



# THE OCTAGON

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



*Since 1957!*



Retro Monte  
Carlo Rally,  
1996

## January 2026



# About *The Octagon* and the MG Owners Club

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

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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

[webmaster@mgocsf.org](mailto:webmaster@mgocsf.org). 2026 rates are: monthly (yearly):

full pg. \$25 (\$240), half page \$18 (\$175), third page \$12

(\$120), business card \$8 (\$75).

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

## MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO *THE OCTAGON*

Your stories, photos, tips, questions, and anything MGOC-related are always welcome in *The Octagon*. Please make your contributions by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the issue in which you want them to appear. Please email all contributions to [magnut\\_dan@hotmail.com](mailto:magnut_dan@hotmail.com) or send them to: Dan Shockey, 12632 Edith Dr., Garden Grove, CA 92841

## RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR THE MGOC

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

## MGOC.SF.ORG

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

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# MGOC Planning Meeting

## Saturday, January 24, 10:00 a.m.

### *Please join us!*

We need your help to plan our events and activities for this New Year. Everyone is welcome - especially new members and anyone who has any ideas for new or old events. All ideas are welcome and there are lots of people who are willing to help you.

**Date:** Saturday, January 24, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

**Location:** Marcia Crawford's home at 150 Purdue Ave, Kensington

**Event:** The club will provide tea and coffee, donuts and pastries.

**Please RSVP** to Andy Preston 707-795-3480, [andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net)

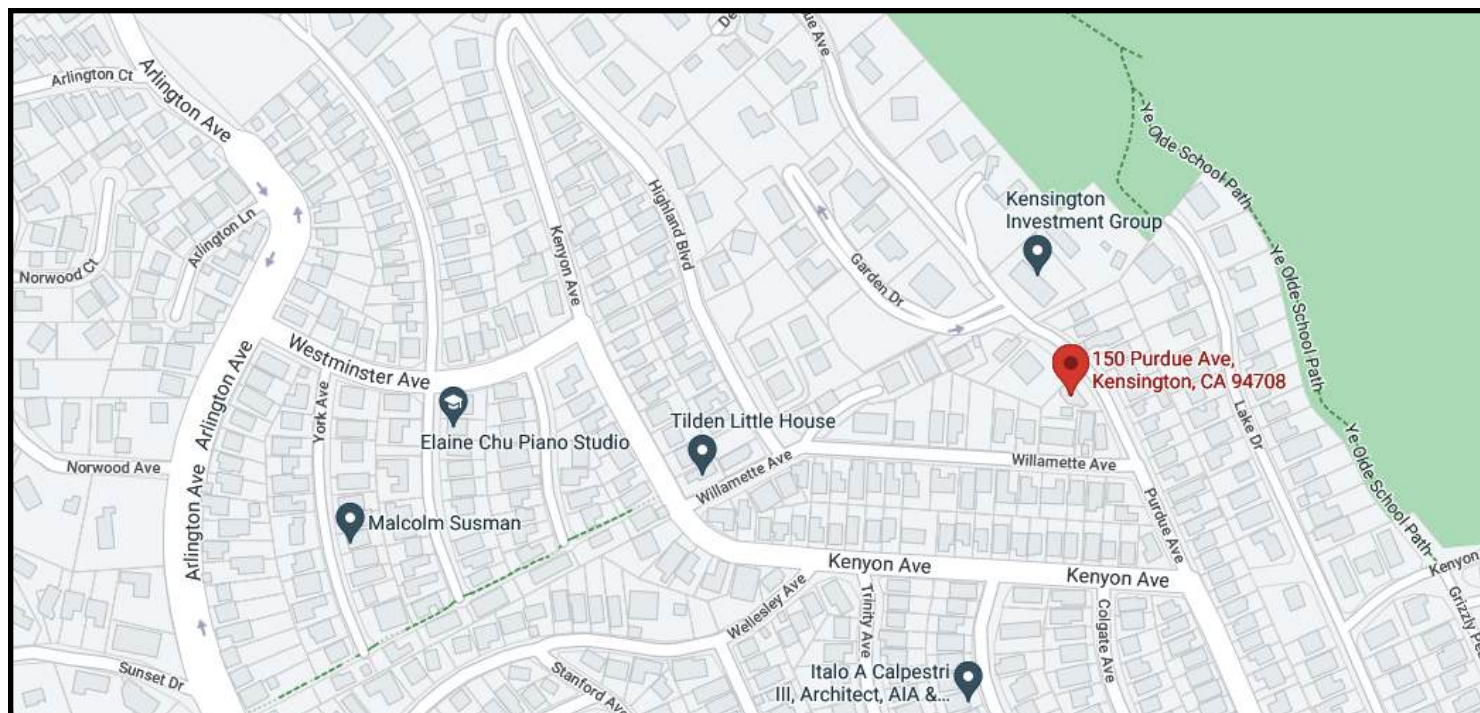
**Directions:** Take I-80 or 580 toward Golden Gate Fields. Exit at Albany/Buchanan. At light turn east (toward hills). Follow Buchanan east. Buchanan curves right and becomes Marin. Cross San Pablo Ave. and continue east on Marin thru several lights. Cross The Alameda (round fire house on your right) and continue to Marin Circle (fountain in middle) and around to The Arlington (only divided road).

Continue on The Arlington to stop sign. Continue three blocks, then turn right on Westminster. Turn right on Kenyon (at top of "T") and continue around and up to Purdue. Turn left on Purdue Ave and continue a short way to 150 Purdue, a white colonial house on your left. Continue to find parking

You can also get there from Hwy 24/Orinda. Use your maps or GPS



Geoffrey Locquenutte with Basil at the Tech Session



# *MGOC Annual Brunch at Moss Beach Distillery*

*On Sunday January 18, 2026*

*Moss Beach Distillery, 140 Beach Way, Moss Beach, CA 94038*



Our Annual MGOC Brunch will be held again this year at the Historic Moss Beach Distillery at Moss Beach. This is always a popular event, so sign up early. It will be a [Champagne Brunch](#) and held in a private room overlooking the Pacific.

**Time:** 11:30 Sunday January 18. **Please arrive no later than 11:30 to be seated.**

**Cost:** \$40/person (MGOC members) and \$55/person (non members) paid in advance.

Your [Brunch](#) will include: Fresh baked pastries, cup of seasonal fruit, your choice of one from 4 entrees;

1. Coastal Crab Cake Benedict
2. Grilled Salmon
3. California Coastal Omelet (with or without Prawns)
4. Pork Chop and eggs

Tea, Coffee, OJ and of course Champagne and Mimosas. Please advise Marla of your entrée when you sign up.

**RSVP by January 11, 2026** with your entrée choice and check made out to the MGOC and mail to: Marla Preston, 7305 Rebas Way, Rohnert Park CA, 94928  
707 795 3480, [marlapreston@hotmail.com](mailto:marlapreston@hotmail.com)

To pay through PayPal go to the website at: [www.mgocsf.org](http://www.mgocsf.org) and under Events click on Brunch Payment and select your entrée.. But please tell Marla that you have paid through PayPal and your entrée choice.

# From the Editor

Happy New Year, MGOCers!

