



THE OCTAGON

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



Since 1957!



Shockey Photo

So what color scheme?
Matching or sharply
contrasting colors?

At the lunch stop on the
St. Paddy's Day Tour

April 2021

Club Movie Night!
See page 3

About *The Octagon* and the MG Owners Club

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

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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).

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

MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO *THE OCTAGON*

Your stories, photos, tips, questions, and anything MGOC-related are always welcome in *The Octagon*. Please make your contributions by the 15th of the month preceding the issue in which you want them to appear. Please email all contributions to magnut_dan@hotmail.com or send them to: Dan Shockey, 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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Drive-In Movie Night!

7pm for 8pm Showtime, Saturday, April 3

Join us for a Covid-friendly viewing of this fun new movie. Cheer for your favorite giant monster. We plan to gather just before and drive in to park together.

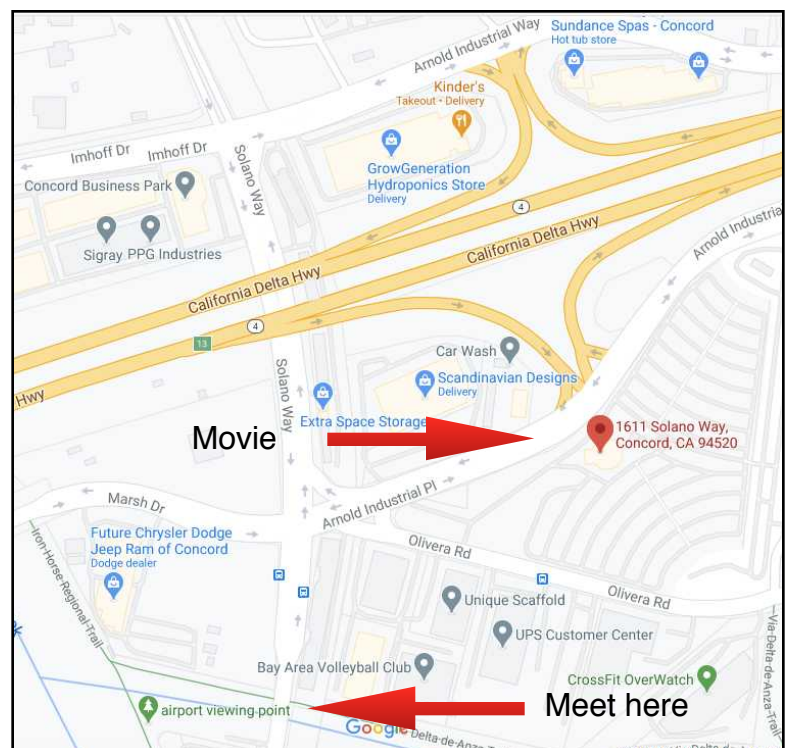
Pre-purchase tickets on-line @ \$8.50 per person or at the Box Office on entry. (\$2.00 for a child ages 5 to 11) Be sure to choose 8pm at the Solano / Concord location!

Bring any car. Note you'll need an FM radio to get the movie sound. Kirk reports you can download an app for your phone, "RadioApp." Or bring a portable radio.

<https://www.westwinddi.com/>
or (925) 825-1951

Organizer: Mark McGothigan,
mark.mcgothigan@gmail.com,
(510) 633-1981

Gather at the **Airport Viewing Area** off Solano Way, at 7pm, latest by 7:30pm



From the Editor

Hello, Covid-surviving MG folks,

Happy Spring! It has finally felt like it with temps near 70. How fortunate we are to live such a great climate. (Pray for rain.) I drove the MGA on the St. Paddy's Day Tour and plan to get the PA out for a local joyride tomorrow. (Getting it out requires moving some things around!)

We are working to get this done a bit early due to the new drive-in movie event on April 3. Thanks to Don Scott for getting us the exclusive interview with Anders Clausager. I never have any shortage of material but it is wonderful to have event photos once again. The ability to produce great photos is such a change from when I started doing this. I used to screen black & white photos (convert to a dot pattern) to try to get them to reproduce somewhat discernable. My ed photo reminds me of the film problem called, "green sickness."

I have now finished my laundry room remodel and have thought to finally start the MGA driveline swap (and a/c install.) Spring is a good time for me to do indoor car work, due to my hay fever.

March 25, 2021



Happy trails to you!

Dan



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APR09



Here's an example of how photos have changed in club newsletters. This is Mike Jacobsen at GT-9 in Tiburon in 1984.

Not all changes are due to advancement in photographic reproduction.

Source: NorCal NAMGAR newsletter



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SMOG EXEMPTION BILL AB220

By Holger Mishal

[Editor's Note: Holger wrote to the club to let us know about this important bill which seeks to relax the SMOG check requirement on cars older than the 1983 model year instead of the current 1976. It has been referred to the Transportation Committee and will get a hearing on March 22nd. For the latest information:

https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB220]

On January 11th, 2021 a Bill was introduced to the State Assembly in CA to change the existing SMOG exemption rules.

The Bill would change the existing rule which excludes vehicles older than 1976 for the SMOG test and would exempt all vehicles 1983 and older. The actual text reads:

Existing law exempts specified vehicles from being inspected biennially upon renewal of registration, including, among others, all motor vehicles manufactured prior to the 1976 model-year.

This bill instead would exempt from the smog check program all motor vehicles manufactured prior to the 1983 model-year.

As the owner of a 1978 Spitfire, I can attest to the relief this bill would bring!

I am sure all owners of cars 1983 to 1977 would agree. It seems like common sense, even in times where climate change a key topic – and should be.

The fact is that a very small percentage of cars on the road (I am reading 1-2% at most) are that old and most of them at this point are well kept collector's cars or "labors of love" that are used for the occasional club outing or fun ride on a sunny weekend.

No significant miles are driven with these cars and their contribution to pollution is certainly minor.

I would be grateful if the Club could contact our representatives to support this bill.

