

MGOC Octagon
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UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

General Meeting & 'Natter, Jan. 13 th (Thurs.).....	23
South Bay 'Natter, Jan. 28 th (Fri.).....	23
Annual Dinner, Feb. 19 th (Sat.).....	4-5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Calendar of Events.....	3
Annual Dinner	4-5
From the Editor.....	6
North Bay Natter; Event Reports.....	7
Why Drive on the Left.....	8-9
<i>The Drip Pan</i> – Fuel Pumps	10-11
Brake Tech Tips.....	12
MGs By the Bay Update.....	13
Mike's Useful Lifters.....	14, 18
New Members.....	15
Event Photos	17
Meeting Minutes.....	19-20
Sports Cars in NASCAR?.....	21
Classified Ads.....	22

THE OCTAGON

Newsletter of the M.G. Owners Club & the Peninsula T Register
 The Northern California Centre of the M.G. Car Club



Enjoy Great MG Events in 2005. (Palo Alto, 2004) Photo: Dan Shockey

January 2005

About *The Octagon* and MGOC...

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 on the second Thursday of 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 M.G. 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 2005

President: David Wright, 510-653-3831

Vice President: Nina Barton, (510) 845-7212 ninaba@mindspring.com

Treasurer: Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, MikesMuseum@yahoo.com

Secretary: Dan Shockey, 408-923-3927, MGmogul@earthlink.net

T Register Director: Jim Carlson, 408-257-9976, mgjim@att.net

Activities Director: Randy Grossman, 510-483-3171,

r.m.grossman@comcast.net

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j2george@pacbell.net

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Octagon Editor: Dan Shockey, 408-923-3927, MGmogul@earthlink.net

Commercial Advertising: Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699,

MikesMuseum@yahoo.com

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 1962-74: Felix Wong, 510-226-7721 home, mgoc@felixwong.com

MGB 1974-1980: Ed Adams, 510-483-6821

MGB V8 Conversion: Tony Bates, 408-666-6174, Tony@BatesFamily.net

MGC: Kent Leech, 925-253-9757, kent@kentleech.com

M.G. Midget: Kingsley Klarer, 707-226-1955

MGA/Coupe/Twin Cam 1955-62: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125

Z-Magnette Saloon: Marty Ray, 831-247-5863, martyray@cruzio.com

T-types: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125, j2george@pacbell.net

Pre-war Midgets-Magnas-Magnettes: George Steneberg, 510-525-9125

PA/PB Midget 1934-36: Eric Baker, 510-531-7032, mgpb36@yahoo.com

S.U. Carburetters: Marty Ray, 831-247-5863, martyray@cruzio.com

Bodywork: Bill Weissberg, 209-835-0428, weissber@slip.net

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING IN *THE OCTAGON*

Direct all questions about advertising to Mike Jacobsen at 415-333-9699 or MikesMuseum@yahoo.com. 2005 rates are: monthly (yearly): full pg. \$25 (\$240), half page \$18 (\$175), third page \$12 (\$120), business card \$8 (\$75).

Natter & Noggin with Club Meeting

Jan. 13, 2005 (Thurs.), 8 p.m.

The Englander Sports Pub & Restaurant
101 Parrott St., San Leandro, 510-357-3571

From Northbound I-880, take the Washington Ave. exit within San Leandro and turn right on Washington St. Travel 2.2 miles until you see Parrott St. Turn right on Parrott Street. You will see The Englander on your right.

From Southbound I-880, take the Davis St. exit and turn left on Davis. Travel 1.3 miles, then turn right on E. 14th St. Travel 0.3 miles, and then turn right on Parrott St.

The Englander is an enjoyable place where we have our own cozy room. The food is good so bring your appetites.

South Bay Natter & Noggin Friday Evening, Jan. 28, 2005, 8 p.m.

Join us for an informal gathering in the South Bay. We'll meet at a fun British Pub. Our attendance has been good and we're trying the Britannia Arms on DeAnza just north of Hwy 85, between Cupertino and San Jose. The pub's parking lot fills up on Friday evenings but we can park together in the business lot across the side street (Fallen Leaf Lane), if necessary.

The Britannia Arms, 1087 S. DeAnza Blvd., San Jose, (408) 252-7262

Directions: From Hwy 85 south of I-280, take the DeAnza exit and go north. Make a U-turn at the 2nd light. The Pub will be on your right. Try the lot in front of Galaxy Lighting. If we're not there, check the business parking lot north of Fallen Leaf Lane.