28 December 2025

I should see what I wrote a year ago. I get stuck in ruts. We seem in a good place as a club. We have the key positions filled with skilled and enthusiastic members. There is excitement for events as we look at the new year.

I wrote up my current projects as articles. We are light on event reports and photos this issue and I like to document my work. I did start work on making a hood (top) for my 1935 MG. I am not satisfied with the one I modified last year. I thought to make it easier and better looking but it doesn't look right.

I found some more toasts to fit us. Raise a glass with me:

- "Here's to the year past and friends who have left us. Here's to the present and the friends who are here. Here's to the New Year and the new friends who will join us." — Emily Post
- "Remember that life's most valuable antiques are dear old friends." — H. Jackson Brown, Jr.
- "With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come." — William Shakespeare

"Mirth," that is a good word. I try to include that in each issue.

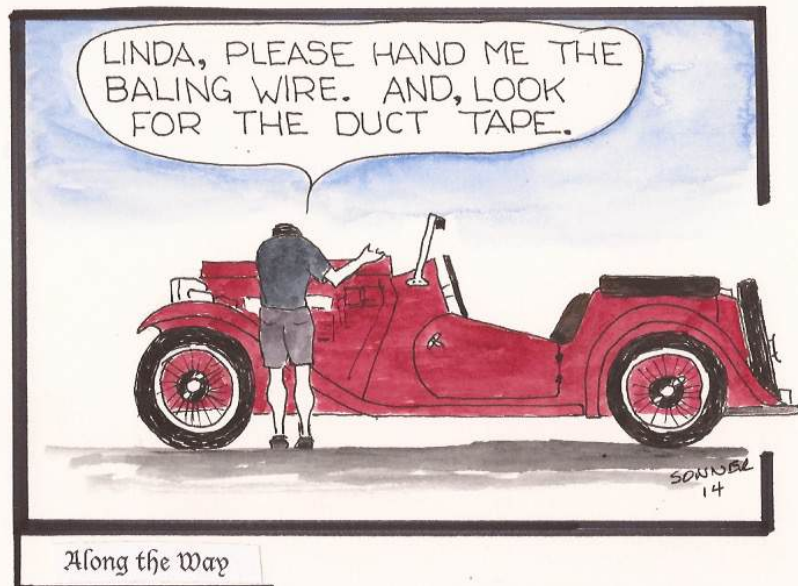
Mirthful New Year!

**Dan**



Celebrate MG success in the Monte with the rally plate at right. 1964 is perfect for Midgets and MGBs especially.

Cartoon below by Brian Sonner of Placerville



Along the Way

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**MONTE CARLO RALLY SIGN #37**

**MONTE CARLO RALLY SIGN #37**  
**Price: \$26.95**

**Description:**  
 High quality embossed aluminium sign will look great  
 Approximately 17" (432mm) x 7-3/4" (196mm)  
 Four attachment holes .

# January Comments

One of the restrictions of Connie's "one sports car only" policy is trying to describe recent work on my MGB. I can either have a car to drive or a project car to describe work on. As mentioned in former articles, I have the car to drive, preferably for long distance locations or overnights. The most work I do is maintenance; oil, lube & filter, brake adjustments or the occasional tune up and valve adjustment. (I'm not going to mention smogging woes, that is for another column).

This past month has given me a mechanical project I can write about. You may recall in a previous column a couple months ago, I mentioned purchasing and installing a used speedometer to keep the car available while I had the original rebuilt. I removed the original and put in the temporary in October and sent the original for repair the first week of November. Jonathan Twist describes replacement of the heater core in an MGB as the worst and most difficult job on that particular model. I've done that job and concur with him. By far though, the most agonizing and painful job on that model is removing and replacing the speedometer. It's all by feel, you can't see anything and both hands are mauled by unseen "fiends" under the dashboard.

To access, you have to remove the under dashboard cover, remove the tachometer and the right heat control. Then you feel under the dash, beyond the heat control with the right hand and through the tachometer cavity with the left hand to remove the Spedo/tach nuts. These are not steel and are made of zinc. The two that I lost under there were not retrievable and reside permanently somewhere under the dashboard. Remember this is all by feel. What I thought was one of those nuts turned out to be the oil gauge nut. My test drive with the replacement speedo rapidly indicated it needed re-tightening, which required removing the tach to tighten the loose oil gauge retaining nut.

I sent the original speedometer to West Valley Instruments in Southern California in the first week of November and received it back in the second week of December. Removal of the temporary was again grueling but replacement of the original was even worse. The job seemed complete and both hands were bleeding the same as they did during the removal two months ago when I discovered the trip

odometer wouldn't work. So, I had to remove both gauges and start over again. The trip odometer cable has a specific route under the dash. Lesson learned, check all as you go. Odometer back

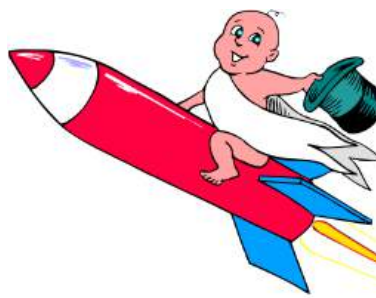
in, tach back in and rightmost tach mount tightened. Where is the left tach clamping support (that holds the left side of the tach to the dash)? Out comes the tachometer again and a magnet finds it under the dashboard. Luckily, unlike the nuts made of zinc, these are steel and easily retrieved. Finally, the project is finished. But will it work? Top down, it's as cold as the arctic. I'm only wearing a light fleece but speeding up Crystal Springs Road with the wind blowing through what's left of my hair made it all worthwhile.

If anyone needs a spare speedometer while having the original rebuilt I have one for loan. It dances a bit but is accurate enough for safe driving. I had my original repaired for \$275.00 at:

West Valley Instruments  
19314 Vanowen Street  
Reseda, CA 91335  
818-758-9500

I should mention the Tea Party went well at Mike and Elaine's. If you have never attended, it's a fun little party and they are now easily accessed off Highway 92 in San Mateo. There is plenty of parking and plenty of food.

January will bring the annual brunch at The Moss Beach Distillery on January 18th. This fills up. If you have never been, it's a fun event and the food is good. Bring your MG! Also, January 24th is our planning meeting. Come with a tour event in mind and consider joining our group going to the GOF in Flagstaff Arizona in May. We should set up a GOF committee at that time.



**Doug**

# Space Saver Wire Wheel

By Dan Shockey, MG Owners Club, Bay Area California

I have been intrigued by the idea of a space-saver wire wheel for my MGA. This is because the current spare takes up most of the boot (trunk). I have 165R15 tires on the car with an excellent matching spare. That is great but it is too wide to fit through the slot into the rear of the interior. The original tires were smaller and narrower. 5.50/15 or 5.60/15 bias tires. I haven't been keen to cut open the passage for the tire to push forward into the interior. The MGA has a custom tire cover that is designed for the application with carpet on the interior part and trunk material on the back. (My replacement cover is all carpet.)

Later MGA coupes had the spare mounted entirely in the boot with a solid panel and other changes to gain more useful space behind the seats. You could fit some bags of groceries there or carry your dog. So having the spare entirely in the boot is not terrible. But with the wide shelf of the 1500 Coupes, the space under it is largely wasted - much like an MGA roadster.