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2021–22 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 220

Introduced by Assembly Member Voepel

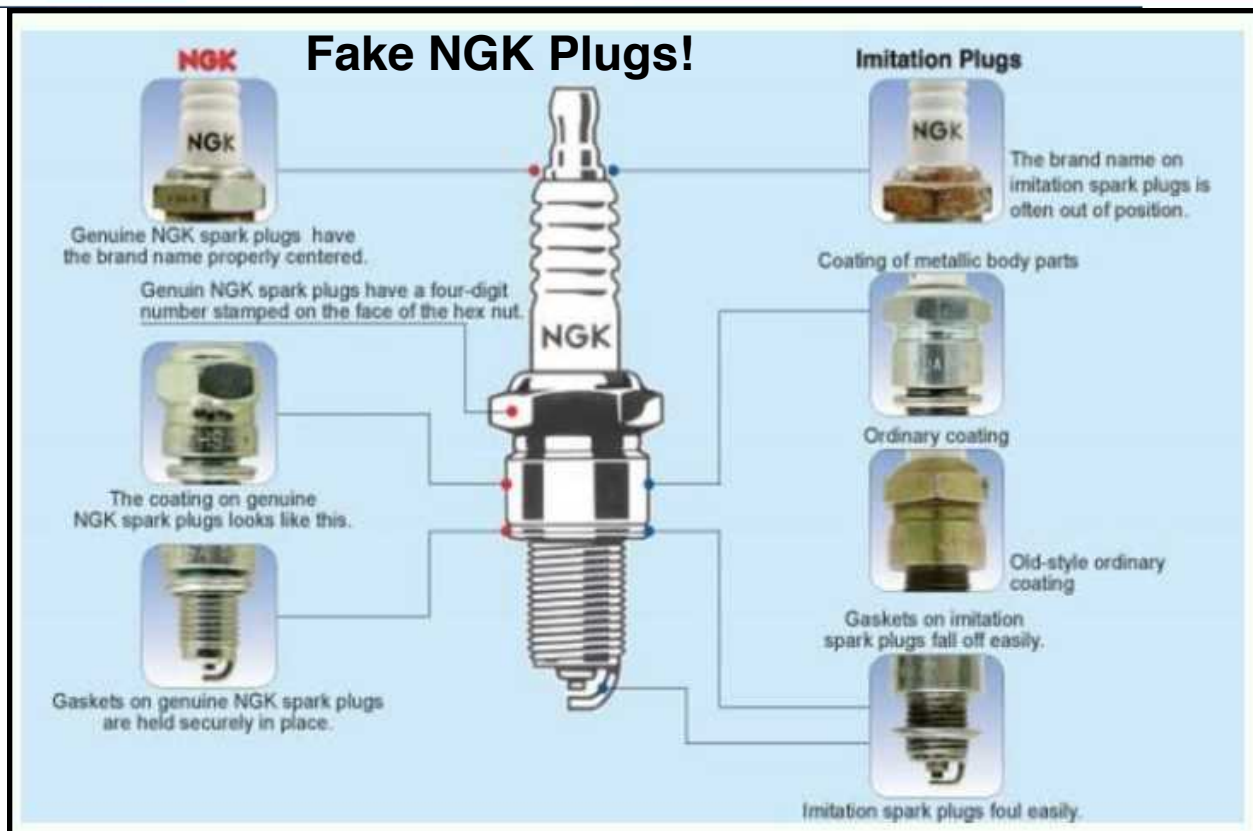
January 11, 2021



A New MG Sports Car?

SABCC member Dr. Tony McLaughlin, electric car owner and keen observer of the British motoring industry, sent this [story](#) on the MG E-motion, a four seat electric coupe scheduled to be introduced in late 2021. With four motors, a zero-to-60 time of four seconds, and 300 miles of range, does this engineering triumph herald MG's return to its sporting roots? [Maybe, but Ed.'s bad puns need not return-Ed.]

Fake NGK Plugs!



Member Notes

From Don Livingood

I was very pleased to see my goofy self on the front cover. What a hoot!

From Don Davis

You put out another winner, Dan! Loved the picture of Vacaville "Ghost Track". When I was working for Ampex in Redwood City, a pal and I drove his TD to Vacaville for the races in the 1959 or 60. The TD, of course, was his daily driver. Wow! I guess that makes me really old!

From Marty Rayman

We participated in a Breakfast Club Rally that started from Ft. Cronkite & up to Tomales. We were outclassed for sure. A lot more British cars are needed to bring some panache to this rally. We drove the MINI roadster last time because the brakes were problematic on the TD at the time. We drove with the Tortoise group. It really doesn't matter. People seemed to start when they wanted to & passed us ad libitum. We pulled over



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twice & just watched the groups zoom by. I think that & looking at the autos in Ft. Cronkite & Tomales were the best. When we joined back in, there were still many folks behind.

The driving was not as much fun as with the MGOC/Sorry Safari folks. It's so nice to have the pretty cars of people you know ahead & behind you, whilst motoring along. In the BCR, at times we were alone on the road. Cheers,

From Nick Korens

Thanks for the newsletter with JR's reminiscence about the old MGA club. I enjoyed reading it. It reminded me of the fun we had. My red MGA coupe had some problems with the fuel pump. It finally failed and I replaced it with a new one a couple of months ago and also installed a new battery. The motor runs great now, but my brake master cylinder failed, and the car is sitting in the garage waiting for me to do something about it. Regards,

From John Hunt

Every time I try to start my MGB GT, it takes 3-4 tries. How much of a concern is that? Could it be a low battery or something else? Your thoughts?

From Tom Doyle

I ordered Moss 408-390, Quarter Flash, L/H, BMH. Moss Motors also offers a right side flash. As you know I have a MGC/GT but this part would work on any MG GT body from 1965-1974. Moss suggested drilling into the body but the tech said I could possibly use glue or tape. Thanks for any ideas you may have.

(See at top.)

