

# THE OCTAGON

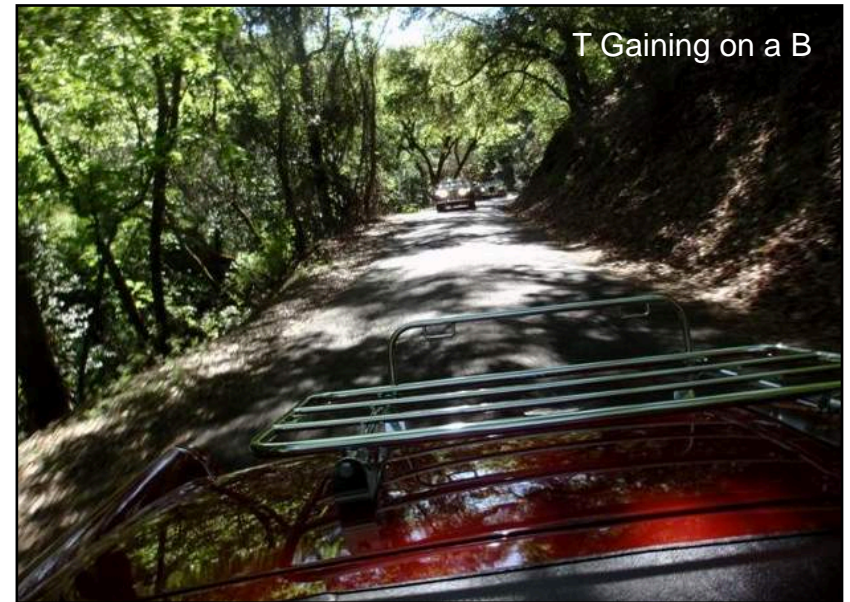
Newsletter of the M.G. Owners Club & the Peninsula T Register  
The Northern California Centre of the M.G. Car Club



MGOC Octagon  
If undeliverable please return to:  
7230 Silver Lode Lane  
San Jose, CA 95120

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# May 2012

## 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 2012

**President:** George Steneberg, 510-525-9125, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)  
**Vice President:** Tim Polidoroff, 650-342-6443, [polidoroff@comcast.com](mailto:polidoroff@comcast.com)  
**Treasurer:** Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, [MikesMuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:MikesMuseum@yahoo.com)  
**Secretary:**  
**Registrar:** Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, [MikesMuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:MikesMuseum@yahoo.com)  
**T Register Director:** Jim Carlson, 408-224-3992, [mgjim@comcast.net](mailto:mgjim@comcast.net)  
**Corresponding Secretary:** George Steneberg, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)  
**Membership Development:** Bob Stine, 650-349-5128, [rbrtstine@gmail.com](mailto:rbrtstine@gmail.com)  
**The Octagon Editor:** Felix Lee, 650-947-9282, [octagoneditor@mgocsf.org](mailto:octagoneditor@mgocsf.org)  
**Commercial Advertising:** Mike Jacobsen, 415-333-9699, [MikesMuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:MikesMuseum@yahoo.com)  
**Historian:** George Steneberg, 510-525-9125, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)  
**Photographer:** Jeremy Palgon, [alistaircookie@gmail.com](mailto:alistaircookie@gmail.com)

### CLUB ADVISOR PROGRAM

Feel free to call these members, who have volunteered to help with purchase, repair, and restoration of various MG models.

**MGB 1962-74:** Marty Ray, 831-475-6204, [martyray@cruzio.com](mailto:martyray@cruzio.com)  
**MGB 1974-1980:** Ed Adams, 510-483-6821  
**MGB V8 Conversion:** Tony Bates, 408-666-6174, [Tony@BatesFamily.net](mailto:Tony@BatesFamily.net)  
**MGC:** Kent Leech, 925-253-9757, [kent@kentleech.com](mailto:kent@kentleech.com)  
**MG Midget:** Craig Kuenzinger, 925-934-3130, [mrcraigk@aol.com](mailto:mrcraigk@aol.com)  
**MGA/Coupe/Twin Cam 1955-62:** George Steneberg, 510-525-9125  
**Z-Magnette Saloon:** Eric Baker, 510-531-7032, [mgpb36@yahoo.com](mailto:mgpb36@yahoo.com)  
**T-types:** George Steneberg, 510-525-9125, [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net)  
**Pre-war Midgets-Magnas-Magnettes:** George Steneberg, 510-525-9125  
**PA/PB Midget 1934-36:** Eric Baker, 510-531-7032, [mgpb36@yahoo.com](mailto:mgpb36@yahoo.com)  
**S.U. Carburetors:** Marty Ray, 831-475-6204, [martyray@cruzio.com](mailto:martyray@cruzio.com)