I heard that you can use a 13" wire wheel from an MG Midget as a space-saver wheel which would work on all four corners of a drum-brake MGA (MGA 1500 models) but would not fit over the disk brakes in front. You could still use it but you would have to move a rear wheel to the front then use the 13" wheel on the



back. I presume it would also work for a wire-wheel MGB (or MGC). That wheel is 14" but often wider. (I used a Saab donut wheel as a spare for my disk-wheel BGT.)

The space-saver 145/80R13 tire is 3" shorter than the 165R15 tires on the MGA. It is narrower and fits through the hole into the interior. It is also 10.5 pounds lighter (26.3 pounds vs. 36.7 pounds). These benefits give the option to carry it easier on the luggage rack should you want to load all your luggage inside the trunk. Or even carry two spares!

With the 13" wheel/tire inserted into the hole, there is a lot more useful space in the boot. I think it is 7-8" further forward and less wide and tall. I carry too many spares and tools, partly to help others out if needed. I have a second large fire extinguisher, a spare inner tube (15"), a tow strap and a portable battery booster, for example. I have spares in the second battery box and a bag under the bonnet (hood) as well! I had to make an inventory list to keep track of what I have on board - and where. (Thanks to Mike Jacobsen for the idea for that.)



When buying a Midget wire wheel, look for good splines. My wheel came with a totally bald tire and a made-in-England Dunlop inner tube. I patched the tube and reused it. The wheel had water in it so was fairly rusted. I worked to smooth that and put a band around the inner spokes and duct tape over the rest.



Photos by the author



**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

I found that the 13" tire is harder to get on and off the wheel. There is less to stretch. It seems to help to let the tire warm in the sun. I bought the tire from Amazon, made in Indonesia, but looks very good at only \$58 and free shipping. My wheel has 60 spokes so seems very stout. I don't know if they made any that were only 48 spoke.

One further note, the 13" wire wheels from a Triumph Spitfire or GT6 will not fit the splines on an MG. So check that when you shop at a swap meet.

Note from Andy Preston:

I did the same thing with my 1600 Coupe but used an original 15" wire wheel with a 145/65R 15 tire and that saved a lot of room in the boot. (His photo at right.)



# Home Sewn Tonneau

By Dan Shockey, MG Owners Club, Bay Area California

I have long wanted a tonneau cover for my 1935 MG P-type Midget. Two problems: you can't buy one off the shelf so have to get one custom made, and the cars didn't originally come with a full tonneau. They came with a "half-tonneau" cover for over the space behind the seats only. One more problem: no room to carry the bulky tonneau in the tiny boot area.

It is nice to be able to cover the interior without putting up the top and the side screens, often at night at an event. I have used the top flat without the bows erected. Or I carry a car cover if I tow the MG and have the room to bring one.

One club member made a tonneau of very thin waterproof material just to use to cover the interior at night when traveling. It keeps out dust, dew and light rain but rolls up very small. Another club member used a car blanket they had – one of those with a waterproof backing – and added LTD (lift-the-dot) fasteners. (See photo.) So it is dual purpose – blanket and tonneau.



Many years ago, a club member in Germany offered left-over top material for sale. He purchased best-quality "SONNENLAND" hood material, as used by Mercedes and Porsche. It is a rich dark brown and he had 3 meters of it at a very good price. (1.5 meters wide) My P was green at the time so I snapped it up. It also works well with the red and white colors.

I purchased a cobbler's sewing machine from the internet. These are copies of an English hand-operated machine from 1850 and have been made in China since about 1900. They are often used for leather work. They come with short tripod legs so you can make or repair shoes Chinese squatting style. I made a wooden base of 2x material. They are inexpensive, \$100 or so, you can use readily available Singer parts, but you have to finish the machine and set up yourself. They will sew through

even plywood and have the important large "walking foot" that pulls the material along.

It took me some time to get mine working properly. I nearly gave up. Youtube videos helped a lot.

The machine must have been returned by someone already since it had a broken needle wedged into it. I found the key was using the right thread and the right tension on the upper thread. I bought several rolls of thread that would not work. I only broke one needle.

The tonneau can be very simple – like the blanket one pictured. Or it can be fairly complex with extra zippers and flaps and multiple parts. I needed to stay simple but I did want a zipper and the ability to drive the MG with the passenger side covered. (Although you can't see the key gauges that way.) I purchased a zipper on Amazon intended for use in heavy jackets.

In the meantime, I practiced making "bikini" tops from boat cover material then from heavy canvas. (See *The Octagon*, June, 2023.) I did not want to ruin the expensive material. I thought of trying a tonneau with some heavy vinyl before using the good stuff. But I decided to jump right in.

The main problem of making the tonneau all of one piece was the tall steering wheel. I had saved the steering wheel bulge from another tonneau and used that inset into the new material. My wife doesn't like the look of that so maybe I will replace it later.

I replaced the awning material on the front of our house last spring so used the old material to make a pattern. I also made a pattern for a new top. I wanted to try to get both a top and a tonneau from the roll of material. It appears I can do so. I set aside the top material (called a "hood" by the Brits) and started in on the tonneau.

First I had to add several missing LTD studs and drill for two more on the front of the doors, making sure they don't interfere with the side screens. Then I began to lay out the tonneau, punching holes for studs at the center front and back, and then at the outer sides. That allowed me to set the zipper in place.

One big problem with using the cobbler sewing machine is you have to turn the crank with one hand and control the material with the other hand. An electric machine would allow the use of both hands



for a much better job, I think. This is especially true with very large, odd-shaped pieces of heavy material! These are all I ever work with.

I sometimes place a few hand stitches to hold the material in place, or to add strength, and sometimes use clamps or even staples for the purpose. That long-reach stapler that I once used to assemble *The Octagon* paper copies came in handy.



For the zipper I hand sewed the entire length (both sides) then added machine stitches. I use either an awl or a large needle with heavy thread for the hand stitching. The German material is difficult even to push a needle through even with pliers. Tough stuff.

With the zipper and steering wheel cover in place, I could finish laying out the tonneau and place the stud holes. I used small punched holes for that to start with. I had to add some 3-D-ing at the front and rear corners. You can do that with sewn extra pieces of material. I chose to add darts where needed. I didn't need much dimensioning.



To give the edge and the LTD fasteners more strength, I added a second layer of material all around the tonneau underside. This I sewed into place along its inner side. After being satisfied with the overall fit of the piece, I sewed a strip of black vinyl all around the outside, tying the two layers of cloth together and giving it a finished edge.



It laid okay but I found I could make it more taut by adding a long dart along each side. They are symmetrical and make a folding seam for the cover.

Suddenly I was nearly done. I added the LTD fasteners – reused from an old tonneau – and Halleluia! – a finished one-piece tonneau that works well and looks good – if you don't look too close at the stitching.

To address the problem of stowing the heavy-material tonneau when not in use, I saw some photos of tonneau covers rolled up just behind the seat top. This allows access to the small storage area behind the seats. It seems to work. Of course if I have a tow vehicle, I can just remove the tonneau and not carry it on tours.