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President's Ponderings

Agony and Ecstasy

I have a renewed appreciation for those members who drive T series cars especially on long journeys. We had several TDs and TFs show up for our St. Paddy's Day Drive and many of them came from far afield and some with the tops down. We also have very good friends who used to drive their TF 1500 all over country attending GOF events back in the day. Why do I mention this? Marla and I drove our TF on the beautiful backroads of Sonoma yesterday covering over 60 miles stopping for lunch half way through. After we got home we both looked at each other and wondered why are we doing this? The answer is simple; Fun with a capital F and the pure delight of driving an old car where you are one with the car and your surroundings. And with Ecstasy comes a little Agony.

More drives needed

We had an amazing response for our SPD drive and I apologize for limiting the count to 25 cars but it's very hard to manage any more cars. I'm sure people were just glad to be out of the house even for a short time. So if any of you have any ideas for a "Safe and Socially Distanced" drive please let me know and I'll be pleased to help you arrange it. At the moment I think we should stay with the 'Picnic' model so just think of a location to have a picnic and I'll help you with the rest.

Brakes, brakes and more brakes (cont. from last month)

Yes, I'm still working on the front brakes on my 74 GT. Replacing the dual master cylinder (68-75 model years) was more of a Herculean effort than it should have been and took me way longer than it should. My advice to myself is "read the workshop manual" before you start. I could have avoided a lot of unnecessary work and bloodshed and tears (metaphorically speaking) if I had done that. But the MC is back on the car and working fine. I then noticed that the front brake calipers were sticking a little. The pistons were not retracting completely because the rubber seals were twisted with age. I bought new calipers and flexible brake lines and installed those only to notice that the wheel bearings were making a slight grinding noise. I fixed this with new bearings and I'm back on the road.

However, I don't think the brakes are working as well as they should be and there is a little shimmy when the brakes are applied which is a sign of warped brake rotors (discs). I've ordered new Brembo rotors and TRW ceramic pads and will let you know how it goes next month. Funny how one thing leads to another and then another. Remember this all started with a drop of brake fluid on my floor mat. I'm just fortunate to have a garage and tools and can tackle most jobs myself.

Take care,

Andy





MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW!

Reservations are OPEN for GoF West 2021!

July 26 - 30th

Contact the Resort: 503-622-3101
Mention you are booking as part of GoF West 2021

We received word that the GOF is good to go. The concern was Oregon Covid limits on gathering and dining.

We are beginning to plan one or more caravan groups to the event between us and the Sorry Safari Club. One group is talking of taking the coast highway.

- Dan

The Way We Were

MGB at the 24 Hours of Le Mans

By Graham Robson

Condensed from **British Car** magazine, July, 2000

At Le Mans in 1963 – and again in 1964 and 1965 – a single red long-nose MGB lapped steadily, monotonously, passing the grandstands every five minutes. Except for when driver Alan Hutcheson put the car into a sand bank for more than an hour, a 100mph running average was always a possibility.

"It was very boring," race team manager Peter Browning told me. "We'd see the car every five minutes, tick off another lap, and go back into hibernation. It was so predictable."

Three times, with three different cars, but only one specially shaped long nose, BMC entered an MGB for the prestigious 24 hours race at Le Mans in France. There was no question of winning the race – even a race-tuned MGB was 70mph slower than the Ferraris or Uncle Henry's best – but merely proving a point.

Which certainly happened for here, except for the special long nose, was a sports car that everyone could recognize. Here was a racer developed from a road car. Maybe, just maybe, you or I could have been sitting there, in the same race...

The miracle was not that the MGB performed so well at Le Mans, but that it was there at all. BMC's bosses put a ban on 'works' racing, and it took eight years of delicate diplomacy (on Competitions Manager Stuart Turner's part) to modify that.

The 'works' Competitions Department at Abingdon, fortunately, had experience of preparing MGBs to race at Sebring. Peter Browning explained, "I was working at Abingdon where I was hired to run the Austin-Healey Club. In my spare time I was a racing time keeper. Stuart Turner asked me to manage the events for which MGs were entered. My very first such event was Le Mans in 1963.

"I must have behaved myself at Le Mans, so when it came to going to Sebring, Sicily or Le Mans again, Stuart was happy for me to go. There wasn't any strategy really. The whole objective of running MGBs in motor racing was to demonstrate reliability.

"The cars were run very much to standard specification. We didn't really race at Le Mans anyway, we just tried to qualify and finish. The only tactical plan I had was to refuel the car every two hours and 20 minutes; we knew we might have to change brake pads at midnight (after eight hours of racing!), but that was about it. The reason that we finished 11th in 1965 was that everyone else dropped out.

"To qualify to start, the MGB had to beat a five minute lap, which was about 100mph. As speeds rose, it got more difficult to qualify each year. We actually asked old friends in other cars to give us a "tow" along the Mulsanne Straight!

"At Sebring, maybe, we would look at the TRs and the Alpines, to try to beat them, but we couldn't match the racing Porsches, and never tried. The drivers were very good about that – though it was never easy to stop Timo Makinen from going flat out. Parts of our success with our regulars – Paddy, Andrew Hedges and Tony Fall – was that they had the discipline, and they were fine.

"In 1963, the MGB was officially entered by the driver, Alan Hutcheson. Just as well, really, because he went off at Mulsanne on the first few laps and spent 1.5 hours digging the car out, using his helmet, the passenger seat, anything to move any sand. The car was undamaged and averaged 99mph for the rest of the event. The doughty MGB just kept on, and on, and the engine, revving to a consistent 6500rpm, never missed a beat.



"Preparing the MGB for Le Mans got no special priority. In 1963, it was a standard car, registered 7 DBL, which returned from Sebring with a blown engine. It was re-prepared at Abingdon, flanked by Healey 3000 and Mini Cooper rally cars. Whichever mechanic was free would start the next job."

For Le Mans, MGs's chief engineer Syd Enever designed a new long nose in aluminum, with a small air intake. This was grafted onto a standard MGB body. It looked right and clearly, it worked well – but was never tested in a wind tunnel. The body panels were also done in light alloy. Other than a massive fuel tank, the whole structure was remarkably standard. Even the removable hardtop was of the type you could order from your dealer.

The engine was tuned to what was called stage 6 in the Tuning Manual. The fittings included a side-draught Weber carb, a full-race camshaft, special flywheel, pistons, valve gear and exhaust manifold. The close-ratio gearbox and competition clutch were matched to a very high 3.307:1 final drive. Overdrive was not fitted, presumably because it could not cope with the increased power.