Dan Shockey (408) 923-3927 or Bob Wall (408) 739-2373

Attention!!

Have your MG painted by a fellow sports car lover with 14 years experience. High quality rubbed-out polyurethane finish at reasonable cost. I do bodywork, rust repair, and welding. Fast turn-around time. References and examples of my work available. Call for an appointment for a free estimate.

Andy Schank, 510-236-5232

Classified Ads

Ads are free to MGOC members and \$6.00 per month for non-members. Please send copy (and check **made payable to MGOC** if a non-member) to MGOC, 3219 Mabury Rd., San Jose, CA 95127. Members may also email ads to the Editor at MGmogul@earthlink.net

1967 MGB-GT: Wire wheel car. No motor or transmission. Interior is fair, serviceable. Fairly easy to turn into a running car. The shell is essentially rust free and straight, with a few rough edges. A few hundred dollars is my asking price. Also restored 1969 MGB GT shell with rebuilt suspensions. Ready to paint.

Parts for MGB 64-69+: many used and a few NOS. 3-main motors, heads, manifolds, radiators, transmission, suspension, wheels/tires, gauges, electrics, alternators, generators, starters, brakes, glass, body sundries, and more. Member Marty Ray, Santa Cruz, 831-475-6204, 831-247-5863 cell or martyray@cruzio.com

From Craig's List: (Posted 11/22/04) My husband died last year. I must now sell his MGs and a garage full of all kinds of MG parts, tools, gauges, etc.

MGB 1968: \$1,500. Mazda B-2200 engine. MGB GT 1972: \$1,000. Toyota engine with 4 speed. MG 1963: Project. Best offer. Buick alum. V-8 engine & 5-speed transmission. MG 1969: spare parts car. Best offer. 650-364-0277, vkean80@aol.com

1969 Sprite: in Novato. 2nd owner. Garaged 3 years ago. In very good shape. Joyce Kleege at 415-898-2636. (Info from member Bob Luebbert)

'53 TD Parts: complete rear end, two front shocks, 5 painted 60-spoke wire wheels (15") with new tires. Member Bob Luebbert, 510-276-0365 luebbert@spade.net

1978 MGB: Fair condition. White with black. Good top & paint. \$3500/offer. Non-member Eugene Egger (650) 861-9354 San Jose

Craig's List – www.craigslist.com – has proven a good place to trade MGs and parts in the Bay Area. There is no fee.

All ads expire on Jan. 1st, and fees for a partial year will be pro-rated to that date. Deadline for ad materials is the 10th of the preceding month. The MGOC makes no claims as to the reputation or quality of work performed by businesses advertising in *The Octagon*.

MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OCTAGON

Your stories, photos, tips, questions, and anything MGOC-related are always welcome in *The Octagon*. Please make your contributions by the 15th of the month preceding the issue in which you want them to appear. The editor's address is: Dan Shockey, 3219 Mabury Rd., San Jose, CA 95127. Or, you may email contributions to MGmogul@earthlink.net

RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

Have you helped recruit any new members lately? Bob Stine (650-349-5128) is in charge of new member recruitment and can send you flyers. The club roster is available from Mike Jacobsen upon request.

Forthcoming Events

MGOC (which is us!) events are in **bold** type. Most MGOC events have not yet been determined.

Every Sat. – Donut Derelicts, Los Altos, Martinez, see Nov. *Octagon*

Jan. 13th (Thur.) – **Club Meeting & Natter**, see page 23

Jan. 26th (Fri.) – **South Bay Natter**, see page 23

Feb. 19th (Sat.) – **MGOC Annual Dinner**, see pages 4 & 5

Feb. 27th (Sun.) – Hayward Swap Meet & Car Show, (510) 835-6069

May 7th (Sat.) – **MGs by the Bay**, see page 13

May 14-16 – Moss British Extravaganza at Buttonwillow

May 15th (Sun.) – Dixon All British Car Show, MGOC Caravan?

June 3-5 – Wine Country Classic Vintage Races, Sears Point, MG Corral?

June 19th (Sun.) – Hayward British Car Meet, Show & Swap Meet

July 7-10, 2005 – NAMGBR Annual Meet, Olympia, Washington, (south of Seattle) www.MG2005.com

July 11-15 – GoF West, California Central Coast, Buellton

Aug. 11-13 – Rendezvous, Yachats, OR, Area clubs caravan

Sept. 10-11 – **All British Meet, Palo Alto, MGOC Caravan**

Oct. 15-16 – Autumn Classic, San Juan Bautista

* The MGOC encourages common efforts with the other area MG clubs. There is a lot of membership overlap. It is difficult for any one club to serve the entire Bay Area and all the varied interests. Generally you are welcome to these other clubs events. We will try to give contact info in *The Octagon* in time for the event. You can inquire about participation when you RSVP.