Next, on to the more complicated top (hood).



Top left: Half tonneau made by Jim Silva for Bill Traill's J2 Midget (Traill photo)

Other photos by the author

# MG and Hispano-Suiza?

## MG and the Best British Fighter Plane of WWI?

By Dan Shockey, MG Owners Club, Bay Area California

I have always heard that the overhead cam engines that MG used from 1929 to 1935 in the original Midgets (and Magnettes and Magnas) were based on an aeroplane engine from WWI. But I was never able to get much information about the extent of that link or many particulars. I finally decided to do some research. No, I did not use AI but maybe I should. (My father says he has worked with artificial intelligence his whole 101-year life.)

Here is what I found out. During WWI, Mark Birkigt, Swiss chief engineer of Hispano-Suiza, designed a huge 11-liter V-8 engine running at 2000 rpm for use in warplanes. The H-S engine powered the SE-5 aircraft, regarded as the best British fighter of WWI. This engine used an overhead camshaft driving valves directly and developed up to 200hp. The valves were of two-piece construction allowing valve adjustment via a screw thread. The shaft-driven overhead cam used bevel gears top and bottom and the engine featured a cross-flow head design. This direct drive from the overhead cam and the cross-flow breathing allowed for a powerful and efficient engine.



However that doesn't sound very much like the cheap-and-cheerful 850cc high-revving engine used by MG. We need to look at the development history to understand the connections.

Car company Wolseley was given a set of drawings for the Hispano-Suiza engine. I believe that was done in consideration that they might build the engine for wartime aircraft. After the war ended, Wolseley did design and build a 4-cylinder engine, the Viper, using similar drive but with rockers off the overhead cam. Like push-rod engines, rockers allow

easier adjustment but are less efficient by being less direct and by putting the valves in less than optimal positions.

Concurrently an engine that looks just like the Wolseley and later Morris/MG engine with vertical dynamo was shown by engine builder Wrigley in 1922. (See ad below.) Frank Woolard was chief engineer at Wrigley, later hired by Morris who acquired Wrigley's in 1924. So the technology and the engineer both came to Morris on that path. (The two-main bearing M-type engine was described as having a rubber-band or bent-wire crank but this was not the chewing gum Wrigley of America.)



Wolseley further developed their engine without the rockers, making different size versions of both 4-cylinder and 6-cylinder engines. Without the adjustable rockers or the complex two-piece valves, valves had to be custom ground to length for each valve in each engine. This was efficient in engine performance and inexpensive in materials but costly in labor.

Soon after Wolseley developed these engines, Morris needed an engine for a new baby car to compete with the popular Austin 7. He purchased Wolseley and put the new Morris Minor into high-

Left: The compact, efficient, reliable Hispano-Suiza aeroplane engine

volume production. It used the 850cc version of the Wolseley line, a superior engine than the side-valve Austin unit - more powerful and more efficient- but at a cost and complexity disadvantage.

And the MG connection? MG engineers got an early look at the baby Morris and saw the potential for a small sports car based on the overhead cam engines. Initially the M-type Midget also used the Minor chassis with few changes. The baby family car birthed the baby sports car.



Wolseley had now-redundant 4- and 6-cylinder engines and tooling not wanted by Morris. Cecil Kimber was able to buy these engines and continue production along with a degree of development. The major expense was design and tooling for the castings and that had already been expensed. A total of 11,000 overhead cam engines were then used in a whole alphabet of MG sports cars and sports sedans.

The MG engine used an overhead camshaft with a vertical generator replacing the shaft drive and



also included bevel gears at the top and bottom. Later versions used a cross-flow head for better breathing and more power.

MG greatly developed this engine over the few years it was in production. For racing, the 850cc engine was reduced to 750cc with shorter throws of the crankshaft (called "de-stroking" the engine). MG added a large blower (supercharger) and developed special fuel so that the engine produced 150hp by the time it was used in the Q-type and R-type racecars. This was the highest specific output of any engine in use prior to WWII, higher than that of the Formula 1 racers including Audi and Mercedes.

So the creative WWI engine design of Hispano-Suiza did play a significant, if convoluted, role in the development of the sports car engines that put MG on the international sports/racing map.

## The SE-5 Fighter Plane

The SE-5 was developed by the Royal Aircraft Company and introduced in 1917 during a time of very rapid aircraft development. It is considered one of the most effective fighters of the war. The Hispano-Suiza engine gave it excellent speed and maneuverability. It was capable of 138mph and carried two Vickers machine guns. It was primarily used for air superiority, reconnaissance, and ground attack missions. Many ace pilots flew the plane, including the famous Billy Bishop.

The SE-5 is remembered for its reliability and performance, contributing to the Allies' air campaign. Its design influenced future aircraft development following the war.



Yop left: New Minor engine displayed at the Olympia Motor Exhibiiton, 1929. Looks tiny!

Left:William Morris with the new Minor

# MGOC Board Meeting

## Saturday, December 6, 2025, San Mateo

### Minutes

**Call to Order:** Andy Preston

**Attending and introductions:** Elaine Chan, Marcia Crawford, Gary & Janet Germano, Don & Jeannie Herrick, Doug & Connie Hollander, Mike Jacobsen, Mark McGothigan, Andy Preston, George Steneberg.

### REPORTS

**President's Report:** Doug Hollander: Said he will be attending the 2026 GOF West on May 11-15 which will be in Flagstaff, AZ and invited other members to join him. Mike said he will also attend and Andy is considering it.

**Vice President's Report:** Andy Preston:

**Treasurer's Report:** Marla Preston: Absent due to illness.

**Secretary's Report:** Mike Jacobsen: Nothing to report.

**Registrar's Report:** Steve Kellogg: Absent

**Members at Large Reports:** Mark McGothigan & George Steneberg: Nothing to report.

**Website Report:** Alan Havey:

**Octagon Report:** Dan Shockey: Absent.

### Past Events

Egg Roll Run: Thanks to Andy Preston for the write-up in the *Octagon*. Attendees said that the drive to the egg roll place was fantastic.

### Coming Events

Planning meeting 1/10/26: At George & Marcia's. Bring ideas for 2026.

Annual Brunch 1/18/26: Marla coordinating at the Moss Beach Distillery.

**Old Business:** None

### New Business

Elections: All officers agreed to serve for another year.

Website: Andy noticed that the club's website sometimes does not appear after a Google search. He will check with Alan Havey about this.

Club address: Needs to be updated to 2029 Kings Lane, San Mateo, CA 94402-3928.

**Business resolved since last meeting:** None to resolve.

### Announcements:

**NEXT MEETING:** The Planning Meeting, January 10.

Meeting adjourned

Submitted by: Mike Jacobsen

## 2026 Club Officers

The current officers have agreed to another year of service..

President: Doug Hollander  
Vice President: Andy Preston  
Treasurer: Marla Preston  
Secretary: Mike Jacobsen



# Holiday Tea 2025

It was a great event with lots of food and well attended. I picked up George and Marcia because Kirk was not feeling well. Marla stayed home because she also was not feeling well. In addition to the list of attendees in the minutes, Felix, Kimberley and Samantha also attended. It was great to catch up with Felix again who was driving his TF to our November drive when his car started coughing and losing power. So he turned around and made it home.