There were wide-rim wire wheels, competition brake pads (on standard size brakes), and stiffened springs and dampers.

Peter Browning makes the point that any reasonably well off MG enthusiast could have prepared his own car to the same standard. In later years, many privately-owned MGBs were faster and more specialized.

With 125-130bhp and the long nose, drivers could expect 130mph on the straights. It was not going to be a restful race however, with the leaders blowing by the MGB every 20 minutes or so. In 1963, the MGB moved up to 12th place and without the sand pit delay, could have finished in 9th or 10th place.

Paddy Hopkirk says they ran flat out the whole time. "Otherwise it would have felt very slow."

7 DBL went on to crash in the *Tour de France Auto* but then won the GT category of the 1964 *Monte Carlo Rally* in the hands of the

Morley brothers. For the 1964 Le Mans race, a second MGB, BMO 541B, was prepared to the same specification. It was driven by Paddy Hopkirk and Andrew Ledges. This year the MG was timed at 140mph on the straight but had to make an emergency stop at 4am with the brake pads welded to the discs. This kept the MGB from recoding a 100mph average for the race. However the 99.9mph it did achieve got it perhaps more attention!

The challenge was taken again for 1965, this time with the third MGB, DRX 255C. In spite of a trouble-free run, the team recorded 98.2mph. Yet it was impressive enough by any standard, and as rock-reliable as ever. I had the pleasure of using this car soon afterwards, only modified with a 4.55:1 rear axle to make it useful in traffic.

Noisy? Yes. Crude? Only in the standard of its fittings. Enjoyable? Oh, yes! And did it cause a stir? Well, of course it did – when did you last drive a racing car, complete with numbers, in rush-hour traffic?

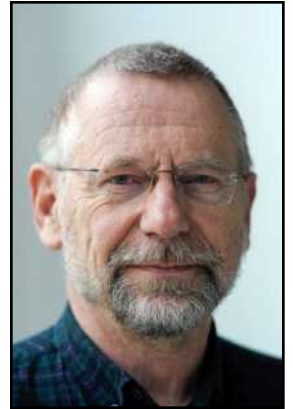


The Interview: Anders Ditlev Clausager

If you own an MG, and you value originality, then you probably have one of the "Original" books by Anders Ditlev Clausager. I have several of his books, and I refer to them constantly. I can lose track of time as I peruse these books for obscure technical details and general information on an MGA or MGB. The photographs of mostly preserved MGs are eye candy to an MG nut.

I always wondered who Anders was, and how he could compile such interesting books with so much detail. With help from the Internet, I was able to contact him. I asked him if he would be willing to do an "email interview" for our MG club's newsletter, and to my delight, he agreed. I compiled a few questions, and sent them off to Anders in Birmingham, and here are his replies.

Don Scott, MGOC Member, Napa



MG Owners Club (of Northern California) Interview

You're from Denmark originally. How old were you when you moved to the UK and why?

I originally moved to the UK at the age of 25 in 1974 when I was accepted for the Master's Degree course in automotive design in The Royal College of Art in London and which I completed in the summer of 1976. I then spent some time out of the UK including working for the Volkswagen design department in Wolfsburg, Germany, in 1977-78 before returning to the UK when I got a job in the design department of Austin-Morris British Leyland at Longbridge in Birmingham. In 1979 I was very fortunate to be selected for the post of archivist in the then newly-founded BL Heritage division which later became the BMIHT, British Motor Industry Heritage Trust, now in the British Motor Museum at Gaydon. The BMIHT sponsored me for a Master's Degree in history from the University of Warwick which I undertook in 1997-1999. In 2000 I was head-hunted for a similar position for the JDHT, Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust, then based in Coventry, and worked for them until retirement in 2014.

Do you live in the UK now, and do you consider yourself an Anglophile?

We still live in Birmingham where we have lived since 1978. Birmingham is the "Second City" in England, it is nearly at the centre of England, and we are about 2 miles from the centre of Birmingham! Birmingham was the original home of the Lanchester and Wolseley car companies, also Austin, BSA, and Singer, then Rover and Land Rover at Solihull from 1945, and most recently Jaguar at Castle Bromwich. The Austin factory at Longbridge where I worked in 1978-79 later became the UK home of the Chinese-owned MG Company. Yes, I suppose I am an anglophile, and my husband of 43 years whom I met in London in 1976 is not only English but was actually born in Birmingham. However it was only last year that I finally took the step of becoming a British citizen which I felt was advisable in view of the "Brexit" situation.

How did you develop an interest in British cars?

I think that I was two months old when my father bought a new Morris Oxford Series MO in 1949. We then had only Morris cars in the family for the next 20-odd years – four Oxfords, two 1800s, and two Minor 1000s. I learnt to drive on an Austin 1100. My father's brother who in my early childhood drove a 1939 Morris Eight Series E, then bought a Wolseley 6/90, and later owned two MGBs, an MGC GT, and finally a Rover 3500. As a teenager I was once allowed to drive his MGB. An aunt had a very early 1959 Morris Mini 850 which I inherited but when I felt I could not look after it properly, I sold it to the BMW Museum. It was a very early car, I believe it is still the 14th oldest Mini known to survive, with about 15,000 miles on the clock when I owned it, and in original condition, so it was definitely museum quality.

What other automobile career pursuits did you have, other than being an author?

See first paragraph – as a designer for Volkswagen and then Austin Morris in 1977-79, apart from being archivist and company historian for 35 years. I have also held a variety



of posts in the voluntary and car club sector and I am still secretary of the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain to which I have belonged for 40 years.

How many "Original" books did you write?

I wrote in that order, *Original MG T-series*, *Original Austin-Healey*, *Original MGA*, and *Original MGB*. More recently I have also written *Factory-Original Jaguar E-type* and *Factory-Original MG T-series*.

You wrote other books about cars that were not in the Original series. Is there one you are most proud of?

