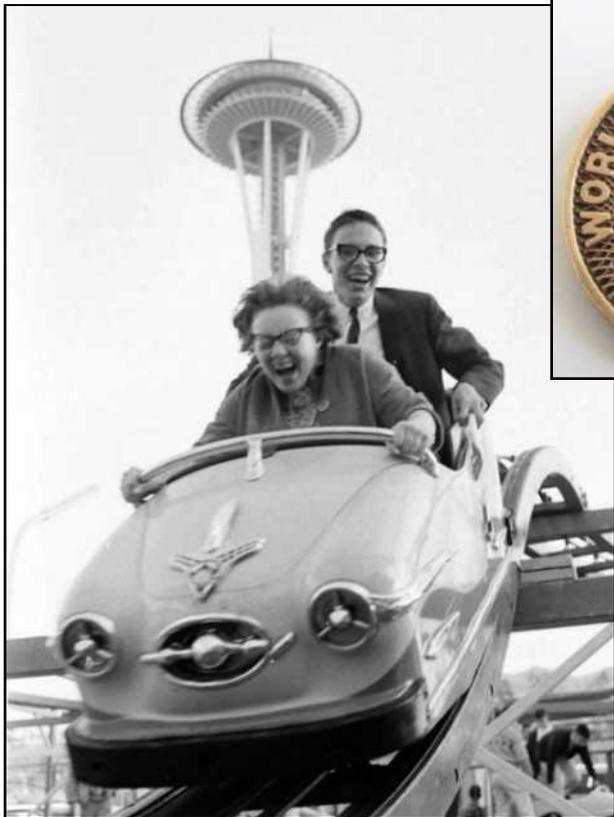
By Staff Writer  
Jan 15, 2020 | mgb, SCCA Solo Nationals | Posted in Features | From the Aug. 2019 issue | Never miss an article

Photography Credit: Rupert Berrington

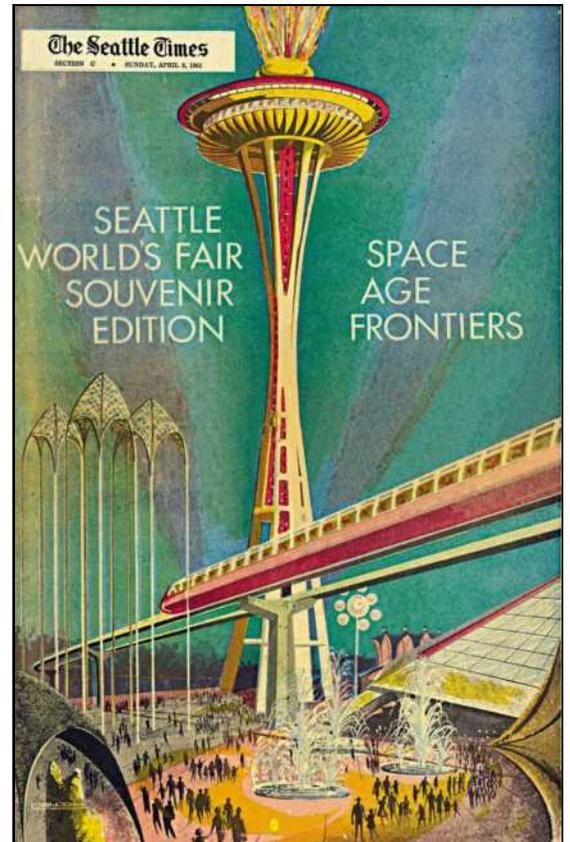


# TC Goes to the Fair!

Mike Jacobsen found these photos of someone in San Francisco heading to the 1962 Seattle Century 21 Exposition (known as the World's Fair). The TC was old already. Exciting times!



MGOC Tour at left



# 1933 Alpine Trial – Introduction

by Dan Shockey

Historically there are four great endurance trials from Europe, the Monte Carlo Rally, the Mille Miglia, the Le Mans 24-hour race and the Alpine Trial (or Rally), also called *LA COUPE INTERNATIONALE DES ALPES*. The focus in July was this Alpine Rally. Rather than the ice and snow and freezing cold of the Monte Carlo Rally, the Alpine was more likely choking dust and rocky roads and heat at the lower elevations, though fog could be a problem over the high passes. Some years there were avalanches, ice, snow and valley flooding.

MG had stunning success in the Mille Miglia run in the spring of 1933 and followed with a daring team entry for the Alpine. After running the K3 sports racing car in the Mille, MG entered the 6-cylinder L2-type 'Magna' sports car in the Alpine. The Alpine was featured for ordinary cars not racing cars. Other MGs were entered, most notably a J3 Midget sports car you will read about. The entries were by individuals, with factory help, and not by the MG company itself.

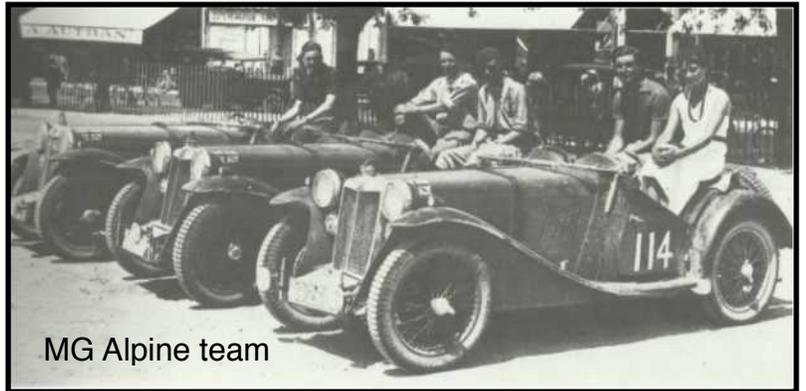
Also for 1933, a British manufacturer called SS Cars entered three of their new SS1 large sporting cars. Painted in patriotic red, white and blue colors, Bill Lyons ran these in the 3-litre class. (SS of course later became Jaguar.) Another entry of interest was Sam Collier of Long Island with an Auburn, the only US entry. The Collier brothers later started road racing in the States and even acquired one of the L2 MGs that ran in the 1933 Alpine. Donald Healey also competed in the 1933 Alpine.

The Magnas were stock production cars with full weather equipment and standard under-car exhausts. They did have an under-shield added for protection from the rocky unpaved roads and carried two spare wheels. All were driven from Abingdon to the start of the Trial in Italy, an adventure in itself.