However he parked his car on his steep driveway and

applied the handbrake and got out of the car only to see that the handbrake wasn't

working and his car careened down his drive into a flowerbed. He tried to stop it rolling by holding the rear bumper but cut 2 fingers on his right hand and had to have 12 stitches, which hampered his operating for a short time. (Felix is a heart surgeon.)

Andy Preston

My granddaughter, Stella, might serve as a substitute for Holiday Tea photos. My sister has given all three of my granddaughters toy tea sets and Stella has really taken to them. She sets them up every time she comes to the house. These particular photos were taken as we opened "Emily at Tea", a porcelain doll the same sister sent for Stella's benefit. Note Stella's tea set in the foreground and Emily's in the back.

Doug Hollander

Above: Felix drives his TF in a Veterans Day parade



# Bagpipes in an MG

by Daniel Shockey



George Kershaw and his wife 'Kevin' (female) were key movers in our local MG club in Orange County and in the GOF West events. George was especially known for his huge collection of MG models – accumulated before eBay – and his faithful participation with his TC and TD Mk II MGs.



George passed in March of 2025 after a long illness following a stroke. Kevin died earlier. His request was to have an MG caravan to his gravesite and a bagpiper to play at the graveside service. It was a goodly drive to the cemetery - 60 miles round trip - but I decided to risk it with my 1935

MG PA. I had recently rebuilt the engine and had few miles on it. I did not want to break down en route on this special occasion

It was fun having police escort and rolling through the red lights. The route took us through my favorite local canyons. It was a typical Southern California beautiful day and the service was well done. The bagpiper was a member of the LA Police Department's Emerald Society.



It was great fun and memorable. I think George would approve. And yes, I got the P up to 60mph canyon carving on the way home (no police escort fortunately.)



I got a few pictures of the bagpiper with my MG. I was surprised by his request to drive him back to his parked car. The right-hand-drive MG worked out well with the bags held on his left side. In fact, he played while we drove. It was well received by folks around the cemetery so we took a extra lap, playing all the while.

The Scots and Irish like the pipes for their ability to cut through the loud noises of battle. In this case, the pipes cut through the loud noises of the old MG.



Reprinted from the North American MMM Register magazine



# Keep Planning for 2026!

## WINTER



Sat., Jan. 10: SSTS Planning Party

Sun., Jan. 18: MGOC Annual Brunch, page 4

Sat., Jan. 24, 2026, MGOC Planning Party!  
page 15

Card art left: BEN cards,

## 2026

May 11-15, 2026: GOF West, Flagstaff, AZ, Club caravan? Route 66! Page 23

**June 6: Brits by the Bay, Greenbrae**

August 24-27: MG2026 All-Register Event, Ohio

Below: Prouction lines at Abingdon, late 1930s



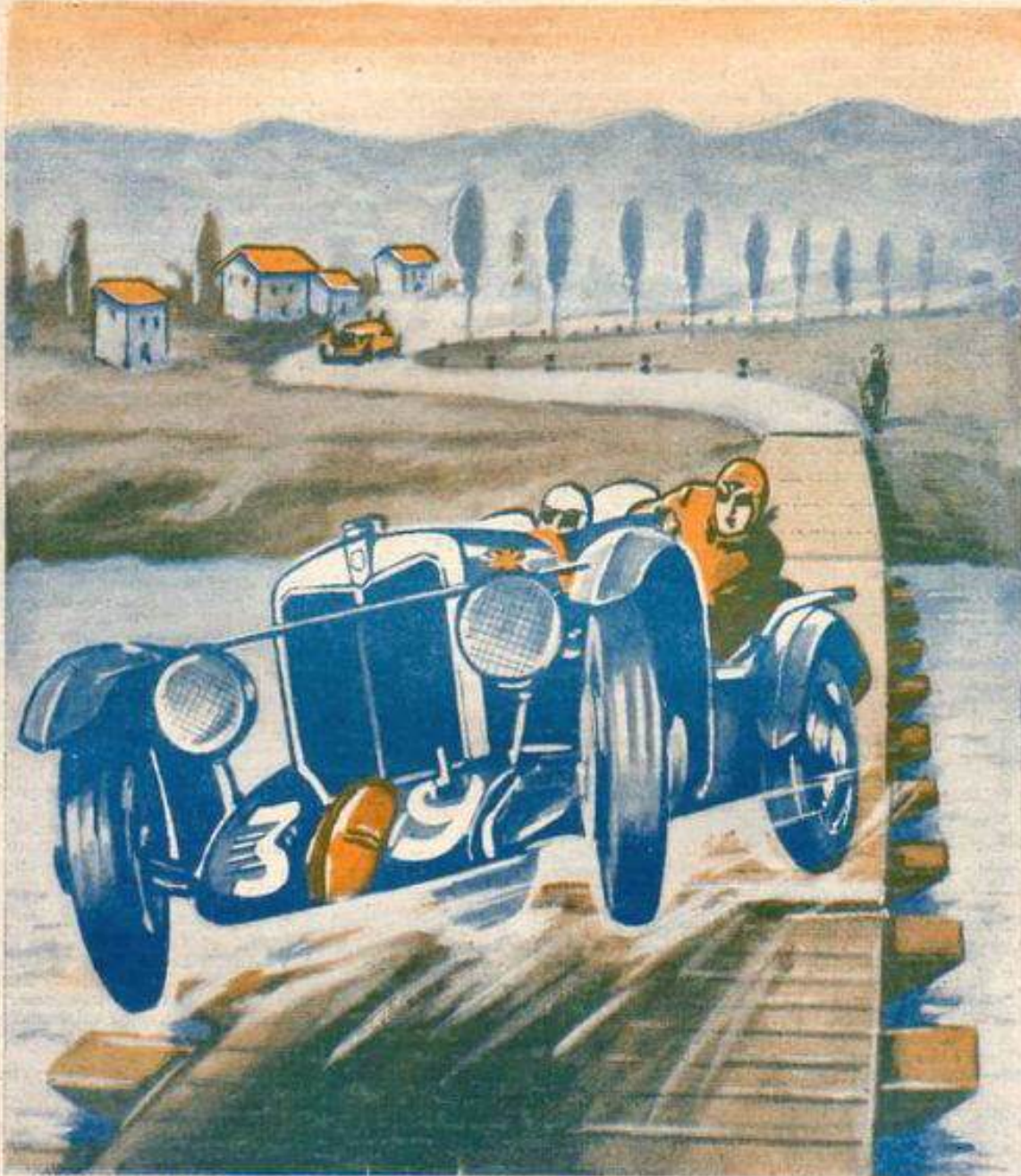
**FLYING BOMBERS!**—Great War Flying Story by *Morden,*  
GEO. E. ROCHESTER

# The MODERN BOY

EVERY SATURDAY  
Week Ending May 1st, 1937.

No. 482.  
Vol. 19.