**COVER PHOTO:** Road to Benicia, Bob Shaheen

## Club Meeting Natter & Noggin May 10, 7 pm

The Englander Sports Pub & Restaurant  
 101 Parrott Street, San Leandro  
<http://www.englishpub.com>  
 (510) 357-3571

The Englander is an enjoyable place where we have our own cozy room.  
 The food is good so bring your appetites.  
 Dinner Starts at 6 pm

### Directions to The Englander:

**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 Davis St. exit and turn left on Davis. Travel 1.3 miles, then turn right on E. 14<sup>th</sup> St. Travel 0.3 miles, and then turn right on Parrott Street.



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**Enclosed Trailer for Rent:**

Enclosed car trailer for rent (16' x 8'). Trailer has integrated braking system and lights with the tow vehicle, and a 12 volt 2,000 lb. Electric Winch. Electrical outlets in and outside the trailer and air conditioning. Rental rates are very reasonable with a discount for rentals of three or more days. Contact either Randy Grossman (415-518-5210) or Eric Baker (510-517-2165) for more information.

**Parts for Sale:**

**MGB Parts: Autopower Roll Bar**, SCCA Race Approved, 1.75" DOM. Roll bar has diagonal brace, horizontal seat back brace, and small restraint bar behind driver's seat. Asking \$150. **Two Chrome Luggage Racks**, trunk lid mounted. \$50 each. Contact Member David Wright at 510-653-3831.

**MG Midget Rolling Chassis Body Shell**. No VIN. No Title. No engine, transmission, differential, front bumper, or windscreen. Not crashed but rough. Rubber bumper car. Make Offer. Contact Member Nick Becker at 925-932-9778 or [becker2226@astound.net](mailto:becker2226@astound.net).

**Wanted:**

**Electrical Help:** I am new to the world of MG, and am in the process of improving a 1959 MGA Roadster. I have replaced the wiring harness and need the expertise of someone with electrical know how to help me make sure I do not burn anything up when I put a battery to it. I will pay for their time and knowledge. Can you help me? I live in Walnut Creek. Contact Harry at 925-934-4973 or [TipTot@astound.net](mailto:TipTot@astound.net).

**Pre-1968 MGB roadster**. Long-time MG nut seeking early B roadster. My preference is one that is a preserved original or one redone to original specifications; but I will consider most any steel-dash car, depending on its price and its needs. Contact Member Don Scott at 707-942-0546 or [don@napanet.net](mailto:don@napanet.net).

**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). 2012 rates are: monthly (yearly): full page \$25 (\$240), half page \$18 (\$175), third page \$12 (\$120), business card \$8 (\$75). All ads expire on January 1, 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*.

**MGOC FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Information on the MGOC finances is available upon request from the treasurer.

**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 [octagoneditor@mgocsf.org](mailto:octagoneditor@mgocsf.org) or send them to: Felix Lee, 27330 Ursula Lane, Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

**RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC**

Have you helped recruit any new members lately? Bob Stine is in charge of new member recruitment and can send you flyers. The Club roster is available to members from Mike Jacobsen 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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## Forthcoming Events

**MGOC Events in bold**

May 4-6 – North Meets South, Pismo Beach, Larry Long

May 10 – **Natter & Noggin**, New Englander Sports Pub, San Leandro,  
George Steneberg

May 20 – **MGs by the Bay**, The Livery, Danville, Mike Jacobsen

May 26 - Jun.3 – British Car Week, Wherever You Happen to Be, Create  
Awareness of the Classic British Car hobby in Local Communities by  
Driving Your British Classic

Jun. 2 – Hayward Field Meet, All British Car Show and Swap Meet,  
Hayward

Jun. 6-9 – **MGB 2012**, Dillard, GA

Jun. 18-26 – GOF West 2012, Santa Ynez Valley, Buelton, CA



## From the Editor...

With the conclusion of "April Showers," we can all look forward to "May Rallies." Invariably, these rallies are typically organized drives by classic car clubs, involving 10 or more cars which snake through local backroads, and culminate with a customary shared meal, bottomless "spirits" and lively chatter.

