



# 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!*



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battle the Spanish Influenza  
in Sydney, Australia, Spring,  
1919

## May 2020



# 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). 2005 rates are: monthly (yearly): full pg. \$25 (\$240), half page \$18 (\$175), third page \$12 (\$120), business card \$8 (\$75).

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

## MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO *THE OCTAGON*

Your stories, photos, tips, questions, and anything MGOC-related are always welcome in *The Octagon*. Please make your contributions by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the issue in which you want them to appear. Please email all contributions to [magnut\\_dan@hotmail.com](mailto:magnut_dan@hotmail.com) or send them to: Dan Shockey, 10 Willis Rd., Scotts Valley, CA 95066.

## RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

Have you helped recruit any new members lately? The club roster is available from Steve Kellogg upon request.

## MGOCSE.ORG

Upcoming events, MGOC history, photos, membership forms, *The Octagon*, and helpful links are posted on the Club Web site at <http://mgocsf.org>.

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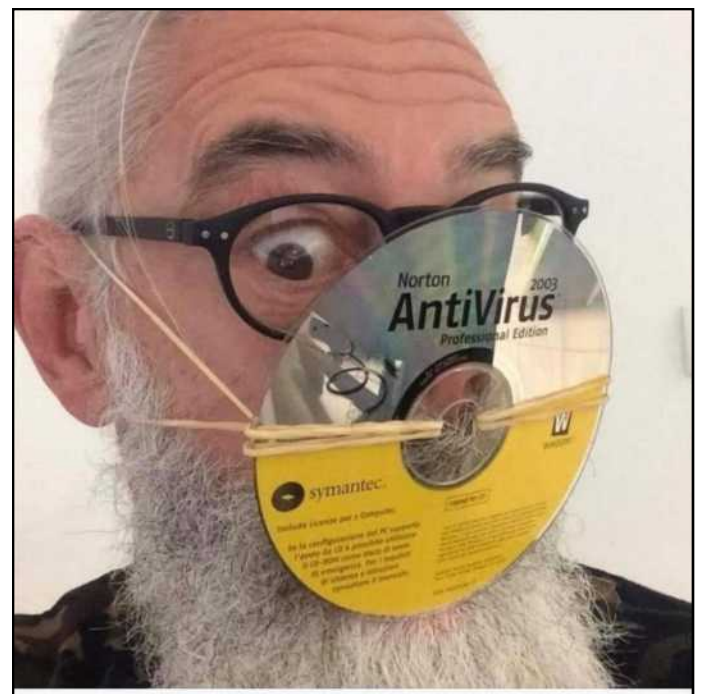
# Virus: Wear a Mask!



Member Don Davis puts his *MGs by the Bay* shirt to good use.

Below left: “Cover What Matters” by Marty Rayman

Below: Another antivirus mask...



## From the Editor

Greetings from home. I am not sure I like being labeling an aged person at risk but here we are – and there we aren't. Last month I said we would know a lot more about this virus by now. I think we do. There is still much uncertainty about when we can go back to work and lead a more normal life. The major MG events have now been canceled but we are seeing some events being rescheduled for September. Bill Hiland hopes we can do the Fall Classic in October.

I plug along on the MG PA, trying to finish the detail bodywork. I have now put away the power grinders and sanders and only using fine sandpaper and glazing compound. I removed the doors to paint them but have drawn the line there. I think I am very close to firing up the air compressor and seeing if I can spray some paint. Maybe in another day or two, depending on whether I find more imperfections I can't live with.

I am leaving two holes on the side of the body where I think a side-mount radio antenna once lived. I discovered the holes are covered on the inside by two shiny dimes glued there. The holes – and dimes – are part of the history of the 85-year-old MG.

It is truly amazing to me that I have no trouble filling the newsletter with articles, mostly new stuff, about cars that have been out of production for 40 years. It seems like we have only scratched the surface. I am reminded about the New Testament that says if everything were written, the world would not contain the books.

Perhaps we can soon take the MGs out for a drive without concerns. I hope to see you soon. Safety Fast!

**Dan**



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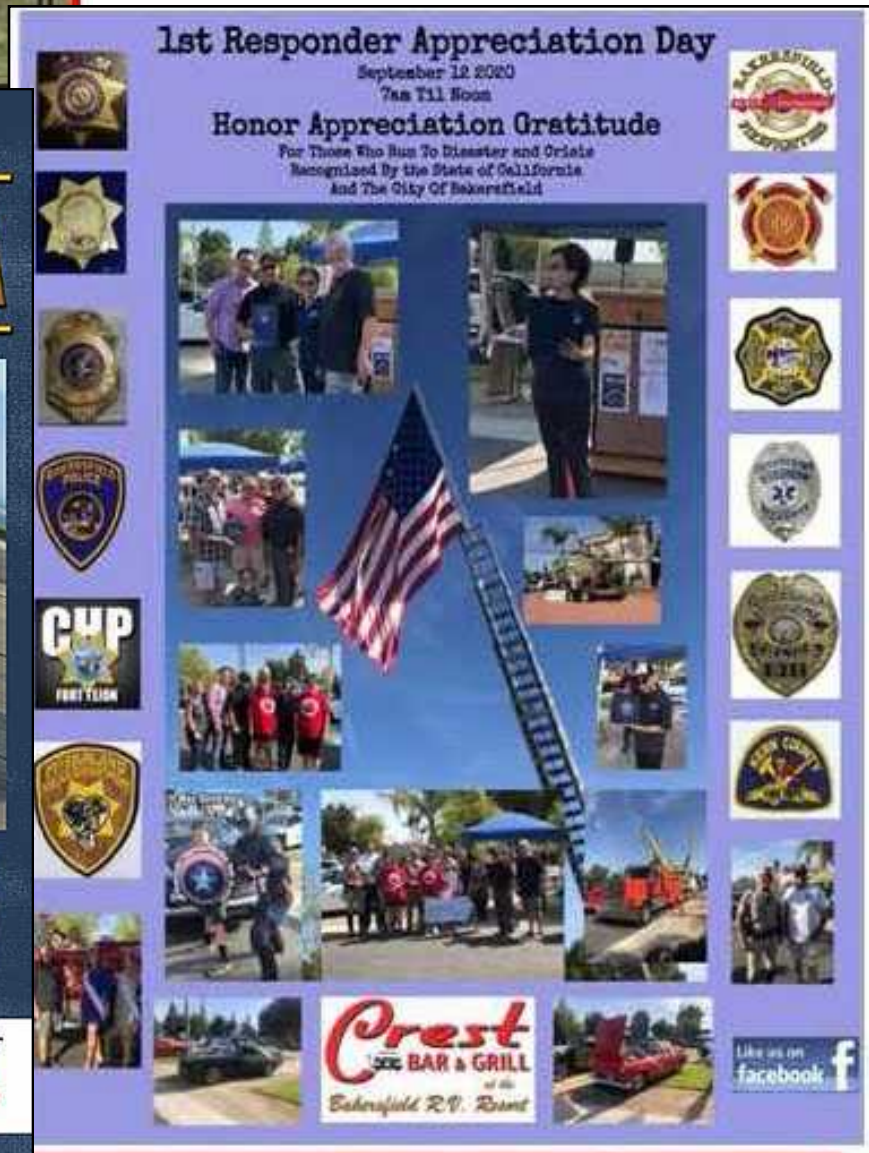
## 2020 Events