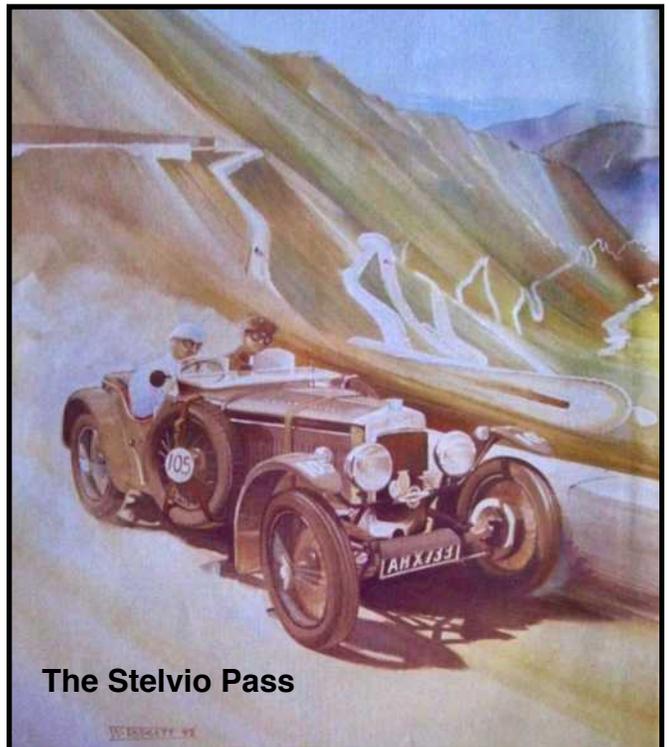
The three MGs had only just competed a week earlier in a race at Brooklands, winning their class. These had to be hastily prepared for the Trial, returning fenders and weather equipment and replacing the high-compression race-prepared engines with stock engines that would handle whatever fuel would be available in Italy. (Reliable fuel was a big problem in the 1930s. That is why MGs of the time had low compression engines that could burn anything.)

There are fun colour films of the Alpine taken by Triumph in the 1950s when they used the event to publicize their TR2 (later TR3 and TR4) sports cars. You can find some of these films on youtube, "Coupe des Alpes." The films showed TFs, MGAs and other cars of the time in action over the passes. They also filmed Le Mans including the MGA debut in 1955. We used to borrow these films from the Jaguar dealer and rent a 16mm projector to show them at events for the MGA club. In the 1980s, only Jaguar was left as repository of these films. (How different things were then!) I don't know if anyone is selling DVD copies of these wonderful films. I have copies on VHS (and a working player, so far.)

I was confused when I saw that Elsie and Tommy Wisdom had success also in the 1934 Alpine Trial. But it turns out that they ran another make of British cars that year. You can see them and even hear Elsie speak on a very short video on youtube. Look under 1934 Alpine Trial. Elsie is a wonderful chronicler as you shall read. I tried to leave it as she wrote it. Reading the names of the people and the places and passes is part of the joy of the account, at least to me. Often reports of these events can be quite sterile and colorless.



MG Alpine team



The Stelvio Pass

## 1933 Alpine Rally *from MG Magazine, Sept., 1933*

by competitor Mrs. Tommy Wisdom (Elsie) – nickname "Bill"

"Either we flatten out the Alps or the Alps flatten us!" That was the motto jokingly adopted by the members of the M.G. Alpine team. There was an underlying seriousness about it, however, for it was a real job of work, and failure we could not afford to risk.

The International Alpine Trial is the most exciting reliability test to which any standard touring car can be subjected. It is really, in effect, a five day race over the worst roads and the highest mountains in Europe, and any car that can even complete this trial must be a pretty sound vehicle.

It has been said for so long that British cars are of no use on the Continent that some of us had come to believe it. Last year the trial was a comparatively easy affair and nearly everyone who went the distance won a Glacier Cup and that they didn't deserve them.

But this year the event had been made considerably stiffer; the average speed for the 1100cc class, for instance, was 42km per hour – just over 25mph. Not a very high speed for those of use who average 40 or more on journeys at home. I may say that I was of this opinion myself before the Trial started, but the first couple of hours showed me that it was not so easy, but confoundedly difficult to average that speed up narrow lanes and dangerous mountain passes and, just as bad, down them.

This speed had to be averaged up the timed passes, a matter next to impossible with the great majority of cars. And for every 10 seconds below that average speed a mark was deducted. It meant driving hard all day, taking every advantage of those all too rare straight stretches for a burst of 70 or so and, incidentally, any car that is not capable of a quick 70 is not much use to us in the Alpine Trial.

The M.G. Magna (L-type) team was entered for the Coupe de Alpes, the manufacturer's team award which was for the team of cars losing least marks during the event. Against us we had the now well-known team of Singer "Nines" and a team of Ballila Fiats; those who remember how fast were the Ballilas in the Mille Miglia will also realize that we were up against a pretty stiff proposition.

We were a merry band of adventurers that crowded aboard the Townsend Auto-ferry that morning. Our team consisted of No. 112, W.E.C. Watkinson and H.A.F. Ward-Jackson, who took a Magna through the Trial last year and knew something of what was before them. Then there was No. 113, L.A. Welch, a few years ago motor-cycle trails champion in this country, and who knows the Alps backwards, and his brother D.F. Welch, who also has had experience in the Alps with motorcycles and three-wheelers. Then there was my husband and myself (No. 114) who had motored in the Alps before, but had never even thought of anything quite so terrific in the way of mountain passes as we were to see later.

The cars consisted of those same M.G. Magnas which, captained by Allen C. Hess, had captured premier position in the Relay race at Brooklands the previous Saturday. It had been a rush to get them ready, for obviously foreign fuels would be useless with the fairly high compression ratio used for the track, and the engines had been changed, and wings, running-boards, and screen replaced. But, except for the Bonora quick-action filler caps, all three cars were perfectly standard production models.

The run down was without particular interest, although the heat was terrific and we took full advantage of an opportunity to be in the open air swimming bath on the banks of the Rhine. And we lost Watkinson!

We went into Italy by way of Switzerland, the minute State of Liechtenstein and Austria over the Arlberg Pass, just to see how the cars liked the hills.

Then in Marano we heard bad news. Watkinson was having trouble, and eventually he limped in at 3am on the next day. And this is the incident which we have discussed and argued about for hours – how did a quarter-inch nut first get inside the induction pipe, and then, after having bent and battered sundry valves, get into no. 1 cylinder? It certainly wasn't there when the cars left the works, and it most definitely was inside when we took the engine down! (Later sabotage was suggested.)