However, what is one to do if there aren't any planned events on the calendar or any friends available for a drive? Should one get out there and drive alone? Well, Yes!, especially during the week of May 26 - June 3, also known as British Car Week. Take your British car to work, to the market, to the restaurant, to downtown Main street or wherever you happen to be.

This annual tradition of promoting British cars during the last week in May began in 1997 as a response from British car owners to Peter Egan's article in *Road & Track Magazine*, entitled "Seldom Seen Cars." The purpose of his article was to raise awareness and serve as a reminder of how pleasurable driving "classic" cars have been in the past, are in the present, and hope will continue to be amongst drivers in the future.

Following the Great War, American servicemen who had spent time in Europe brought many of these British classics back home and introduced "Auto Sport" to the United States. As such, these little British cars were a common sight throughout US roads during the decades of the '50s, '60s and '70s. The next 4 decades, however, saw a rapid decline in British cars and now they are quite rare.

Taking our MGs to the roads during British Car Week is probably as close as we will ever come to recreating those familiar motoring street scenes of the distant past. Bystanders always seem to have some special memory of these quirky small cars of the past and at every stop light these gems appear to be an open invitation to start a friendly conversation with perfect strangers. So grab your goggles, driving gloves, AAA premiere member card, and that extra quart of 20W-50 motor oil and take to the roads!

*Safety Fast!*

Felix Lee  
- British Car Week  
Observer



<b>MG</b>	
TC-TD-TF-MGA-MGB-C-Midget	
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MGTC.....	185.00 185.00
MGTD & TF.....	185.00 85.00
MGA, MGB, MGC, Midget.....	102.00 75.00
HEAVY DUTY UPGRADE.....	10.00 10.00
SHOCK LINK (New or Rebuilt)	Scall
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MGB, Midget caliper.....	\$85.00
MGA, MGC caliper.....	\$155.00
MGA, Midget twin master 1956-67.....	\$225.00
MGB, Midget master 1968-80.....	\$125.00-145.00
MGB brake booster servo.....	\$175.00
MGC booster servo.....	\$445.00
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**1978 MGB Roadster.** Maroon with beige interior. Vehicle has 43,000 original miles. 1800cc engine with Stromberg carburetor and 4-speed manual with electronic overdrive. Soft-top with two tonneaus. AM/FM/CD stereo with removable face, remote control and MP3 interface. Luggage rack, new tires, many extras. Currently registered in California. Asking \$15,000. Contact Member Tom Doyle at 520-220-6228 or at [wtdoyle@cox.net](mailto:wtdoyle@cox.net).



**Classic 1973 Jaguar XJ12 Series 1 Sedan.** 5.3 V12 engine. All original! The only year of the chrome bumpered XJ12 model. 66,000 original miles. Silver with beautiful original black leather interior. Sunroof and Nardi wood steering wheel. Always a California car from new. No rust! Same owner for the last 35 years. Always garaged. Looks and drives great! \$8,900. Contact Member Ron Simi at 925-765-5807.

**Beloved 1974 MGB.** British Racing Green with tan interior, chrome wire wheels, and 5-speed OD transmission. Been in the family since 1989. Restored in 2004-5, engine built by Bob Yarbrough, carbs rebuilt by John Twist. 13,000 miles since rebuild. Runs great but I just don't have the time to enjoy the drives with the top down in Napa Valley! It is time for someone else to enjoy the MGB experience! \$8,500. Located in Pleasanton. Contact MGOC member Charles Rooks at 925-989-0942 (m).



### Five 60-spoke Painted Wheels

Five 60-spoke, tube-type painted wire wheels from my 67 B. I've upgraded to tubeless tires and wires. Three are right off the car, not very many years old, very decent condition, with 90% worn 175-15 tires (kept one for my spare), one is older, only slightly bent but with good spokes and balanced with a 50% worn, older 165-15 (was my spare) and one is sans tire with 6 new spokes. Special Club Price: \$50.00 each; all 5 for \$200. Moss sells these new for \$240 each. Wayne Veatch 415-821-1806, [veatchlaw@gmail.com](mailto:veatchlaw@gmail.com).