Events are being rescheduled for late summer and fall.

Check web sites for updates

**2020 Sonoma Speed Festival**  
[carclubs@sonomaspeedfestival.com](mailto:carclubs@sonomaspeedfestival.com)

**EVENT RESCHEDULED TO  
 SEPTEMBER 4-6, 2020**





# Member Notes:

Thank you, thank you, thank you Dan for another fantastic newsletter. You do a terrific job!!

However, I don't know about your copy, but the text came out perfectly clear on the BEWARE, MG Car Enthusiasts Disease..... - Gary Germano

## Walking Tours of Kentfield

From member Marty Rayman

The obvious becomes revealed when one looks around. We've been walking/hiking 3 to 8 miles/day, from right out our front door. We've been stopping to read signs that we'd quickly passed by in the past, finding hidden sculptures, experiencing garage, front entrance, & garden envy, seeing magnificent views of Mt. Tamalpais, noting gas meters in unusual spots, spotting interesting vehicles (so many that were for camping),

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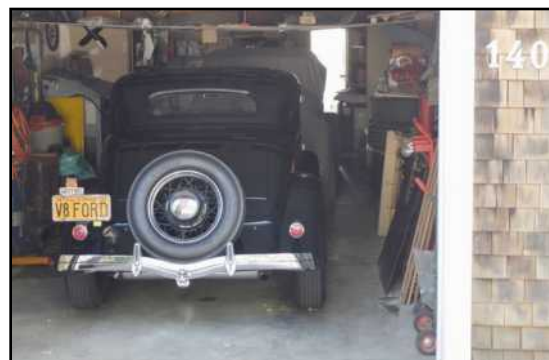


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rambling through places we never knew existed that are not far from our home, admiring our surroundings, cooking, eating, reading, listening to music, podcasts & the sounds around us, appreciating our home & learning new things. And, of course, taking photographs.





## President's Ponderings

**GROUND HOG DAY**, I wake up every morning, look at the clock and it seems just like yesterday and I do the same things. I feel like Bill Murray in the movie *Ground Hog Day*, when everyday is a repeat of the day before as he tries to win the heart of Andie MacDowell. I think it's one of Bill Murray's best films and if you haven't seen it and even if you have you should see it again. We've got to do something to pass the time.

Marla and I did slip out this week for a drive in country side and went to Bodega Bay. We packed sandwiches and drove out to the coast. All of the parking areas and beaches are closed but we know a quiet coastal road where we found a bench to sit on and enjoy our sandwiches overlooking the waters. It was a nice change. However after we sat down we were quickly surrounded by a flock of black birds. Some of them sat on a bush directly in front of us, some to the side and the others behind us. After I started to eat my sandwich one of the birds flew towards me, snagged by finger and pecked at my sandwich! It reminded us of Alfred Hitchcock's movie "The Birds", they were very similar in size and weren't afraid of us at all. I think Marla was right when she said they must be hungry because of the lack of tourist and scraps of food to eat. Obviously we finished our food very quickly and retreated back to the car.

We don't normally watch movies at home during the day, but with the theatres closed we may start a new routine. Yesterday we watched the movie "Parasite"; that's the Korean movie that won several Academy awards including best picture. The whole movie is in Korean with sub-titles but you quickly get used to reading them and it seems quite normal. We didn't know what to expect but we both enjoyed it and understand why it did so well on the awards circuits. If you haven't seen it put it on your list. It's not my usual kind of movie but it was very good and entertained us for over 2 hours.

I spent the first half of the month working on my MGB GT sorting out starting and running issues and have hopefully resolved them; time will tell. You can read about my trials and tribulations in this newsletter. I found that you just need to be patient and systematic in your approach and not jump all over the place as I was doing at first.

Since my last column several other National events have cancelled including the NAMGAR GT-45, NAMGBR 2020, GOF West and recently Pebble Beach Concours 2020 and many of the car auctions. I don't know if the other events held during Monterey car week will still continue.

In order to offset some of the impacts of this Pandemic the MGOC Board did approve "free membership" for the next 6 months for all members, from June 30 to Dec 31. However, due to the temporary closure of our copy shop (*not an essential business*) the mailing of the Octagon will be suspended until further notice. The Octagon will still be available online and can be printed at home.

Take care and stay safe,

**Andy**



## A Brummy in Our Midst! - *You never knew...*

Good to get your newsletter in these desperate times, makes for a good MG read whilst we are in isolation. I didn't realize that you are from Brum until I read most of it, so from all of us in the Midland Centre of the MGCC, good luck to you and all your MG lot, and hopefully happy MG motoring in the future.

I personally am elderly (age 80) and vulnerable but OK at the moment, so ever hopeful to continue my MG life in a short while.

Incidentally, I was living in Southern California in the late '60s and for a short while was Vice President in the San Diego MG Club, happy sun filled days in my '54 TF, now a distant memory.