Fortunately we met two of the stoutest fellows imaginable in the persons of Messrs. Romegeally and Becker, the Zurich M.G. agents. These two, with the assistance of the rest of us, work for two solid days and repaired the havoc caused by that accursed nut. We managed to replace the valves, but scored cylinders, block and piston heads had to be left as they were. This was bad news for a team with five days of real hard motoring before them.



Still, everyone was having their problems, and cars were in pieces all around Marano. With our other two cars there was little to do besides draining their sumps and checking over things.

On Monday morning at crack of dawn we were let into the park where the cars had stood under guard all night and given the signal to start. All three cars started up immediately, good augury for the future, and off we went with the first pass just outside Marano's back door. This was the Giovo, the summit towering 7200 feet above sea level, a twelve mile long climb, fairly steep with innumerable corners and some very nasty sheer drops into the valley below.

The Giovo was the indirect cause of many retirements, for at the top most people found that they were well down on the average speed required and accordingly trod hard on the loud pedal. Since the descent of the Giovo is just as difficult as the ascent there were naturally many "phenomenal avoidances!" And then we saw unlucky No. 13, Herr Klotz's Mercedes, upside down in a field.

We had decided on this first stage to find out, if possible, the speed, particularly up the passes, of our friendly rivals, the Singers and the Fiats. The Italians were the chief threat, but although they could go like the wind down the passes, their excellent brakes and road-holding being particularly noticeable, we could hold them without exerting the motors.

At Lago di Misurina, a beautiful lake in the centre of the valley, which was the scene of the great Italian campaign during the War (WWI), was the setting of the first control. Five minutes were allowed either way at controls and after that the competitor was penalized one mark per minute up to a maximum of one hour, at which period he was automatically retired.

Then followed numerous passes to the Passo di Pordoi. This was the first hill-climb, 7154 feet high and six-and-three-quarter miles long with a loose surface and many bends, but the least of the difficulties of the faster cars being the risk that had to be taken in passing slower cars. Actually we lost two, four and three marks respectively, while the Singers lost a total of 30 and the Fiat team, 41. We were already in a commanding position – although we knew all too well that we had four more days to go and we had to get all three cars though. However many points the other teams lost it only needed one of our cars to go out and we automatically went to the bottom of the class.

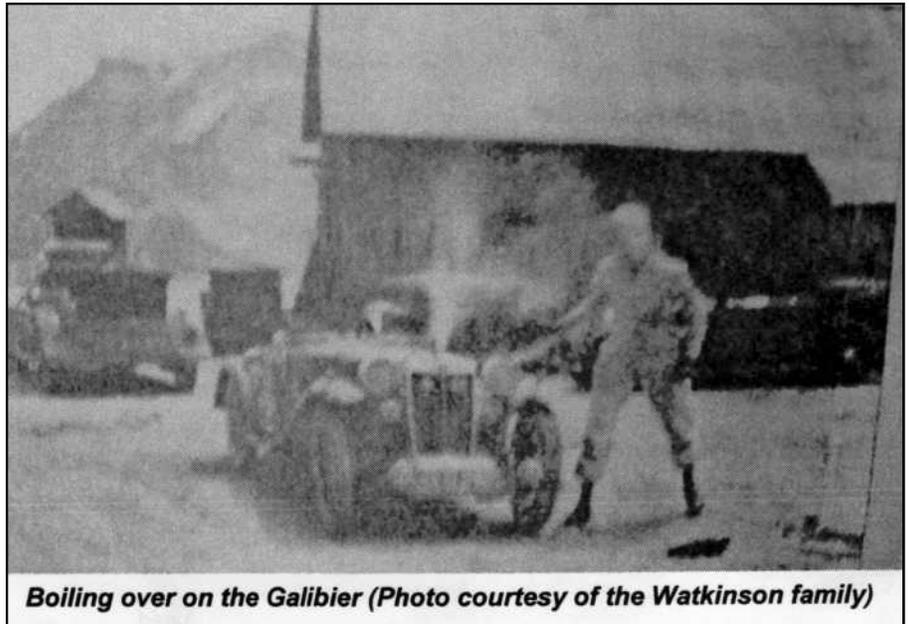
That day there were retirements, Blackstone's O.M. uprooting a boundary stone with bad results for the car, and petrol feed troubles putting an end to the hopes of the Montague-Johnstone's Riley, W.M Cooper's Talbot and Lt.Col. MacFarlane's Wolseley. T.W. Oxley (Frasier-Nash) went clean off the road on the Pordoi, and in all there were two retirements. So after 250 miles for the first stage of the trial we were back at Marano.

The second day's run included a timed climb of the Stelvio, the highest road in Europe, 9150 feet above sea level. Once again the M.G.s performed magnificently, and whilst we lost marks, as did practically every other competitor, we succeeded in further entrenching our position. It was a difficult climb, for hairpin after hairpin, 49 of them in all, followed one after another in succession for 11 miles, and engines were 'revved' flat out in first and second for some 25 minutes before we were amid the snow on the summit. Then we had the Passo dolla Bernina, the Abula and the Fluella before we reach St. Moritz.

There had been many more retirements that day, but the British cars were doing well, and our own team, by reason of their speed up the passes, was in a commanding position already.

St. Moritz is 6000 feet up in the mountains and the rarefied air, a shower of rain and a cold night in conjunction, were not likely to aid any at starting of motors left all night in the open.

As a matter of fact, the rarefied air played havoc with carburation, most settings being far too rich and dozens of cars were in trouble for this cause – a few lost five valuable marks through having to make use of the starting handle – but luck was with us, for the Magnas started, as indeed they did during the whole period of the trail, at the first press of the starter.



***Boiling over on the Galibier (Photo courtesy of the Watkinson family)***

That day we tackled the Julier Pass (7500 feet) then the 6700 feet of the San Bernadino and then the Ceneri at a mere 4150 feet. Then came the Customs through which competitors were passed with all possible speed and we had practically a main road run to Turin, Italy's Coventry. Compared with the previous day's run and what was to follow we had a fairly easy time.

From Turin to Grenoble we went by way of the Col de Sestrieres, followed by the Col du Mont Genevre across the frontier to Guillestre, a frontier town crowded with very warlike police on those maneuvers which, nowadays, last all the year. After the control came the dreaded Co d'Isoard. This pass was certainly the worst of the lot: a military road with an atrocious surface reminiscent of Beggar's Roost, with the camber sloping the wrong way and no barriers at all between the road and the valley hundreds of feet below. We were all glad when the summit was reached without incident. Before us was the Galibier, the third and last of the timed climbs and certainly the most difficult. Only three cars, a supercharged Bugatti, a supercharged Alfa-Romeo and H.R. Aldington's Frazer Nash succeeded in averaging the required speed up this pass, so its difficulty will be appreciated.