## 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, 7230 Silver Lode Lane, San Jose, CA 95120. Members may also email ads to the editor at [octagoneditor@mgocsf.org](mailto:octagoneditor@mgocsf.org).

### Cars for Sale:

**1980 MGB Coupe.** One of the last to enter the USA, this MGB is in excellent condition. Runs great! Oil changes, brakes and mechanical work done recently. Recently re-done seats and carpet. Overdrive transmission that WORKS! Radio/CD player. British racing green w/gold stripe. Top mended and in good condition. Tonneau cover. CLOCK WORKS TOO! Asking \$5,000.00 for it. Contact David Alvey at 925-687-0168.



**1976 MGB** with over drive needs a new home. No time to care for properly. This was former member Gary Lukey's car. Maintained by Baroo in Albany. Not currently licensed. Top replaced in 2009, seats as well. Newer metal fuel pump. Asking \$2,000 or best offer. Transmission is worth \$1800. Need the space for my Jag. Photos available. Contact Lanny Clark at 510-410-7572 or [lannyclark@aol.com](mailto:lannyclark@aol.com).

**1967 MGB** with overdrive. Original owner, has all maintenance records, Bay Area car since new. 121K original miles and less than 2K miles since full mechanical rebuild. Excellent condition. Looking for owner that will continue to give it TLC. Asking \$15K OBO. Contact Stephen at 415-722-0556 or [sdhom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sdhom@sbcglobal.net).



**1961 MGA Coupe.** 1600 cc engine, 5 speed gearbox. California car, completely restored by third (and present) owner in 2002, rust free, body straight, no accidents, 7,800 miles since rebuild. Original body panels, new front spoiler below bumper. All good original chrome, new rubber gaskets for body and glass. Painted "Paprika Red" (Jaguar color). Asking \$25,000. Contact Member Viggo Riddersholm at 650-341-9064 or [vriddersholm@yahoo.com](mailto:vriddersholm@yahoo.com), or Gordon Craig at [lismoregordon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lismoregordon@sbcglobal.net).

## President's Ponderings...

The attendance at the April MGOC Business meeting was better, at least we had a quorum. However, I was hoping to see a few more in attendance, if possible. At last count, the club has 192 regular members. Where is everybody? Come on people, get yourself out of the house and your MGs out of the garage. You will be surprised at how much fun it can be.

The Tech Session at (On The Road Again) gave us a chance to sit down with Bill Hiland and catch up on what has been happening in our lives. Planning for the Morgan Hill Fall Festival is coming along and it looks like it is going to happen. He will know more by this time next month.

The 20th of May marks MGs By The Bay, so please come and support your club and get your registrations in to Mike Jacobsen as soon as possible.

It would be nice to see a majority of MGOC attendees at this event. The Posters have been printed for MGs By The Bay. If you need any to pass around please contact me at [j2george@pacbell.net](mailto:j2george@pacbell.net) and I will try and get them to you.

George Steneberg



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email: [jhg.msn@gmail.com](mailto:jhg.msn@gmail.com).



# Meet our Newest Member

By Eric Horodas

Hi, my name is Eric Horodas. I am new to the both the MG community and to membership in the MG Owners Club. On March 29 of this year, I became the proud owner of a bright red 1967 MGB GT.

My knowledge of this car's history only goes back to 1993, when it went through a complete frame off restoration by a fanatic car collector. This gentleman, at one point, owned 50 cars, including some very unusual and expensive cars. He and his wife had an MG when first married, so it was a nostalgic endeavor to buy this particular car and restore it. I have all the receipts and no expense was spared. The car is completely original except for new black leather seat coverings with red piping, stainless steel hoses for the fuel lines and oil cooler, assorted gaskets and rubber parts, a wood steering wheel, Minator wheels and, of course, radial tires. I was very lucky to find this car as I think what I paid for the car is far less than it would cost to do a restoration of this quality.

I also have the original sales brochure on which the salesman apparently wrote the price of the car new of \$3,280 plus \$75.00 for a radio (however the car does not have a radio), \$65.00 for a heater and \$17.50 for seat belts. A discount of \$110.00 was applied, apparently due to the devaluation of the British Pound. \$3,400 plus or minus doesn't buy much on four wheels today. Perhaps there is an economist out there who can calculate the equivalent cost in 2012 dollars!