Brian Osborn, Treasurer - Midland Centre, MGCC

Hi Dan, you are correct. Brum is short for Birmingham. In fact all the locals pronounce it Birmingham, so Brum for short. Everyone like me who is from Birmingham is called a Brummy. Andy Preston





# FIXING PROBLEMS WITH MY 1974 MGB GT

by Andy Preston, April 2020

For the past several months I'd noticed several problems with my 1974 MGB GT, which were becoming worse and worse namely:

1. Difficulty in starting. It was hard to find the correct amount of choke for the engine to fire and then I had to feather the gas pedal to keep it running.
2. Loss of power. The engine was very flat on acceleration, it had no go.
3. Missing under load. Occasionally the engine would miss a beat when accelerating which was getting worse.

## Background

We have owned the car for 24 years and it has 160,000 miles. Engine rebuilt 60,000 miles ago. The engine is original and still has all the SMOG equipment attached. Pertronix ignition fitted 3 years ago.

While undergoing the "Stay at Home" mandate I thought it would be the ideal time to see if I could find what's wrong with the car. I must admit to almost giving up several times but with some online help from a former British shop owner, Dan Grinnell I was able to find the answers.

## Approach

Initially I tried the quick fix approach and removed the carbs serviced the cold start valve and then when that didn't work played around with the timing but to no avail. So I decided a more organized method was warranted.

According to John Twist and other experts it's important to have a systematic approach and check everything in the following order. Do not go the next step before finishing the previous one. This analysis took place over several weeks and not overnight; even though it might appear that I did it quickly that was not the case. I'm not an expert and spent lots time reading and re-reading manuals and watching John Twist videos online until I understood how things are supposed to work together.

1. Overall engine condition
2. Emissions
3. Ignition
4. Fuel

### 1. Overall engine condition

My Engine # is 18V 672Z which is original and correct for a 1974 model with emissions controls. The distributor, carbs and emission controls are unique for the 73 and 74 models.

First of all I did a compression check on the engine to ensure that it was in good condition. Compression numbers were #1 175, #2 170, #3 165, #4 180 psi across respective cylinders. These readings were higher than I expected for an engine with 60k and all within 10% of each other so were OK.

I adjusted the valves to 15 thousand clearances, although all were fairly close already. I fitted a new valve cover gasket at the same time because the old one was leaking and drooling oil down the side of the engine onto the exhaust system. I inspected the engine for leaks and other broken hoses and found none. So onto the next step!

### 2. Emissions

The emissions equipment on the engine was all stock and I didn't know what parts were working correctly or not so I decided it was easier to remove the air injection system and see how that affected anything. The engine should run very well even without certain parts of the emission system. I removed the air (smog) pump, check valve, air injection manifold, gulp valve and anti run on valve and misc hoses.

Items not working were; check valve, and anti run on valve. The check valve is important because that prevents exhaust fumes flowing backwards into the smog pump and then back into the inlet manifold. The anti-run on valve was leaking thereby causing a vacuum leak in the inlet manifold. I plugged the cylinder head with set screws and inlet manifold ports with rubber caps.

*At right, Andy's engine bay before removing the smog equipment. Photo by author.*





I also removed the charcoal canister and cleaned the charcoal (you burn off all the residual gas vapors by emptying the charcoal onto a steel tray and setting fire to it, which is great fun). It's important to re-install the charcoal canister because the fuel tank and carbs vent to it and prevent fuel vapors escaping to atmosphere. The valve cover breathes through the charcoal canister thereby removing accumulated fuel vapors.

I also cleaned the vent/overflow line from the carbs to the canister which was partially blocked. This line must be open otherwise the float chambers are not vented and the engine will stop running. BTW this is how the "anti run on" valve works by starving the carb float chambers of air.

Did this make any difference to the car starting? Not at this time but I think it helped with the overall performance later on; so onto the next step.

### 3. Ignition

The engine has the original distributor # 41491 25D4, with manifold vacuum unit 54425516 both correct to the car.

I had the distributor and vacuum unit rebuilt by Advanced Distributors 4 years ago and installed electronic ignition (Pertronix) inside the distributor and a Pertronix coil 3 years ago. As far as I know Pertronix ignition systems either work or don't; unlike conventional points that can sort of still work but can be hard to trace a fault. In order to check the Pertronix system I replaced the complete distributor and wires with the ones from my 1967 MGB (also Pertronix) which I knew worked great. I re-timed the engine for this set up but it didn't seem to improve the starting or performance much.

I replaced the spark plugs and made no difference. So I had ruled out everything except for the 3 year old Pertronix coil. I checked the low voltage side of the coil and it read 3.5 ohms resistance which is good but there's really no way to check the high voltage output. So I replaced that with an old one I had in a storage box and the car wouldn't even start. I found another old coil and put that on and it wouldn't start either. Things were looking worse and worse. In desperation I took the one off my 67 MGB and the engine roared into life straight away. What are odds of having 3 bad coils! All those coils were dispatched to meet their maker!

I bought a brand new Lucas High Performance coil, re-installed the original distributor, wires and plugs and the engine started better but it still wasn't running well. I tested the vacuum line from the distributor to the inlet manifold and that was plugged. On this engine the manifold vacuum advances the distributor by 10° (at the crankshaft) which gives a smoother idle and helps with emissions. I replaced the distributor vacuum hose and experimented with various timing settings. After numerous trials and test runs I found the optimum timing to be 24° BTDC at idle with the vacuum connected. (This equates to 14° BTDC at idle with no vacuum, so it's pretty standard). The engine idled better than before but not perfectly, so I decided it was time to adjust the carbs.

### 4. Fuel

The engine is fitted with Twin HIF4 SU Carbs which are correct and original to the car. The HIF stands for "Horizontal Integrated Float" which means that the float bowl is under and attached to the body of the carb. Over the year's I've cleaned them, re-set the float height with new needles and seats and had the shafts re-bushed otherwise they're stock.

After I had got the timing correct I started to adjust the carbs. I balanced the air flow to each one and adjusted the mixture using a "Gunsons Colortune Kit". This is a very clever tool and consists of a glass topped sparkplug that allows you to see the color of the combustion in the cylinder while the engine is running. You put the Colortune in #1 cylinder and adjust the front carb and then in #4 cylinder and adjust the rear carb. If the mixture is too rich the flame is yellow, and if it's just right you get a nice Bunsen blue flame. The jet is adjusted by turning a screw on the side of the carb body.