Undoubtedly *Wolseley A Very British Car* in 2016 which was a milestone as the first (and I expect it will be the only ever!) full history of this make and the company. The book won three major awards in 2017 – the SAH Cugnot, the SAHB Sedgwick, and the GoMW Montagu Mercedes-Benz award.

How many "Original" books are there, and who created, or how did that book concept come about?

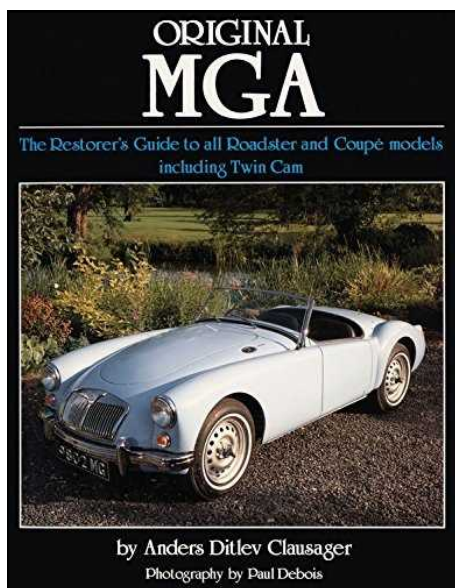
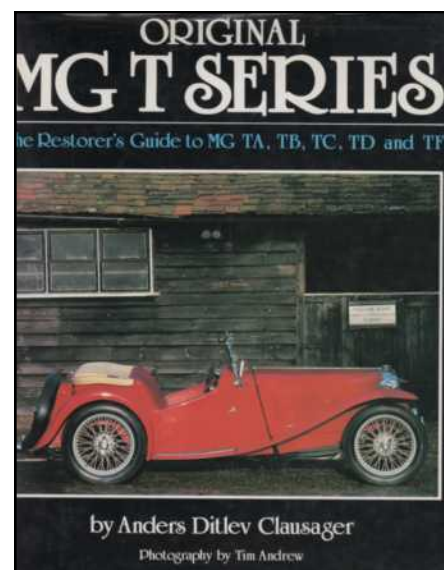
The idea for the "Original" books came from my publisher Charles Herridge who then ran a company called Bay View Books (it was taken over by Motorbooks Inc in 2000) and his editor Mark Hughes who was a friend of mine from the time that he edited *Classic & Sports Car* magazine. This was in 1988. I don't think it was quite the first type of originality guide to be published – there were one or two similar books published in the USA – but it was still a novel concept, and it was always a challenge to find suitable cars for photography, which was Mark's job! The first book in the series had met with a mixed reception, but they then commissioned me to write the MG T-series book and I was determined to do better than that first title. I guess I was in a privileged position, having easy access to many of the MG factory records in "my" archive. I am honestly not sure how many books there ended being in the series, may be 20 or 30, they were very popular and made Charles some money – and me a bit too... Motorbooks for a time continued to publish new titles but then eventually lost interest, so Charles who in the meantime had started a new company, Herridge & Sons, bought back the rights in some of his original "original" books and some of them are still in print. He has published most of my books over the last 30 years and both he and Mark remain dear friends.

What book was most fun to write?

You think writing books is *fun*? You ought to try it! Seriously perhaps the *MG Saloon Cars* from 1998, the last book Bay View Books published before they were taken over. I did enjoy that... sadly it did not sell and I think Motorbooks pulped a lot of the print run. I also wrote a little book on Volvo Amazon and P1800, just for a bit of light relief!

How long did it take to research, write, and compile an "Original" book? Was it fun, or a chore?

I guess about 1 to 2 years. I am not sure that "fun" and "a chore" are quite the right words. I always find it most interesting doing the research, especially if you know you are doing research no-one else has done before, but it can become a little tedious going through every single page of production records as I for instance did with the big Austin-Healeys – about 50,000 cars – as well as a lot of the MGAs (100,000 cars) and MGBs (500,000 cars). As for writing, I am grateful that I have never found this too difficult. Over the years and especially since my MA thesis, I have become a lot more conscious of the need to document your sources, and include references and a bibliography in your books. Now with the Internet many things have become so much easier to research, with a lot of original material available in digital form, but one has to be extra careful and not accept all statements at face value – e.g. Wikipedia... The other day I spent half an afternoon trying to track down a specific quote which has been repeated very often in print without people bothering to check where it came from and whether it was true. I now know where it came from, well at least I think so, but I doubt that it is true!



Which of your books do you feel best about?

That is not a fair question! Like asking a parent what is their favourite child. Most of them have involved a fair amount of research, which is what I find enjoyable. But again I have to single out the Wolseley book which I had wanted to write ever since the 1970s but which only came to fruition after retirement, when I could devote the time which was necessary to research all the Wolseley records.

Which of your books has been most popular, or sold the most copies?

That has to be *Original MGB*, but I imagine that *Original MGA* also did rather well. Mind you I do not know exact figures because of the changes in their publishing history.

What are your favourite cars?

I can't afford to have favourite cars! But one possible (perhaps surprising) answer would be the 1981 Volkswagen Polo Mark II which I designed or at least helped to design, especially the mini-station wagon with the vertical rear end; it was never sold in the USA, you just had the Golf a.k.a. Rabbit. But there are lots of other cars which I am very fond of or might have liked to own. When I was with the BMIHT, I was privileged to be allowed to drive MG "Old Number One" on a few occasions and even took her to a "Gathering of the Faithful" in Andover, Mass., where we were invited as guests of the New England MG T-register.

Have you owned MGs and Jaguars?

As a student in Denmark in the early 1970s I collected a few classic cars – mostly non-runners – but my daily driver was a 1953 Wolseley 4/44 and then I got an MG Magnette ZA, non-runner. When I joined BL Heritage I could lease a company car from BL and one of the first ones was one of the last 1980 MGB roadsters which I greatly enjoyed for about 18 months. Subsequently I had both MG Metros and MG Maestros, and I still have a lot of respect for the MG Maestro 2.0 litre EFI which I think was one of the outstanding sports saloons of the 1980s (although it is what my friend the US Morris Minor guru John Voelcker would call a "malaise motor"!)