## Old Business

Secretary still needed: We are still looking for a qualified secretary.

Recruiting (not business) card design and reprinting: Still waiting on Website domain name resolution.

MGs by the Bay: Many items:

- Registrations: Mike has 4 registrations as of today. There is concern because of the conflict with the Woodland event.
- Mike announced that there are 24 registrations as of 4/12.
- The award & T-shirt art is done and tees have been ordered.
- Sponsors are Jim Silva of Sure-Fit, Dave Pelton, Roberts Awards, and Bill Hiland.
- Kim and Marcia will each create a gift basket for the raffle prizes.
- Craig and Kim met with Rob who will supply us electricity (we need to supply extension cords).
- Craig and Bob Shaheen will meet with Rob concerning the large sign.

Members at Large: The current Members at Large (David Wright and Craig Kuenzinger) will continue for 2012. After a discussion, it was decided to not expand the number of Members at Large.

www.mgoc.org Domain: It was moved and approved to reimburse Steve Kellogg for renewing the mgoc.org domain name for another ten years at a cost of \$118.17.

## New Business

MGCC Renewal: We have renewed our out affiliation with the MG Car Club of England as their Northern California Centre.

## Next Meeting and Natter

7pm, Thursday, May 10, 2012 at The Englander Sports Pub, 100 Parrott St., San Leandro.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04pm  
Submitted by Marcia Crawford



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# MGOC Business Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2012

President George Steneberg called the meeting to order at 7pm. Also attending were Marcia Crawford, Ken Gittings, Mike Jacobsen, Craig and Kim Kuenzinger, Bob and Edi Shaheen, and David Wright.

The March 8, 2012 minutes were approved as printed in the April *Octagon*.

## Reports:

Treasurer's Report: Balances are slightly lower than last month.

Registrar's Report: The MGOC membership stands at 192 regular, 57 auxiliary, 12 corresponding and 2 associate members for a total of 263 members for a gain of three members over the past month.

Secretary's Report: Nothing to report.

Corresponding Secretary's Report: Nothing to report.

Regalia: David Wright reported that he had 11 grille badges. At the request of Steve Kellogg in his report it was moved and seconded that 50 grille badges and 100 lapel pins will be purchased from Rallye Productions.

The Octagon: Editor Felix Lee was unable to attend but sent the following report:

- Submissions needed
- Still working on getting the Flipbook up and working
- Tyrone Revelo of Collins Classics considering either an online/*Octagon* Tech Session called "Ask Tyrone ..."

Website: Webmaster Steve Kellogg was unable to attend but sent the following report:

- Set up Regalia Store online – similar to MG Chicagoland – \$99.00 set up. See example at <http://chicagolandmgclub.com/regalia/>
- After checking with Ron Hazlehurst, our previous grille badge supplier, Steve got a quote from Rallye Productions for grille badges & lapel pins. See Regalia, earlier in the Minutes.

## Past Events

St. Patrick's Day Tour: March 17 – Steve Lilves canceled the tour because of rain forecast and a blown head gasket. It is hoped that the tour can be rescheduled.

The Cheese Tour: March 25 – Andy and Marla Preston's tour was a huge success with 24 attending and only scattered showers.

## Upcoming Events

MGB Tech Session: Saturday, April 14 with Bill Hiland at On The Road Again in Morgan Hill. The subject is evaluating work needed on a car. It was moved and approved to send Bill \$30.00 as reimbursement for refreshments. MGs by the Bay posters may be available for pick-up and distribution at this event.

MGs by the Bay: Sunday, May 20.

Bertolotti Tour: June 16 – Still not confirmed. Mike will check.

I always wanted a MG and am a sports car devotee, but never owned one before this. In college, I had a Fiat 124 Sport Coupe, a car with very advanced feature for the early 1970s with twin overhead cams, 5 speed transmission, 4 wheel disc brakes and radial ply tires. I went to college in upstate New York and that Fiat completely rusted out in 3 years. That car was followed by a brief stint in a Chevy Camaro which was then followed by a late 60's Mercedes 230 SL, one of the most solid drivers I have ever owned despite its high mileage and generally poor condition. I learned how to clean and gap points with that car, it was the only way to keep it running.