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Annual Dinner info:

Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto

Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto opened in 1890 and the name Spenger's has become synonymous with wholesome fresh fish to dock workers, fisherman, Cal students, politicians, socialites and movie stars. Over a century of ship's wheels, anchors, rigging and paintings are mounted in Spenger's collection of more than 500 antique and modern guns and the Diamond Bar's Star of Denmark, a 34 carat diamond ring given to Hawaii's Queen Kapiolani.

The Spenger family has been supplying fresh fish to the Bay Area for four generations. The original founder was John (Johan) Spenger, who came to Oakland from Germany in 1865 and worked as a fisherman. He sold to markets around the Bay, eventually building up a small fishing fleet which fed the ever increasing population.

Patrons may find themselves dining elbow to elbow with such local luminary fish lovers as Robin Williams, Huey Lewis or Joan Baez.

Event Planning

We plan to present 2005 events at the dinner and get your feedback and suggestions. Don't miss this fun event at a good price at a great restaurant.

Event suggestions: MG corral at the Wine Country Classic, rallies (TSD, gimmick, etc.), overnight & weekend events, a second picnic in a different area, tech sessions, garage tours (private & business), charity events, caravans to out-of-state big events, English-style trials, gymkhanas (funkhanas), tours to past racetracks in the area, and evening BBQ events (Guy Fawkes Day?).

Let the Randy & the officers know right away what interests you. We don't want to be stuck in the same routine!

Randy Grossman, 510-483-3171, r.m.grossman@comcast.net



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Sports Cars in NASCAR?

by Greg Zyla, *King Features*

Production sportscars indeed did run with NASCAR's premium division back in the '50s. Not only did they run, they also won!

NASCAR's first ever road-course event was held back on June 13, 1954, at the Linden Airport in Linden, NJ. Al Keller, driving Paul Whiteman's Jaguar, passed NASCAR star Herb Thomas in Smokey Yunick's '54 Hudson and led the final 27 laps to score the victory, which stands as the only win ever by a sports car in NASCAR's premium division. Keller won \$1,000 and averaged 77.57 mph, even with four caution flags slowing the action.

Almost half of the field of 43 cars were sportscars, including Jaguar, MG, Austin Healey, Porsche, and Morgan. Joe Eubanks in a '51 Hudson finished second, with Buck Baker in a '54 Olds 88 taking third. Jaguars captured four of the top six places, with Bill Claren, Bob Grossman and Harry LaVois finishing fourth through sixth, respectively.



Dave Terrell, in a Dodge, battles Phil Bell in an Austin Healey during NASCAR road race action at Linden Airport in 1954. Terrell finished 27th and Bell 13th. (Photo from Bill Claren.)

I had the pleasure of speaking with Claren recently at a motorsports convention. Claren ran the best race of his career that day. Claren was experiencing brake and overheating problems in his Jag.

Claren was part of the SCODA racing club, and its 1954 champion. SCODA stood for Sports Car Owners and Drivers Association, and it was actually the first true sports car series in the United States, as the SCCA was all amateur at the time. Several big names came from SCODA, notably Steve Krisiloff and Al Loquasto, both of whom went on to race at Indianapolis.

There were a few more NASCAR races in Canada and Michigan that featured sports cars, but by the beginning of the 1957 season the fields were back to all American brands.

Planning Meeting: We discussed holding a separate planning meeting as we have done this past two years. We elected to combine this with the Annual Dinner.

MGs By the Bay: The annual MGOC show will be held at the San Leandro Marina's city-owned parking lot. Electric power will be needed for the band and PA system. The date was set as May 7, 2005. A \$45 fee will reserve the date. The parking lot is near the El Torito restaurant. Randy Grossman will be the liaison and coordinator for this important club event.

OLD BUSINESS

The class awards to be presented at the *MGs By the Bay* event were discussed. It was agreed to pay up to \$850 for 30 awards. The companies that make & supply awards were discussed. Randy has been talking to Roberts Awards. Bob Stine will look for an awards supplier in the San Mateo area.

NEW BUSINESS

It was agreed that a present shall be given to the retiring President. (Up to \$50 in value.) Dan Shockey will obtain a gift for this purpose. Bob Stine will obtain small thank-you gifts for other officers and significant contributors. It was agreed to spend up to \$10 each for these gifts. (There were 16 such gifts given last year.)