I adjusted both carbs and got a blue flame and a perfect rhythmic idle so thought I was finished. I took the car out for a drive and it was terrible and had no acceleration at all. However, if I pulled out the choke while accelerating it accelerated very well.

I checked all my records and couldn't find anything showing that I had ever replaced the jets and needles in the carbs. If they were worn that could explain why I had to lean them out at idle and then pull the choke out while running to enrichen the mixture.

I removed the carbs, checked they were working correctly, re-set the float heights and installed new jets and needles. I reinstalled them filled the dashpots with 20W50 oil and once again balanced the air flow and adjusted the mixture with the "colortune". The mixture adjustment is very precise and just ¼ turn of the screw can make a significant difference in the performance. After several attempts I finally found the magic spot and **voila!** I took the car for a test drive and I had no idea that it was this fast; it was like night and day. It pulled right from the start in every gear and right up to 4500 rpm. Wow, it was incredible the difference it made. I'd say it's probably better now than it has ever been.

The final thing I did was to adjust the fast idle (choke) setting to 1500 rpm by aligning the arrowhead on the choke cam discs to the adjustment screws. This is important to ensure the butterfly disc is slightly open to allow fuel to enter from the cold start valves.

I also experimented with different oil in the dashpots and found 20W50 to work best. Thinner oils let the pistons "float" a little causing uneven cruising.

Overall I couldn't be more delighted with the performance of the car but it did take a lot of time and patience to get it right and a certain amount of knowledge. As I said I spent a lot of time studying various manuals and watching videos online from recognized experts.

So to summarize I replaced the coil, replaced the jets and needles in the carbs, replaced the vacuum line to the distributor, and corrected a few vacuum leaks. I should have been able to do that in a day; how come it took me so long?

#### Further note from Andy:

*I asked Andy about the wear on the carb needles. – Dan*

For some unknown reason and I can't find any explanation, the needles in the HIF carbs are spring loaded and biased to one side of the jets. This means that over time they wear out on one side. Both of mine had shiny wear marks on the upper part of the needles, which obviously affects the running. Replacing them sorted out the rich/lean running problems. That's another good reason to buy an MGB earlier than 1967; they so much easier to work on and tune.

At right, Andy's engine after removing the emission equipment. Note the added a/c components. Photo by author.



## MG's and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

By MGOC member John Hunt

The MGB is a timeless iconic design. Simply put, it's a classic. As they say, you need to move with the times. Now, you can have your cake and eat it too! A British firm called RBW Electric Classic Cars, based in Staffordshire, England, is electrifying the MGB. The founder of the company, Peter Swain's first car was an MGB when he was 17 years old. Your first car always leaves a lasting mark. Today, he is creating an electric version by partnering with British Motor Heritage Trust, the organization providing new body shells. To make this happen, over a million pounds were invested into the development of these cars.

These cars have a drive range of 160 miles on each charge and take 8 hours to recharge. It is really the ideal car to run about town. The average person just drives a total of 29 miles per day. These will be limited edition hand-built cars. It looks like they even fit these cars with hand crafted Moto Lita steering wheels! They are not inexpensive like our Abingdon classics; however, they are beautifully built. They cost 105,000 pounds plus tax. To see what they look like, check them out at: <https://rbwelectricclassiccars.co.uk/the-car/>





As noted by our fearless leader, Andy Preston, MG Motor headquartered in Longbridge Birmingham, England are turning out new MGs worthy of the brands heritage. They are available in UK, Europe and Asia; however, not in North America. The main challenge might be due to the need of having to find a dealer network to partner with to sell and support the vehicle and being able to meet various US safety and environmental standards. New MG's in the US may be years away, however, an electric mass production one elsewhere may not be.

What I have long waited to see is their MG E-Motion EV sports car to be produced. It has been in prototype mode for several years. Aesthetically, the E-Motion should become a classic. According to Autocar UK, production is supposed to happen sometime in 2020. It has excellent performance stats: 0-60 in less than 4 seconds and a driving range of over 310 miles. The target price will be under 30,000 pounds. Once it hits the streets, it should be a smash hit! To see what it looks like, check it out at: <https://www.autocar.co.uk/car-news/motor-shows-shanghai-auto-show/mg-e-motion-ev-sports-car-production-2020>



I think there's a place in the market for both of these electric MGs. The RBW Electric Classic Cars MGB is a bespoke car like a Saville Row suit and the MG E-Motion is a fine off the rack suit you would find on Knightsbridge Street in London. Happy motoring and safety fast!



Photos from the web  
site referenced



# How MG helped Ford beat Ferrari

By Adam Sloman, 11th April 2020

**Le Mans '66** (*Ford v. Ferrari* in the States) is one of the biggest films of the year, telling the incredible story of how Ford broke Ferrari's dominance at the 24 hours. But what part did MG play in the story?

At its heart, **Le Mans '66** (or *Ford v Ferrari* as it's known in the US) is the story of two friends – one world-renowned, in Carroll Shelby, the other a hero to motorsport fans in the know, Ken Miles.

Shelby was the all-American hero – a former World War II test-pilot, who in peace-time turned to motorsport, making his debut in May of 1952 at the wheel of an MG TC. Shelby won his first race, which entitled him to a second, and later that day took on bigger, faster cars from the likes of Jaguar and he beat them, too. He would quickly graduate to more exotic machinery, but it was the MG that cemented Shelby's desire to succeed on the circuit. "I still had a lot to learn, but I knew how to go fast. The MG changed my life, because from that point forward, I knew I wanted to be involved with racing and sports cars."

In 1959 he would take an Aston Martin to victory at Le Mans, but shortly afterwards he was forced to retire – a heart condition made it too dangerous for him to compete, so while his career on track had been cut short, a new chapter was opening up for Shelby as a constructor.

Ken Miles' story could not be more different than that of Shelby's. Born near Birmingham, in his early years he raced motorcycles, and at the age of 15 became an apprentice at Wolseley Motors. He too fought in the Second World War – Miles served in the Territorial Army, becoming a tank commander, and was part of a unit that fought on the beaches of Normandy on D-day.