After moving to California in the late 70's, I went back to Fiat with a 124 Sport convertible. Since then, I have owned a Jaguar XK, and several Porsches, including a 996 Cabriolet that resides next to the MG in my garage.

The 67 GT is a very solid, strong driver. It starts right up with no hesitation and is solid on the road, soaking up bumps with no body rattles or shakes. I am looking forward to years of enjoyment with this car.

I hope to attend the May 20 MGs by the Bay event in Danville with my car and look forward to meeting other MG enthusiasts.

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# Keep Planning for 2012 ...

## SPRING



SPRING CHEESE TOUR, 3/24  
MORGAN HILL TECH SESSION, 4/14  
NORTH MEETS SOUTH, 5/5-6  
MGS BY THE BAY, 5/20  
HAYWARD FIELD MEET, 6/2  
MG2012, GEORGIA, 6/6-10

## SUMMER



GOF WEST: BUELLTON 200 MILES, 6/18-22  
PALO ALTO CONCOURS, 6/23-24  
NAMGAR GT-37, 7/9-13  
ANNUAL PICNIC JOAQUIN MILLER PARK, 7/21  
MONTEREY HISTORIC / CONCOURS, 8/11-19  
MILL TOUR, 8/19  
HILLSBOROUGH DE ELEGANCE, 8/26

## FALL



STUDEBAKER MEET, 9/8  
DANVILLE DE ELEGANCE, 9/15-16  
BODEGA BAY TOUR, 9/22  
JIMMY'S OLD CAR PICNIC 09/29  
TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE, 10/6  
MORGAN HILL BRITISH CLASSIC, 10/20-21  
1000 MIGLIA S. BARBARA CONCOURS, 10/28  
PENINSULA TOUR, 11/10  
HOLIDAY TEA, 12/15



This annual event is a gathering of MGs from across Northern California. The show starts at 10:00 a.m., rain or shine, with awards presented at 2:00 p.m. Same-day registration opens at 8:00 a.m.

**In Danville, under the trees at The Danville Livery shopping center!**  
400 Sycamore Valley Road, Danville, 94526 – One block west off I-680

**Awards:** Judging is by popular vote, with awards for People's Choice, Best Daily Driver, Premier (from previous winners), and for every class, with classes determined according to the number of cars registered by May 1, 2012.

**Entries:** All MGs are welcome, from daily drivers to complete restorations. The \$25 entry fee includes a dash plaque, an event T-shirt, and special coupons from our sponsors. Additional cars registered to the same owner are \$10 each, which includes a dash plaque only. All cars must arrive by 10:00 a.m. sharp! This is necessary to allow for proper placement of the cars. If you arrive late, we cannot guarantee placement of your car with others in its class.

Return the registration form below with the entry fee. Photocopies of this form are acceptable. One form is required for each MG.

Mail before May 1, 2012 to:

*MGs by the Bay*  
320 B Monterey Blvd.  
San Francisco, CA 94131

For information call  
415-333-9699 or 925-899-1218  
or visit [www.MGOCSF.org](http://www.MGOCSF.org)

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone: ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Short description of your car: \_\_\_\_\_

Has this car ever won First in Class at *MGs by the Bay*?  Yes  No

MG model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Body style:  Coupe  Roadster

Saloon  Race car

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Car color: \_\_\_\_\_

T-shirt size:  M  L  XL  XXL

**Release:** Neither I nor my heirs will hold the MG Owners Club or The Danville Livery Shopping Center liable for any loss, damage, or injury done to me, or my party, while engaged in this event or traveling to and from this event.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# When a Positive is a Negative

By Steve Kellogg

It all started a couple of months ago. The rain had held up for a little while and I decided to take the Green Caterpillar out for a spin. Top up I cruised on up to Skyline and was heading to Alice's Restaurant. The day was nice, Two Wheelers of the Mechanical and person powered were in abundance waving to me sometimes with the thumbs up and sometimes with their middle finger.

It got a little chilly so I cranked the knobs on the heater (not sure which does what, so I just turn them all to the right) and noticed a little crack and smoke coming from out under the dash when I turned them on full. As Scooby Doo says "Ruh-Roh" The car dies and I pulled over to the side of the road. Didn't notice any flames and I cranked the knobs back to off. Took a peek under the hood (thinking back, what was I going to find that I would know what to do about it?) Still didn't see any flames and so I drove off as the car started up fine.