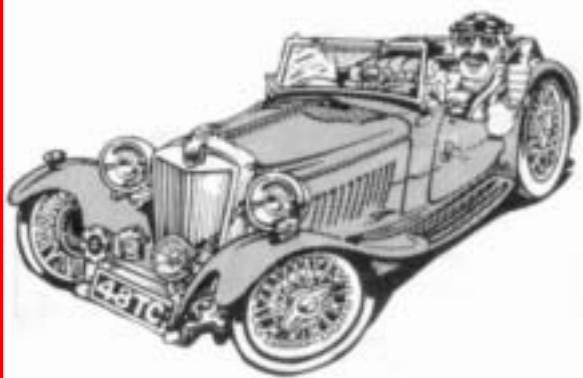
It was agreed that alternative locations for the Club business meetings would be discussed at the Annual Dinner.

2005 OFFICERS

The slate of officers was accepted as listed in the December Octagon. All officers were elected "by affirmation on white slates." Esteemed President: David Wright, Vice President: Nina Barton, Treasurer: Mike Jacobsen, Secretary: Dan Shockey. Randy Grossman will be our Activities Director.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 p.m. The next business meeting was to be held at the Annual Dinner but was subsequently changed to January 13, 2005 (Thursday) at the Englander Pub.

Respectfully submitted,
David Wright, MGOC Secretary



MGOC Annual Dinner

Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto, Berkeley

February 19, 2005 at 6:30 p.m.



Please join us.

No host bar begins at 6:30 p.m.

Dinner will begin at 7:15 p.m.



Place: Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto
1919 Fourth Street (cross street is Hearst)
Berkeley, CA. 94710 (510) 845-7771

Directions: Take the University exit east off I-880. Immediately get on 4th St. (Take right exit before the overpass) Turn left. Spenger's will be on your right. Use the Banquet entrance.

Menu: Grilled Mahi-Mahi with Citrus Barbeque Sauce
or Roast Sirloin of Beef Au Jus

Price per person is \$35.00

Checks and RSVP to Nina Barton. Indicate menu selections.
21 Avenida Dr.
Berkeley, CA. 94708
(510) 845-7212
or e-mail to ninaba@mindspring.com

Please RSVP by February 5 so we can give Spenger's a final count.
Hope to see you there!

From da Ed...

Happy New Year to you. It is time to begin the cycle of another eventful year, the year of our MGs 81. And the year of our club 48! T'is the season when it gets a little hard to keep pushing on the car projects, so they'll be done by spring.

I have had space for more articles recently with fewer event reports this time of year. It is difficult to know what tech articles to run. The old-timers have seen them all, yet some members are just beginning on their quest for knowledge and experience. In the past there was not a lot of info beyond the factory manuals. "Make do & mend" articles were very useful to most of us

who were trying to get their MGs on the road with little expenditure.

The car restoration hobby has been around long enough that we have seen what happens when those who love them begin to pass on, especially once the make is no longer available new. Do what you can to encourage new members and young members. We sometimes are guilty of gobbling up and hoarding the cars that are left, taking them out of the low-cost market that might draw in a new generation. A group took their MGBs to an autocross event recently and the young enthusiasts thought they must be kit cars!

We welcome David Wright to the helm of our MG club. It is difficult to find someone who can both give us the time and make it to a common meeting place. We are open to other meeting places and times. We are gradually doing more club business by email, as well.

In 2005, may your tranny be happy and your head uncracked.

Dan'el

Minutes of the MGOC Business Meeting, December 9, 2004

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 p.m. Present were: Bob Stine, George Steneberg, Dan Shockey, David Wright, Randy Grossman, James Brown, Ed Adams, Dennis Grey and Nina Barton. November minutes were accepted as presented.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer was not present but he had reported on the Club's balances and that renewal notices have been sent to all *Octagon* advertisers.

Secretary's Report: The Secretary was present.

Registrar's Report: Club membership presently stands at 245.

Regalia Report: The revised regalia order form was finalized.

PAST CLUB EVENTS

Pigeon Point Lighthouse: A few members went to the annual Light-Up event.

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

Holiday Tea: Will be held at John & Esther Milsap's home in Alameda. See *The Octagon* for info on this great event.

Boxing Day Tour: This is a Morgan club event held on December 26 and will be a tour through scenic parts of Marin & Sonoma counties.