The Magna team could afford to take things more easily though all three cars shot up the pass like scared cats – for by now we were leading comfortably, and, bar trouble, the coveted trophy was ours. W.E. Belgrove, who was competing a J3 Midget for the Glacier Cup on the 1100cc class, had lost only two points and was leading for this award – a particularly fine effort since he was also up against stiff competition.

The Galibier was not the last obstacle of the day's run, however, for there followed the Col de Telegraph, the Col de la Croix de Fer and then the descent of the Col du Glandon. It was a race against time, for we were all some 20 minutes behind our schedule and this last pass, for those in a hurry, was a fearsome business, and drive as hard as we could, few had more than a few minutes in hand at the Grenoble control.

On the following day we set out on the final section, the run to Nice. Once again the run to the first control was comparatively easy, but from Guillestro it was once more a race, the ascent and descent of passes, with their twisting sinuous corners, making high speed quite impossible, and testing brakes, steering and road-holding to the utmost. There was one serious crash, one of the German Rohrs overturning on an S-bend. Many of the British competitors stopped to render assistance – a sporting action which very nearly made them late at the final control.

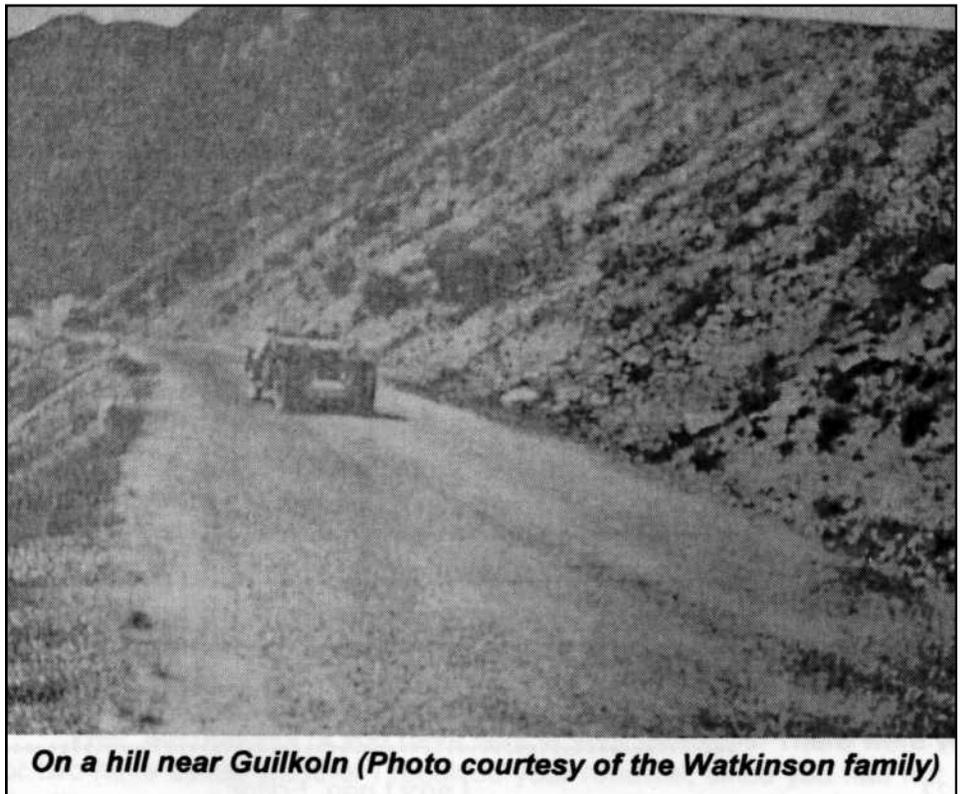
So eventually we drove along the Promenade des Anglais – the finish of the most strenuous trial ever held.

There only remained the final inspection, marks being deducted for cars with bent axles – and there were not a few of these – gears not operative and 'dud' lights. None of the Magnas or the Midget lost points on this score. The Magnas, against severe opposition, had won the Coupe des Alpes and the Midget had won, from opposition no less severe, the Glacier Cup.

The cars were in excellent condition, and on the way back to Calais showed that 75 mph and more was still within their powers even after the five days 'caning' they had received.

The International Alpine Trial is an admixture of the London-Exeter and the Land's End quadrupled in severity, the Le Mans 24-hour race and a Donington Park Meeting, with the addition of a few passes which cannot be compared with anything else at all. Any car which can get through this trial successfully MUST be above average.

*(Tommy Wisdom was described as a newspaperman.)*

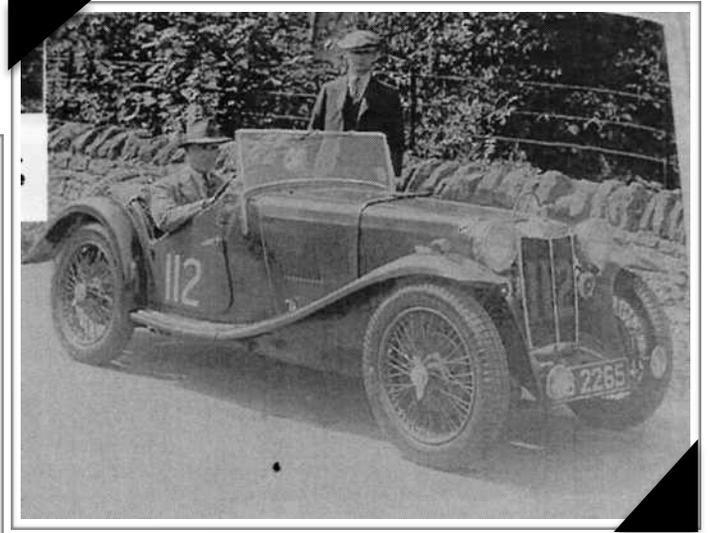


***On a hill near Guilkoln (Photo courtesy of the Watkinson family)***

# Photo Album - 1933 Alpine Trial



*Car 113 driven by L.A. Welch during the 1933 Alpine Trial.*



MG Magna cars on the 1933 Alpine. From the Watkinson family



SS1 '33 Alpine glorified in oil paint above  
Elsie "Bill" Wisdom at lower left

Road conditions on the 1933 Alpine below



## 1933 Alpine Trial – *The Rest of the Story*

With thanks to Paul Harvey and greatly condensed from a magazine report at the time

A large international event has many, many stories, of course. The event attracted a starting entry of 121 cars, of which number 42 were made up of teams who were competing for Alpine Cups, the rest being individuals for whom Glacier Cups were the prize.