Spoke to some folks about it and the consensus was that it is not a good thing to see smoke come from out of the dash and I should have it checked. OK - So I took it down to OTRA (On the Road Again - the cars second home away from home and where she was refurbished the year before) and they found a fried wire underneath the dash that was obviously original, replaced it and I was good to go. They also hung all the wires under the dash so that those pesky wires that don't go anywhere were not as much in plain sight as they were.

So then a couple of weeks ago on a nice Saturday, I decided to install the battery box that I've had for a while. Unplugged the cables after turning off the kill switch in the trunk, drilled the holes in the side of the box for the

cables, smooshed the battery down into the box (tight squeeze) and with a good amount of the 3 "esses" (swearing, sweat and sighs) got the cables hooked back up. Turned on the kill switch and darned if I didn't hear a crackle and notice a puff of smoke coming from out under the dash on the right hand side. Tried to start the car and nothing. Starter turned over but that was it. "?!#\*(%(\*%"

So I called my friends at AAA (Somehow they know who I am when I call and were all too glad to help me as I had two long tows left on my Premium Account for the year!! - Yeah!! Took the Tow of Shame to Morgan Hill and it seems to be that I had hooked up the cables to the wrong stems on the battery and fried my alternator and radio.

Well, the guys fixed me back up and I even got a new battery compartment cover for the Green Caterpillar as gift to myself. The radio

will have to be replaced someday - (not missing it so much as I can't hear it when I drive anyway - best for listening to a ball game in the driveway). They even marked the battery and the cables really well so a fifth grader can tell what cable goes to what stem!! Who knew that the red cable doesn't go to the positive and the black goes to negative? Apparently, me.

Oh well, a little less \$\$ in the cat's college fund, but the car is driving well and I look forward to many miles traveling in it this summer. Wonder what the backyard mechanic in me can work on next? Rumor has it the name plate for the Burnt Spark Plug is already at the engravers, but I say we still have another good 8 months in the year!!

Anything can happen!!

# From Jack in the Box to Sailor Jacks

By Samantha Lee

Three girls in the Sorry Safari group planned a winding drive to Benicia. We started at Jack in the Box in Livermore. There were over 30 people in 17 MGs. I met a lot of new Sorry Safari friends. We drove in a long line, following each other like a caterpillar on a winding, hilly road. Then we stopped for snacks. I took pictures of the cars and we drove to the glass blowing shop for a demonstration where it was very hot. The person who was blowing the glass was making a vase, so they put colored glass on a tube. They melted it and spiraled on black glass. They put 3 layers of clear glass, shaping as they went. They blew in the tube and shaped the glass some more. They made the base and mouth of the vase and put it in the oven to cool overnight. Then we walked to Sailor Jacks and I had fish and chips for lunch. Yum!



# BLUNT SPARK PLUG AWARD



.... TO BE CONTINUED

Photos by Bob Shaheen and Felix Lee

Taking the engine out seemed like a major step to me. I was loathe to do it. I was afraid that I might take the engine out and never put it back in. The biggest job I'd ever done on the car was removing and replacing the head for rebuilding. Removing the engine would be a far tougher task.

And once I got the engine out, what then? Who knows what the shifting problem might be. It might cost a small fortune to repair, or worse, be irreparable. I started to look into how much a new overdrive gearbox would cost.

Since the engine would be out, I supposed it would also be the time to rebuild the engine (over 30 years and 100,000 miles and it's never been rebuilt). But that would take time and cost even more. It was starting to seem like a never ending project. I envisioned the engine sitting forlornly next to the car for years on end.

Scared by this thought, and without sufficient time (or money) to deal with the situation, I let the car sit. Every now and then, when compiling *The Octagon* or at a Club event, I'd think about my MG, sigh, and contemplate taking on the project. I'd wander into the garage, sit in the car, feel the still stuck shifter, and get discouraged. Many kind members encouraged me and volunteered to help out, but it was a daunting task and I put it off.

But I recently regained interest. I wanted to drive the car again. And with Felix taking over *The Octagon*, I found myself with some time on my hands. So I committed to a tech session to remove the engine and investigate the gearbox. I cleaned up the car, charged the battery, and invited Marty Ray over for some preliminary diagnosis.