2<sup>D.</sup>



This art perfectly depicts Capt. Eyston crossing a narrow wooden bridge at very high speed on his way to the class win in the 1934 Mille Miglia

**A THOUSAND MILES OF THRILLS!**—See Capt. Eyston's Own Story Inside!

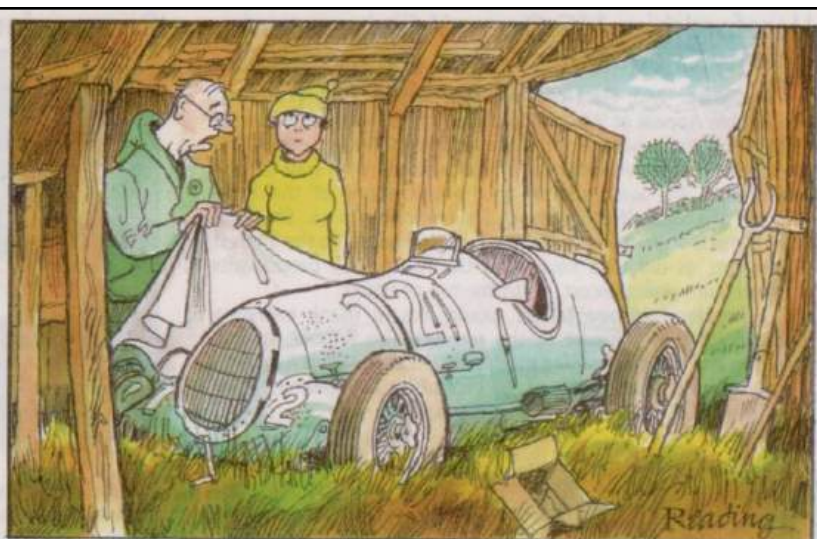
## Nuvolari Stayed Here

I was moving the J2 today to its new storage location which lies inside the old Ards TT circuit, about a mile from where the start/finish line was. The owner of the storage unit asked what year the car was - 1933, says I, the year Hitler came to power. Oh, says he, that'd be around the time of the Ards TT. My grandparents used to rent out this house to the drivers each year. They had Nuvolari one year, and Caracciola another year. Their mechanics used to sleep in the barn across the yard with the cars!

He wasn't sure which year Nuvolari was there so it might have been 1930 when he won driving an Alfa Romeo 6C rather than 1933. And I have heard that another branch of the same family living a short distance away, hosted the MG équipe. So more investigation needed, but clearly a good spot to keep the J2.

You never really think about where the racing teams and cars stayed but I suppose it was a bit like when the Open golf came to Norn Iron a few months ago, any ol' shack within a reasonable distance of the course could be rented out for a small fortune. And a farmhouse with plenty of barn accommodation for cars (and mechanics) must have been in high demand. Apparently the grandparents, and their young son (the current owner's father), moved out of their house to some primitive accommodation in the farmyard so that their guests had the run of the house, and the maid came in to make their breakfast!

Simon Johnston, Belfast, Northern Ireland, J3437



"HOW DISAPPOINTING, ITS JUST A THIRTIES NUVOLARI ALFA ROMEO SINGLE SEATER, I WAS HOPING FOR A SIXTIES MIDGET"



ms — experts showing the tools they use

# Member Notes

## Front License Plate from Don Herrick:

I believe it was CHP. I was heading south out of the Bay Area on 101, maybe 80 miles south. I think they set up a checkpoint for missing front license plates.

## Lucas from Dan Shockey to Doug Hollander:

I think Marty Rayman also has a grandson named Luca. Do two Luca make Lucas?

## Reply from Doug:

Two Lucas probably means two aspiring car guys!

## Update from board member Mark McGothigan:

I'm retiring this year and will have more time for extra curricular activities next year. Cheers

## Update from Alan Havey:

I have been keeping busy working on my Healey 3000. Lots of work there!

## Travels Way South from Marty Rayman:

We just returned from touring southern Africa; Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana & S. Africa. My slow healing fractured left leg did very well. When our guide in the Cape Town area found out I was a vintage car buff, he managed to slip a most phenomenal motor museum. And then a brewery...

The outstanding thing about the motor museum was that we discovered many MGs: a TC, TD, TF, A & a B!



## MG in a Box from Don Scott:

42 years ago, a man decided he didn't have time to finish working on his car, so he built a box around it where it languished in a crate ... until today!

<https://www.mgexp.com/forum/mga-forum.2/mga-twin-cam-on-youtube.5003739/>

## Tammy's MGB from Max Heim:

More Tammy: *The Octagon*, Aug., 2020



I thought the Octagon readers might find this amusing. I just acquired this from a Morgan owner who had rescued it from a thrift shop, and presented it to me at an informal vintage car drive yesterday.

This is "Tammy's MGB". Tammy was a fashion doll, Ideal Toy Co.'s competitor to Mattel's Barbie. Barbie famously drove a Corvette, but apparently Tammy caught the British car bug back in 1962. While this model is not completely accurate in scale, you can see how it is intended to represent a Mark 1 MGB. It has an Octagon on the deck lid, and it even mimics the factory press car — while the blue is much brighter than Iris Blue, it has the red interior, steel wheels and whitewalls. And true to Mk. 1 tradition, the steering wheel is broken in this example — no doubt from trying to cram the stiff-legged doll into the cockpit.

It's quite large (almost 18" long).

## **The Automobile Magazine from Ken K.:**

Hi everyone, for a very limited time there is free access to The Automobile back to 2005. You can also now (finally) get a digital subscription which gives you access to all current and archive issues. The subscription version uses a better user interface app than this free access web version. Normally a paper subscription is about \$220/yr but the new digital one is currently available for \$45/yr.

If you've never read this magazine it is outstanding, with emphasis on prewar european cars and heavily British.

[theautomobile.co.uk](http://theautomobile.co.uk)

## Update from Barbara T.:

I sadly missed the Tea because I broke my left shoulder and won't be driving for awhile. It's a long recovery. I cancelled my trip to London. I will back get into painting hopefully soon.

## Local Stained Glass Artist

These folks joined the Abingdon Rough Rider TC Club recently. I always wondered about the windows at the pub in Monterey.

John Forbes and Mary of Bonny Doon (address is in the membership list, out recently)

John is a major car guy, with some quite interesting vehicles on his plot of land at the end of a really cool TC road in the Santa Cruz highlands. He is also the creator of some fabulous stained glass windows, like the ones at the Sly McFly restaurant on Cannery Row, pictured.

John found his TC in Illinois. He had a lot questions about it and Bill Traill, Jeff Stobbe and I went for a visit. Bill did some magic on the SU carbs while there. We pronounced the car a winner. One of his comments after driving the TC was, "Now I know why you call yourselves The Rough Riders!"



A project waiting for finishing – a Mk IV Jaguar



Note: John is depicted driving the Bugatti – and the Bentley – !

John's company is [BDARTGLASS.COM](http://BDARTGLASS.COM) - still making windows.



# Table Top Rally

23rd November 2025 – Regulations and Entry Form

This event is being hosted by Philip and Rosemary Bayne-Powell on behalf of the Inter Register Club and the MG Car Club. This event will take place in the comfort of your home, with no fee charged.



You will need the OS Landranger 1:50,000 Map197–Chichester and The South Downs, March 2017 edition available from [dash4it.co.uk](http://dash4it.co.uk)

Navigation techniques will be used such as spot heights, grid references, coloured roads etc. Not all routes will be on public roads. Answers to the questions will be found on the map at the end of each section, proving that you have correctly arrived at the finish.