Do you have an old British car now, and if so, what is it (or what are they)?

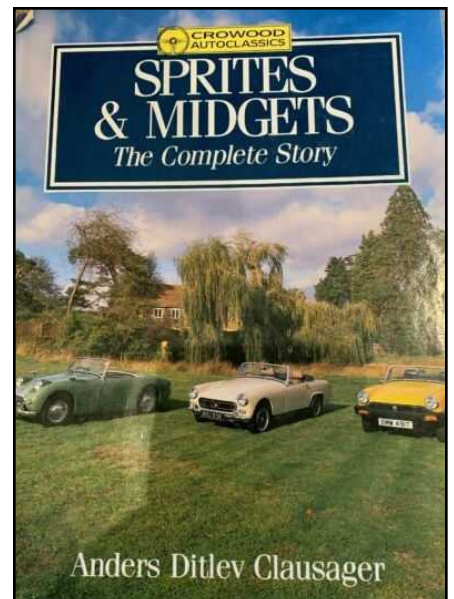
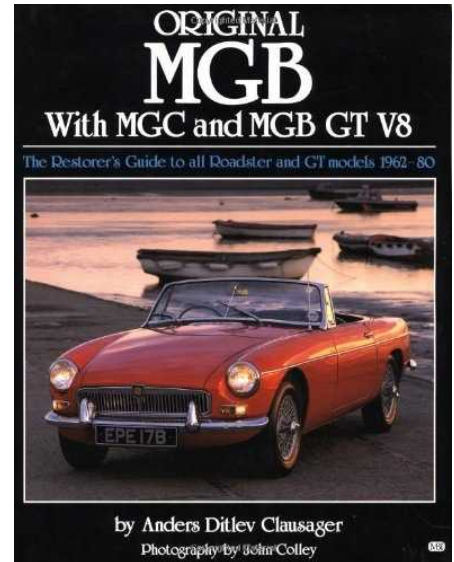
I am pleased to say that I have got rid of all of them... and at the end of the day I probably did not lose money on them overall. As a student I did once share a nearly new Morris Minor 1000 with my brother, but then I got bitten by the old car bug, and from time to time I owned a 1939 Fiat 500, a 1949 Citroën 11CV, four Wolseleys (the 4/44 which was the only runner, a 1946 18/85, a 6/80 and a 15/50), three Jowetts (a Javelin, a Bradford pick-up, and a Jupiter with a Danish special coupé body), and the MG Magnette. The Jupiter I kept for longest but I never got it fully restored so I eventually sold it on and it went back to Denmark, and my last classic was the 1959 Mini. Alongside I also got into motorcycles especially BMWs and over a period of 35 years owned about six Beemers, finally selling the last ones when we moved from a house to an apartment in 2016, and I was getting on a bit anyway.

What kind of car do you own and drive now for regular transport?

I am fortunate to have been a Jaguar / JLR manager as we still enjoy the privilege of a company lease car in retirement. Currently I drive a Range Rover Evoque. I do not actually need a car like that but it is the smallest and cheapest and most modest car on the company car scheme!

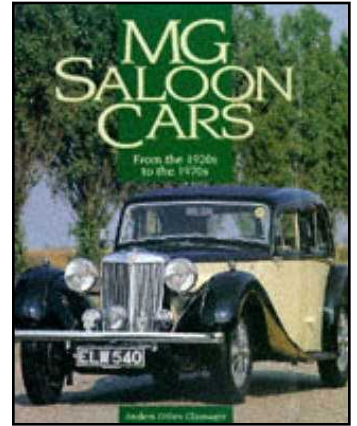
Who is the most famous/influential person you have met during your research?

You'd probably like me to mention some MG folk ... I did meet John Thornley once, and also Don Hayter a few times. I felt very privileged to meet Count Giovanni "Johnny" Lurani, who drove one of the K3 Magnettes in the Mille Miglia; he came over to the UK for an MG Car Club event in the 1980s. I met Jack Daniels a few times, he started as a draughtsman at MG before he teamed up with Alec Issigonis, and I also met Gerald Palmer who designed the Jowett Javelin, the Wolseley 4/44, and the MG Magnette, all of



which I have owned, and I greatly admire Palmer's cars. I regret that I never did get to meet Issigonis, he turned down a request for a meeting. Of latter-day personalities, when I was a designer at Austin-Morris my boss was Harris Mann who designed the Austin Princess and the Triumph TR7. Then as company archivist and historian involved with the museum, I inevitably got to meet some V.I.P.s, but more important to me personally was that I met Ole Sommer, who had been the Danish importer of Jaguars and Jowetts, and as a young engineer had helped to design the Jupiter which I owned. He later built up a stunning car collection which was housed in his own museum on the outskirts of Copenhagen, and I think we became quite good friends in his later years – he died in 2018, and the collection and museum are now in a foundation.

Anders Ditlev Clausager, 17 February – 11 March 2021



Air Conditioning your MG (Part II) by Andy Preston

These are follow up questions from Tom Doyle regarding my article in last months Octagon.

1. Where did you buy the kit and what parts did it contain?

I bought the kit from RetroAir (Classic Auto Air) and it contained all the parts required for the complete installation. The radiator was extra. All parts can be sourced separately from other vendors such as Vintage Air or you could have a Hot Rod shop install one for you.

2. How much did it cost?

Total cost of the AC kit plus aluminum cross flow radiator was \$2050 (2014).

3. How long did it take to install?

About 3 weeks off and on, approx. 100 man hours (I'm not as fast as Ant Amstead)!

4. Did it require any special tools?

I only had to buy a couple of step drill bits to drill the holes in the firewall.

5. What is the performance of the system?

You get cold air at 40°F from the outlets on a hot day. It does not cool you down like a modern AC due to hot air infiltrating the car.

6. Does it impact performance?

Yes, but only noticeable climbing steep grades. On really hot days you might have to turn it off in stop and go traffic if the engine gets too hot.

7. Does it require servicing?

I had 2 AC hoses leak when first installed which were replaced by RetroAir. Since then it's been trouble free. I expect some loss of refrigerant over time which will need recharging.