Post-war, Miles demonstrated a huge talent for motor racing, competing in Alvises, Bugattis and Alfa Romeos. In the early 1950s, Miles and his wife relocated to California, where he would find work as an MG service manager and he began to compete with the Sports Car Club of America.

Miles would build his own car, based on an MG TD. It won its first race and quickly drew attention up and down the West Coast of America. The car was simple, but its simplicity only served to underline Miles' talent as a driver. Never one to rest on his laurels, Miles set about developing his next car, a more advanced, MG-based special, nicknamed 'The Flying Shingle' thanks to its swooping body and low ride-height. It was quicker, smaller and lighter than that first special and his success in the US meant Miles found himself as part of the MG team entered the 1955 Le Mans, competing in EX182. Miles and teammate John Lockett would pilot the MG to 12th place, making it the highest placed MG.

Unfortunately, the 1955 Le Mans would be remembered not for the MG's return to the race after a 20-year absence, but for the worst disaster in motorsport history, as 83 spectators and French driver Pierre Levegh died following a major crash.

The events of 1955 led MG to disband its works team and withdraw from racing and Miles returned to the US, and following a difference of opinion with MG General Manager and director John Thornley, moved away from MG. The following year, Miles took MG EX179 to the Bonneville Salt Flats, setting 16 international 1500cc Class 'E' records, including 170.15mph for 10 miles and 141.71mph over 12 hours.

His final race in an MG came in the Flying Shingle, in 1956. As the likes of Porsche began to make their presence known in motorsport, Miles moved with the times, competing in a Porsche-powered Cooper special, racing against another icon in MG's history – Phil Hill.

Miles & Shingle win at Palm Springs, 1955





As the 1950s drew to a close, MG's focus was on its record-breakers, something Miles felt to be of little benefit, taking to print in the US magazine *Competition Press*. He believed that MG still had the potential to succeed internationally, but that the marque was held back, constrained by the management of the British Motor Corporation. "The results of high speed or endurance runs are highly predictable," he said, adding: "The results are in the bag before the car ever leaves the factory."

Thornley would respond in the pages of *Safety Fast!*, reminding all that Miles remained a friend before explaining to Miles that the investment made in a decade of record breaking would not support a racing stable for a single season.

Miles clearly had a passion for MG and a desire to see it racing amongst the best, but in the end, neither the budget nor the political will within BMC existed to push MG onto the global motorsport stage and Miles would move.



In the early 1960s, Miles would become lead test driver for Shelby, playing a key role in the development of the AC Cobra. Other work would see him help develop the Sunbeam Tiger, before in 1964 he would take a key role, alongside Shelby, in completing the development of the Ford GT40 – a car in which he would win the Daytona 24hrs, the Sebring 12hrs and, if not for company politics at Ford, the 1966 Le Mans 24hrs.

Tragedy would strike a year later in 1967 when, while testing Ford's next GT racer, Miles' car flipped, crashed and caught fire. He was 47 years old when he died.

Miles would be inducted into the Motorsport Hall of Fame in 2001 and is considered one of the founding fathers of US road-racing. His contribution to motorsport should not be forgotten and he deserves to be more widely remembered than he

has been – hopefully his and Shelby's story, told so well in *Le Mans '66*, will change that. However his achievements before the 1960s should be noted, too, as should all he achieved behind the wheel of an MG.

Every MG enthusiast knows the story of Stirling Moss and EX181, but what is less well known is that had things turned out differently, we might well have seen Carroll Shelby setting those records. In 1959 Shelby visited Abingdon to test a Spridget-based record breaker. Despite the best efforts of those involved, the Spridget project was shelved, and in the end EX179 would return to Utah in 1959. The pictures below show Carroll Shelby sitting in the shelved EX219 car at the MG Factory in Abingdon (left) and sitting in the cockpit of EX181 with Alec Hounslow looking on (right).



Top to bottom:

- Ken Miles' MGA at the 1955 LeMans
- Ken Miles with EX179 and George Eyston at the Bonneville Salt Flats
- Ken Miles' famous "Shingle" MG race car
- Carol Shelby and EX219

# Sir Stirling Moss, 1929-2020

The MG Car Club Bids Farewell, 12th April 2020

Honorary member of the MG Car Club and motor racing legend, Sir Stirling Moss passed away following a long-term illness. Lady Moss was by his side at Mayfair House until the early hours of Easter morning. Lady Moss said that Sir Stirling "died as he lived, looking wonderful."

Sir Stirling Moss was an incredibly versatile driver and won 212 of his 529 races in his professional career. Sir Stirling was associated closely with Formula One racing, but in 1957 also secured himself a place in MG history when he smashed the class F (1100 - 1500cc) world land speed record at Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats in the streamlined MG

EX181. Moss beat the previous record set by Goldie Gardner to set the bar at an incredible average over two runs of 245.64 mph.

Although never managing a Formula One World Championship, in 1955 he became the first Englishman to win the British Grand Prix at Aintree, finishing ahead of another legend, Juan Manuel Fangio. Fangio was not only his teammate at Mercedes, who Moss joined the same year, but also a friend and mentor.

Sir Stirling Moss' top - level career came to an abrupt and tragic close in 1962 when he crashed at Goodwood in 1962 and was left partially paralyzed and in a coma for 6 months. Following his forced retirement from top-level motorsport, he remained close to motor racing either via his broadcasting commitments or many guest appearances driving or speaking at historic events.

Moss is widely regarded as one of the greatest racing drivers of all time, but more importantly he will be a sadly missed member of the MG Car Club family.