The British entry was a big one, comprising teams of S.S. 1, Vauxhall, Riley, Frazer Nash, M.G. and Singer. In the individual classes were such makes as Talbot, Alvis, Humber, Daimler, A.C., Riley, Frazer Nash, Wolseley, Aston Martin, **M.G. Magna and Midget**, Singer and Triumph. In addition, R. Züst ran an **MG Magnette** in the 1500cc class. There were other Americans in the race, running G.M. Vauxhalls (of Germany).

Cars which had been functioning perfectly in France began to give trouble as soon as the Alps were reached. Belgrave's blown **Midget** ran a big end at Davos, but he arrived at Merano on the Saturday before the Monday starting day. Watkinson had trouble with his **Magna**, but the agents in Zurich dashed over (185 miles) and working all day in terrific heat and half a night, completely stripped and reassembled the engine. Incidentally the **M.G. Magnas** were the actual Relay Race cars, but with new engines.

Some excitement was caused in the excellent garage in which the official Rileys were parked. A short in the wiring of Donald Healey's Brooklands model caused a small fire, which was soon extinguished.

Those unfamiliar with the placing of the time-control at the foot of the Stelvio were at a distinct disadvantage, for the canny drivers made full use of the straight half mile after the control by charging through at high speed. The average speeds required were the same as for the trial itself, in fact beyond the capabilities of any but the most efficient cars, both as regards power and adequate lock on the hairpins. Actually only seven cars got up the passes without loss of marks, a really creditable feat, and of these seven, four were British cars of under 1,500 cc capacity.

The full list was Mlle. Helle-Nice (Bugatti), Delmar (Bugatti), Carriere (Alfa Romeo), H. J. Aldington (Frazer Nash), Jack Hobbs (Riley), D. M. Healey (Riley) and W. E. Belgrave (**M.G. Midget**).

But there had been 10 retirements during the difficult 2nd day. They included two of the S.S 1 cars, Mrs. Gripper's Frazer Nash, and Miss Richmond's Singer with the inevitable fuel pump trouble; and S. Sander's **M.G. Magna coupe**.

"Seven Alpine Trial cars  
With scores from marks quite free  
Tried to climb the Galibier Pass  
And then there were three!"



A bad accident befell the German driver of a Rohr, Von Furstenberg. His car overturned on a double corner, pinning him beneath it, and he was rescued by following competitors from a most dangerous plight. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining medical aid, French doctors and ambulance showing no readiness to give their assistance. Finally the injured driver was taken to hospital by other competitors.

Turning to the Glacier Cups for individual performances, the V8 Fords of Van der Menlen and Van Beek Calkoen showed a clear superiority over the rest of the group in tying for first place. Their loss of marks was only 7, against the 26 and 35 of the third and fourth men. Remarkable to each to loose so few points over so many miles, days and passes – and then to tie!

### **MG Midget Wins, Beats Donald Healey, "Act of God"**

In Group 5, W. E. Belgrave (**MG Midget**) was outstandingly good in winning the Glacier Cup with his supercharged 750 cc **M.G. Midget** against an entry of 1,100 cc cars. Donald M. Healey (Brooklands Riley) was second. Of the ladies, Miss Champney (Riley) thoroughly deserved her win, partnered by Miss Hobbs, but Mlle. Sajoux deserves special mention for her single-handed run with a Delahaye saloon.

Note that Donald Healey was just nipped by the **MG Midget** for the class win. Donald Healey put in a protest that the Galibier finish-banner had been blown away when he made his climb but this was disallowed, on the grounds that it was "an Act of God". It may have cost him three points, which Hobbs also lost, as did Nene Nice, thus spoiling her clean sheet as well. But Belgrave's **MG** was a mere two points down, beating Donald Healey in his Riley at the end by 1 point.

Also note all the ladies that competed on an equal footing with men in this event. None of these accounts can truly depict the stress of the Alpine Trial and its importance to manufacturers.



# Keep Planning for 2024!

Wisdom on  
San  
Bernardino  
Pass



## WINTER - SPRING

Sat., Feb. 10: Drive Your Triumph Day. Join `em!

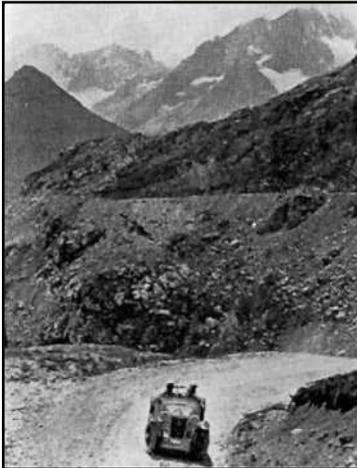
**Thurs., Mar. 14: St. Paddy's Day Tour, Prestons, p. 3**

Mar. 23-24: Clovis British Auto Roundup! See p. 5

April 21-24, MG2024, Katy, TX, NAMGBR annual event  
(east side of Houston)

Sun., May 19: Dixon All-Brit Meet, show & swap meet

Welch on  
Galibier  
Pass



## SUMMER - FALL

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

**Sept. 13-15: Back to the Beach, Kelloggs, Carmel**

Oct. 14-18: GOF West, Folsom, CA

1933 Alpine  
Trial



## Andy's E-Type Progress

*OMG! This is such a major job by our club VP that I think it well worthy of note here. - Dan*

I have been making slow but steady progress on the E type. I finally worked out the problem with the clutch and found that using the standard Borg and Beck kit worked and not the one that they recommended. Of course all of that takes lots of time, in fact probably a month.

So I have the engine and gearbox in the car and have bled the clutch and it works but only after more modification to the master cylinder. I have spun the engine with my new high torque starter and have oil pressure. That's a relief!

I have installed the exhaust manifold and exhaust system and only had to modify the exhaust heat shields a little but it still took over a day.

I have installed the new Sanden air compressor on its highly modified bracket and the new 60 amp alternator that faces backwards on the new bracket. It took me a long time to find pulleys that I could use on the crankshaft, and alternator so everything lined up. Thankfully I have a local machine shop that is very easy to work with and helps me a lot with welding and machining so I can get everything to work. But it takes a lot of time and I mean a lot of time.