8. What are the advantages/disadvantages?

Advantages are a cooler car and more comfortable driving on hot days. Disadvantages are slight loss of power and a little more cluttered engine compartment and under dash making access to some areas more difficult.

9. Would you recommend this system to other MGB owners?

That really depends on how much you drive your car on long journeys and in hot weather. If you only drive your MG on short weekend drives I probably wouldn't bother, but if you drive cross country and on long drives I'd say it's a must have and worth the money.

10. Would you do it again or install it in another car?

Yes I would, in fact I'd love to install AC in my MGA Coupe but presently I'm waiting for Dan Shockey to install AC in his Coupe and will be pleased to help him once Covid is over.





Welcome New Members!

Ken Kuhn of Clearlake Oaks with a 1967 MGB Roadster

This is my third (3) MGB, I have had the current B for a couple years. The B is a local California Car purchased in Chico... no rust. Installed Mazda 5 speed last year, not as easy as they claim... Thank you, Ken

Cameron Holland of Alameda with a Dove Grey 1962 MGA Roadster

We bought the MGA recently from a relative and are very excited to get it started! Unfortunately it got a bit smooshed in transit and now we seem to have a project on our hands. It's a great project but we have three young kids and two jobs and need some help. Can you help me figure out how to find a reputable body shop and mechanic that knows how to deal with these things? Is there a listserv that I can ask a question to?

My husband and I can't wait to take the car out for a whirl once it's back in action! I'm attaching a picture of the front (looks great!) and the back (hmm, a bit smooshed). - Cameron

Andrew Hunt of Tiburon with a restored 1966 MGB Roadster and a just starting restoration 1955 MG TF1500

Thanks for the welcome. I don't have an operable MG in the Bay Area at the moment! My MGB (1966 roadster - nicely restored) is up in Tahoe hunkered down in a garage 'cause I am out of space here in Tiburon (we all have too many cars - right?). I got the car reimported from CA to the UK where I lived in 1993. There followed a complete restoration for a couple of years (my first - just out of university at age 23).

I then promptly left to go to California with work! That is where I bought the TF1500 (1955) which I sent back to the UK for my father to restore. Sadly it has sat there for 23 years untouched and I am now going to bring it back to California to restore it myself (hence my outreach to various MG clubs). A couple of personal relocations to and fro between the UK and US later, I returned to CA and brought the MGB here in 2005. I have since also got a 1930 Model A Ford and a 1957 Land Rover Series 1 (which I have just finished) and with kids going off to college I have a bit more time so will fill it with the TF project. - Andy



Holland MGA
above -
smooshed!

Hunt MGB
and Land
Rover at left



Keep Planning for 2021

SPRING



Sat., April 3, 9:30am, Board Meeting via Zoom

Sat., April 3, Drive-in Movie Night, Mark McGothigan

April 9-11, Vintage Races, Sonoma, CSRG

Sun., April 10, SSTs Mystery Tour

Sat., April 17, Triumph Travelers, Los Altos to Pigeon Point Tour

SUMMER

From 1965 MG Ad:

car. Our MGB averaged 98.2479 mph for the 24 hours of Le Mans and was beaten by only 3 GT cars... a Ferrari, a Porsche and a Cobra.

June 14-17, All-MG Meet, Atlantic City - only 3000 miles away.

July 26-30, GOF West, Mt Hood Resort, Oregon, MGOC Caravan, All welcome. It's on!

Sun., Sept. 16, Dixon All British Show & Swap, MGOC Caravan?

Oct. TBD, MGs by the Bay



Alan Hutcheson finds the bunker! 1963 Le Mans





St. Paddy's Day Tour

by Andy Preston

It was a "tops up and side screens in" kind of day but several members braved the elements and the cloudy skies with their tops down. We had an overwhelming turn out with 24 cars and 36 members joining us for this annual tour. Once again Don Livingood drove down from Medford Oregon in his stunning BRG MGA braving the snow that fell the day before. Don's a true testament that these cars can drive hundreds if not thousands of miles and arrive safely and without incident. Our own Editor Dan drove up from Scotts Valley and other members drove from far afield. So hats off to you all for taking the time and making the effort to join us.

We headed out through the emerald green countryside of Chileno Valley which is spectacular at this time of year to our first stop at Cornerstone Sonoma. This is a fantastic place with beautiful gardens, shops and outdoor dining which we'll definitely use as a final destination on a future drive when things get back to normal.

We left Cornerstone and headed north through Glen Ellen to Spring Lake Park in Santa Rosa. At this time of year the fields are full of Mustard flowers so all you see is beautiful yellow flowers between the rows of vines and vacant fields. It's truly a magnificent sight.

We arrived at Spring Lake and it was quite a sight to see 24 cars lined up at the entrance kiosk. We parked at the south end of the lake which is quieter and sat on the grass overlooking the lake in a Druid's Circle to enjoy our sandwiches. The sun came out while we ate our lunch which made a perfect end to a perfect day.

Thanks again to everyone who came and same time next year!

Kirk & Pooch by Barbara T.; Gathering from Dan Shockey below





MGA from Marty Rayman; Lunch group from Barbara T.; Bob Bundy and on the road photo from Dan Shockey





Caravan in town from Barbara T.; other pics from Dan Shockey



The geese manage to stay together better than we....



Strange characters from Barbara T.; other pics from Dan Shockey

Geese Gazing...



Rowena and Ed got the most attention

MGOC Minutes – Saturday Feb 27, 2021

Held in Cyberspace

Call to Order: Andy Preston at 10:05:

Attending: Marcia Crawford, Ken Gittings, Mike Jacobsen, Steve Kellogg, Mark McGothigan, Kirk & Amy Prentiss, Andy & Marla Preston, Dan Shockey, and George Steneberg.

There were no reports made. Instead the discussion was about March & April events and when or if the club should hold MGs by the Bay.

For MGs by the Bay it was decided to tentatively schedule the event for the first Saturday in October. The All-Register MG this year is June 14-17, and the local Dixon show is Sunday, September 19.