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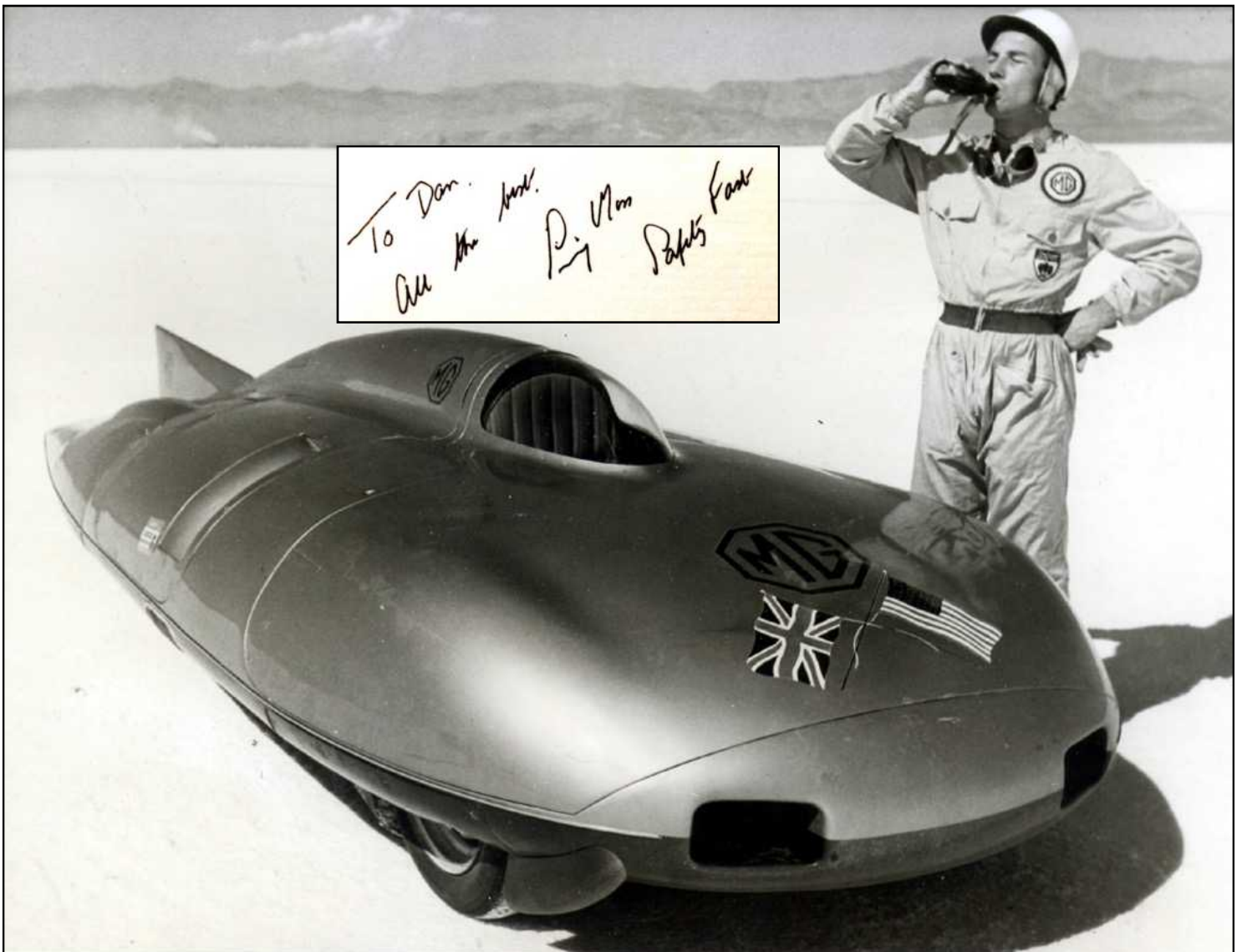
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noto.veloce@gmail.com



## Sir Sterling Photos:

- Maserati 300S, 2nd at Sebring
- Early days in Cooper
- Jaguar C type Mille Mglia (left)
- Maserati 250F
- With EX181 at Bonneville



# Keep Planning for 2020 ... (2021?)



Racer Doreen Evans ran several MGs along with her two brothers. She had many wins and much success in the 1930s.  
(Is that a bulb horn? I need one!)

## SPRING

Drive your MGA Day!, Sat. May 2

British Extravaganza, VARA vintage races, Buttonwillow, May 16-17, Still shows as scheduled.

Other events canceled until the situation with the virus becomes clear.