I have installed the triple SUs and that was fairly straight forward but there are 18 nuts total that hold it on and the 9 under the manifold are almost impossible to access. I have installed the thermostat housing and thermostat and all the hoses.

The next job is the radiator but I'm waiting for a new OEM set of sway bar bushing that I should get this weekend because the ones I have aren't correct and are too tight.

In the meantime I'm working on the interior and fitting the center console and radio console. This is another modification that is taking forever to work out. Everything is so tight and difficult to get to fit and line up properly. Of course the new 5 speed and gear lever position doesn't help either, but I'm getting there.

I'm hoping to get the radiator in next week and start the engine. - Andy

You can see the backwards facing alternator front and center.



## Member Notes

MGOC History from Mike Jacobsen:

Awhile back we were talking about the old MGOC scrapbook. I've attached a couple of pages from the sixties and seventies. (See page 18.)

Update from Dave McCann:

I plan on going to the GT in Welches this year. I'm not sure I'm going to get out there otherwise. Really can't see when I might get to southern California any time soon. Although for work I might have a short trip to Mexicali in February.

Walter Kilik Service from Jim Carlson:

Here are the details on the service for Walter. My wife, Pastor Anne, will be doing a brief service at the Los Gatos Memorial Park Cemetery on Friday, January 26 at 1 PM. The address is 2255 Los Gatos Almaden Rd, San Jose, 95124. There will also be a reception at 2:30 following the service at Carole's home in Saratoga. Her address is 12509 Palmtag Dr., Saratoga, 95070.

TC in SF from Mike J.:

I found these pictures while looking through an archive for something else. They were taken somewhere near Union Square and the fair referred to on the sign is the World's Fair in Seattle. 1962? It looks like a TC to me. (See page 8.)

Update from Jennifer Orum:

I very much enjoyed this issue! Loved the "MG Mittens" article. Your mention of driving in winter conditions reminded me of the problem I face with my wipers freezing onto the windshield (of my daily driver, a 2007 Ford Escape with 300,000 miles on her). This year we have not had any winter conditions until this week, when our temperatures have been as low as - 20C.

Seeing the photo of the Moss Beach Distillery brought back memories of many such events I attended over the 8 years I was in SF. And the notice of the planning meeting at George & Marcia's, which I recall attending there one year with streams flowing down the streets. All the best to you for 2024!

Nigel Shiftright TC for sale from Allan Chalmers:

Larry Pate, current owner, is selling Phil Frank's TC. If you know of anyone who would love to get this famous car, let me know. (See Classifieds)

Photo Info from Don Scott:

I posted this old MGB GT ad photo (a brochure and ad photo) on Facebook, and author Anders Clausager commented!

*Photograph taken on the inner ring road in the centre of Birmingham, near the Bull Ring shopping centre, hence the lit-up bull across the road. (That's Birmingham ENGLAND)*

Our VP should know this place, being a Brummy himself!

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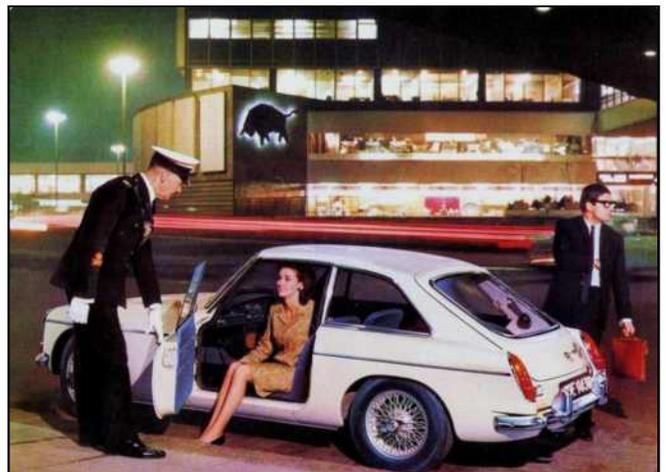


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## MGOC History: *Zippity Day Do, 1977*

This from one of the club scrapbooks. Looks like a gymkhana. Anyone know who or where? Hey, we were young and hairy once! Recognize anyone?



ZIPPITY DAY DO - APRIL 18 1977





# Annual Brunch 2024

by Andy Preston

First of all, many thanks to Marla for once again organizing the Annual Brunch which was a great success. It was held at Moss Beach Distillery which is proving to be the perfect location for most members in the Bay Area. The weather was grey and overcast which limited the number of MGs to one brave soul who braved the rain showers. However there was a yellow MGB GT parked at the far end of the parking lot which must have belonged to a local. We were back in the spacious front room and all of the tables were by the windows where the views are truly spectacular. The staff was wonderful and we were ushered in before anyone else. Food and drink was fast and everyone was served at the same time which was great.

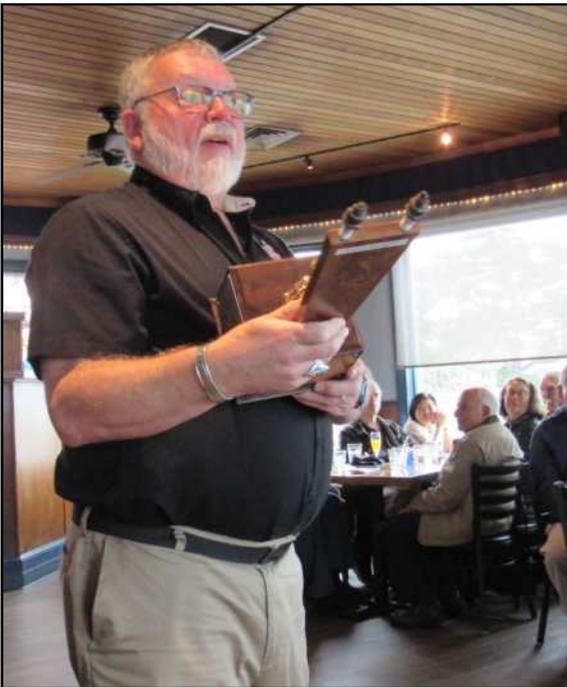
In attendance were: Mike Jacobsen & Elaine Chan, Kirk and Amy Prentiss, Doug & Connie Hollander, Eric Baker, Don & Anne Scott, Dan Shockey, Ken Gittings & Guest, Bill Billier, Tony & Joyce Inzana, Walt & Atlanta, Ray & Kristy Davis, Rod & Sue Schweiger, Bob & Linda Bundy, George Steneburg & daughter Jennifer, Tim & Molly Polidoroff, Jack & Rada Ford, Jim Carlson, Gary & Janet Germano and Marla & Andy Preston.