Annual Dinner: The Annual Dinner will be held at Spenger's Restaurant in Berkeley. Nina reported that they have a smaller room available on Jan. 29 and a larger room (80 people) available on Jan. 15. A no-host bar in the room would cost \$100 and a \$500 booking deposit was required.

It was agreed to reserve the larger room on Jan. 15. (Note that this date was subsequently changed to Feb. 19, apparently due to someone else taking the Jan. date.) The Club will need to guarantee 50 people. The Club will, per tradition, provide one red and one white wine at each table.

Continued on page 20

MG

TC-TD-TF-MGA-MGB-C-Midget

SHOCK ABSORBERS: Front Rear

MGTC.....	165.00	165.00
MGTD & TF.....	165.00	80/85
MGA.....	69.95	49.95
MGB, MGC, Midget.....	69.95	49.95
HEAVY DUTY UPGRADE.....	10.00	10.00
SHOCK LINK (New or Rebuilt).....	\$call	

BRAKES : sleeved and rebuilt

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MGA, MGC caliper.....	\$125.00
MGA, Midget twin master 1956-1967.....	\$165.00
MGB, Midget master 1968-80.....	\$125.00
MGC brake master.....	\$175.00
MGC booster servo.....	\$375.00
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Kingpin swivel axle rebushed.....	\$40-\$80
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Useful Tools Series by Mike Jacobsen

Seal Lifter

Friends, I have discovered the clean and easy way to get the #@%\$&* oil seal out of the rear axle hubs on MGAs, Magnettes, and early MGBs. (And probably for a host of other cars as well, but these are the ones that I fight with most often.) After years of using small screwdrivers, needle-nose pliers, and my pocketknife, I discovered seal pullers.

A seal puller looks like a miniature ice axe. The handle on mine is a foot long, and the head contains two hooks of different radius. To remove a seal, you insert one of the hooks under the seal, press the hook in (the hooks are sharp, so they'll get under the seal, don't worry), and then lever out the seal. Works like a charm! It will also take out other seals throughout the car, of course, but the axle hub seals were always especially troublesome for me. It can even be used on the oil seals for canister oil filters, but it can be awkward to get the tool in place for those.

My puller is by Cal-Van and was purchased years ago, so I'm no longer sure of the price, though I believe it was less than \$10. Eastwood carries a similar tool, and they're also still available at most auto parts stores. Buy one and stop using your small screwdrivers or pocketknife to remove old seals.



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Tel: 530 529.6450 Fax: 530 529.6452 1520 Schwab Street Red Bluff, CA 96080 martinhveem@earthlink.net	Classic & Antique Restoration Service Repair

North Bay 'Natter?

MGOC member Dennis Gray is interested in getting together with other enthusiasts periodically on a Wednesday or Thursday evening. (Perhaps lunch?) He has suggested the English pub in San Rafael. If you are interested in joining in, contact Dennis.

Dennis's 1971 daily driver MGB/GT is Bedouin in color with an unpainted aluminum hood. Dennis works in San Rafael. Honk if you see him!

Dennis Gray, San Francisco, 415-929-3951, gray44@pacbell.net

Holiday Tea

The MGOC Holiday Tea was another great event, with lots of members, superb food, wonderful hosts, beautiful home and a good time by all. This is becoming a popular new tradition for our old club. Thanks to Esther and John Milsap for all the work and hospitality.

MG Swap Meet Report

Fullerton is a bit far to go for a swap meet though it is also an chance to get together with old friends from other clubs and from Southern California. I shared a ride down with Terry Sanders but club member Dean Spielman, now living in Illinois, was able to join us for the meet and the ride home. Member Stuart Locke was also there snapping up bargains ahead of me. I got some parts cheap for the MGA coupe. For example, I got a complete and straight front bumper with over-riders, all in aluminum, for \$10.

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Why We Drive on the Left

From the Amphicars Website

Author not published; Submitted by John Hunt

"England was one of the last places in the world where the people drove on the wrong side of the road... But they did everything else well enough,..."

Jack Ryan, *Patriot Games* (Tom Clancy)

Why do the English drive on the "wrong" side of the road? It's one of those trivia questions that can really nag at you. I did some research and discovered the following:

In days of old, folks passed on the side that allowed them to use their sword to protect themselves if necessary. As most people are right handed they therefore kept to the left. This practice was formalized in a Papal Edict around 1300 telling pilgrims to keep to the left.

Nothing much changed until 1773 when an increase in horse traffic in the UK brought about the General Highways Act which contained a keep left recommendation. This became law in 1835.