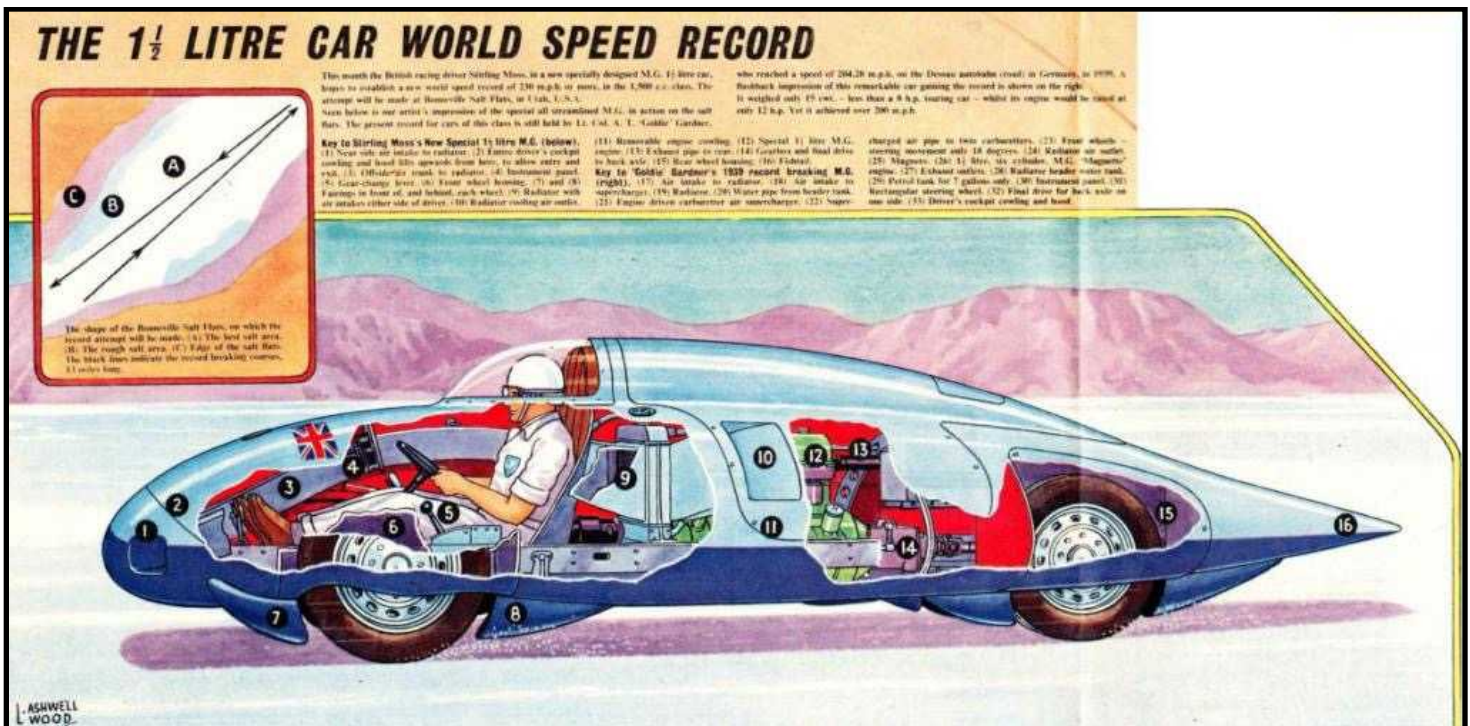
## SUMMER MEETS

NAMGAR GT46, Colorado Springs,

MG2020, NAMGBR Annual Meet

GOF West, Welches, OR

**All Cancelled!**





# Estee Lauder Commercial with 1958 MGA and Grace Elizabeth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgnepkP15t0>

Steve Simmons, Southern California (Active in the MG clubs)

Here's a behind the scenes shot for you. The commercial was shot in November 2017 and first aired last Fall. More photos here: <http://www.mgnuts.com/mga/film/>

So Steve, is that your car in the ad? I must say it looks incredible! – Ken

Posted 05 April. Steve - Ah, I read all the way though your webpage on that shoot and see it was not only



your car, but that Grace Elizabeth loved it so much she tried to buy it on the spot! Congrats! - Ken

Posted 05 April 2020

She did indeed. Many times actually. No sale. :) - Steve

Posted 05 April 2020

Colyn Firth, South Yorkshire, United Kingdom

Steve, I just watched the YouTube clip again and I am thinking that it may be just as well that Grace Elizabeth didn't persuade you to sell her your MGA. I think she would have had to have lengthened the car to accommodate those impressive long legs of hers if she planned to drive it very far. :^) – Colyn, South Yorkshire, UK

Posted 06 April 2020

Well there was the time she did a minor burnout around a rather narrow corner in high heels. That one took some coaching but she pulled it off. The raw footage is awesome. :) - Steve

# MGB Photo Shoot!

19 Nov 2020. Phil Toy, a professional car photographer, came up today from Walnut Creek in his '57 Cadillac, and took photos of my two MGBs to be used in an upcoming article on MGBs in **Collectible Automobile** magazine. We were able to use my friend/neighbor Dick Anderson's yard as a setting. MGOC Member Don in Napa

Here's the website for the magazine:  
<http://collectibleautomobile.com/>

And this is Phil's website:  
<http://www.philtoyphoto.com/profile.html>





# On-Line Minutes Update

Here are the results of the online ballot that I posted a couple of weeks ago.

1. Cancel all future MGOC events until further notice. This will also include MGsbtB because it takes at least 6-8 weeks lead time to do the flyers, send out notices and order the awards. As soon as the USA and California receives clearance from the CDC and Health Authorities we can start hosting events again and hopefully even reschedule some events that have been cancelled.

Yes 7                      No 0

I have sent out an email blast to all members advising them as such.

2. Extend all memberships at no charge for 6 months. That means that all current memberships will end on December 31, instead of June 30. I think this will be a nice gesture on behalf of the MGOC that we appreciate our members and trying to do something for them. I checked with our Treasurer and she thought we don't have to worry about the loss of dues for 6 months and it will also make it more customary to renew dues at the end of the year.

Yes 6                      No 1

I also sent an email blast in the middle of April to all members advising them:

- a) Membership will be extended at no cost for the next 6 months up to December 31, to offset some of the impacts in the reduction in club activities.
- b) Due to the temporary closure of our copy shop (*not an essential business*) the mailing of the Octagon will be suspended until further notice. The Octagon will still be available online and can be printed at home.

BTW I think that without this extension we might lose a lot of members who might decide not to renew membership in July. This way we will hopefully keep our present membership base.

Andy Preston, President MGOC, 4 April 2020

**Thanks, Andy!**



## Classified Ads

**Ads are free to MGOC members and \$6.00 per month for non-members.**

**Parts on sale:** Dave Laughlin is clearing many parts at good prices. He has engines and gearboxes; a good pair of MGA rear fenders; tons of parts to sell! Contact Dave at 510-234-6624 (Richmond)

**Wanted: MGB to Restore:** Member Andreas is a 15-year-old looking to take over your project. Will pick up. Andreas Pichardo, [andreas.c.p24@gmail.com](mailto:andreas.c.p24@gmail.com) (Posted 1/20)

**MGA Parts:** 5 Alum bonnets, 2 styles, gas tank, leak spring, 1500 driveshaft, new fiberglass front valence (race), front frame extension, master cylinder sleeved, 1500 engine block. Member Tom Morgan (650) 740-4116

**For Sale:** Full Tonneau for an MGB roadster in excellent condition, \$150. Contact: Tom Doyle at [wtdoyleii@gmail.com](mailto:wtdoyleii@gmail.com) or via phone at 530-546-9924 (Posted 01/20)

**Two 1976 MGBs:** Sell as package. Clean titles. The red passed smog and has been stored indoors. Both were running vehicles when parked. Roll bar. Owner has passed. Ask \$2000. Located in Linden, CA. (209) 981-5424 (Posted 03/20)

**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)**

# A Barn Find Of Barn Finds

San Jose, CA, April, 2020 – An MG car collection has been recovered in Los Gatos/Monte Sereno California. All 15 of these cars had been stored and sealed up for well over 25 years by a dedicated car collector who passed away many years ago. The condition of these stored cars was spectacular with the exception of a few flat tires.