Bill Billier was the lone brave soul who drove his spectacular MG TD and won the Door Prize for the Member driving an MG the furthest. Tim and Molly Polidoroff won the prize for coming the furthest from Florida; they must really love the brunch! Dan Shockey won the prize for driving the furthest coming all the way from Garden Grove, Los Angeles. In fact Dan was planning on driving his MGA Coupe until the weather turned nasty.

Kirk presented the Burnt Spark Plug Award to an absent Barbara Tapp who chose to vacation in Hawaii in lieu of the brunch (Can't blame her for that!). Kirk related how after the rest stop on the Sonoma, Tour Barbara started her 1970 GT but the starter stuck and burnt itself out. While she waited for the tow truck she got her easel and water colors from the back of her car and painted a landscape of adjacent scenery. Way to go Barbara!

Dan brought a "cardboard prop" of an MG PB for a photo opportunity. You held the cardboard car in front of you and Dan took a photo of you driving the car. Thanks Dan.

The brunch seemed to over in a flash even though we were there for over 2 hours. So once again many thanks to Marla for organizing another wonderful event.



El Presidente above with Burnt Spark Plug Award. Shockey photo



Bill Bilier and his TD at right. Preston photo

# Brunch Photos!

Shockey photos



VP Andy Preston recognizes contributors.  
The ocean dominated the room. Shockey pics.

The ocean dominated the room. Shockey pics.





Tour leader and show organizer Bob Bundy at right with his wife Linda



George and daughter Jennifer with Tim and Molly, refugees from Florida

George and Marcia sent along an article about the history of The Moss Beach Distillery. The restaurant had once been a speak-easy by the name of "Frank's Place." Bootleggers discovered that Seal Cove was an especially foggy venue to smuggle Canadian whiskey to San Francisco and Oakland. It also has a ghost! Seventy years ago, a woman fell in love with the piano player at Frank's Place. She always wore blue. While walking the beach, they were attacked. She died; her paramour survived. To this day, she haunts the bar, swaying chandeliers as she goes. Enjoy the 'spirits!' Thanks, Marcia!



Ken and Neighbor Victor



Andy and Marla



Kirk and Amy



Mike and Elaine



Rada and Jack above. Sue and Connie



Ray and Kristy above. Don and Anne below



Tim and Molly below. Welcome back!



Joyce and Tony above. Doug and Connie below



Linda and Bob below



## 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 1600:** Black, Wire wheels, disc brakes, 1800cc motor. Member owned & garaged since 1983. \$15,000. Contact Tom Morgan. 650-740-4116 (Posted 2/24)

**1959 Magnette ZB Varitone:** Steel blue over Mineral blue. New paint, needs finished. Many spares, \$3500. In Turlock, Dale Wallace, 209-404-2051 (Posted 2/24)

**Famous TC:** Phil Frank's TC is available. Contact Allan Chalmers. [allanchalmers@yahoo.com](mailto:allanchalmers@yahoo.com) (Posted 2/24)

**Trailer for sale:** Great for MG. Trailer belonged to Dave Laughlin. New tires and wiring. Single axle. \$750.00. Member Stephen Born: [scborn@hotmail.com](mailto:scborn@hotmail.com) (Posted 2/24)

**George Stenberg MGs now being sold on Bring a Trailer online auction**

**MG TF-1500:** Same family since 1956. Engine & gearbox from 1967 Volvo P1800. MGA rear axle. Wire wheels. Partially dismantled. Located in Oakland. Non-member Burr Nash. \$4000 cash. [Campfork1946@yahoo.com](mailto:Campfork1946@yahoo.com) (Posted 12/23)

**MGB Parts, Parts, Parts:** Free MGB Driver and other magazines. Lots of early MGB parts. Let me know what you are looking for. These are from Ken Gitting's collection. Member Lynn Bryant at [Lynnberta@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Lynnberta@sbcglobal.net)



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)



Greetings from our friends of the Sorry Safari Touring Society - in so many ways, they are us!



## Annual Brunch Notes

By Dan Shockey

Thanks again especially to Marla Preston who coordinated the restaurant and the brunch menu. Also many thanks to VP Andy Preston who awarded small recognition gifts to major contributors. And more thanks to our Grand Moolah Kirk Prentiss who presided over the festivities.

It was great to have members emeritus Ken Gittings and George Steneberg able to attend. The time together passes way too quickly. MG years fly by, back to the future. (See below.)

The oldest attendee was Jack Ford. At age 94 he is, "older than George." An actor, Jack says he is rarely considered for the romantic leading man role anymore. Age discrimination! He qualifies now as a character actor and still drives his TD, once owned by an actor on *Gunsmoke*.

There was a yellow BGT there when we arrived but it left before the brunch. Whose?

Response from Mike J.: The BGT belonged to aliens. From Mars. It was a heavily camouflaged shuttle craft from their ship.

No, wait, it was Dr. Who. He got the chameleon circuit fixed on the Tardis and decided to have it mimic an MG when he learned who would be at the restaurant that day.

Or it might have been a rogue AI, escaped from Silicon Valley, and using a holographic projector to create an image it knew would resonate with us.

Then again, it might have just been a coincidence.