On the morning Marty came by, the shifter curiously moved relatively freely – but the car wouldn't start. The front carburetor was leaking profusely and there was no spark. Judicious use of carb cleaner and replacement of the distributor points and condenser resolved those problems. I was certain that the shifter wouldn't move with the engine running; but we started the car, rocked it back and forth a few times, and clunkily got it into gear.

Marty had to run off, so no further investigation or diagnosis occurred. Disappointed that I was no closer to understanding the shifting problem, I sat in the rough idling MG and played with the clutch and shifter. Curiously, it started to go into (and out of) all four gears. The more I played with it, the easier it got. I couldn't believe it. I had tried to do this many times over the past few years, and the shifter wouldn't budge.

Since the shifter seemed to be moving alright, I cautiously backed down the driveway and drove down the block. I shifted through all four gears successfully. Incredulous, I repeated the process. I drove up and down the block ten times. Feeling braver, I went out on the main road and made a two block circuit. Everything seemed normal, so I kept driving in increasingly larger circles until I had driven a few miles.

Having encountered no problems, I called Marty to report the news. He hypothesized that something in the linkage (or perhaps the gearbox) was jammed and that we had shaken it loose by rolling the car back and forth. That sounded reasonable. Whatever the case, the problem seemed to be gone. I doubt it's gone for good, but there doesn't seem much sense chasing it until it returns.

The tech session for my car was approaching and, since the engine no longer needed to come out, I decided to use it to replace the water pump (as I had originally intended to do at that fateful tech session some years ago). This time around, I drove down without incident. And what's more, the water pump was successfully replaced. (Look for the full story on the water pump replacement next month.)

So my MG is back on the road. The weather is nice and I'm happily out and about, driving with the top down. I'd forgotten how wonderful it is.



# The Continuing Adventures of a 1974 1/2 MGB

By Jeremy Palgon

When we left our hero, she was in a sorry state. In need of a water pump and a tune-up, she was on her way to a long overdue tech session when she was beset by an evil Mowog. The demon took up residence in her overdrive gearbox, causing an inability to shift. The plucky MGB managed to limp back to her garage. Dejected and unable to move, she slumbered for some years.

But recently the MGB was awoken by the wizard Marty Ray. He ministered to her wounds, developed during years of neglect. Carbs were cleaned, points and condenser were replaced, and she was rocked gently back to a waking life.

Along the way, the evil Mowog fled. Where did he go? Why did he come in the first place? Will he return? We don't know. All we know is that he is mysterious, and that he's gone.

Ah, heck. I can't keep this up. Storytelling is not my strong suit, and I'd make a pretty poor comic book writer. So here's the story in my quotidian, unembellished voice:

A couple years back my MG was running well, but seemed to be losing water over time. A little investigation revealed that the water pump was leaking slowly. So I planned a tech session at On the Road Again to replace it.




Photo by Jeremy Palgon

The morning of the tech session, I backed the MG out of the driveway, shifted into first, and started to drive to the tech session. But I quickly found I could not get into second. In fact, I couldn't shift out of first. I checked the clutch fluid and hydraulics (which were relatively new, not leaking, and seemingly functional), played around with the shifter (which was really stuck), and rolled the car back and forth. I could eventually jam it into and out of first and second (with considerable effort), but something clearly wasn't right. I managed to get the MG back into the garage, and drove my Camry to the tech session.

Exploring the problem later, I became dismayed. Even sitting in the garage with the engine off, I had a difficult time getting the shifter into neutral. And once into neutral, it wouldn't go into any gear. These are not common symptoms of a simple clutch problem. So I consulted with some friends in the club, and the consensus was that it was probably a problem in the overdrive gearbox or the shift linkage - and that I probably wouldn't be able to diagnose or resolve the problem without taking the engine out.


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 16840 Joleen Way, Unit G-4, Morgan Hill, CA 95037  
408.782.1100 Fax: 408.779.0938  
bhiland@ontheroadagainclassics.com www.ontheroadagainclassics.com

## Wanted

Submissions of articles / photos / anecdotes / repairs are always welcome

Please make submissions by the 15th of the month preceding the issue in which you would like it to appear

Email Felix Lee at [octagoneditor@mgocsf.org](mailto:octagoneditor@mgocsf.org)



# ROAD TO BENICIA - SORRY SAFARI

Photos by Samantha Lee