There will be 15 sections with increasing scores, starting with the easier clues and getting harder with ensuing sections. If you get stuck on one section, move onto the next section, so as to get the most results, and hence a maximum score.

Please confirm you wish to partake in this event by e-mailing your entry form to [1942mgman@gmail.com](mailto:1942mgman@gmail.com) before Sunday 23rd November 2025. Please state your virtual vehicle, so IRC points can be awarded. Also state the class that you are entering from the choice below.

Class A – Expert Competitors who have finished in the top five of any navigation scatter event or 12-car rally, or the top ten of a National B Rally, in the last 5 years.

Class B – Novice Competitors with more limited navigation experience.

As before, the instructions and questions will be sent to all novices by e-mail at 10.00am and the more difficult instructions to all experts by e-mail at 10.30am. You will then have 2 hours (Experts) and 2.5 hours (Novices) to complete the event by submitting your answers to the clues by e-mail them to the organizers by 12.30. Late finishers incur a penalty of one point for every minute late.

Results will be distributed by e-mail as soon as possible on the following day, depending on the size of the entry..

If any further information or details are required, please call or e-mail Philip.

I saw this event advertised somewhere (UK). Sounds interesting. I wonder if it is something we could do, at least something along these lines. Thoughts? – Editor Dan





# Register by Dec. 31 to save \$15!

## GoF West 2026 Registration

Event Dates: May 11-15, 2026

\$60 USD thru Dec 31, 2025

\$75 USD Jan 1<sup>st</sup> - Mar 31<sup>st</sup>

\$100 USD after Apr 1<sup>st</sup>

Staff use

\*A registration is for two people and up to two MGs. Additional MGs & adults beyond two will need a new registration.

In-Spirit \$30 USD (In-Spirit Registrants will receive a patch, pin, dash plaque, and event guide.)

Cancellations will revert to "In-Spirit". If the request to cancel your registration is received by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026, you will receive a refund less the \$30. If the request to cancel is received at [GOFWESTINC@gmail.com](mailto:GOFWESTINC@gmail.com) after March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026, no refund will be given.

List names as you want them on your name tag and the event guide

Driver's Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Driver's First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Driver's Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Co-Driver's First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Names (and ages) of any children or dependents who will be attending with you: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#1 \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#2 \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Registration confirmation will be sent via email.

Primary Club Affiliation (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Other Club(s) Affiliation (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Have attended (# of) \_\_\_\_\_ GoF West events in the past. / Is this your first time attending a GoF West? (check box) ☐

First MG you are bringing\*: Year \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

Second MG you are bringing\*: Year \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please notify us as soon as possible if you later plan to show a different MG(s), so we can plan out the car display and have adequate class awards.

If your MG has major modifications from stock, please check here and list changes. Ex. Non-MG engine or exterior resembling a different model. ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Will you participate in the Arts/Crafts display? Yes ☐ No ☐

Will you participate in the Rally? Yes ☐ No ☐

Will you participate in the Flea market? Yes ☐ No ☐

Will you participate in the Funkhana? Yes ☐ No ☐

Will you participate in the Car Display? Yes ☐ No ☐

Will you stay at the Doubletree (Host hotel)? Yes ☐ No ☐

Send completed Registration form to:

EMAIL: [GOFWESTINC@GMAIL.COM](mailto:GOFWESTINC@GMAIL.COM)

Or mail USPS:

GoF West 2026  
1454 CHASE TER  
EL CAJON, CA 92020-8368

**Checks should be made out to GOF West.** Once your registration and payment have been received, you will get an email confirmation with your registration number.

Zelle payments to: [gofwestinc@gmail.com](mailto:gofwestinc@gmail.com)

PayPal payments to: [gofwestinc@gmail.com](mailto:gofwestinc@gmail.com)

### Hotel Information-

Doubletree by Hilton, Flagstaff  
1175 W Rte 66, Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
Phone: 928-773-8888

Call the hotel directly or use this link <https://group.doubletree.com/gbgw1p> to make your reservation. Use "GoF West 2026" as the group name to get the special rate of \$169 plus tax and fees.

To get the group rate, reserve before allowed rooms are sold out. All rooms must be booked by 4/11/26. The hotel requires reserving rooms through them directly to help us with tracking.

Information will be posted on the [www.GoFWest.org](http://www.GoFWest.org) website as available

Any questions, contact H Garcia (Chair) at [hcg1977@gmail.com](mailto:hcg1977@gmail.com) or 480-540-8302

# MG TF by Victor Replicars

By John Webber, *Classic Motorsports*, March, 2014

In the 1970s, Victor Replicars, a small company based in Rochester, New York, built custom station wagon bodies for Model A Fords. In the fall of 1981, looking to diversify, Victor introduced a DIY fiberglass TF kit that used the engine and running gear from an MGB. For customers who didn't want a project, they also offered fully assembled cars.

The company designed and constructed a from-scratch frame that was identical in dimensions to the original TF piece. However, it was built with stouter steel, and a larger-diameter rear cross member added strength. In the front, Victor welded in an MGB cross member, positioned so the B's suspension components would bolt right up and use the same settings.

The glass body parts were molded directly from original TF parts. The tub was constructed of reinforced fiberglass over a hardwood frame and featured a molded floor with a removable transmission cover. According to Victor, the tub, doors and fenders were built so accurately, they could be mounted on an original TF. With all the kit's components, these constructors took pains to replicate the TF as closely as possible, even buying parts like door hinges from original vendors.

By early 1984, according to an article in *Rochester Living*, the company (then renamed Great Lakes Motor Cars) employed nine people and was geared up to build 100 kits a year. They also had plans to build a look-alike MG Airline Coupe. (One such car, loosely based on the Airline, was a stretched and widened four-seater called the Phantom. It was built and reportedly now lives with a collector in the Northeast.)

As word slowly got out, the company's TF replicas gained some respect, even in the MG community. At one point, British Leyland reportedly approached Great Lakes Motor Cars about building an anniversary-model TF to be sold in Leyland's showrooms. The number they wanted—1500 examples—was far beyond the tiny factory's capability and the deal never materialized.

Unfortunately, the replica TF market turned out to be a tiny niche, and the company simply could not find enough buyers to keep its workers busy. As sales slowed and costs mounted, the company struggled to stay open. Around 1987, Great Lakes

Motor Cars shut down and its assets were dispersed. The molds were sold, perhaps to someone in Canada, and later reports say they may still exist.

Accurate production numbers are impossible to find, but in an online discussion years after Great Lakes Motor Cars closed, one of the company's principals estimated that they had sold perhaps seven or eight fully assembled cars and around 25 kits.

## Some Assembly Required

In 1981, a would-be builder could have a Victor kit delivered for \$7200 plus crating and shipping (later, the price rose to \$8100). It included a frame, a tub, molded fenders and doors, upholstery, a top and bows, a wiring harness, a windshield frame, a gas tank, miscellaneous hardware and a dashboard with no instruments. Also in the crate was a detailed



and illustrated 72-page assembly guide cross-referenced to an original MGB parts manual.