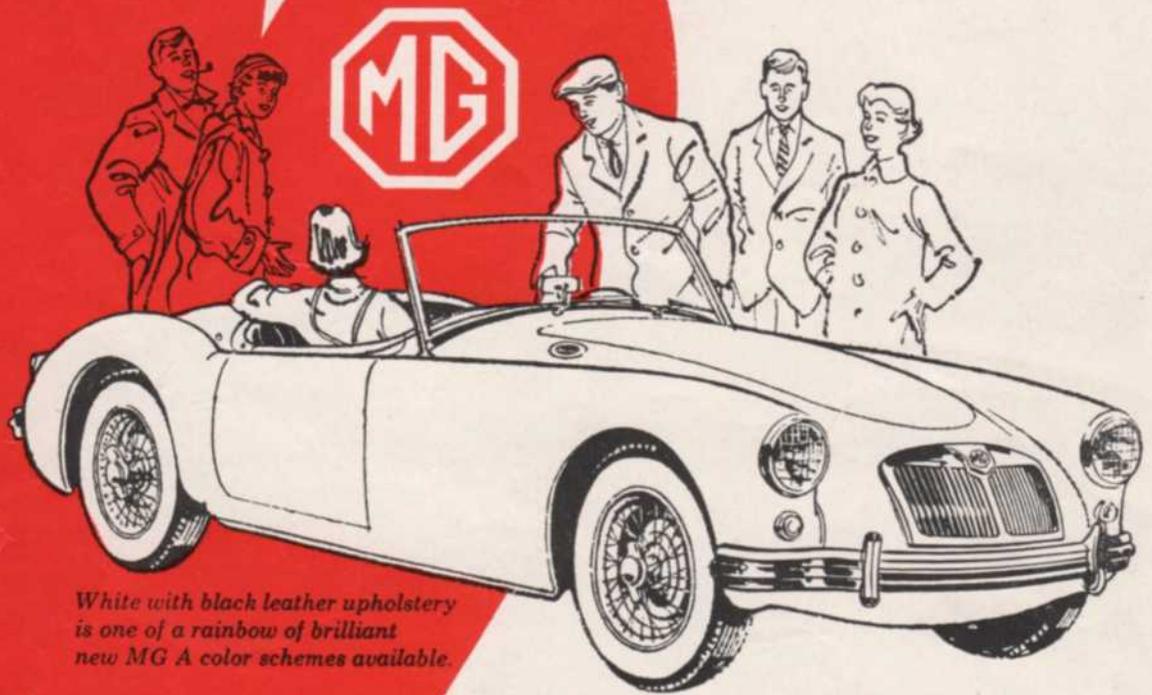
## MG Photo Prop

I wanted to make it life size but of the smallest (in width) MG so looked for a photo of a early Midget. It had to be the right angle to look like folks were really in the car. I found this photo of an 1935 MG PB race car. I had two enlargements made 30" wide, then mounted them on a lightweight backing. I used scrap aluminum channel for the fake windscreens. - Dan Shockey



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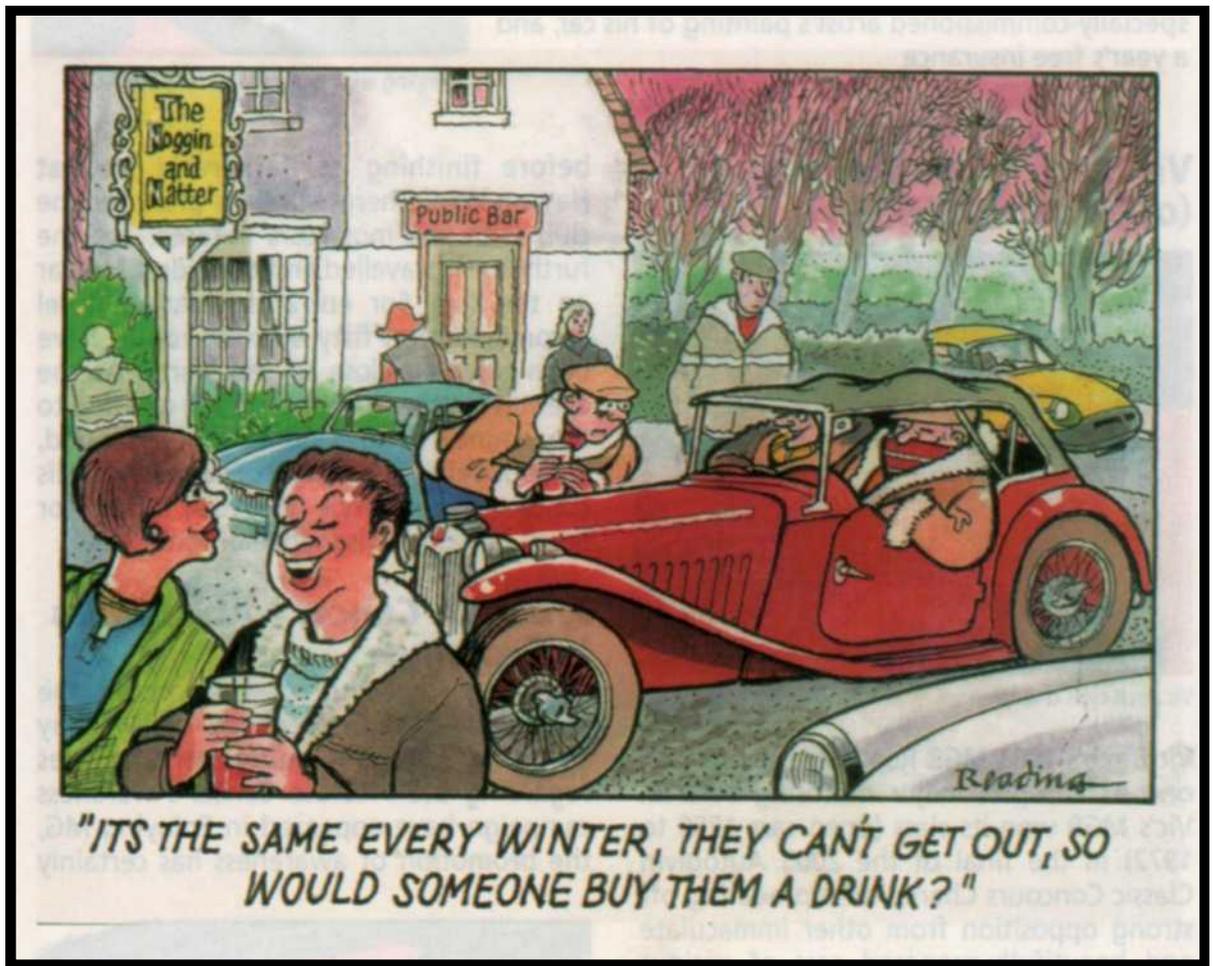
Join over 2,000 enthusiastic owners in the restoration, preservation, and sheer enjoyment of driving an MGA, Magnette, or variant of this noble breed. You'll receive six bi-monthly issues of MGA!, our full-color, award winning magazine, invitations to National and Regional Get-Togethers throughout the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



**North American MGB Register**



From *Enjoying MG* magazine



"ITS THE SAME EVERY WINTER, THEY CAN'T GET OUT, SO WOULD SOMEONE BUY THEM A DRINK?"



This card shows a large hairy person behind the wheel of a Midget. The back of the card reads "Roscoe is a dapper fellow in his snappy red car". The card was produced by Portal Publications Ltd. in California and the photo is copyrighted to Elaine Faris Keenan. From Reinout Vogt



A groundhog escaping his shadow?