Reasons to travel on the right are less clear but the generally accepted version is as follows. The French, being Catholics, followed the Papal Edict but in the build-up to the French Revolution, the Aristocracy drove their carriages at great speed on the left hand side of the road, forcing the peasantry over to the right side for safety. Come the Revolution, instincts of self preservation resulted in the remains of the aristocracy joining the peasants on the right hand side. The first official record was a keep right rule introduced in Paris in 1794.

Britain's imperial expansion spread the keep left rule far and wide. This included India, Australia and much of Africa. (Many African countries changed to the right later when they became independent.)

France also had quite an empire after the revolutionary wars and the keep right rule spread through much of Europe and to colonies such as Egypt. The connection with the USA is thought to be General Lafayette who recommended a keep right rule. The first reference to a keep right rule is in a law covering the Lancaster to Philadelphia turnpike in 1792.

In the 1850s gunboat diplomacy forced Japan to open its ports to the British and they persuaded them to adopt the keep left rule.

Enter the Motorcar! Very early motorcars followed horse-drawn carriage practice and the driver was seated in the middle. Once the owners of the vehicles realized what fun they were to drive they wanted their wife or companion to sit with them so the decision had to be made, which side to place the steering.

The side that was chosen followed the tradition in the country of manufacture so the very first cars (Benz in Germany) were left hand drive as they kept to the right. The major exception was that racing cars were usually right hand drive because it was better suited to circuit racing. In the USA

Shockey Photo



Members Rod Williams and Mark Hertz at Sears Point, October, 2004.



Dan Shockey & Dennis Cox behind Dennis' MGB. Dean & Raye Hansen in MGA. *MG Reunion*, Laguna Seca, March, 2004



William Shaw

(415) 924-1450

36 Industrial Way
Behind Cost Plus
Greenbrae, CA 94904

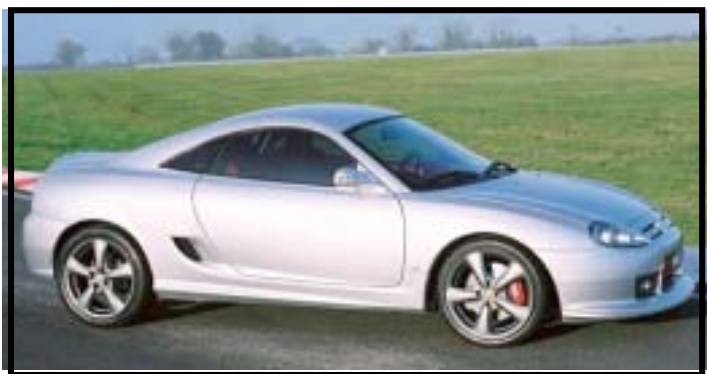
V6 MG TF-GT

An announcement recently from MG Rover is they are considering introducing a GT into the product range. You would expect the GT version of the MG TF* to be faster, more rugged and undeniably more handsome and from initial views, it is. MG Rover have taken the hugely popular current TF and turned it into a modern day example of the MGB/GT.

The GT Concept may be powered by the 2.5 litre KV6 engine currently seen in the MG ZT and producing 200bhp, performance is expected to give the GT sub 6 second zero to sixty acceleration and a top speed of 145mph. The increase in speed is aided by the reduced drag GT style, cutting the aerodynamic drag from 0.35 to 0.31.

The TF's recent sales performance is impressive. It is the UK's best selling sports car and sales have climbed in each year for the last three.

* *The latest version of the MGF has been given the confusing name of MG TF, in line with the company's model nomenclature: ZR, ZS, ZT, ZT-T and SV. See the MG Rover web site or www.mg-rover.org*



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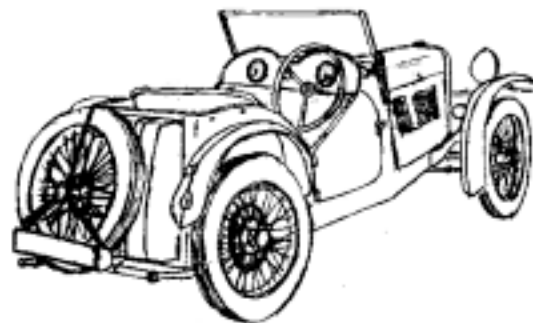
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Pierce-Arrow was an example of this and in Europe, most pre-1950 Italian sports cars are right hand drive, including all pre-1956 Lancias. Every Bugatti (French) is also right hand drive.