Andy said they'd had many RSVPs for the coming St. Patrick's Day drive.

Mark has a drive-in movie event planned for April. He reported that the equipment was on hand, a layout designed, and now he needs a site. Using a generator for power allows the event to be almost anywhere that's flat and has room to park cars. Suggestions included the Hornet in Alameda or at the Oakland Aviation Museum. Kirk offered to help Mark plan & test.

Andy suggested a Mt Diablo tour for sometime this year, and Kirk & Amy said it should be on a weekday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dan, Steve, Kirk & Amy, Andy & Marla, and George & Marcia are going to the GOF West at Mt. Hood from July 26-30.

Meeting adjourned at: 10:46.

Submitted by: Mike Jacobsen

Classified Ads

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

MGB GT: 4 speed. White. Local car. Was mechanic owned. Good body. Salvage title. San Francisco. \$6000. Non-member Tulasi Johnson, tulasidevidasi@hotmail.com (posted 04/21)

1933 MG L-type, MG SA Sedan, SA Convertible: Original condition, apart. Lots of new parts. Sell as a package. In Watsonville. Nancy Reader, Former Peninsula T Register members. 831-722-5128 (Posted 2/21)

1953 MG TD: Owned since 1997. 77k miles, 5 speed transmission, alternator, & rebuilt engine. Cared for by British Automotive in San Rafael. Everything about it is great. I am now looking to replace it with a Mk. II MGA. Member Marty Rayman, 415-250-6299 (Posted 3/21)

2012 MINI Roadster: One owner with 21,000 miles. Cared for by MINI of Marin. Member Marty Rayman, 415-250-6299 (Posted 3/21)

1979 MG Midget: Original condition, no rust, dents, or upholstery damage. Needs engine work. Includes new replacement top, windshield, and radiator (all brand new). Motivated, asking \$4000. Cloverdale (Sonoma). Member Ken Collins (707) 894-3830 (Posted 3/21)

1965 MGB: Red. Rust-free example. Overdrive, 5-main MGB motor; new tires; three tops. In Arizona, Bob (602) 762-5733 or rhrierson@gmail.com (Posted 2/21)

MGA Parts: Four alum bonnets (2 styles), gas tank, leaf springs, 1500 driveshaft, new fiberglass front valence (race), front frame extension, 1500 engine block. In S. San Francisco. Member Tom Morgan (650) 740-4116 (Re-posted 4/21)

We list ads for 3 months. Advise if you want them extended. For additional ads, see prior issues of *The Octagon* or MGOCFS.org



Saga of the '52 MG

Yes, the '52 MG has been owned a long, long time. My brother, Larry Van Craeynest, bought it when he was 18 in 1960 or 61. (Curiously, it was the first of only 2 cars he ever owned!). It was in very good condition at that time and he drove it for maybe 6 months before he had some minor break down.

He enjoyed the car so much that he decided to "restore" it. To make a long story short, he and I did a body-off, top to bottom restoration finishing with a custom paint job performed by British Motor Cars on Van Ness Avenue.

The car was towed to BMC with all the finders loose, attached with spacers so that the beading could be installed after the paint was dry as it was in the factory when the car was made. They finished it in a gorgeous Rolls Royce color, a metallic gray that turned dark at the edges and the curves. It was then towed back to our parent's garage to have the beading installed, bumpers, etc. put on and all the details finished.

He finished the car late one evening and had all the family come into the garage to admire it. It was beautiful! He took some pictures of it and we all went to bed.

We lived on a block in San Francisco that had all the garages in an alley behind them. Our garage was separate from the house, white clapboard with a massively heavy redwood "two car" garage door.

The next morning before any of us were up the elderly (and very proper) Mrs. S..., whose back driveway was exactly opposite our garage, was coming out of her garage in her tank-like Buick Roadmaster and went to step on the brake and instead hit the gas. Her car shot across the alley and through my parent's redwood garage door and pushed my brother's freshly finished, never yet driven TD through the back wall of the garage knocking down a heavy brick planter and crushing my dad's Bar-B-Que!

My brother and I took one look and went back into the house while my parents quieted and took care of Mrs. S... who was very shook up and quite beside herself. Later that day, my dad had checked all the damage, had talked with Mr. S... (who had only Buicks since 1918) and had talked with his insurance agent. He calmed Larry and had the sad TD towed back to BMC.

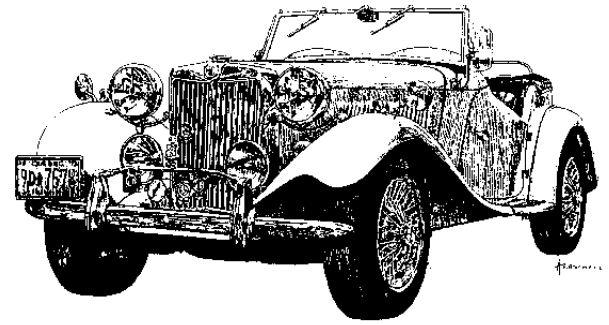
Two days later BMC called Larry and told him that, miraculously, there had been only minor damage to the car, mainly both bumpers were toast and the little skirt at the rear and the piece between the front fenders and the fog lights were done in, but no other body damage. Their body shop repaired all that damage and put the car on some kind of jig that determined there was no distortion at all to the stout little ladder frame.

My brother drove the car until some time in the late 70's or early 80's. An odd noise from the engine compartment made him take the car off the road and he decided it was time to "restore" it again. So for the last 40 years he has been restoring it again on and off. The engine and drivetrain has been rebuilt, brakes including hydraulics, drums, bearings, etc., etc.

Sadly Larry died on the 15th of January this year before he had time to put his beloved TD back together. He had been a master jeweler. Anything he ever attempted was done with superb craftsmanship.

Now I am looking for the right person to take over the task of completing his last restoration and to own this car with its wonderful past.

Roger Van Craeynest
New Member, MGOC



Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!



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




North American MGB Register



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



See the
tentative events
schedule for
2021.

**Stay Safety
Fast!**

Photo: Naomi
Rayman, on the
St. Paddy's Day
Tour