The builder who planned ahead already had a rusted-out MGB, which in the early '80s could be had for a few hundred bucks, sitting in the garage. In fact, Victor touted their kit as a way to save a rusty B.

At that point, the builder could close those garage doors and spend up to 300 happy hours putting the thing together. Well, mostly happy hours; his mood no doubt depended on his wrenching skills—and perhaps his family's tolerance level. It was a labor-intensive job that required pulling all the needed parts—many of which were probably worn out and needed rebuilding—from the B and installing them on the kit's chassis.

Victor literature put it this way: "We won't tell you that building the TF 1800 is a breeze. It requires care, intelligence and hard work, but you won't have to weld or fabricate parts and it is well within the scope of the average mechanically inclined individual."

Kit Car Quarterly reviewed a Victor kit build with a how-to feature that included step-by-step photos. They called the TF 1800 "one of the most authentic and well-built replicas of all" and said that the assembly manual was "one of the best efforts we've seen lately."

### Living With a Victor

Early in 2003, John Leary, then living in Connecticut, was surfing eBay, searching for a replacement for his badly rusted 1966 MGB. "I wasn't really looking for a TF, but this one popped up because MGB was in the tag line," he said. "I had always liked TFs, but I didn't want a car I had to drive at 55 miles an hour."

After more than a decade of ownership—and a move to Florida, where he enjoys the car all year, John remains an admirer. "It's a driver," he says, "a car I can enjoy. My wife frequently drives it, too. We can take it anywhere and not worry about it. About the worst it can get in a parking lot is a paint chip. And it's dependable, too."



## Classified Ads

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

**MGA 1600 Engine & Gearbox:** From running MG. Engine turns freely. Clean. Free to good home. Can help load into truck. Member Andy Preston, [andypreston@att.net](mailto:andypreston@att.net) (Posted 12/25)

**1972 MGB/GT:** Rebuilt engine & 5-speed gearbox. Ready for paint prep and paint. Pictures on request. Member Ray Davis at [redavisiii@gmail.com](mailto:redavisiii@gmail.com) (Posted 9/25)

**1978 MG Midget:** Green with tan interior. Virtually all original, including all pollution control components. 49K original miles. Body in great shape. Engine rebuilt. \$2300 obo. In San Ramon. Joyce Chang, 925.200.4947, [2happytogo@gmail.com](mailto:2happytogo@gmail.com) (Posted 11/25)

**1969 MGB:** Owned 26 years. Very reliable. BRG, chrome wires wheels, \$15,000. Club member Mark Cederborg: 707-975-3105, [mscederborg@gmail.com](mailto:mscederborg@gmail.com) (Reposted 9/25)

**Enclosed Trailer for Rent:** Enclosed car trailer for rent (16' x 8'). Trailer has integrated braking system and lights, 12 volt electric winch. Reasonable. 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)**





This is an MG NA special racing somewhere in England. I especially like the faces on the crowd and their outfits. What era? Late 60s? Early 70s? 1930s and even 1950s would be much less casual. Long hair so post Beatles?

**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 [registran@namgar.com](mailto:registran@namgar.com).

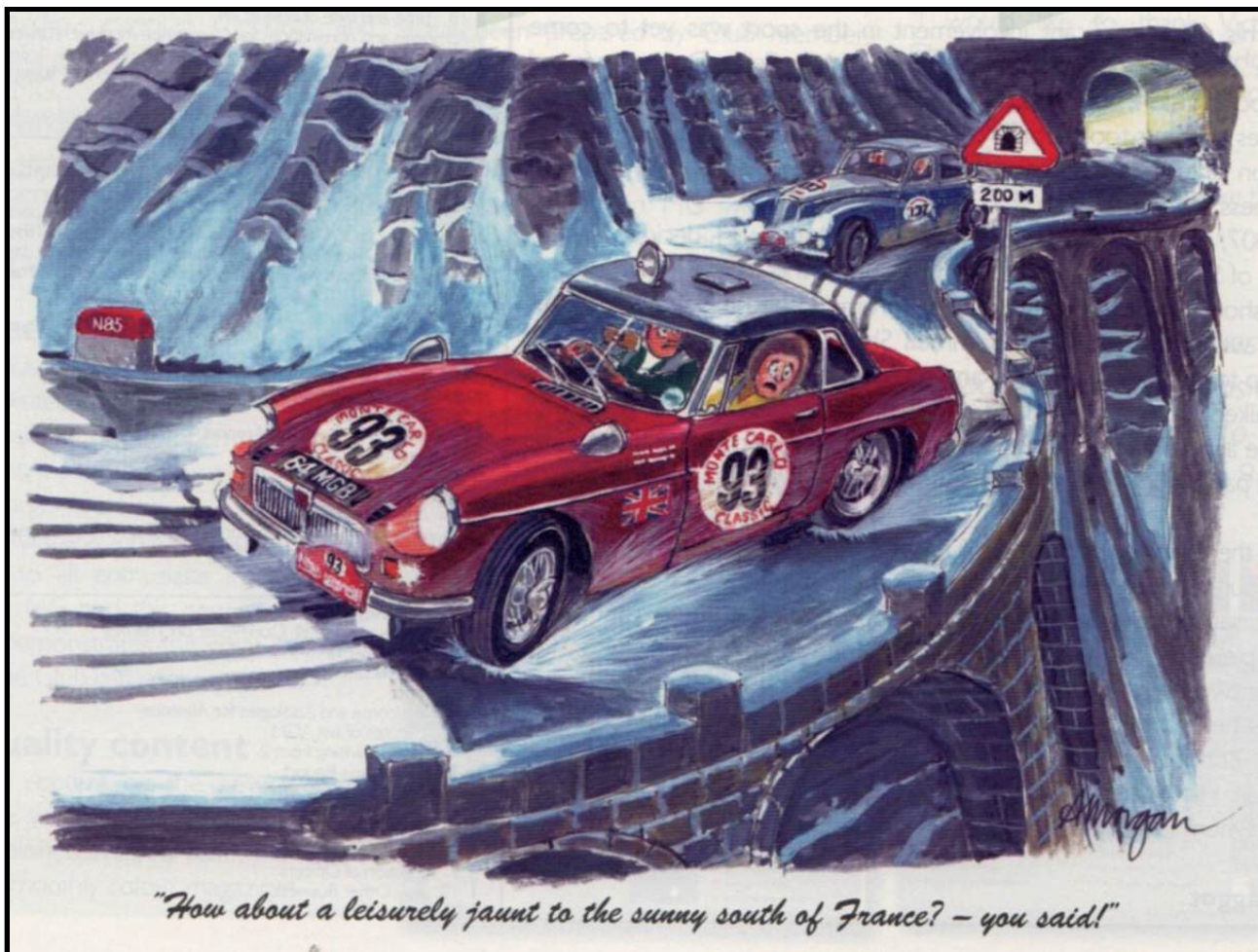



**North American MGB Register**



From **Safety**  
**Fast**  
magazine

MG Car  
Club (UK)



*"How about a leisurely jaunt to the sunny south of France? – you said!"*



From Agatha Christie's  
**4:50 from Paddington**  
by the BBC