And so to the future. Despite Euro-pressure the consensus is that Britain, or any other keep left country, will never change. Two reasons, traffic density makes it very difficult to make such a change and the world's largest producing country, Japan, will always produce right hand drive cars for their market, guaranteeing a supply for the rest of the world.

So why then, even in England, do boats keep to the right (and yet have right hand steering)? Good question with no clear answer. The favorite theory goes back to the fact that most people are right handed. If the boat was propelled and steered in the same way as a punt then you would want to sit on the right side and steer with a pole or a board and keep an eye on the bank. Another reason may be that engines turn in a clockwise direction (viewed from the rear). A propeller turned this direction causes the right side of a small boat to lift under power so boat builders put the seat, steering gear and anything else heavy, on the right.

(Condensed a bit for length; quote added.)



1932 MG J2 Midget
drawing by MGOC
member J.R. Boye
(master MG mechanic
at O'Connor Classics)

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DRIP PAN

News and Articles from the Peninsula T Register

Three Problems with Ken Palmer's Fuel Pump Article*

by Stuart Locke

(1) Ken failed to tell you to only buy the low-pressure electric fuel pump that is for European cars. The most common one sold is high pressure for American cars. MGs can only handle 2-3 pounds pressure. Anything more and you will be on the side of the road, bonnet up, tools out, frustrated, wondering why you listened to Ken.

(2) There is no need to buy the loud, noisy one that Ken refers to. Auto Zone sells a quiet one.

(3) No need to change your electrical system over to negative ground. Auto Zone sells one that can be used on positive or negative ground.

1,2, 3. Now Ken's idea of an auxiliary fuel pump makes more sense and is more user friendly.

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Welcome New Members

Henry Burnett was recruited by John Hunt. Henry's first car was a 1967 BRG MGB roadster with wire wheels, delivered in Copenhagen, Denmark. He toured Europe for three months, covering 5,000 miles, shipped the car back to the US, and reports that life has been mostly downhill ever since. The current MGB/GT has undergone a complete mechanical restoration by Lawrie Alexander of British Sportscar Center in Cameron Park. 72 spoke chrome Dayton wheels and Konis all around make his daily commute from Felton to Santa Cruz down Highway 9 a video game. The paint and interior are future projects.

Robert Piper is our newest member, and our only one in Idaho. He was given the membership by Tom Hughes, his brother-in-law. Bob has a '53 TD.

Tim Thresh is from Santa Rosa and has an MGA that he's owned for four years. He found us at the last Sears Point track day. Tim Thresh is a "true Brit" born in London and has lived in Santa Rosa with his wife Jackie since 2000. After 25 years with Hewlett-Packard, he recently "was retired" and the two of them now own and operate Melitta Station Inn, www.melittastationinn.com, a Bed & Breakfast in Santa Rosa.

Car-wise, Tim began with a 1934 Morris 10/4 saloon when he was 17 years old. A loan from his uncle, this venerable side-valve machine taught him the basics of motor maintenance and took part in several classic car rallies across England. After this he purchased a 1967 metal bumper AH Sprite which was sufficient to impress Jackie and persuade her to marry! Later the arrival of children meant sale of this fun car with its regular SU tuning ritual.

On arrival in Santa Rosa, Jackie relented and bought a 1958 MGA for him in 2000. The car came with a supposed good restoration of the motor, but after two years it became apparent that a botched 1800cc big-bore job was installed. A hot street cam and double valve springs conspired to require Tim to conduct a block level rebuild in the winter of 2002/2003. Oh and of course the layshaft had collapsed so he learned to rebuild the gearbox in the winter of 2001/2. This winter the suspension is up for overhaul, and after that it will be time for bodywork (or)

Tim looks forward to meet members at events in the next few months.



Useful Tools Series by Mike Jacobsen

Panel Lifters

If you've ever tried to remove a door panel from any car designed after about 1960, you've run into the problem of getting those darn plastic rivet-like fasteners out of the door without tearing the panel or breaking the fastener. Wide-bladed screwdrivers, putty knives, and gasket scrapers all help, but none of them really do the job well. I thought about trying to make a special tool by cutting a slot down the center of a large putty knife, but then I discovered that someone had beaten me to it. I found the Trim Removal Set in the Eastwood catalog.

The three-piece Trim Removal Set looks a little like a collection of mutant putty knives. One member of the set is the tool I was wishing for, and is meant to lift out the clips that attach a car door panel to the door. The second tool is designed to push out the wire C-clip that typically secures window crank handles to their shaft, and the third tool will remove window molding clips.