The storage garage was like walking into a time capsule of an MG showroom, featuring almost every MG model (post WWII) of the best cars. There are cars from the 40's, 50's, 60's & 70's. This personal museum housed 15 of the most beautiful cars, all organized by model & year.

A friend of the family contacted well-known local car collector Mike Hennessy to view the collection for purchase. The goal of the family was to sell to the right buyer. They insisted all the cars be sold as one collection. The next stipulation was to have that buyer clean up the cars, service them and help find the right home for each of these beautiful rare cars.

The complete collection was purchased by Hennessy and the collection was removed from the loft storage area on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, by Hennessy's staff. This process alone had taken two full days to remove all of these classic cars. Many of these cars will be on display at Hot San Jose Nights for the public to view.

Mike Hennessy, phone:408-615-1454fax: 408-246-3015

[hsjnmike@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hsjnmike@sbcglobal.net)

[Coolcars55@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Coolcars55@sbcglobal.net)



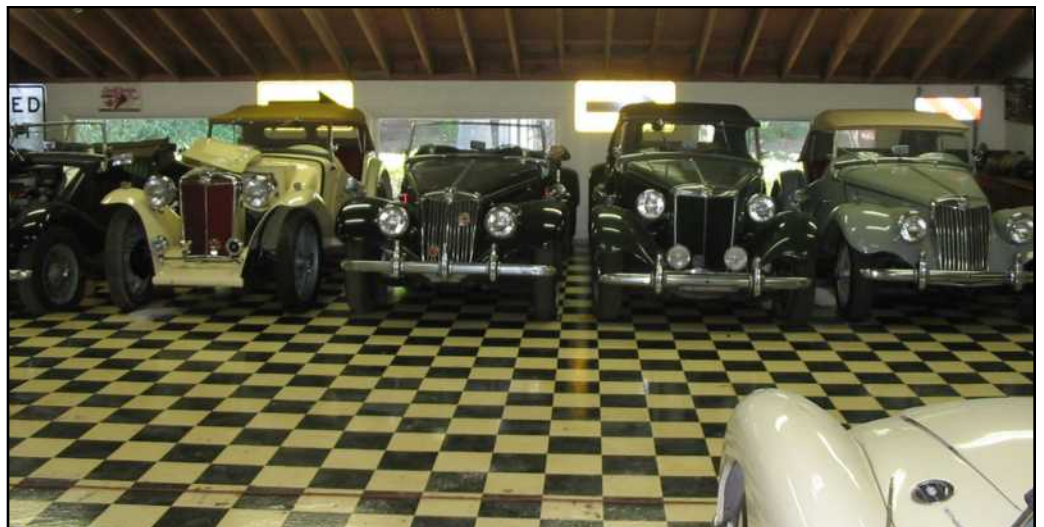
I just purchased a collection of MG's in beautiful condition (except for flat tires & locked brake shoes!) and it includes most every MG model made (post-WWII). They have been stored for well over 15 years. All are very low miles, and very nice survivors like the 1961 Twin Cam MGA with 40K miles, TDs (one a Mk. II), TC, TFs, YT, Midgette ZB, MGC/GT 6-cylinder coupe, MGA coupe, MGBs, etc.

In these crazy times I had the opportunity to buy all these cars last week so I had to work fast. When we opened the door to the heated loft it was like opening the tomb. I expected to hear an air sucking noise, but it was a beautiful personal museum the way the original owner had set it up, with his wonderful cars arranged in order and memorabilia including probably 500 tennis rackets on the ceiling, as his wife loves tennis. The owner died many years ago. His tennis-loving wife just

kept the door closed for all these years. I have all this well documented from the start with pictures.

We have the cars in the shop now preparing them for new owners, one of whom owned one of the cars previously. If you have any interest in any of these cars, please let me know and feel free to forward this email to your car loving friends. THANKS, be safe and be well

Mike Hennessy, HOT SAN JOSE NIGHTS





The value is what it is, fair is fair to both. My shop is taking two cars at time to get running & derivable. I am not concerned about phone calls if a person is really interested and not wasting anybody's time. I am sure that could be worked out. Somebody may want a car the way it is and do their own service work. These all ran very nice when parked. The problems are the common problem from sitting, gas, brakes and batteries. Not one car has any rust or been damaged. - Mike H.

Car Collection List:

1. 1946 YT Tourer XRAGTL, Medium Green, Tan top & interior, disk wheels, wood dash
2. 1948 MG TC, Cream, Red Interior
3. 1951 MGTD, Metallic Green
4. 1952 MGTD Mk II (TD/C), Black, Green Interior, Wire wheels, black plates
5. 1954 MG TF HDA46, Black, Disk wheels
6. 1955 MG TF 1500, HDB46, Gray, Red interior, wire wheels
7. 1957 Midget ZB Varitone, Silver/Blue, Gray interior, black plates
8. 1959 MGA 1600 Coupe, Red, black plates, wire wheels
9. 1961 MGA Twin Cam YD3/2458, Old English White, Red interior, black plates, 1600 style
10. 1963 MGB Roadster GHN3L/10747, Black, Red top & interior, Wire wheels
11. 1969 MGC/GT, stick shift, Light Yellow, blue/yellow Oregon plates
12. 1979 MGB, Bright Blue, Tan interior
13. 1937 Chevrolet Sedan, new gas tank
14. 1963 Plymouth Valiant, Slant 6 with a/c
15. 1968 Mercedes Benz Coupe

The collector was real estate broker Dave Morrison and the cars were inside his home in Saratoga. (Hardly a barn!) Dave belonged to the Peninsula T Register (now part of the MGOC) but was not active. Mike O'Connor reports that he got Dave to join the club and that Dave liked low miles cars and would trade up if he found one in nicer shape.

I had hoped to find out more about Dave and why and how he assembled this collection. That seems the real story to me. It is a dream – though as we have aged, it seems that the cars own us. It is better to focus on one or two, unless you have a lot of time. And think of your widow! - Dan



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**North American MGB Register**



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

**Note that mailing of the newsletter has  
been suspended until the Shelter in  
Place order has ended.**



The MG Owners  
Club has temporarily  
suspended all  
activities that do not  
meet the social  
distancing  
guidelines.

This is especially to  
protect our seniors.

**Stay Safety Fast!**