After years of use, I can truly say that I have *never* broken a door clip while using the door clip tool. The C-clip tool also works as advertised, even on the handles in my Magnette. I thought I'd never get a chance to try the window molding tool, but a couple of months ago I had to replace the windshield moldings on my modern car, and the tool worked just fine. The tools are quick to use, too. Since they have ground and tapered edges, you just slide them in where you need to remove something, lift, and *snap*, the clip is loose.

Mine came from the Eastwood catalog (item 52021, about \$11), but you can sometimes find similar tools at the local auto parts store. I've seen a door panel tool in Kragen before, at least. Eastwood is at 800-345-1178, or www.EastwoodCompany.com.



From Rod Schweiger:**

SU pumps are also a common form of failure. I prefer the low pressure electronic pump marketed by Purolator, part number PR#42S. This pump is also sold by Kragen and from Moss Motors as well. This pump is a pusher pump and should be mounted at the rear of the car. On a TD or TC I mount it at the rear and pump through the SU pump. It can be easily adapted to any MG and is very reliable.

From Dan Shockey:

I purchased a low pressure cylindrical pump from Auto Zone for about \$30 and mounted it on a friend's MGB. This is referred to as the "hand grenade" pump – due to its shape not its failure mode. The pumps talked about by Ken, Stuart and Rod are the little "square" (rectangular box shaped) units. In a pinch, you can add a fuel pressure regulator to a high-pressure pump to drop the pressure. Beware: some of the older pumps weren't designed to handle high levels of alcohol as we now have in much of our fuel.

I usually stay with an SU pump but get the one with an electronic switch and I carry a spare. I've not had a failure with an electronic SU. Buy a new one and put your still-working old one in the boot for a spare. However, the built-in back-up pump sounds like a great idea.

* See the December, 2004, *Octagon*. (Reprinted)

** Published in *The Wind Machine*, January, 2005. (Sorry Safari Touring Society)



MG saloons emerge from the primordial pond. GoF West, 2004. The Arnolt TD at left belongs to Judy & Dick Scardamaglia of Glen Ellen.

Photo: Rick Malsed

Brake Tech Tips

Brake Pulling

Pulling to one side under braking can be caused by several factors. If your car has this dangerous habit, check the following:

- Tire pressures set incorrectly
- Unevenly worn or mismatched tires
- Worn or loose suspension components
- Worn or loose wheel bearings
- Worn or oily brake pads or linings
- One wheel cylinder stuck or working less efficiently than the other

Tightening Bleed Nipples

Ian Cornish

Triumph Newsletter U.K.

I've never seen it recorded before, but it is a very common fault to find brake bleed nipples over-tightened (sometimes to the point where they shear or crack the alloy casing). Girling states that "a torque of 4 to 6 lb. ft. should be applied, which is sufficient to lock the bleed screw without damaging the orifices of the ports." If the orifice has been enlarged and the tell-tale black ring can be seen on the conical seating, then this is a sure sign of over-tightening.

No Dripping Brake Lines

Ben Travato, Goleta, CA

(From the Moss newsletter)

When removing hydraulic components from your car, have you noticed that no matter how well you plug off the brakeline, fluid always leaks out? A quick and easy fix is to remove the master cylinder cap and place a sheet of very clean plastic (such as a plastic bag) over the opening, then screw the cover on tightly. This will form a vacuum, and none or very little fluid will leak out of any line.

Brake (No) Bleeding

Dan Shockey

Recently I repaired the brake master cylinder on a 1973 MGB/GT without having to bleed the brakes again when finished. By using a plastic oil can filled with brake fluid connected to the bleed screws, I was able to push fluid up the lines to the master cylinder without introducing air into the system. Squirt some fluid through to get air out of the oil can and tube before connecting it to the bleed screws. This system seems to work well for bleeding the clutch hydraulics, too, but I must admit that I usually have to bleed the system the usual way after such work.

MGs By the Bay

Saturday, May 7 San Leandro Marina **UPDATE**

This is the 12th annual all-MG car show, formerly held at Jack London Square. The event will be held the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend.



After several years of disappointment with the facilities and management of Jack London Square, and with extensive construction beginning at the Square, the MGOC has decided to try another venue. The San Leandro Marina is 10 miles south of Oakland and right on the water, with restaurants and a nice hotel next to our site.

The Club will save the \$1000 fee charged by the Square so will be able to purchase higher quality awards. The fee for use of the Marina site is \$45. Our site is next to the El Torito restaurant.

